

**Strengthening Migration Governance and Asylum Systems in Serbia: Enhancing policies,  
Protecting Rights**  
**REPORTING PERIOD: 15 MAY – 31 DECEMBER 2025**

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| <p align="center"><b>Programme Title &amp; Project Number</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Programme Title: Strengthening Migration Governance and Asylum Systems in Serbia: Enhancing policies, Protecting Rights</li> <li>Programme Number: N/A</li> <li>MPTF Office Project Reference Number:<sup>2</sup> 00141174</li> </ul>   | <p align="center"><b>Country, Locality(s), Priority Area(s) / Strategic Results<sup>1</sup></b></p> <p><i>(if applicable)</i><br/>Country/Region: Serbia</p>   |
| <p align="center"><b>Participating Organization(s)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organizations that have received direct funding from the MPTF Office under this programme:<br/><i>UNHCR, IOM</i></li> </ul>  | <p><i>Priority area/ strategic results</i><br/>Enhanced migration governance and rights of persons in need of international protection and vulnerable individuals in the mixed movement</p>  |
| <p align="center"><b>Programme/Project Cost (US\$)</b></p> <p>Total approved budget as per project document: \$ 2,476,679<br/>MPTF /JP Contribution<sup>3</sup>:<br/>\$2,476,679</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>by Agency (if applicable)</i><br/>Agency Contribution</li> <li><i>by Agency (if applicable)</i><br/>Government Contribution<br/><i>(if applicable)</i></li> <li>Other Contributions (donors)<br/><i>(if applicable)</i></li> </ul> <p><b>TOTAL:</b></p> | <p align="center"><b>Implementing Partners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National counterparts (government, private, NGOs &amp; others) and other International Organizations:<br/>Ministry of Interior, Commissariat for Refugees and Migration</li> </ul> |
| <p align="center"><b>Programme Assessment/Review/Mid-Term Eval.</b></p> <p>Assessment/Review - if applicable <i>please attach</i><br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Date: <i>dd.mm.yyyy</i><br/>     Mid-Term Evaluation Report – <i>if applicable please attach</i><br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Date: <i>dd.mm.yyyy</i></p>   | <p align="center"><b>Programme Duration</b></p> <p>Overall Duration: 36 months</p> <p>Start Date<sup>4</sup>: 15.05.2025</p> <p>Original End Date<sup>5</sup>: 15.05.2028</p> <p>Current End date<sup>6</sup>: N/A</p>   |
|  | <p align="center"><b>Report Submitted By</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Name: Ljubimka Mitrović</li> <li>Title: Assistant Protection Officer</li> <li>Participating Organization (Lead): UNHCR</li> <li>Email address: mitrovic@unhcr.org</li> </ul>         |

## GLOSSARY

<sup>1</sup> Strategic Results, as formulated in the Strategic UN Planning Framework (e.g. UNDAF) or project document;

<sup>2</sup> The MPTF Office Project Reference Number is the same number as the one on the Notification message. It is also referred to as “Project ID” on the project’s factsheet page the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)

<sup>3</sup> The MPTF or JP Contribution, refers to the amount transferred to the Participating UN Organizations, which is available on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)

<sup>4</sup> The start date is the date of the first transfer of the funds from the MPTF Office as Administrative Agent. Transfer date is available on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)

<sup>5</sup> As per approval of the original project document by the relevant decision-making body/Steering Committee.

<sup>6</sup> If there has been an extension, then the revised, approved end date should be reflected here. If there has been no extension approved, then the current end date is the same as the original end date. The end date is the same as the operational closure date which is when all activities for which a Participating Organization is responsible under an approved MPTF /JP have been completed. As per the MOU, agencies are to notify the MPTF Office when a programme completes its operational activities.

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|----------------|---|
| <b>CRPC</b>    | Centre for Crisis Policy and Response                             |
| <b>DAFI</b>    | Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative                |
| <b>ECtHR</b>   | European Court of Human Rights                                    |
| <b>EMN</b>     | European Migration Network  |
| <b>EUAA</b>    | European Union Agency for Asylum                                  |
| <b>IOM</b>     | International Organization for Migration                          |
| <b>LAPs</b>    | Local Action Plans  |
| <b>MoI</b>     | Ministry of Interior  |
| <b>MoLEVSA</b> | Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs        |
| <b>NFIs</b>    | Non-food items  |
| <b>SCRM</b>    | Commissariat for Refugees and Migration of the Republic of Serbia |
| <b>SEM</b>     | State Secretariat for Migration                                   |
| <b>SOP</b>     | Standard Operating Procedures                                     |
| <b>ToR</b>     | Terms of Reference  |
| <b>UASC</b>    | Unaccompanied and separated children                              |
| <b>UNHCR</b>   | United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees                     |

# SUMMARY AND CONTEXT

During the first implementation year, the joint project *Strengthening Migration Governance and Asylum Systems in Serbia: Enhancing Policies, Protecting Rights* progressed as planned and laid a solid foundation for further strengthening of asylum procedures, migration governance, reception conditions and refugee integration. Implemented by UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) and IOM (International Organization for Migration) in close cooperation with the Ministry of Interior (MoI) and the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration of the Republic of Serbia (SCRM), the project combined institutional capacity-building, operational support and preparatory work for activities to be further advanced in 2026. The reporting period was marked by steady inter-agency coordination, gradual strengthening of implementation structures and continued alignment of activities with national priorities and the broader migration management reform agenda. This project is administered by the Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) Office, which acts as the Administrative Agent.

Progress was recorded across all three result areas. In the field of asylum and border management, activities were initiated in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior to define needs for the development of Standard Operating Procedures for vulnerable categories of irregular migrants, as envisaged under the Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy for Integrated Border Management. In parallel, IOM also assessed needs regarding language training of Border Police officers, translation services and translation equipment aimed at improving communication with migrants and strengthening case management. UNHCR supported the capacity-building of Asylum Office staff through a workshop on asylum procedures at border crossings and in airport transit zones, with a particular focus on relevant international standards, legal safeguards and comparative practice.

Under the migration governance component, implementation advanced through the launch of the Ex-Post Analysis of the Migration Management Strategy, the definition of requirements for a study on climate-related migration and the initiation of activities aimed at strengthening the identification of potential victims of trafficking in reception settings. In addition, preparations were undertaken for the revision of Local Action Plans for migration management, with SCRM and partners agreeing on a mentoring-based approach intended to provide municipalities with more practical and hands-on support throughout the drafting process. Further progress was made in strengthening SCRM's monitoring and reporting capacities, including initial steps toward a model for more regular reporting on circular migration and support to SCRM's engagement in the European Migration Network (EMN).

In the area of reception and integration, SCRM strengthened its institutional capacities through the engagement of a dedicated focal point, or Project Manager, and two Integration Counsellors, all of whom started in November 2025. Their engagement contributed to improved internal coordination, enhanced communication with partners and expanded support to beneficiaries in navigating integration-related services and procedures. A needs assessment was also conducted to identify priority areas for strengthening information provision systems in asylum and reception centres and to inform the development of an implementation plan for 2026. In addition, a public call for proposals was launched for grants to civil society organizations, with the objective of strengthening cooperation between governmental and non-governmental actors in the provision of services in SCRM-managed centres.

Further progress was achieved through the convening of the first meeting of the Integration Network, which brought together representatives of relevant ministries, the National Employment Service, the Employers' Association of Serbia, UNHCR, the Embassy of Switzerland and civil society organizations. The meeting served as an initial step toward a more structured coordination mechanism in the field of refugee integration and provided a platform for exchange among key stakeholders. Complementing these efforts, programme activities also included participatory assessment exercises, workshops on inclusion in

education and access to social welfare rights, and the delivery of non-food items to reception facilities, thereby linking institutional strengthening with direct support to more inclusive and responsive service provision.

While minor administrative delays affected the recruitment of the focal point and the two Integration Counsellors, these delays did not substantially affect the overall implementation dynamics and all positions were subsequently filled. In coordination with UNHCR, it was also agreed to postpone the conference on refugee integration originally planned for December 2025 to March 2026, to upgrade the event into an international conference format with broader participation and greater strategic relevance.

Overall, the project demonstrated steady progress, strong inter-institutional cooperation and a shared commitment to strengthening a more coordinated, protection-sensitive and rights-based migration and asylum system in Serbia.

### **Context**

Serbia continues to manage mixed movements within a legal and policy framework shaped by international refugee and human rights obligations, national asylum and migration legislation and the country's European Union accession process. While the legislative framework is largely aligned with the EU acquis, implementation continues to require sustained support, particularly in the areas of asylum processing, protection-sensitive migration management, identification of vulnerable persons and access to services and integration opportunities.

Operationally, Serbia remains both a transit and reception context, with fluctuating numbers of arrivals and continued protection risks affecting asylum-seekers, refugees and migrants, including unaccompanied and separated children, survivors of gender-based violence and persons with disabilities. At the same time, national institutions continue to face capacity and resource constraints, particularly at local level, despite ongoing progress in coordination and service delivery.

Within this context, the Swiss-funded joint programme complements broader national and international support by focusing on institutional strengthening, operational coordination and improved access to rights. Its overall objective is to support Serbian authorities in building a more predictable, efficient and protection-sensitive migration and asylum system, while also promoting better reception conditions and stronger integration pathways for persons in need of international protection.

# Results

**Outcome 1. National stakeholders are supported to strengthen rights-based and protection sensitive border management, ensuring access to protection for persons in vulnerable situation and in need of international protection**

## Output 1.1: National capacities are strengthened in the field of asylum

### 1.1.2 Conduct training sessions for Asylum Office officers on the procedure with persons who apply for asylum at the border crossing and in the airport transit zone

On 2 and 3 December 2025, UNHCR organized a specialized workshop for representatives of the Asylum Office and officers deployed at international airports. The workshop focused on the procedures for expressing intentions to seek asylum at airport transit zones and border crossings. It was also an opportunity for strengthening knowledge of the participants related to relevant international standards, including standards and jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), applicable national legislation, and key challenges within the current Serbian asylum context.

This first workshop was held as part of a planned series of project interventions aimed at strengthening national capacities to identify individuals with international protection needs and to ensure their effective and timely referral to the asylum procedure. Building on this initial activity, further workshops and tailored capacity-building measures will be implemented during the 2026–2028 project cycle, the design of subsequent phases will be further refined in close coordination with the Ministry of Interior (MOI). Furthermore, an exchange of good practices focused on the Swiss asylum procedure was organized during the workshop by the expert from the State Secretariat for Migration SEM. During the exchange, the expert went through legal and institutional frameworks, operational modalities, focusing on asylum procedures at the international airports. Interactive discussions enabled participants to examine practical considerations related to conducting asylum procedures within transit zones, including challenges related to identification, access to the procedure and safeguards. Participants indicated in their evaluation feedback, that the training was highly relevant and met their expectations, and requested future sessions on the role of border police in protection-sensitive approaches and on upcoming asylum system reforms.

## Output 1.2: National capacities are strengthened for protection and rights-based border and return management

### Activity 1.2.1 Development of a SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) for the treatment of irregular migrants with special reference to the referral of persons who express intention to seek asylum and treatment of vulnerable categories of migrants

Based on MOI's needs assessment for the conduct of their officers, the IOM and MOI had two consultative meetings and consistent communication to define the format, approach in creation of SOP, its legal format and plausible formats for cooperation with other, relevant state actors for multilateral SOP. The draft agreement made based on these consultations is that the SOP will be created through process in the format of Instruction on SOP which would be a legally binding document for MOI. It is agreed that the new SOP should define procedures for divergent vulnerable categories more thoroughly and provide clear

and concise directives for possible situations which emerge during field work of police enforcement units. Consultative process for creation of Instructions on SOP and creation of the document based on materials collected during the process will be conducted by relevant experts. Based on MoI guidelines, IOM will create Terms of Reference (ToR) in close coordination and engage a group of experts to implement the process and prepare the document. Other relevant institutions within the migration management system will be invited for preliminary consultations, to be informed on the creation of Instruction on SOP for MoI but also to ensure their commitment and inputs in the process. Also, the possibility for creation of non-binding guidelines for other institutions based on the same consultative process will be considered.

The Instruction on the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the identification and referral of migrants in vulnerable situations will be developed in line with national legislation and international human rights standards, which apply to all persons regardless of migration status. While some individuals encountered at the border may fall within specific protection frameworks—such as refugees or unaccompanied and separated children (UASC)—others may face significant vulnerabilities related to factors such as age, health conditions, experiences of violence, exploitation, or other personal circumstances. The SOPs will therefore support police officers in recognizing both formal protection categories and broader vulnerability indicators, ensuring that migrants receive appropriate safeguards and referrals in accordance with applicable legal and protection standards.

### **1.2.5 Purchase technical support for remote or/and in person translation of languages spoken by migrants**

MoI has supplemented the list of languages necessary for translation services in procedures. The list includes: Pashtu, Urdu, Bengali, Nepali, Hindi, Singhalese, Tamil, Panjabi, Arabic, English, Chinese, Turkish and Farsi. MoI also conceptualized a request for equipment for translation (technical characteristics of equipment delivered to the IOM) that will be used in case management and field work of their officers.

### **1.2.6 Capacity building – English and other foreign language courses for MoI officials**

IOM and MoI have mapped the languages that are necessary for the capacity building and better case management of the border police officers. Additionally, MoI has finished the process of registration of officers interested to attend language courses and improving their professional standards in handling cases related to migrants. The number of interested participants for each language course has been finalized and sent to IOM. Based on Border Police assessment and predominant countries of origin in major migrant group courses will be organized for the following languages: English, French, Turkish, Arabic, Chinese.

### **1.2.7 Purchase of equipment (mobile phones and computers) for the Border Police Directorate and 27 regional border police administrations, i.e. lines of work for foreigners and suppression of irregular migration in regional police administrations.**

IOM and MoI have conducted consultations on necessary equipment that will be purchased for the needs of the Border Police Directorate and its regional administrations. MoI have delivered to the IOM the technical specifications for mobile phones and laptops. IOM will assess budget availability to check whether available budget complies with the value of requested equipment. IOM will conduct a public procurement process.

## Outcome 2. National stakeholders in Serbia are supported to develop evidenced-based migration policies in line with adopted EU and other international standards and commitments

### Output 2.1: National and local strategic and normative framework for migration governance strengthened

#### Activity 2.1.1 Preparation of ex-post analysis on the implementation of Strategy for Migration Management

In line with the national regulatory framework governing public policy planning and evaluation, expert support was mobilized to assist the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration of the Republic of Serbia (SCRM) in preparing a comprehensive Ex-Post Analysis of the Effects of the Strategy for Migration Management. The process is being conducted in accordance with the Law on the Planning System of the Republic of Serbia (Official Gazette RS No. 30/18), the Regulation on the Methodology of Development of Public Policies (Official Gazette RS No. 20/2025), and the Regulation on the Analysis of Effects (Official Gazette RS No. 20/2025), thereby ensuring methodological compliance with nationally prescribed standards for evaluation of public policy documents.

The engagement of the consultant reflects the complexity and scope of the task. Serbia, as a country of origin, transit and destination, experiences diverse forms of migration — including internal and external, voluntary and forced, regular and irregular movements — shaped by demographic trends, labour market needs, regional mobility dynamics and broader geopolitical developments. Since the adoption of the Migration Management Strategy in 2009, the national migration landscape has evolved significantly, accompanied by the development of additional legal and strategic instruments addressing various aspects of migration governance. These developments necessitate a structured and evidence-based review of the Strategy's implementation, relevance and continued applicability.

During the reporting period, the consultant initiated the analytical process through a comprehensive desk review of the Strategy, related action plans, implementation reports, annual reports submitted to the Government, and other relevant strategic and legal documents. Particular attention is being given to assessing the degree to which the Strategy has contributed to the establishment of a coherent migration management system, the extent to which planned objectives were achieved, and how coordination, monitoring and reporting mechanisms functioned in practice.

The analysis is designed to systematically identify measurable effects, institutional achievements, implementation gaps and lessons learned over the course of the Strategy's implementation. It will assess coherence with subsequent national strategic frameworks, relevant international standards and evolving migration trends. In accordance with the methodology prescribed by national regulations, the Ex-Post Analysis will also evaluate the need for revision of the existing Strategy or the development of a new strategic document, potentially preceded by an ex-ante analysis of the current migration context.

The consultant is guiding the full analytical process, ensuring methodological rigor and alignment with prescribed procedures, while preparing the draft Ex-Post Analysis document in Serbian. The final product will provide actionable, evidence-based recommendations to inform future strategic planning, strengthen policy coherence and enhance institutional coordination within Serbia's migration governance framework.

#### Activity 2.1.5 Preparation of the Study on the Relevance of Climate-Related Migration to the National Context

Recognizing the growing importance of environmental and climate-related factors as drivers of human mobility, preparatory activities were undertaken for the development of a dedicated study assessing the relevance of climate-related migration within the Serbian context. The activity aims to introduce a structured analytical perspective on how environmental change, natural disasters and long-term climate trends may influence internal and cross-border migration patterns.

During the reporting period, the conceptual framework and detailed Terms of Reference were finalized, defining the scope of analysis, methodology, key research questions and expected outputs. The study will assess existing national data sources, institutional mandates and policy instruments relevant to disaster risk reduction, environmental governance and migration management. Attention will be paid to identifying potential gaps in institutional preparedness, coordination mechanisms and data availability.

By situating climate-related mobility within the broader migration governance framework, the activity seeks to strengthen anticipatory policy planning and enhance the resilience of national institutions in responding to emerging migration drivers. The engagement of an expert is planned for early 2026, with the objective of producing practical recommendations to inform future strategic and policy discussions.

#### **Activity 2.1.6 Preparation of Different Analytical Documents in Line with SCRM Needs**

To further strengthen SCRM's analytical and coordination capacities, this activity provides flexible expert support for the preparation of targeted analytical documents responding to emerging institutional priorities. During the reporting period, consultations were conducted with relevant SCRM units to identify thematic areas requiring structured technical input, with the aim of enhancing evidence-based policy development and inter-institutional coordination.

More broadly, this activity remains designed as a responsive support mechanism, enabling SCRM to access specialized expertise in areas where additional analytical depth is required. By institutionalizing such flexible expert engagement, the project contributes to strengthening the quality, coherence and practical applicability of migration-related policy instruments and coordination mechanisms.

#### **Activity 2.1.9 Supporting Revision of Additional 30 Local Policy Documents**

At the local level, a structured approach has been agreed to provide the support for the revision of Local Action Plans (LAPs) in the field of migration management. The activity is implemented in close coordination with SCRM and aims to strengthen the practical capacities of local self-government units to plan, implement and monitor migration-related measures in alignment with national priorities.

In addition to the envisaged classical training sessions for the development of LAPs at MTC "Plandište", the implementation modality was refined in coordination with SCRM to introduce a more practice-oriented model of consultative and mentoring support for municipalities actively engaged in drafting or revising their LAPs. This adjustment was made to enhance effectiveness, ensure stronger local ownership, and provide technical assistance at the point when municipalities are concretely working on their policy documents. Under the revised approach, qualified consultants/mentors will provide structured support to multiple municipalities, depending on implementation dynamics and needs. Rather than assigning a separate mentor to each municipality, the experts will guide groups of municipalities through the drafting and revision process in a phased and demand-driven manner, ensuring methodological consistency and efficient use of resources. The objective is to ensure that municipalities themselves prepare their Local Action Plans, thereby strengthening institutional ownership and internal capacities. The mentors will guide municipalities through the key phases of the drafting process, including data collection and analysis, identification of priority issues, structuring of the document, formulation of objectives and measures, definition of indicators, and review of draft versions. Municipalities will

receive concrete assignments and technical feedback throughout the process, enabling steady and measurable progress toward finalization of their LAPs. Rather than relying solely on one-off theoretical training sessions, support will be provided continuously and in parallel with the actual drafting process. This reduces the risk of delays or incomplete documents and increases the likelihood that LAPs are finalized in a structured, coherent and implementable manner. In terms of working modalities, mentors may conduct targeted visits to municipalities where needed, while joint working sessions may also be organized to facilitate peer exchange and collective problem-solving. Facilities such as MTC “Plandište” may be used as logistical support for specific working meetings, as appropriate, though the primary focus remains on hands-on, process-oriented mentoring. Through this model, the activity contributes to strengthening local governance structures, improving the quality and feasibility of Local Action Plans, and reinforcing the alignment between national strategic objectives and local implementation capacities in the field of migration management.

#### **Activity 2.1.10 Conducting 26 trainings/seminars/conferences/workshops for the civil servants and other stakeholders engaged in migration management**

To be implemented during 2026, in accordance with the work plan. One of the priority capacity building/training topics identified under this activity is the preliminary identification of victims of human trafficking among the migrant population. Given the heightened vulnerability of certain migrant groups to exploitation and trafficking risks, the creation of adjusted version of the indicators for potential VoTs in the migration context and reception settings is identified as needed. This would improve early detection, referral mechanisms and coordination between migration and protection actors. The proposed work will build on existing national anti-trafficking frameworks, while ensuring that migration-specific vulnerabilities are adequately reflected within operational screening and identification practices.

It was agreed during the reporting period to prepare detailed Terms of Reference for this assignment and to engage qualified experts in early 2026. The experts will be tasked with developing a structured set of practical, context-specific indicators, accompanied by methodological guidance for their application by relevant institutions. The process is expected to involve consultations with competent authorities, specialized CSOs and protection stakeholders in order to ensure operational relevance and institutional ownership of the materials after the trainings are completed.

### **Output 2.2: SCRM knowledge and skills strengthened for better policy development, planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting and information sharing and facilitated international cooperation in line with EU accession commitments**

#### **Activity 2.2. 2. Establishing Regular Monitoring and Reporting on Circular Migration**

During the reporting period, initial steps were undertaken to strengthen the institutional framework for monitoring and reporting on circular migration. Given the cross-sectoral nature of labour mobility and temporary migration schemes, the activity requires close coordination among several institutions, particularly between SCRM and the Ministry for Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs (MoLEVSA), as well as other relevant stakeholders involved in data collection and policy implementation.

Preliminary consultations focused on mapping existing data sources, clarifying institutional roles and identifying gaps in current reporting practices. These discussions highlighted the need for a more

structured and regularized mechanism that would define indicators, establish reporting cycles and introduce standardized templates to ensure consistency and comparability of information.

In light of these findings, it was agreed with SCRM to prepare detailed Terms of Reference for the engagement of an expert in early 2026. The expert will support the development of a methodological framework for monitoring circular migration, including the identification of relevant indicators, data collection procedures and inter-institutional coordination modalities. The process is expected to result in practical guidance defining indicators, data collection procedures and coordination modalities between relevant institutions, thereby contributing to a more structured and regular monitoring approach to circular migration.

By moving toward a more systematic monitoring structure, this activity contributes to enhancing institutional coordination, reinforcing accountability mechanisms and embedding regular reporting practices within Serbia's broader migration governance framework.

#### **Activity 2.2.4 Engagement of an Assistant to the National EMN Focal Point**

To ensure operational continuity and technical capacity within the European Migration Network (EMN) National Contact Point, an assistant was engaged to support coordination, analytical preparation and communication tasks. The assistant contributes to the timely preparation of national inputs, coordination of data collection from relevant institutions and follow-up on EMN requests.

This reinforcement strengthens institutional memory, ensures consistency in Serbia's participation in EMN activities and enhances the quality of analytical contributions provided at international level.

#### **Activity 2.2.5 Preparation of EMN National Events and Support to SCRM in Participation in Other EMN Events**

This activity aims to strengthen the presence and visibility of SCRM within the European Migration Network (EMN), both through participation in relevant EMN events abroad and through the organization of national EMN activities in Serbia.

During the reporting period, internal consultations were initiated regarding the scope and priorities of SCRM's engagement within the EMN framework. At the beginning of 2026, SCRM is scheduled to submit a structured concept outlining planned participation in selected EMN events in 2026–2027, as well as the organization of two national EMN events in Serbia. The concept will also define the strategic approach to enhancing visibility and dissemination of EMN-related outputs at national level.

The development of this planning framework will provide the basis for structured and timely implementation of EMN-related activities in the forthcoming period, ensuring alignment with institutional priorities and available resources.

#### **2.2.6 Editing EMN Serbia Web Page**

During the reporting period, preparatory discussions were conducted to define the scope, structure, and key functionalities of the EMN Serbia web page. These consultations focused on identifying the types of content to be published, the desired navigation and accessibility features, and the bilingual requirements for Serbian and English.

The actual content and technical input are expected to be provided by SCRM at the beginning of 2026, after which the web page development and publication will proceed in accordance with the agreed specifications. This preparatory work lays the foundation for a dedicated platform that will enhance

visibility, accessibility, and dissemination of EMN-related outputs at national level, while complementing SCRМ's broader digital presence.

**Outcome 3. National stakeholders are supported to improve reception conditions and access to services for persons with specific needs and individuals in vulnerable situations and to strengthen integration opportunities for refugees**

### Output 3.1: Reception conditions and access to rights and services in reception and asylum centres improved

#### **Activity 3.1.1 Supplying equipment for asylum and reception centres based on a need assessment, prioritising disability and specific needs' friendly facilities.**

During the reporting period, UNHCR delivered non-food items (NFIs) to the Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration (SCRМ) in response to identified needs in asylum and reception centres, with particular attention to disability inclusion and support for persons with specific needs. The assistance included one specialised wheelchair for a child with disabilities, 40 square metres of turquoise tatami mats, and textile items comprising 300 pillows, 500 bedding sets and 1,240 towels. In addition, clothing items for men were provided, including 150 tracksuit sets, 150 winter jackets, 120 pieces of underwear and 120 pairs of winter socks.

This support contributed to improving living conditions in reception facilities and to enhancing the capacity of centres to respond more adequately to the diverse needs of accommodated persons, particularly children and individuals requiring specific support.

#### **Activity 3.1.2 Conducting community engagement activities that include language courses, learning activities, soft skills training vocational lines, and self-sufficiency income generating opportunities in the host communities where asylum centres are located, and strengthen community mobilization mechanisms.**

During the reporting period, UNHCR conducted a Participatory Assessment (PA) as a protection and accountability exercise aimed at strengthening engagement with asylum-seekers, refugees and host community members as well as assessing the specific needs linked to self-sufficiency. The assessment was implemented in partnership with the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration of the Republic of Serbia (SCRМ), the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs (MoLEVSA) through local Centres for Social Welfare, and three local non-governmental organizations. In line with the participatory approach, the exercise sought to foster meaningful dialogue with refugee women and men, girls and boys, youth of different ages and backgrounds, as well as members of host communities. The exercise focused on 3 areas: 1) employment, livelihoods and integration, 2) asylum and legal protection, and 3) education, with discussions structured around how these areas promote inclusion and strengthen collaboration within and between refugees and local communities. The assessment included 17 focus group discussions and one semi-structured discussion, including 85 participants from 18 nationalities (host population was included as well). These consultations were held in SCRМ-managed centres (in Obrenovac, Sjenica, Vranje, Preševo, Bujanovac and Principovac), and with refugees living in private accommodation in Belgrade and Novi Pazar. Separate online questionnaires were developed for private companies to capture their

perspectives relevant to employment and inclusion. Following the completion of the exercise, a feedback session was organized to review key findings and agree on recommendations. This process contributed to a better understanding of the priorities, challenges and capacities of affected populations, while also supporting evidence-based planning and reinforcing accountability to communities.

The information gathered also contributed to inform the public call for proposals I to award small grants to civil society organizations for the provision of services to beneficiaries accommodated in SCRM-managed centres. The grant scheme is planned for implementation in 2026, and it is expected to strengthen cooperation between governmental institutions and the non-governmental sector. By establishing a structured funding mechanism, this activity will expand local service delivery capacity and promote a more coordinated and complementary response between state institutions and civil society actors in addressing the needs of persons in vulnerable situations.

UNHCR and its partner organization Centre for Crisis Policy and Response (CRPC) organized a one-day Workshop on the Inclusion of Refugees in Education in Belgrade on 17 June 2025. The workshop targeted participants from different sectors directly involved or supporting education of refugees. It brought together 24 participants from SCRM, MoLEVSA civil society organizations and UNHCR, and was facilitated by an external expert on refugee education, CRPC community mobilizers and professional guardian. The interactive workshop enhanced participants understanding of the main barriers and support mechanisms related to refugee inclusion in education. Participants evaluated the workshop positively particularly emphasizing usefulness of practical guidance and resource materials. By broadening the range of actors engaged in this area, the workshop also contributed to strengthening inter-institutional understanding and local capacities to support more inclusive access to education for refugee children and youth.

Finally, in October 2025, UNHCR organized a workshop on access to social welfare rights for asylum-seekers and refugees. The workshop brought together 26 participants, primarily professionals from municipal Centres for Social Work, including two representatives of the City Centre for Social Work in Belgrade, as well as a representative of SCRM. The training was approved by the Chamber of Social Protection, enabling licensed participants to receive five professional development points for their attendance. The workshop supported the strengthening of professional capacities among frontline social welfare actors and contributed to improving understanding of the rights and entitlements of asylum-seekers and refugees within the national social protection system.

### **Activity 3.1.3 Provision of information in centres, taking into consideration synergies and complementarity with EUAA Roadmap activities and “Let’s speak asylum methodology”**

A needs assessment was conducted to map SCRM’s capacities and gaps in providing information to beneficiaries on their rights and obligations, in line with the EUAA (European Union Agency for Asylum) methodology. The assessment identified priority areas for strengthening information provision systems and served as a basis for the development of an implementation plan for 2026. While no direct service expansion occurred during the reporting period, this activity represents an important preparatory step toward improving access to accurate, timely, and standardized information for residents of reception and asylum centres.

## **Output 3.2 Opportunities for integration of persons granted international protection are strengthened**

### Activity 3.2.1 Developing coordination mechanisms on integration

The first meeting of the Integration Network was organized on 28 November 2025 as a step toward establishing a structured coordination mechanism in the field of integration of persons granted international protection in Serbia. The meeting brought together representatives of the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration, Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of the Interior, the National Employment Service, the Employers' Association of Serbia, UNHCR, the Embassy of Switzerland, and several civil society organizations. This multi-stakeholder platform strengthened inter-institutional dialogue, clarified roles and areas of cooperation, and contributed to a more coordinated approach to integration policy and practice at the national level. Meetings of the integration network will be held quarterly.

### Activity 3.2.3 Carrying out activities aimed at promoting and accessing the rights of persons with international protection, including workshops, coordination meetings, and individual assistance

Two Integration Counsellors were engaged to complement SCRM's existing capacities and expand its scope of work in the field of social cohesion and integration. Their engagement enhanced institutional capacity to provide structured guidance and individualised support to persons granted international protection, particularly in navigating administrative procedures, access to services, and integration pathways. This contributed to strengthening individualized support mechanisms and improving integration prospects for beneficiaries.

### Activity 3.2.3. Carrying out activities aimed at promoting and accessing the rights of persons with international protection, including workshops, coordination meetings and individual assistance

The publication "**Handbook on Career Guidance for Refugees**", developed through the cooperation of the Qualifications Agency of the Republic of Serbia, UNHCR, and the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration, was presented on 22 May 2025 at the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture in Belgrade within the framework of this project. This handbook is the first resource of its kind in Serbia, offering refugees, asylum seekers and individuals under temporary protection clear guidance on recognizing foreign educational qualifications, enrolling in schools and universities, learning Serbian, accessing retraining opportunities, securing employment and obtaining counselling on these topics. The event was an opportunity to seek synergies with other employment related projects funded by the Swiss government.

To support refugee employment UNHCR organized, two training sessions titled "**Applying for Jobs in Serbia and Finding Decent Employment**" facilitated by Infostud, a company member of the #ForRefugees network, on 10 July and 18 December 2025 at Impact Hub Belgrade. Approximately 30 refugees and asylum seekers participated, learning how to search and apply for jobs, create profiles and use the largest job platform Infostud to find decent employment. They also learned on the importance of working legally and having formal contracts in place, as well as on how to prepare for job interviews.

UNHCR private sector partners – including Inditex, Impact Hub Belgrade, Vox Code, IDEA Marketi, Qonnexa and Adecco - participated in "**Recipe for Support**" the third annual meeting of #ForRefugees business network on 11 December 2025 at the Il Primo cooking school in Belgrade. The event was an opportunity to nurture relations with private sector partners, communicate the results of supporting refugees in 2025, provide insights from the latest participatory assessment of refugee needs in

Serbia, and discuss plans in an informal setting. Company representatives had the opportunity to jointly prepare dishes with refugees from Iran, Congo and Cameroon, with assistance of Swiss Embassy chef.

UNHCR, with the support of the project, organized the event **“Support to Refugee Tertiary Education: DAFI and Onward”** on 15 December 2025 at the UN House to celebrate five years of enabling refugees in Serbia to access higher education and achieve their full potential. The event highlighted the accomplishments of refugee students supported through the DAFI scholarship programme, the only scholarship opportunity for refugee students supported by the German government. This year, two refugees from Burundi and Guinea signed their DAFI scholarship agreements to continue their studies, while two students from Afghanistan marked the successful completion of their academic journeys. In addition, two refugee students outside the DAFI programme delivered inspiring speeches about their educational paths. The National Qualifications Agency also presented the Career Guide for Refugees during the event. The event was also a good opportunity to highlight importance of facilitated access to tertiary education for refugees and explore opportunities for synergies with other projects and initiatives.

# Results Reporting Framework

| INDICATORS   | Baseline   | Target (end of programme)                              | Results achieved for the reporting period | Notes |
|--|--|--|---|-------|
| <b>E 1 National stakeholders are supported to strengthen rights-based and protection sensitive border management, ensuring access to asylum for persons in vulnerable situation and in need of international protection</b>  |  |  |   |       |
| Indicator 1a<br>% increase of identification and referrals to asylum procedure by Border police  | Baseline: # of referrals to asylum procedure from border police (border areas and airports)<br>Baseline: 15% | Target: 30% (% of main obligatory targets implemented) | 44%                                       |       |
| Indicator 1b<br>Operational framework on immigration and border management implemented based on a rights-based and protection-sensitive approach.  | Baseline: N/A  | Target: Yes  | N/A                                       |       |
| Indicator 1c<br>IOM SRF Short Term Outcome Indicator 3b4a (IOM Core indicator):<br># of government-led initiatives implemented through policies, strategies, or systems for enhanced immigration and border management to facilitate cross-border mobility and streamline immigration processes. | Baseline: 0  | Target: 1  | 0   |       |
| <b>OUTPUT 1.1 National capacities are strengthened in the field of asylum</b>  |  |  |   |       |

|   |             |             |     |  |
|---|-------------|-------------|-----|--|
| <p>Indicator 1.1a<br/># of documents/papers developed including model procedures and internal standards to support implementation of the transit / procedures. Activities will be conducted in coordination with EUAA to avoid any overlaps and take into consideration EUAA's contributions in line with the EUAA Serbia Roadmap</p> <p>Paper: Minimum standards for material conditions defined and included in SOPs</p> <p>Paper: Model SoPs for implementation of the asylum procedure in the transit zone of the international airport in line with international standards developed.</p> | Baseline: 0 | Target: 2   | N/A |  |
| <p>Indicator 1.1b<br/># of new practices in regard to CoI implemented in asylum procedure</p>   | Baseline: 0 | Target: 2   | N/A |  |
| <b>OUTPUT 1.2 National capacities are strengthened for protection and rights-based border and return management</b>   |             |             |     |  |
| <p>Indicator 1.2a<br/># of authorities included in development of SoP</p>   | Baseline: 0 | Target: 3   | N/A |  |
| <p>Indicator 1.2b<br/># of representatives of the relevant authorities informed/trained on new SoP (exit test)</p>  | Baseline: 0 | Target: 100 | N/A |  |

|  |               |             |     |  |
|--|---------------|-------------|-----|--|
| Indicator 1.2c<br>Mol internal operational instruction on usage of new SoP amended   | Baseline: NO  | Target: YES | No  |  |
| Indicator 1.2d<br># Police officers with certificate of English language course  | Baseline: 0   | Target: 100 | N/A |  |
| Indicator 1.2e<br>IOM SRF Indicator 3b41a:<br># of immigration and border officials trained on developing/implementation of inclusive immigration or border management policies        | Baseline: 0   | Target: 100 | N/A |  |
| Indicator 1.2f<br>IOM SRF Indicator 3b42a:<br># of authorities provided with new or upgraded infrastructure or equipment for border management in air, on land or at sea               | Baseline: 0   | Target: 28  | N/A |  |
| <b>OUTCOME 2 National stakeholders in Serbia are supported to develop evidenced-based migration policies in line with adopted EU and other international standards and commitments</b> |               |             |     |  |
| Indicator 2a<br>Mixed migration issues addressed/policies developed in line with applicable international standards and commitments.   | Baseline: N/A | Target: Yes | YES |  |

|  |             |  |     |  |
|--|-------------|--|-----|--|
| Indicator 2b<br>SRF Short Term Outcome Indicators (IOM Core Indicator):<br><br># of new or revised migration-relevant and specific policies or laws developed with support from IOM. | Baseline: 0 | Target: 3  | N/A |  |
| <b>OUTPUT 2.1 National and local strategic and normative framework for migration governance strengthened</b>   |             |  |     |  |
| Indicator 2.1a<br># of national policy and legal documents and analysis in the field of migration developed in line with international standards                                     | Baseline: 0 | Target: 6  | N/A |  |
| Indicator 2.1b<br># of LAP's updated/developed based on consultative process of local migration councils including new/extended number of stakeholders.                              | Baseline: 0 | Target: 30 new LAP's developed and 15 LSG's with extended number of stakeholders | N/A |  |
| Indicator 2.1c<br># of capacity building trainings/workshops/learning events   | Baseline: 0 | Target: 26   | N/A |  |
| Indicator 2.1d<br># of staff with improved skills and competences based on exit test results   | Baseline: 0 | Target: 400  | N/A |  |

|   |             |  |     |  |
|---|-------------|--|-----|--|
| Indicator 2.1e<br><br>IOM SRF INDICATOR 3c43b (IOM Core Indicator):<br><br># of government officials and other stakeholders trained on the development of migration policies or legal frameworks contributing to good migration governance      | Baseline: 0 | Target: 400                                  | N/A |  |
| <b>OUTPUT 2.2 SCRM knowledge and skills strengthened for better policy development, planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting and information sharing and facilitated international cooperation in line with EU accession commitments</b> |             |  |     |  |
| Indicator 2.2a<br># of EMN activities participated/organised  | Baseline: 0 | Target: 5 (including 2 national conferences) | N/A |  |
| Indicator 2.2b<br># of national reports/analysis/on mixed migrations developed  | Baseline: 0 | Target: 6                                    | N/A |  |
| Indicator 2.2c<br>IOM SRF INDICATOR 3c43a (IOM Core Indicator):<br><br># of government officials or other stakeholders who have capacity on good migration governance   | Baseline: 0 | Target: 1                                    | N/A |  |
| <b>OUTCOME 3 National stakeholders are supported to improve reception conditions and access to services for persons accommodated in reception/asylum centres and to strengthen integration opportunities for refugees</b>                       |             |  |     |  |

|   |                      |                    |      |                                    |
|---|----------------------|--------------------|------|------------------------------------|
| Indicator 3a<br>Average percentage of EUAA reception standards met in asylum and reception centres                | 75%                  | Target: 80%        | N/A  |                                    |
| Indicator 3b<br>Extent Sphere standards and principles are implemented  | Baseline: All (100%) | Target: All (100%) | N/A  |                                    |
| <b>OUTPUT 3.1 Reception conditions and access to rights and services in reception and asylum centres improved</b> |                      |                    |      |                                    |
| Indicator 3.1a<br># of reception/asylum centres supported to enhance reception standards and services             | Baseline: 0          | Target: 9          | 6    | NFIs were provided to SCRM centres |
| Indicator 3.1b<br>% of migrants /asylum seekers access to increased standards and occupational/leisure activities | Baseline: 80%        | Target: 100%       | N/A  |                                    |
| <b>OUTPUT 3.2 Opportunities for integration of persons granted international protection are strengthened</b>      |                      |                    |      |                                    |
| Output Indicator 3.2a<br>M&E mechanism implemented (Y/N)  | Baseline: No         | Target: Yes        | N/A  |                                    |
| % of persons granted international protection entering integration programs                                       | Baseline: 100%       | Target: 100%       | 100% |                                    |



# Programme Management and Coordination

Programme management and coordination were ensured through development of detailed implementation plan and regular monthly coordination meetings, held in the middle of each month, bringing together all implementing partners. These meetings served as the primary operational mechanism for ensuring coordination and collaboration, reviewing progress achieved during the preceding month, discussing activities planned for the following period, and identifying opportunities for complementarity and synergies among other organizations supported by the Swiss Embassy. This approach helped promote efficient implementation, avoid duplication of efforts and encourage the development of new joint or complementary initiatives.

In addition to the monthly coordination meetings, a Steering Committee meeting was held on 27 October in Belgrade to provide strategic guidance and review overall implementation progress. The meeting was co-chaired by Soufiane Adjali on behalf of UNHCR, Dragan Samolovac, Head of the Border Police Directorate on behalf of the Ministry of Interior, and Danijela Nedić, Assistant Commissioner for Refugees and Migration on behalf of the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration. Other participating institutions included the Ministry of Interior, the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration, IOM, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the Swiss Embassy. This structure ensured both operational follow-up and strategic oversight and guidance, while maintaining regular communication among the institutions involved in programme delivery and support.

## Constraints, Adjustments, Lessons and Good Practices

During the reporting period, the main constraint related to delays in the recruitment of key project personnel, namely the SCRM Project Manager and two Integration Counsellors. As a result, only 1.5 of the four planned monthly salary payments for 2025 were disbursed, and the second funding tranche was not requested during the reporting period.

A further adjustment concerned the conference initially planned for December 2025, which was rescheduled to March 2026 in coordination between SCRM and UNHCR, as agreed with the donor. This allowed the event to be upgraded to an international format and enabled broader stakeholder participation.

These adjustments were reflected in the revised implementation agreement with UNHCR for 2025. Other activities progressed as planned, and overall implementation remained stable.

The reporting period confirmed the importance of timely recruitment and onboarding for maintaining operational continuity and ensuring predictable financial implementation. It also demonstrated that

flexibility in planning can strengthen the strategic relevance and quality of programme activities, as illustrated by the rescheduling of the conference.

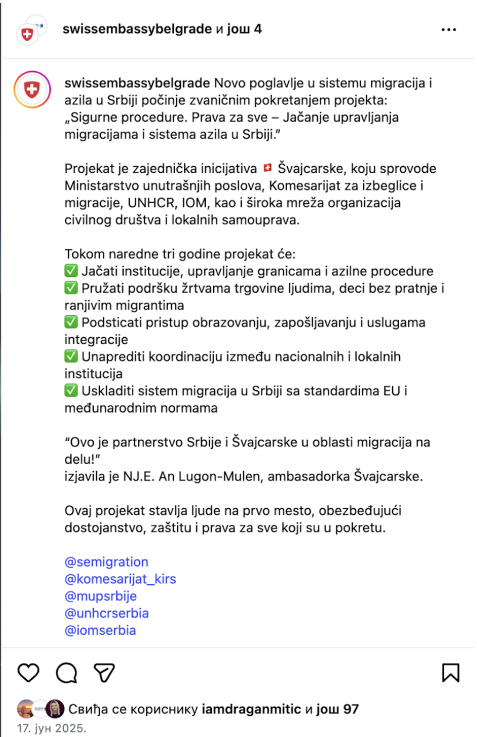
A key good practice was the regular monthly coordination among partners, which provided a structured space for planning, reviewing progress and agreeing on next steps. This contributed to stronger coherence in implementation, facilitated timely adjustments where needed and helped maintain a common understanding of priorities across participating institutions.

Joint approach to visibility established from the outset of the programme could also be considered as a good practice. Developed collaboratively under the leadership of UNHCR and with clear guidance from the donor, this approach helped ensure consistency of messaging, stronger alignment among partners and a more strategic and coordinated presentation of programme results.

## Visibility

This section presents the visibility activities undertaken under the project during the reporting period to highlight the support of the Swiss government to migration management, asylum and integration efforts in Serbia. These activities were aimed at ensuring appropriate recognition of the donor's contribution and at communicating the project's objectives, partnerships and results to relevant stakeholders.

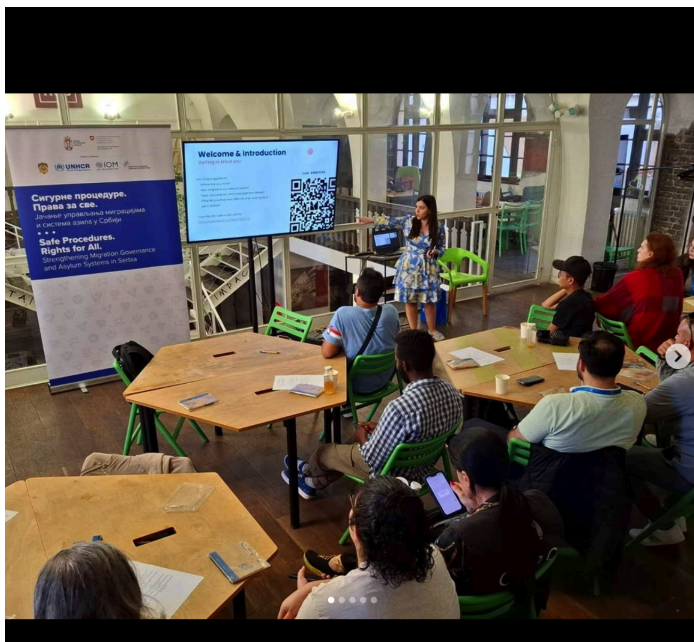
To this end, visibility was ensured through coordinated public and institutional communication efforts, developed jointly by project partners under the leadership of UNHCR and in coordination with IOM, in line with donor guidance. A common set of branding guidelines was also developed jointly and applied by all project partners, helping ensure a coherent visual identity and consistent messaging across communication materials and public outreach. The approach sought to ensure harmonized messages and adequate acknowledgement of Swiss support across key communication products, events and stakeholder engagement activities. It also included frequent collaboration with the donor on social media, further strengthening the visibility of the partnership and reinforcing common messaging around project objectives and results, as outlined below:



Project signing ceremony – [Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [X](#)

Press release:

<https://www.unhcr.org/rs/en/news/new-steps-toward-fair-and-inclusive-migration-and-asylum-system-serbia>



Employment workshop – [Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#) | [LinkedIn](#)



unhcrserbia and 3 others

unhcrserbia Visoko obrazovanje koje otvara vrata budućnosti!

Kroz program stipendiranja DAFI (Nemačka akademska inicijativa za izbeglice Albert Ajnštajn), UNHCR, uz podršku Vlade Nemačke i partnera, već pet godina omogućava izbeglicama u Srbiji pristup visokom obrazovanju i priliku da ostvare svoj puni potencijal.

Ove godine, ugovore o DAFI stipendijama za nastavak studiranja potpisali su Karim iz Burundija i Karim iz Gvineje. Njih dvojica su tokom dosadašnjeg školovanja kroz učenje i istrajnost dokazali važnost transformativne snage obrazovanja.

Kako je istakao šef Predstavništva UNHCR-a u Srbiji, Sufijan Ađali: „DAFI ne pruža samo znanje, već i nadu. Nadu u svetliju budućnost za izbeglice, njihove porodice i zajednice koje ih prihvataju.“

U okviru događaja predstavljen je i Vodič za karijerno usmeravanje izbeglica, važan alat koji ima za cilj da mladim izbeglicama olakša snalaženje u obrazovnom sistemu i

Liked by draganvuko and 62 others  
19 December 2025

DAFI scholarships signing – [Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#) | [LinkedIn](#)



unhcrserbia and swissembassybelgrade

unhcrserbia U Beogradu smo organizovali obuku za predstavnike Ministarstva unutrašnjih poslova - Kancelarije za azil, sa fokusom na postupanje po zahtevima za azil u tranzitnoj zoni aerodroma i na graničnim prelazima.

Kroz razmenu znanja i iskustava, učesnici su imali priliku da prodube razumevanje:

- međunarodnih standarda pristupa postupku azila, uključujući praksu Evropskog suda za ljudska prava;
- pravnog okvira i konteksta u oblasti azila u Srbiji;
- prakse i okvira postupka azila u Švajcarskoj, kao i aktuelnih procedura na međunarodnom aerodromu;
- identifikacije potreba i narednih koraka, kroz zajedničku diskusiju Kancelarije za azil i Uprave granične policije.

Ovakve obuke predstavljaju važan korak ka jačanju kapaciteta institucija i obezbeđivanju da svaka osoba koja traži zaštitu ima pravovremen pristup postupku azila, u skladu sa međunarodnim standardima.

Posebno smo zahvalni dr Nadji Eichin, iz Državnog sekretarijata za migracije Švajcarske, na izuzetno korisnoj prezentaciji o postupku azila u Švajcarskoj, pravnom okviru i

Liked by smiljahb and 40 others  
26 December 2025

International standards workshop – [Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [X](#)



Recipee for support – culinary event – [Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [X](#)



Visibility package

**ANNUAL**

**REPORT**

**Strengthening Migration Governance and Asylum  
Systems in Serbia: Enhancing policies, Protecting  
Rights**

**May 2025 - December 2025**

