

Information Documents

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28 June 2021

**Report of the fact-finding mission by Ambassador Drahoslav Štefánek,
Special Representative of the Secretary General on migration and refugees,
to Bosnia and Herzegovina
24-30 January 2021**

I. CONTEXT OF THE MISSION

1. Taking into account the unfolding humanitarian crisis concerning the situation of migrants and refugees in Una-Sana Canton of Bosnia and Herzegovina in late 2020 and early 2021 (detailed under III and IV below), the Secretary General tasked me to conduct a fact-finding mission aimed at assessing the respect for human rights of migrants and refugees, in particular in the Bihać area, Una-Sana Canton, with particular focus on vulnerable groups.

2. On 13 January 2021, I addressed a letter in this regard to Ambassador Ivan Orlić, Permanent Representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Council of Europe, to ask his assistance for the organisation of the mission. On 22 January 2021, Ambassador Orlić replied to the letter and confirmed the possibility of organising the mission.

3. The mission took place from 24 to 30 January 2021.

4. The mission was conducted in accordance with my mandate as Special Representative of the Secretary General on Migration and Refugees (SRSG), which includes:

“ ... seek, collect and analyse information, including through fact-finding missions, on the human rights situation of refugees and migrants and report to the Secretary General, notably on the basis of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and other Council of Europe instruments, as well as on basis of the guidance on the ‘Protection of migrants and asylum-seekers: main legal obligations under the Council of Europe Conventions’.”¹

5. I carried out this mission together with my adviser, Mr Riccardo Priore, and my communication officer, Ms Paivi Suhonen.

6. I would like to express my gratitude to the Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities for their assistance and unfailing support provided in the preparation of and during the mission. I would also like to thank the International Organisation for Migration for organising, under difficult COVID-19 pandemic conditions all the visits to the reception centres, and the Council of Europe’s Field Office for their assistance with the meetings held in Sarajevo.

II. MEETINGS AND VISITS

7. During the mission, I met with representatives of national, cantonal and local authorities. In particular, I had meetings with the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), the Minister of Foreign Affairs of BiH, the Minister of Security of BiH, the Minister of Human Rights and Refugees of BiH, the Prime Minister of the Una-Sana Canton, the Mayor of Bihać, as well as the three Ombudspersons of BiH. I also met the High-Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina and representatives from relevant international organisations based in Sarajevo: the Delegation of the European Union, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the UN Resident Coordinator, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the UN Women, and the United Nations Populations Fund (UNFPA).

Meetings with representatives of UNICEF and a number of INGOs and local NGOs were also held in Bihać and Sarajevo.

8. I visited the reception centres in Miral, Sedra, Borići and the emergency tent camp Lipa in the Una-Sana Canton. In Sarajevo area, I visited the Ušivak temporary reception centre.

9. The detailed programme of the mission is attached to the report.

¹ [Mandate](#) of the Council of Europe Secretary General’s Special Representative on Migration and Refugees, 1 July 2020.

III. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

10. During the period 2017-2021, the migration trends in the Western Balkans have been the subject of growing attention. The Balkan migration route, stretching from Turkey, Bulgaria, and Greece, passing through North Macedonia and Serbia, towards EU countries was slowly diversifying over time and, as a possible result of different policies adopted in some EU member states, a new route passing through BiH has been used intensely.

11. Since the end of 2017, most migrants started crossing to BiH through its eastern border with Serbia, some entered the country from the southern border with Montenegro. They then travelled through the entity Republika Srpska, to Sarajevo and Una-Sana Cantons, in the North-West part of the entity of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Their declared goal was (and still is) to reach an EU country which is part of the Schengen area, through Croatia.²

12. As of 2018, these developments have led to a relatively massive influx of migrants and refugees, including women, children, and families, and this, in a country still struggling with the traumatic consequences of the armed conflict in the 1990s. Despite the efforts made to provide shelter and basic services to the migrants and refugees entering the country, BiH was not prepared to adequately manage this influx of people in need of assistance, notably as regards the organisation of reception, treatment of vulnerable people and asylum.

13. The former SRSG, Ambassador Tomáš Boček, visited BiH in 2018, concerned with the increasing migratory movements in the country during that year.

14. As observed in his mission report,³ in the first half of 2018 BiH witnessed a significant increase in the number of migrants entering its territory: from 237 recorded in January to 2 557 in May and 2 493 in July. The total number of recorded arrivals between 1 January and 31 July 2018 was 10 145 (compared to a total of 218 during the whole of 2017), among which 175 were unaccompanied and separated children. Between January and November of 2018, a total of 23 271 arrivals was registered, which was twenty times more than the arrivals in 2017.

15. At the end of July 2018 there were over 4 400 migrants and refugees in the Una-Sana Canton, living without formal accommodation, basic hygiene, or access to official asylum procedures. At that time, the nationality breakdown showed that Pakistan, Iran, Syria, Afghanistan, and Iraq were the most common countries of origin declared by the new arrivals.

16. In 2019 authorities continued to struggle with the influx of migrants and refugees. While new facilities were gradually prepared and opened (for instance Borići reception centre in Bihać), improvised camps like the one in Vučjak were established to the concern of all stakeholders.⁴

17. After the infamous improvised Vučjak camp in the Una-Sana Canton was officially closed in December 2019, the local authorities proposed to open a camp providing accommodation for 1 000-1 500 single men in Lipa, along the road from Bihać to Bosanski Petrovac.

18. The authorities acknowledged that the Lipa camp could not be used as a permanent solution for the accommodation of migrants and should only be used during the emergency period. The BiH authorities agreed to take responsibility over camp management, commit to respecting basic human and hygienic needs, and ensure essential utilities: electricity, water, sewage and improved access road, security arrangements, staff for registration, support of health authorities.

² Colloquially, migrants refer to “The Game” to indicate their attempts to irregularly cross the border into Croatia and travel through dangerous mountainous terrain to reach Slovenia or Italy.

³ Report of the fact-finding mission by Ambassador Tomáš Boček, Special Representative of the Secretary General on migration and refugees, to Bosnia and Herzegovina and to Croatia, 24-27 July and 26-30 November 2018, SG/Inf(2019)10, 23 April 2019.

⁴ During her visit in December 2019, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights called for the immediate shutdown of the camp due to its unacceptable living conditions.

19. The works in the Lipa camp, conducted with the support of the IOM and of the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), after some delays, were completed in mid-April 2020. However, the undertaken commitments to winterize the camp, to provide access to electricity, water and to establish sewage, were not fulfilled, despite multiple requests from the EU and partners. The Lipa Emergency Camp was inaugurated on 22 April 2020.⁵

20. On 30 September 2020, hundreds of migrants were forcibly removed by the authorities of the Una-Sana Canton – claiming pressure from the local community – from the Bira temporary reception centre, located in one of the industrial districts in Bihać and which had been sheltering migrants and refugees since the end of 2018.

21. After this transfer, the Bira centre was closed. These actions added hundreds of migrants to the 2,500 that the IOM estimated were already sleeping rough around in the Una-Sana canton. The closure of the Bira centre and the Una-Sana authorities' ban on new admissions to the Miral temporary reception centre had serious consequences for hundreds of migrants and asylum seekers, including families with children, who have been left without accommodation, food and medical care.

IV. LATEST DEVELOPMENTS PRECEDING THE MISSION

22. A month before my mission, the situation in BiH was of particular concern due the lack of reception facilities or the disagreements concerning the use of existing facilities. This exacerbated, on the one hand, the situation of migrants and refugees in the country under rough winter conditions and on the other hand, the tensions among the local population.

23. On 7 December 2020, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms Dunja Mijatović, addressed a letter to the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of BiH and to the Minister of Security of BiH, in which she voiced her serious concerns over the developments in the Una-Sana Canton concerning the absence of adequate reception facilities.

24. On 21 December 2020, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission, Mr Josep Borrell, the EU Commissioner for Home Affairs, Ms Ylva Johansson, and the EU Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement, Mr Olivér Várhelyi, made a joint statement on the migration situation in BiH urging BiH authorities, once again, to rise above political considerations and reopen the centre in Bira and open the facility in Ciljuge near Tuzla.⁶

25. On 21 December 2020, the BiH Council of Ministers designated Lipa as a formal reception facility and on 31 December 2020 decided to relocate refugees and migrants from Lipa to Bira.

26. Given the opposition of the local population, this decision was never implemented. Even at the time of my visit, citizens of Bihać were protesting in front of the closed Bira centre to prevent its reopening. I had the opportunity to speak to them during my mission.

27. On 23 December 2020, Lipa was officially closed due to its unsuitability for winter conditions. On the same day, a fire destroyed part of the camp, fortunately not causing any casualties. Two days after the fire, it began to snow, and temperatures dropped below zero. Humanitarian organisations distributed food, sleeping bags and other necessities.

28. On 29 December 2020, the Ministry of Security of BiH attempted the relocation of all migrants from Lipa to army barracks in Bradina, near Konjic, in Hercegovina-Neretva Canton municipality, but the relocation was cancelled following protests by the local community. Approximately 900 migrants and asylum-seekers remained on the site of the former Lipa camp without access to basic services and adequate accommodation.

⁵ Further information on the Lipa Emergency Camp: <https://bih.iom.int/sites/bih/files/LIPAOctober20.pdf>

⁶ [Statement on the migration situation in Bosnia \(europa.eu\)](#)

29. On 31 December 2020, the European Commission stressed that the decisions by the Council of Ministers of BiH of 21 and 31 December to temporarily reopen the Bira reception centre had to be implemented without further delay.⁷

30. At the end of 2020, more than 1 700 refugees and migrants were still without appropriate shelter and support in the Una-Sana canton. Around 800, including children, were staying outdoors in harsh winter conditions.

31. On 11 January 2021, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission Mr Josep Borrell held a call with the Chairman of the Presidency of BiH to discuss the dire humanitarian conditions of migrants in the country. The EU urged BiH authorities “to quickly scale up their actions to address the grave humanitarian situation in Una-Sana Canton and provide basic and secure living conditions to all the persons of concern still sleeping out in the cold in extreme conditions”.⁸

V. THE OUTLINE OF THE REPORT

32. Based on the information gathered during the mission, but also in the following weeks (cf. PART VI), this report aims to provide a picture of the current situation of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in BiH, with a focus on vulnerable persons and unaccompanied children, new input on ways to strengthen Council of Europe assistance and advice to BiH in fulfilling its obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights and other standards of our Organisation.

33. With these goals in mind, the report picks up the thread of the discussion starting from the main conclusions and recommendations formulated in the report drafted by my predecessor in April 2019, on the basis of his 2018 mission⁹ (cf. PART III).

34. The report is structured around the three aspects that have a significant impact on the respect for human rights of migrants and refugees in BiH: reception; treatment of vulnerable categories; and access to asylum. The report also explores the factors that have a decisive influence on these aspects. This includes the social and institutional response; the organisation of public responsibilities and decision-making processes; the role and contribution of the Council of Europe and of other international organisations.

35. Based on findings from the mission, the report puts forward at the end several migration related observations (cf. PART VII) as well as recommendations (cf. PART VIII) aimed at addressing the challenges to be met.

VI. MAIN FINDINGS

6.1. Overview of the figures

36. Upon arrival in BiH, I noted that 70 083 arrivals have been recorded since the start of the mixed migratory movement in BiH in January 2018¹⁰.

37. The UNCHR estimated that between 8 000 and 8 800 migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers were in the country at the beginning of 2021. The declared countries of origin were as follows: 30.1% Pakistan, 28.5% Afghanistan, 15.3% Bangladesh, 6.6% Morocco, 6.5% Iran, 4.1% Iraq, and 8.8% other.

⁷ [Europa.ba](http://europa.ba)

⁸ BiH: High Representative Josep Borrell spoke to Presidency Chairman Milorad Dodik - European External Action Service (europa.eu)

⁹ Report of the fact-finding mission by Ambassador Tomáš Boček, Special Representative of the Secretary General on migration and refugees, to Bosnia and Herzegovina and to Croatia, 24-27 July and 26-30 November 2018, SG/Inf(2019)10, 23 April 2019.

¹⁰ UNHCR operational update – January 2021 <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/85001>

38. The IOM estimated that there were around 9 000 – 10 000 migrants in BiH at any given time and that migrants are always concentrated in the north-western part of the country, in close proximity to the border with Croatia, in Una-Sana canton, or in Sarajevo canton, with smaller numbers of migrants located in Tuzla and Mostar cantons.

39. In January 2021, 4 000 – 5 300 migrants were estimated by the IOM to be living rough, predominantly in border areas in Una-Sana Canton.¹¹ Compared to 2020, the official capacity for accommodation in BiH has been reduced from 8 282 to 4 760 beds by the closure of the Bira temporary reception centre, and Lipa Emergency Camp in the last quarter of 2020.

40. While the IOM provided additional beds and increased the capacity in the reception centres of Miral and Blažuj to accommodate more than 1 000 and 3 000 additional persons respectively, these centres were already overcrowded at the time of my mission.

41. Protection and health risks of migrants and asylum-seekers residing in these centres were aggravated by high occupancy rates, particularly considering the COVID-19 pandemic.

6.2. The institutional response

42. Bosnia and Herzegovina has a complex constitutional framework: it is comprised of two entities – Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina – with the latter consisting of 10 cantons, each canton has its own Government and Parliamentary body. This structure has determined the way authorities managed to react to the situation at hand. Lack of co-ordination and regular co-operation between various levels of government makes it difficult to implement local decisions taken at national level.

43. In the context of managing the situation of migrants and refugees, I learned about two operational groups – one at the state level and another at a local level –, which were not interconnected. The communication between these two levels was rather on an *ad hoc* than on a systemic basis. For the proper operation of state services, it is essential that decisions taken at state level are followed and enforced locally; better co-ordination could prevent lack of commitment or ownership at local level.

44. This situation is aggravated by the persistent opposition of the authorities of Republika Srpska and a number of cantons of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina to host arriving migrants.

45. Against this background, during a number of meetings I have been informed about initiatives with respect to the adoption of a new management plan, new management structures, new reception centres, improved border controls, and new readmissions agreements. I find these initiatives very positive and I believe that they deserve the attention of political constituencies of BiH and of the international community.¹² These meetings have confirmed the willingness of the authorities of BiH at the state level to improve the situation of migrants and refugees in the country.

46. In this same perspective, it is essential to develop and implement a national policy capable of structuring and co-ordinating the country's institutional response to migratory phenomena, in compliance with international obligations. Such national policy could be based on the outcome of one or more comprehensive discussions at all levels, by associating all the institutions concerned.

6.3. Situation at the local level

47. The response of local community to the influx of migrants and refugees in the country and their support for the decisions taken by authorities is very important.

¹¹ <https://crisisresponse.iom.int/response/bosnia-and-herzegovina-crisis-response-plan-2021/year/2021>

¹² In this sense, the meeting with the Minister of Security of BiH, Mr Selmo Cikotić, was very constructive and useful in this regard. I also appreciated the active involvement of the Minister for Human Rights and Refugees of BiH, Mr Miloš Lučić, including the joint visit of one of the receptions centres.

48. Different interlocutors confirmed that in the initial phase of the migratory influx, the population reacted by welcoming and helping migrants, making sure that they had the essentials to live. The local population either contributed directly with food, accommodation, clothes or volunteered in the reception centres. At a certain moment, however, this positive attitude began to change.

49. The COVID-19 pandemic has placed additional strain on local communities. In addition to the impact on the tourism industry in the region, the pandemic has exacerbated the local population's concerns for public health and safety risks.

50. During my mission I was informed by local NGOs about some incidents in Bihać and Velika Kladuša, including criminal acts of sexual violence and displays of culturally unacceptable behaviour, which added tension among the local population. Single male migrants have been seen as particularly involved in such incidents. Lack of access to information about cultural norms and the lack of opportunities for migrants to express themselves have deepened the misunderstandings and the tensions between the arrivals and host communities. The negative image of migrants' needs could be balanced through positive examples in order to reduce tensions and avoid further deterioration of relations between migrants, refugees and the local population.

51. In this context, with increasing pressure due to the number of arriving migrants and asylum-seekers, in summer 2020 the Co-ordination Committee on Migration in the Una-Sana Canton adopted measures to restrict the freedom of movement of refugees, migrants and asylum-seekers not accommodated in official reception centres.

52. These measures included the prohibition of new arrivals into the canton, ban on transporting migrants and refugees including in public transport and taxis, ban on their gathering in public places and prohibition of providing them with private accommodation. Police have set up roadblocks to prevent new arrivals, raided squats and private houses and forcibly removed migrants and refugees occupying them without providing alternative accommodation. Meanwhile, self-organised vigilante groups have intercepted buses and pulled off migrants and refugees leaving many of them, including families with children, stranded in administrative no-man's land.¹³

53. Despite my efforts, I was not informed if these unlawful measures limiting the rights and freedoms of people on the move were still in force. If so, they must be repealed.

6.4. Response at the local level

54. The meetings with the Mayor of Bihać and the Prime Minister of the Canton of Una-Sana accompanied by Minister of Health and Minister of Security of the Una-Sana Government, described the extent of the difficulties in the dialogue between local and central authorities with respect to migration management.

55. The representatives of the governments of Bihać and Una-Sana consider that they have not been sufficiently supported by the state authorities in dealing with the influx of migrants and refugees into their territories. According to them, this support should have somehow compensated for the difficulties related to the presence of migrants and refugees near densely populated settlements, especially with respect to economic development, health, and safety of local communities.

56. In addition, these representatives referred to the absence of a comprehensive State strategy, which would include local authorities. They consider that they have not been regularly and adequately involved in the decision-making processes and related financial decisions regarding the migration issue, despite of its significant impact on City of Bihać and Una-Sana canton.

57. The mayor of Bihać expressed the idea that the reaction of local populations – exasperated by the situation, but fundamentally open and welcoming – would likely be pacified by more transparent, inclusive, and balanced public decision-making processes.

¹³ [Bosnia and Herzegovina: Reckless restrictions of movement leave refugees and migrants stranded without protection | Amnesty International](#)

58. The Prime Minister of Una-Sana referred to a series of proposals about strategy, standards, division of responsibilities, co-ordination, as well as the sharing of quotas of migrants in the country.

59. In my exchanges with the BiH authorities, I have referred to the importance of establishing mechanisms of consultation between authorities at all levels of government in the planning, implementation and evaluation of national commitments and action plans.

60. During my visit to Bihać I participated in the presentation of the “Sounds of Migration Project” implemented by the IOM. The Project brings locals and migrants together around music. Local and foreign talented musicians are gathered around this project, which points to the similarities between hosts and migrants. The project’s goal is to further cultural exchanges between the local population, migrants, and refugees. It is overseen by the Bihać Music Youth with the help of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Resilience Initiative, BHRI, funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by the IOM.

61. I welcomed this initiative and encouraged the BiH authorities to promote further opportunities for dialogue with the local population in the area populated by migrants, including through community-focused projects.

6.5 The role and support of international organisations

62. The assistance of the EU is crucial: the total funding allocated by the EU to and through IOM since June 2018 is €76 851.217. The total number of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers assisted so far is 59 139. The number of migrant and refugee accommodation centres established since June 2018 is 7, with a total approved capacity of 7 830 beds.¹⁴

63. I was informed that the EU funding covers the following costs¹⁵:

- humanitarian assistance (77%) - divided into the following sub-categories: (1) food and nutrition, (2) distribution of non-food items, (3) shelter, water, sanitation, hygiene and running costs, (4) safety and security and (5) protection, health and education;
- establishment of 7 reception centres (14%);
- direct support to BiH Institutions (7%);
- operational and administrative costs (2%).

64. At the same time, as already indicated in 2019 by my predecessor, it seems that the authorities of BiH are excessively relying on the European Union to find sustainable solutions. As the biggest part of international assistance is provided through international organisations, the authorities continue to be reluctant in taking ownership of the management of the situation.

65. As of June 2018, the IOM supports the management of the migration and refugee situation in BiH. This activity is carried out by the IOM in co-ordination with the Minister of Security of BiH, the EU, and its partner organisations the UNHCR, UNICEF, UNFPA and DRC, as well as through its implementing partners Pomozi.ba and the Una-Sana and Bihać Red Cross. On behalf of the United Nations Country Team, the IOM and the UNHCR co-lead the response in support of the BiH authorities and in particular the Ministry of Security of BiH. This support covers both the provision of humanitarian assistance and the strengthening of the overall migration and asylum management in the country.

66. The IOM and the UNHCR also co-chair the monthly Refugee and Migrant Response Coordination Meetings. This interagency group is open to national and international governmental and non-governmental actors in the humanitarian response to the migrant and refugee situation and is the main venue for information exchange and co-ordination among international and civil society

¹⁴ [Information on the implementation of the projects related to Emergency Response to the Migrant and Refugee Situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina funded by the European Union | Bosnia and Herzegovina \(iom.int\)](#)

¹⁵ *Idem*

stakeholders. I noted that State-level authorities are routinely invited, as well as Federation authorities and, concerning the local level, that only the authorities from Sarajevo Canton and municipality are somehow involved.

67. In this framework, since early 2018, the EU has provided €89 million directly to BiH and through implementing partners. This funding helps address the immediate and mid-term needs of the refugees, asylum seekers and migrants. It is also directed to help the country strengthen its migration management capacities. This support includes €13.8 million in humanitarian aid to provide emergency assistance, implemented by international humanitarian organisations. This emergency response addresses the needs of refugees and migrants with a focus on the Una-Sana Canton, Tuzla and Sarajevo area.

68. As regards this important funding, the IOM's role is three-fold: implement agreed upon activities directly or through implementing partners; pass-on the funds allocated to its partner organisations; and procure equipment, goods, services and support staffing costs for BiH institutions. Once a decision has been taken by the EU on the amount of funding to be allocated, priorities and budget are established through a meeting between representatives of the EU Delegation in BiH, the Ministry of Security of BiH, the IOM and its UN partners and the DRC.

69. The Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB) has contributed substantively through its Migrant and Refugee Fund (MRF). The overall financial support provided to BiH for the improving of the migrant situation amounts to this day to €2 million. It includes €350 000 to support COVID-19 prevention and response measures among the migrants and asylum seekers in BiH.

6.6 The situation observed in the reception centres

70. At the time of my mission, 5 880 migrants and asylum-seekers were sheltered in reception centres (close to 4 300 in Sarajevo Canton and 1 700 in Una-Sana Canton). Around 2 500 – 2 700 persons were squatting outside of formal accommodation, mainly in the Una-Sana canton.

71. In reception centres, some 73% were single adult men, 19% were families with children, 9% were women and girls, and about 8% were unaccompanied and separated children.

72. During my mission, I visited the four temporary reception centres (Miral, Sedra, Borići and Ušivak) and the new Lipa emergency camp. This section described the conditions in these facilities.

Miral Temporary Reception Centre

73. This centre is located in Velika Kladuša, Una-Sana Canton, operational since October 2018 and, with the IOM supporting the site management since November 2018.

74. It is a facility mostly for single men, mostly from Pakistan and Bangladesh. Around 1 200 people were housed there at the beginning of the year, even though the maximum capacity is 700. Among them, there are about 50 unaccompanied and separated children staying in a designated area, which is not sufficiently separated from adult men.

75. The Miral centre is housed in a disused factory unsuitable for adequately accommodating migrants in precarious psychophysical conditions. The centre is located very close to the town centre. The measures necessary to deal with the health emergency due to COVID-19 did not appear adequately ensured in the facility.¹⁶

Sedra Temporary Reception Centre

76. This centre is a private rented hotel in Cazin, Una-Sana Canton. It is intended to accommodate families and vulnerable migrants, including unaccompanied and separated children. It was opened in July 2018. The structure obviously needs renovation.

¹⁶ Further information about this temporary reception center:
<https://bih.iom.int/sites/bih/files/MIRALOctober20.pdf>

77. At the end of January 2021, it hosted around 400 people, including around 50 unaccompanied children and more than 100 children in families. Most of the residents are from Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq and Pakistan. There are a wide range of activities and services provided to the families living in the Sedra centre, including medical care, education, recreational activities, etc.¹⁷

78. In the Sedra centre, I had an instructive exchange with a group of persons, mostly from Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq. During the discussion, I learned that these persons did not feel free in BiH because they had no money, no job, no possibility of movement and no life plan. Many expressed a feeling of anger and sadness at the failed attempts to cross the border into Croatia and the violence they had suffered in the context of these attempts. These people made it clear that they did not wish to remain in BiH, did not intend to apply for asylum and that the vast majority of them had only one goal: to reach their friends or family members residing in European countries in the Schengen area. They also conveyed their feeling that they were not wanted in BiH, the local population was wondering why they came in the first place because even native Bosnians were emigrating.

79. At the same time, I have met a family (two parents with a son) originating from Iran, who wished to stay in BiH and had requested asylum.

Borići Temporary Reception Centre

80. This is a public facility in the City of Bihać. It is intended for the accommodation of families and vulnerable migrants. It was officially opened at the beginning of 2019 following a renovation.¹⁸

81. At the beginning of 2021, this facility accommodated around 350 persons, including around 200 children (unaccompanied, separated and in families). As in the Sedra centre, most of residents are from Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq and Pakistan. Similar to the Sedra centre, there was a wide range of activities and services provided to the families living in the Borići centre, including medical care, education, recreational activities, etc.¹⁹

82. The Sedra and Borići temporary reception centres are generally well managed by the IOM, in co-operation with BiH authorities and several NGOs.

83. The situation of unaccompanied children, women who have suffered traumas or violence, or that of other categories of vulnerable people (for example disabled people) was the subject of specific measures, especially regarding psychological assistance and children's educational needs.

84. The conditions of the migrants hosted in these facilities were in general good and did not require urgent corrective actions.

85. In this context, I note that UNICEF together with Save the Children facilitated the enrolment of children into primary schools in Bihać and Cazin in co-operation with the Ministry of Education of the Una-Sana Canton. There were 166 children attending formal education in December 2020, 59 out of which were attending regular classes and others were in preparatory classes. Non-formal education activities were also held daily in the Borići and Sedra centres.

The new Lipa emergency tent camp

86. After the fire destroyed the camp in December 2020 (see paragraphs 27-28 above), on 8 January 2021, the BiH armed forces started installing new tents at a new site, adjacent to the old Lipa camp. Progressively, new accommodation was established to provide temporary shelter for the refugees and migrants still staying at the old site and in the surrounding area. The EU, the IOM and other

¹⁷ Further information about this temporary reception center:

<https://bih.iom.int/sites/bih/files/SEDRASOctober20.pdf>

¹⁸ In 2018, during the visit of my predecessor, this was an abandoned student dormitory, without windows, doors, electricity or sanitation, unsuitable for accommodation purposes.

¹⁹ Further information about this temporary reception center:

https://bih.iom.int/sites/bih/files/2021/Site_Profiles/BORIC%CC%81I_March21.pdf

partners continued to provide health, protection, shelter, water and sanitation, food and non-food items to refugees and migrants at the site as well as to offer emergency outreach assistance to those sleeping rough.

87. During my visit the new Lipa camp consisted of military tents heated by air canons operating thanks to electricity generators. Under a heavy snowfall, the basic needs of migrants were secured through initiatives taken by the BiH authorities in co-operation with the IOM, supported by the essential work of the NGOs. There was no risk of humanitarian catastrophe in the camp and essential goods and services were available.²⁰ Medical assistance was also provided, including PCR testing for persons with COVID-19 symptoms. However, I noted that about 400 people, i.e. almost half of the population of the camp, suffered from scabies, probably due to the lack of a laundry service; the authorities in charge promised to provide this service in a short time.

88. I also saw that the cleaning of the burned down Lipa site was underway, in order to start the works of the building of new Lipa temporary reception centre as soon as possible, following the decision taken by the Council of Ministers of BiH at the end of 2020.

89. After the mission, I was informed by the representatives of IOM and Service for Foreigners Affairs (SFA) that the living conditions in the Lipa tent camp continued to improve. Doctors from the Bihać Health Centre had started treatment for scabies. Migrants present in the camp were given new clothes and bedding; their living space was disinfected. The Humanitarian Organisation "SOS Bihać" and the Bihać Health Centre provided medical assistance to the migrants. An emergency vehicle was provided to relieve the Bihać Health Centre and to offer first aid in Lipa 24 hours a day. Among other things a tent in which migrants can perform religious rites was set up in the camp.

The closed Bira Temporary Reception Centre

90. At the time of my visit, in Bihać there was still a strong opposition of the municipality and population towards the reopening of the reception centre in Bira. While visiting the location of Bira centre, I spontaneously met and spoke to local vigilantes, who were present there to oppose in case of return of migrants to the centre.

91. Although the Bira centre is closed, approximately 250 containers were still inside, which could eventually be used in other locations.

92. Beyond the question of the limits mentioned by the UN Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants and the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights²¹, I noted that this reception centre was located very close to the city centre.

Ušivak Temporary Reception Centre

93. The facility was opened in 2018 after the renovation of army barracks with CEB funding. It was managed by IOM in co-operation with BiH authorities, the UN agencies and several NGOs. Its reception capacity was increased with additional funding from the CEB.²²

94. At the time of my visit, it hosted around 800 people: 6% single men, 2% single women, 33% adults in families, 29% children in families, 30% unaccompanied and separated children. Most residents were from Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and Pakistan.

95. Primary health care and mental health psychosocial support were provided in the centre by the DRC. The same medical team provided assistance for daily COVID-19 screenings for all staff and centres population.

²⁰ Beds, blankets, meals, drinking water, toilets, sinks, showers.

²¹ Further information about this temporary reception center:
<https://bih.iom.int/sites/bih/files/BIRAOctober20.pdf>

²² Further information about this temporary reception center:
<https://bih.iom.int/sites/bih/files/US%CC%8CIVAKOctober20.pdf> | Migrant and Refugee Fund (MRF) | CEB (coebank.org)

96. Child-friendly space and mother and baby corners were provided by UNICEF/World Vision. Child protection services for unaccompanied children were also provided. Boys on the move methodology, informal life skill education of children with special focus on health issues were implemented by the UNFPA.

6.7 The situation of vulnerable groups of migrants and refugees

97. During their journey to BiH or their stay in the country, many children, and women, as well as some young adult males, often suffered physical violence, and other violations of their human rights. All this has a negative impact on their mental health or social well-being. In this context, single women travelling alone or with children, pregnant and lactating women, adolescent girls and unaccompanied and separated children are the people most exposed to risks with respect to their health and safety. Women and girls are victims of various forms of sexual and gender-based violence. They are deprived of their family or community to protect them. And even those travelling with family are often vulnerable to abuse. Often, they are not reporting crimes and thus not receiving the support they need. Unaccompanied and separated children are victims of human trafficking, lack of adequate educational activities, protection from drugs, alcohol and sexual abuse.

98. In some reception temporary centres (Ušivak, Sedra, Borići), women and children, especially if separated or unaccompanied, are housed in specialised care facilities and benefit from educational or recreational activities specially designed to help alleviate their suffering and support their social integration.

99. At the same time, I was informed that the majority of children who refuse accommodation in the Centre for Children and Youth MFS-Emmaus in Duje were left outside without adequate protection and without access to food, shelter, non-food items, health and other services. Unaccompanied and separated children in the Blažuj centre were not registered by the Service for Foreigners' Affairs, which made them invisible for the relevant authorities as without identification a legal guardian could not be assigned.

100. International and non-governmental organisations have compensated to a certain extent for the lack of resources of the BiH authorities to assist these particularly vulnerable categories of migrants and refugees.

101. In this context, the UNHCR, the IOM, the UNFPA, the UNICEF, together with the DRC, Save the Children, Jesuit Refugee Services, Zene sa Une, CARE International and other NGOs, implemented initiatives, which address a range of needs and provide dedicated services, including: protective shelter/protective accommodation for most vulnerable migrants, refugees and asylum seekers; child-friendly spaces; women and girl centres, mother-baby corners; integration corners; outreach activities/emergency response through delivery of non-food items and providing on-site mental health and psycho-social support (MHPSS); MHPSS through trauma recovery programmes; identification and support of potential victims of trafficking in human beings; emergency response to COVID-19 in mixed migration context.

102. Other services provided by these organisations focus on special needs of women and children and refer to: sexual and reproductive health care; screening services; sexual and reproductive health counselling; prevention and curing of communicable diseases; individual and group psychosocial support for gender-based violence (GBV) survivors and those at the highest risk; women empowerment activities; life-skills education for youth; provision of dignity kits and modern contraceptives; English language classes; coordinating GBV prevention and response in emergency; agreement on standard operation procedures for GBV in emergencies; GBV referral pathways; GBV safety audits; GBV/sexual exploitation and abuse trainings for humanitarian personnel; mainstreaming GBV in all aspects of the emergency response.

103. Despite the provision of these services, there are still many gaps in the care of the most vulnerable categories of migrants and refugees. This refers in particular to unaccompanied and separated children. There is an urgent need to ensure a minimum of 600 reception capacities in reception centres, in designated zones for them, with 24/7 on-site child protection and care support.

104. The authorities continue facing challenges relating to identification of children as unaccompanied, age assessment, and access to international protection. Reports have indicated that most unaccompanied and separated children did not have a legal guardian appointed by the authorities and that there was a lack of capacity to provide social welfare and adequate training on legal guardianship of migrant children.²³ In this respect, I have recalled the importance of strengthening the system of guardianship for unaccompanied and separated children by effectively implement the Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)11 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on effective guardianship for unaccompanied and separated children in the context of migration.

105. I have been told that the Service for Foreigners' Affairs did not conduct registrations and thus centres for social welfare could not appoint legal guardianship for children, limiting their access to essential protection services, including their ability to apply for asylum. Due to these issues and to the systemic shortage of adequate accommodation, numerous unaccompanied and separated children live in dire conditions, often together with unrelated adults and households, which may put their well-being at risk.²⁴

106. There is a need to ensure a whole continuum of care services, meeting the needs of different groups of unaccompanied and separated children, in particular those below the age of 14, children at risk/children victims of violence and exploitation, including human trafficking, female children and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex children.

107. Care support could include foster care, semi-independent living units, small group homes, and safe houses. It should be a priority to include unaccompanied and separated children into the local child protection and care systems in a non-discriminatory manner, which recognise the need to support various vulnerabilities and which meet international, regional and domestic standards.

6.8. The implementation of asylum procedures

108. It is important that legal provisions applicable to asylum seekers and foreigners in general are accessible, foreseeable, precise and clear. The report of the former SRSG already noted the deficiencies in the legal framework concerning access to asylum. Many attestations of intent to seek asylum expired before persons were able to register their address and then to schedule an interview with the Sector for Asylum (SA). From the moment of registration of an asylum application, it generally took several months to have the first asylum interview. Lack of interpretation during asylum procedures was a recurring challenge, despite the support provided by international partners. Moreover, many asylum seekers had no place to register their residence or met obstacles in the registration of a residence, such as the permission of landlords and/or administrative fees for obtaining certificates of residence.²⁵

109. During my mission, I learned that the situation has not changed significantly since 2018. Upon entry migrants expressing an intention to seek asylum obtained an attestation of such intention and had 14 days to submit a proper request for asylum. If the foreigner failed to submit an asylum application within the deadline without justified reason it was considered that he/she had abandoned the expressed intention. The Service for Foreigners' Affairs was reluctant to issue new attestation of expressed intention.

110. According to the UNHCR and the NGO Vasa Prava,²⁶ even though most of the migrants entering BiH were entitled to express intention to seek asylum, only a very limited percentage eventually submitted a request for asylum. In this respect, the following data appear significant: 69 413 arrivals were detected between 1 January 2018 and the end of December 2020 by BiH

²³ The letter of the CoE Commissioner for Human Rights of 7 December 2020 to the Chairman of the Council of Ministers and the Minister for Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina <https://rm.coe.int/commdh-2020-30-letter-to-the-authorities-of-bosnia-and-herzegovina-en/1680a099b6>

²⁴ *Idem*

²⁵ *Report* of the fact-finding mission by Ambassador Tomáš Boček, Special Representative of the Secretary General on migration and refugees, to Bosnia and Herzegovina and to Croatia, 24-27 July and 26-30 November 2018, SG/Inf(2019)10, 23 April 2019, pages 15-17.

²⁶ Cf. <https://pravnapomoc.app/ba>

authorities. In reference to this figure, 64 943 migrants (94%) formally expressed intention to seek asylum with the Service for Foreigners' Affairs. Of these, only 2 601 (4%) formally lodged an asylum claim with the Sector for Asylum.²⁷

111. This seems to confirm that the State authorities provided all individuals entering the territory of BiH with an attestation of expressed intention to seek asylum but that there was potentially a bottleneck in accessing the asylum procedure itself.

112. Migrants were not well informed about their rights and the asylum procedures. Although information materials were provided by the NGO Vasa Prava regularly in relevant languages to the Service for Foreigners' Affairs and Border police I could not ascertain that those were widely distributed.

113. Access to accommodation remained in practice a precondition for accessing asylum procedure. Only those registered in formal reception centres and private houses within this deadline had the possibility to submit a formal request for asylum.

114. In practice, I was told that unaccompanied and separated children accommodated in the Ušivak centre and migrants accommodated in private houses were prioritised in this procedure. No registrations of asylum requests were conducted in Blažuj, Miral and Lipa centres. For the government-run centres in Delijaš and Salakovac, the last registrations were conducted in June 2020. Last registration in Una-Sana Canton happened in 2019.

115. According to the UNHCR,²⁸ the average processing time for asylum applications varied by location and type of accommodation. With individuals residing in reception centres tended to wait longer for a final decision on their asylum claims than those in private accommodation. On average, the processing time for asylum decisions issued in 2020 and 2021 was 409 days, however, for claims registered in the immigration centre or prison, the average was just 66 days. The average processing time for decisions issued for residents of temporary reception centres exceeded one year, with residents of Borići experiencing an average processing time of 541 days.

116. As a result of this procedure associated with the difficult organisation of the registration process, potential beneficiaries of asylum remained in a legal limbo that sooner or later turned them into "undocumented migrants".

117. In view of this situation, I drew the attention of the BiH authorities to the importance of implementing the legislation on asylum and foreigners, in light of standards on refugee and migrant protection, with regard to all potential beneficiaries, in relation to the all the steps of the asylum procedure. In this context, I have referred to the importance of providing continuous training for judges and lawyers on asylum-related matters.

6.9. The impact of COVID-19

118. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of the migrants in BiH who are particularly affected due to poor access to health services and limited access to proper sanitation, hygiene facilities and personal protective equipment. Migrants are further affected by the health/safety impact in relation to the management of temporary reception centres in accordance with COVID-19 mitigation measures, and other activities impacted by the COVID-19 related restrictions.

119. The increasing demand for accommodation was complicated by the necessity to ensure compliance with COVID-19 mitigation and prevention measures such as maintaining physical distancing and ensuring space for quarantine; all amidst concern over the health implications of the

²⁷ Cf. UNHCR, Fact sheet December 2020, Bosnia and Herzegovina
<https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/84288>

²⁸ Cf. UNHCR, Operational Update January 2021 Bosnia and Herzegovina
<https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/85001>

rising levels of overcrowding in the centres. With the closure of the Bira centre, there was an additional urgent need to identify and find new COVID-19 compliant accommodation.

120. The following figures describe well the situation at hand. In December 2020, 2 284 entry screenings for COVID-19 symptoms were performed in the reception centres. At the end of the month, there were 91 migrants/asylum-seekers accommodated in preventive isolation in the Una-Sana centres and 15 cases exhibiting symptoms isolated. At the time of our mission some 24 migrants/asylum-seekers were tested positive for COVID-19. With the closure of the Lipa camp, capacities for preventive and symptomatic isolation in reception centres in BiH decreased. By the end of December 2020, a total of 123 beds in reception centres in Una-Sana Canton were available for preventive isolation and a total of 202 beds for individuals with COVID-19 symptoms.

121. After my mission, I learned that COVID-19 infections were rising among migrants and refugees in BiH, which was struggling to cope with one of the Balkans' worst coronavirus outbreaks. While sporadic cases of coronavirus infections among migrants and refugees had been reported since the start of the pandemic, the current outbreak in BiH's camps was the biggest so far, and several facilities had been quarantined. In April 2021, 147 infections had been recorded in just one camp – more than half the total 265 infections recorded among migrants since the outbreak of the pandemic.

122. The Prime Minister of the Una-Sana Canton, Mustafa Ružnić, confirmed on 7 April that 55 migrants infected with COVID-19 had left the Miral Camp in Velika Kladuša the previous day, as announced by the Operational group for migrant issues in Una-Sana. At the same time the DRC considered the situation “under control,” with new cases isolated and none in need of hospitalisation.²⁹

123. Aware of the difficulty of the moment, I encouraged the BiH authorities to be on all fronts, while providing the necessary services – including accommodation, food supply and support in COVID-19 prevention, adapted accommodation for unaccompanied and separated children, and response measures among the migrants and asylum seekers – in particular in Una-Sana canton. In this perspective, I have referred to the importance of building up expertise on how to ensure adequate monitoring and supervision of facilities accommodating migrants and refugees, in particular vulnerable persons, including families with children, unaccompanied and separated children and women.

VII. MIGRATION RELATED OBSERVATIONS

124. My general migration related observations after conducting the mission can be summarised as follows:

- a. The living conditions in the emergency tent camp Lipa need further improvement. At the same, at that juncture, there were no convincing reasons to bring migrants back to the Bira centre.
- b. The improvement of conditions in Lipa in a first phase could be achieved by re-using the containers and other movable equipment present in the Bira centre.
- c. It would be sensible to establish 3-4 smaller reception centres in BiH, each with a maximum capacity of 1 000 persons. The responsibility should be shared by both entities of BiH, and all these additional centres should be located outside of Una-Sana and Sarajevo cantons. The model used in Serbia³⁰ could serve as a good example and inspiration in this regard.
- d. There is a need to ensure an additional minimum of 600 reception capacities for unaccompanied and separated children in temporary reception centres, in areas designated for them with 24/7 on-site child protection and care support.
- e. For a cost-efficient and optimal technical and administrative perspective, the new centres should preferably be in public structures and be identified in consultation with the relevant local authorities, also regarding the subsequent management activities. The possibility of

²⁹ [Struggling Bosnia sees infection surge in migrants, refugees Croatia Sarajevo Bosnia Covid European Union | The Independent](#)

³⁰ Commissariat for Refugees and Migration Republic of Serbia - <https://kirs.gov.rs/eng>; IOM - <https://serbia.iom.int/iom-serbia> and UNCHR - <https://help.unhcr.org/serbia/where-to-seek-help/asylum-and-reception-centres/>

using former military structures, with all the necessary infrastructure in place (water, electricity, sewage connection), could be explored.

- f. It is essential to improve co-ordination and to establish operational organs, which will comprise both state and local level governments, as well as relevant international organisations.
- g. It is equally important that the decision-making processes relating the practical use of international funds systematically include local authorities that share the crisis burden. This would be a way to gather consensus from the local population, improve local support for the projects (to be implemented at local level).

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

125. Based on the mission conducted in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 24 to 30 January 2021, I am proposing the following recommendations:

1. To support the authorities, in particular the Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina, whose responsibilities include that of migration management, to develop and implement a national policy capable of structuring and co-ordinating the country's institutional response to migratory phenomena, in compliance with international obligations. Such national policy could be designed based on the outcome of one or more comprehensive discussions at all levels, by associating all the institutions concerned and take form of a "national conference on migration".
2. With the financial support of the Council of Europe's Development Bank, sought by the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina, assist further the authorities to provide the necessary services – including accommodation, food supply and support in COVID-19 prevention, adapted accommodation for unaccompanied and separated children, and response measures among the migrants and asylum seekers – in particular in Una-Sana canton.
3. Support the authorities in building up expertise on how to ensure adequate monitoring and supervision of facilities accommodating migrants and refugees, in particular vulnerable persons, including families with children, unaccompanied and separated children and women.
4. Provide assistance in implementing the legislation on asylum and foreigners, in light of standards on refugee and migrant protection, with regard to all potential beneficiaries in relation to the following steps of the asylum procedure:
 - a. *Delivery of the attestation of expressed intent to seek asylum.*
 - b. *Registration of the address.*
 - c. *Delivery of the document that proves the registered address.*
 - d. *Organisation of the first asylum registration interview.*
 - e. *Normal submission of the asylum application.*
 - f. *Delivery of the asylum-seeker's card.*
 - g. *Invitation to the second interview.*
 - h. *Final decision on the application within the set time deadlines.*
5. Assist the authorities to establish mechanisms of consultation between authorities at all levels of government in the planning, implementation and evaluation of national commitments and action plans.
6. Provide assistance to strengthen the system of guardianship for unaccompanied and separated children by effectively implement the Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)11 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on effective guardianship for unaccompanied and separated children in the context of migration.
7. Assist the authorities in providing continued training to judges and lawyers on asylum-related matters building upon the existing collaboration with the European Programme for Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP), on issues arising under the European Convention on Human Rights in the application of legislation on the treatment of asylum seekers and foreigners, and in particular of refugee and migrant children; including through the adaptation and translation of existing HELP e-learning courses.
8. Assist the authorities at all levels in improving their dialogue with the local population in the area populated by migrants, including through community targeted projects.

**Fact Finding Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina
23-31 January 2021**

Agenda

Saturday 23 January		
Time	Location	Participants
05:56 – 07:57	<i>Strasbourg-Paris CDG (AF 6172)</i>	Drahoslav Stefanek, Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen
09:50 – 11:45	<i>Paris CDG – Zagreb (AF 1560)</i>	Drahoslav Stefanek, Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen
11:45 – 13:30	<i>Transfer from Zagreb airport to Izazic border crossing</i> <i>Croatia Transfers</i>	Drahoslav Stefanek, Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen
13:30	<i>Transfer from Izazic border crossing to Hotel Kostelski buk, Bihać</i> <i>Mr. Jasmin Hasić, Adviser of the MFA Bosnia and Herzegovina</i>	Drahoslav Stefanek, Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen
17:00 – 18:00	Meeting with Ms Roberta Giusti (Border Violence Monitoring Network), Ms Silvia Maraone (IPSIA) and Mr Daniele Bombardi (Caritas italiana) <i>Hotel Kostelski buk, Bihać</i>	Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen
18:00 – 18:30	Meeting with Ms Maham Hashmi (Médecins sans frontières) <i>Hotel Kostelski buk, Bihać</i>	Riccardo Priore
<i>Overnight in Hotel Kostelski buk 77000 Bihać Tel: 387 (37) 302 340</i>		
Sunday 24 January		
Time	Location	Participants
09:30 – 12:00	Visit to Temporary Reception Centre (TRC) in Miral, Velika Kladuša	Drahoslav Stefanek, Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen, Laura Lungarotti, CoM, Drazan Rozic, IOM Emergency Coordinator, Amir Djuliman and Amira Sadikovic, Interpreters
12:00 – 13:00	Lunch	All
13:00 – 17:00	Visit to TRC in Sedra (Cazin) Visit to TRC Borići (Bihać)	Drahoslav Stefanek, Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen, Laura Lungarotti, CoM, Drazan Rozic, IOM Emergency Coordinator, Amir Djuliman and Amira Sadikovic, Interpreters
18:00 – 19:00	Visit to Music school project (BHRI/IOM)	All
<i>Overnight in Hotel Kostelski buk, Bihać</i>		

Monday 25 January		
9h00 – 10h00	Meeting with Bihać Mayor, Mr Šuhret Fazlić <i>Bosanska 4, Bihać</i>	Drahoslav Stefanek, Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen, Amir Djuliman and Amira Sadikovic, Interpreters
11:00 – 13:30	Visit to Lipa Emergency camp (en route Bosanski Petrovac)	Drahoslav Stefanek, Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen, Laura Lungarotti, CoM, Drazan Rozic, IOM Emergency Coordinator, Amir Djuliman and Amira Sadikovic, Interpreters
13:30	Departure of Ms Laura Lungarotti, IOM Chief of Mission in BiH	
14:00-15:00	Meeting with Prime Minister of Una - Sana Canton, Mr Mustafa Ružnić + member of the cantonal government <i>Building of the Government of the Canton, Street Alije Džerzeleza no 1, first floor, office of the Prime Minister</i>	Drahoslav Stefanek, Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen, Amir Djuliman and Amira Sadikovic, Interpreters
16:00	Press Conference	Drahoslav Stefanek, Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen
17:00 – 17:30	Meeting with Mr Nicola Bay, DRC <i>Hotel Kostelski buk, Bihać</i>	Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen
17:30 – 18:00	Meeting with Ms Aida Behrem (Women from Una) <i>Hotel Kostelski buk, Bihać</i>	Riccardo Priore
17:30 – 18:30	Meeting with UNICEF (Mr Ahmed Novo, Emergency Coordinator, Ms Amila Madzak. Education Emergency Officer, Ms Amela Catovic Adilovic, Child Protection Officer) <i>Hotel Kostelski buk, Bihać</i>	Paivi Suhonen
18:30 – 19:00	Meeting with Ms Zemira Gorinjac (Solidarnost association) <i>Hotel Kostelski buk, Bihać</i>	Riccardo Priore
<i>Overnight in Hotel Kostelski buk, Bihać</i>		
Tuesday 26 January		
11:00 – 16:15	Transfer to Sarajevo	Drahoslav Stefanek, Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen,
<i>Overnight in Hotel Europe Vladislava Skarića 5 71000 Sarajevo +387 (0)33 580 570</i>		
Wednesday 27 January		
9:00-10:00	Meeting with Ms Jasminka Džumhur, Ms Nives Jukić, Mr Ljubinko Mitrović, Ombudspersons of BiH <i>Institution of BiH Ombudsman, Dubrovačka 6, Sarajevo</i>	Drahoslav Stefanek, Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen + Interpreters
10:00 – 11:00	Meeting with Minister Miloš Lučić, Minister of Human Rights and Refugees of BiH Press Conference	Drahoslav Stefanek, Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen, Boyana Urumova + interpreters

	<i>Institutions of BiH building Trg BiH 1, Sarajevo</i>	
11:00 – 12:00	Meeting with Ambassador Valentin Inzko, High Representative for Bosnia Herzegovina <i>OHR, Emerika Bluma 1, Sarajevo</i>	Drahoslav Stefanek, Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen, Boyana Urumova
12:00 – 13:00	Meeting with Ms Bisera Turkovic, Minister of Foreign Affairs of BiH <i>MFA, Musala 2, Sarajevo</i>	Drahoslav Stefanek, Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen, Boyana Urumova
14:00 – 15:00	Meeting with Ms Kathleen Kavalec, Head of OSCE Mission <i>OSCE Tower A, Fra Andela Zvizdovića 1, Sarajevo</i>	Drahoslav Stefanek, Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen, Boyana Urumova
16:00 – 17:00	Meeting with Mr Elvir Karalić, Mme Adela Ćomić (Pomozi.ba) <i>Hotel Europe, Sarajevo</i>	Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen
<i>Overnight in Hotel Europe, Sarajevo</i>		
Thursday 28 January		
10:00 – 11:00	Meeting with Ms Lucie Gagne, UNHCR Representative and Ms Stephanie Woldenberg, Senior Protection Officer <i>UNHCR, UNITIC Building, Fra Andjela Zvizdovica 1, Sarajevo</i>	Drahoslav Stefanek, Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen, Boyana Urumova
11:00 – 12:00	Meeting with Mr David Saunders, UN Women Representative and Mr John Masoti, UNPF Representative <i>Online at CoE Sarajevo premises</i>	Drahoslav Stefanek, Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen, Boyana Urumova
13:00 – 13:50	Meeting with Ms Ekaterina Dorodovna, Deputy Head of EU Delegation in BiH <i>EUD, Skenderija 3a, Sarajevo</i>	Drahoslav Stefanek, Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen, Boyana Urumova
14:00 – 15:00	Meeting with Minister Selmo Cikotić, Minister of Security of BiH Press Conference <i>Institutions of BiH building Trg BiH 1</i>	Drahoslav Stefanek, Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen, Boyana Urumova + interpreters
15:30 – 16:30	Meeting with Mr Zoran Tegeltija, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of BiH <i>Institutions of BiH building Trg BiH 1, Sarajevo</i>	Drahoslav Stefanek, Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen, Boyana Urumova + interpreters
17:00 – 18:00	Meeting with Ms Amra Kadrić (VASA PRAVA) <i>Hotel Europe,</i>	Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen
<i>Overnight in Hotel Europe, Sarajevo</i>		

Friday 29 January		
10:00	Meeting with_Dr Ingrid Macdonald, UN Resident Coordinator <i>UN house, Sarajevo</i>	Drahoslav Stefanek, Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen, Boyana Urumova
11:00	Meeting with Service for Foreign Affairs <i>Venue?</i>	Drahoslav Stefanek, Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen + interpreters
12:30 – 13:30	Visit to TRC in Ušivak (after meeting with Service for Foreign Affairs)	Drahoslav Stefanek, Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen + interpreters?
15:00	Interview with News Agency FENA <i>Hotel Europe, Sarajevo</i>	Drahoslav Stefanek, Paivi Suhonen
15:30	Interview – Al Jazeera Balkans television	Drahoslav Stefanek, Paivi Suhonen
16:00	Interview with Amil Ducic - Fokus.ba <i>Hotel Europe, Sarajevo</i>	Drahoslav Stefanek, Paivi Suhonen
16:30	Interview with N1 <i>Hotel Europe, Sarajevo</i>	Drahoslav Stefanek, Paivi Suhonen
<i>Overnight in Hotel Europe, Sarajevo</i>		
Saturday 30 January		
9:00	Test Covid Purchase of FFP2 masks (mandatory with Austrian Airlines) + administrative formalities	All
<i>Overnight in Hotel Europe, Sarajevo</i>		
Sunday 31 January		
15:10 – 16:25	<i>Sarajevo – Vienna (OS 758)</i>	Drahoslav Stefanek, Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen
17:30 – 19:05	<i>Vienna – Basel (OS 473)</i>	Drahoslav Stefanek, Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen
<u>Navette</u> 19:05 – 19:15 19:35 – 19:45 20 :05 – 20 :15	<i>Airport – St Louis</i> <i>Airport – St Louis</i> <i>Airport – St Louis</i>	Drahoslav Stefanek, Riccardo Priore, Paivi Suhonen
<u>Train options</u> 19:30 – 20:39 20:00 – 21:09 20:30 – 21:55	<i>St Louis – Strasbourg (direct)</i> <i>St Louis – Strasbourg (direct)</i> <i>St Louis – Strasbourg (via Mulhouse)</i>	