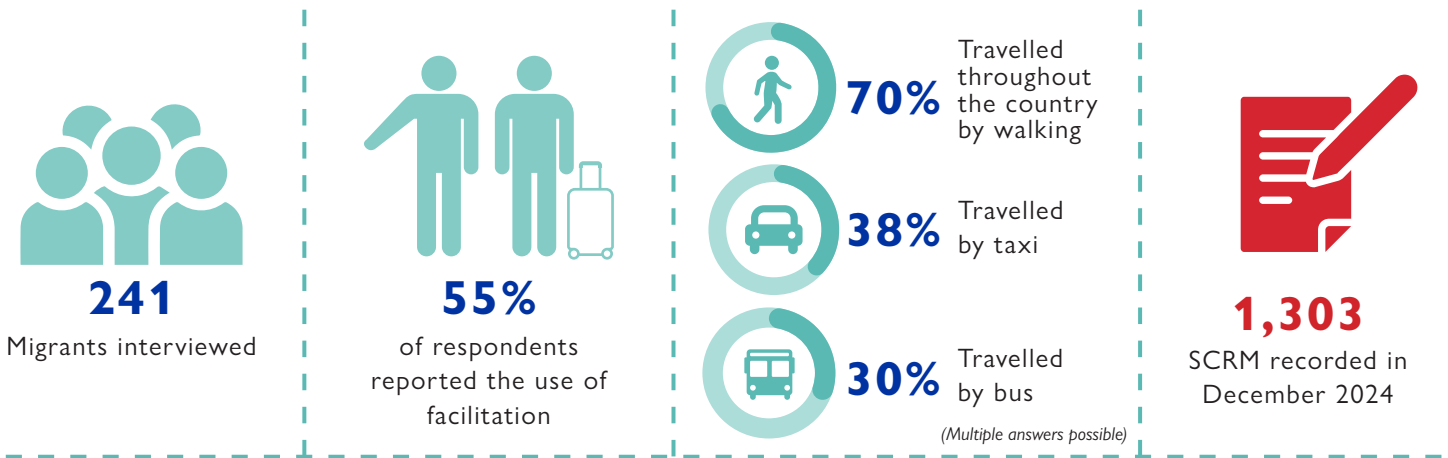


This report provides insights into the profiles, experiences and journeys of migrants transiting through the Republic of Serbia. Data was collected from 1 to 31 December 2024 together with the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration of the Republic of Serbia (SCRM). The sample consists of 241 interviewed migrants in Asylum Centres (AC) Krnjaca, (AC) Sjenica, and Reception Centres (RC) Bujanovac, (RC) Presevo.



In December 2024, the SCRM reported a total of 1,303 recorded migrants. In November 2024, the total number of migrants recorded by SCRM was 1,901.

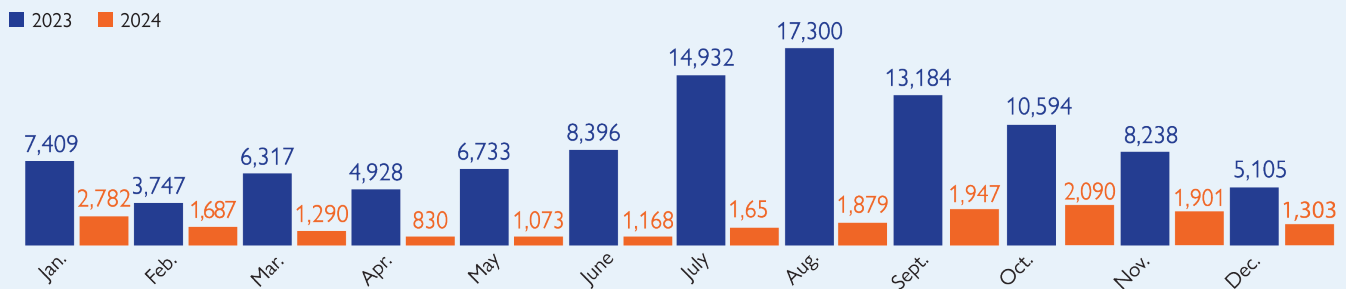


Figure 1: SCRM recorded number of migrants per month

PROFILES

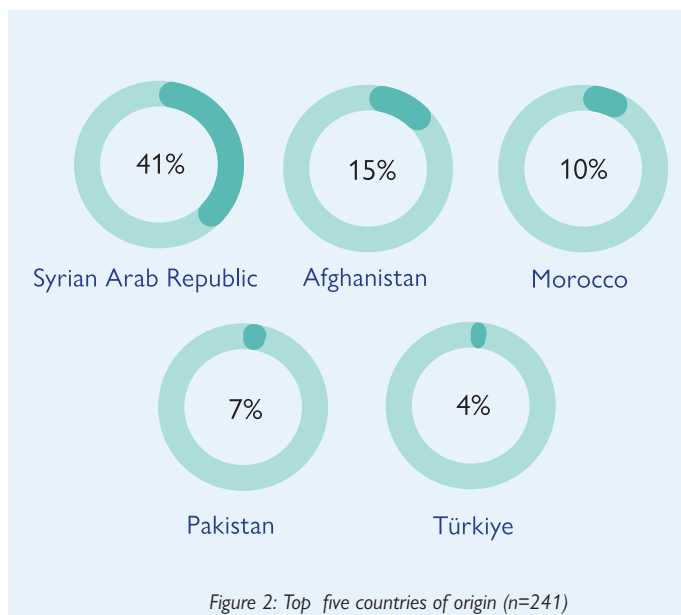


Figure 2: Top five countries of origin (n=241)

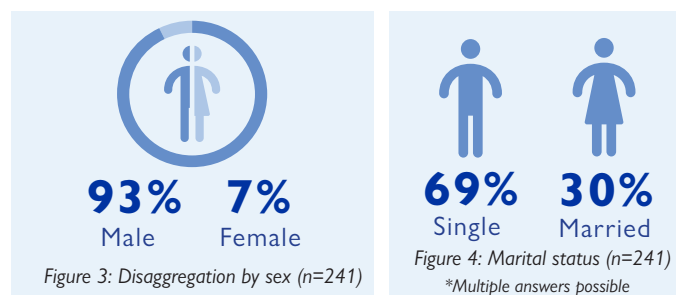


Figure 3: Disaggregation by sex (n=241)

Figure 4: Marital status (n=241)

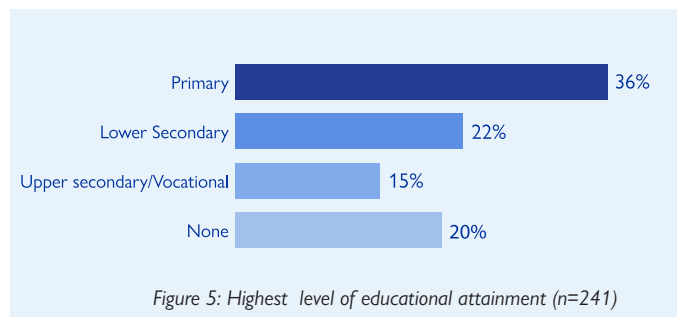
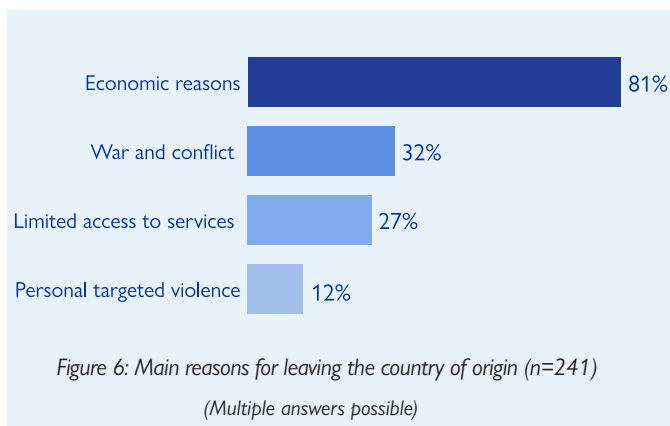


Figure 5: Highest level of educational attainment (n=241)

REASONS FOR LEAVING

In this sample, 35 per cent of respondents indicated that their country of departure differed from their country of origin, implying they had lived in another country for over a year. Türkiye remains the primary country of departure. Among those who reported residing in a transit country for more than a year, 74 per cent mentioned Türkiye, 13 per cent the Islamic Republic of Iran, and 8 per cent Greece. Syrian nationals constitute the majority (72%) of those departing from Türkiye, citing the deteriorating economic situation as the primary reason.



JOURNEYS

In December 2024, the borders of Bulgaria and North Macedonia continue to be the primary points for irregular entries into Serbia. In this sample, 31 per cent of the respondents interviewed in December irregularly entered from Bulgaria and 54 per cent from North Macedonia. Entries from Bulgaria and North Macedonia have stayed consistent compared to November 2024.

Twenty-five persons (11%) entered through the airport, primarily from Türkiye, Burundi, and Bangladesh. Key informants and official sources attribute the steady increase in arrivals of Nepalese, Turkish, and Bangladeshi nationals over recent months to labour migration.

When asked if they were accompanied by people who facilitated their border crossing, 55 per cent of respondents stated they were facilitated, an increase from the 48 per cent recorded in November. Sixty-seven per cent of respondents used facilitators to cross from North Macedonia to Serbia, and 35 per cent used facilitators to cross from Bulgaria to Serbia. Respondents reported paying, on average, 478 EUR per person to cross into Serbia. This is a slight decrease from the 522 EUR per person recorded in November 2024.

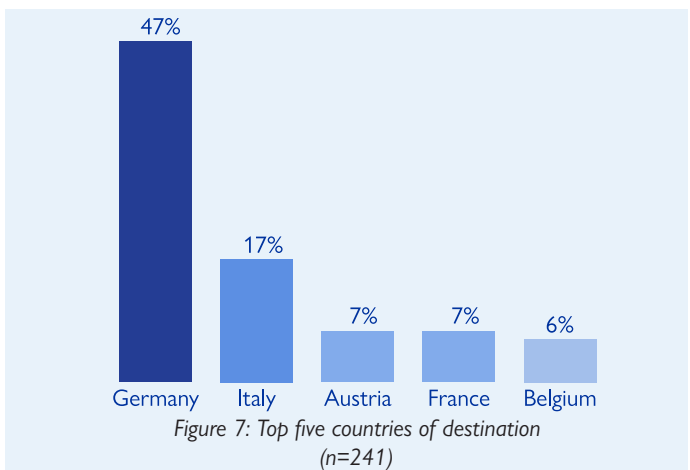
The majority (63%) of the overall sample reported travelling with a group, out of which 44% per cent did so with their non-family members. Out of those travelling with their families (36%), nearly half (49%) had their children with them.

Twenty per cent of the sample reported exclusively walking, which is a decrease of seven per cent compared to last month. Key informants suggested this depends on factors such as weather conditions, financial possibilities, and the police patrols.

When asked which country they intended to go to next, 57 per cent stated Hungary. Thirty-two per cent of the sample reported they had already attempted to cross into another country.

The majority (92%) of attempted crossings were at the Hungarian border. The main reported reason for failing was being returned by the authorities (100%). In this sample, Turkish and Syrian nationals were the main nationalities attempting to enter the EU via the Hungarian border. As reported in November 2024, the trend of increased migrant presence in Northern Serbia continues.

INTENDED DESTINATION



In December 2024, Germany remains the primary destination of choice. Syrian nationals (73%) predominantly selected Germany, while Moroccan (54%) nationals favoured Italy. Iranian nationals (33%) primarily choose Austria as their final destination. Belgium was preferred by a half of Burundi (50%) nationals.

Figure 8 shows the three most frequently cited reasons for choosing the intended destination countries.

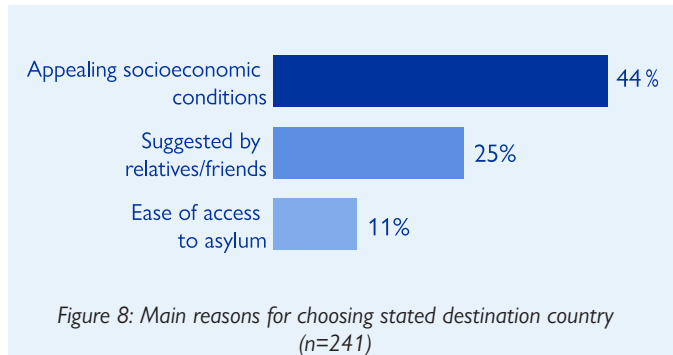


Figure 9 below shows the top 8 nationalities and their intended destinations.

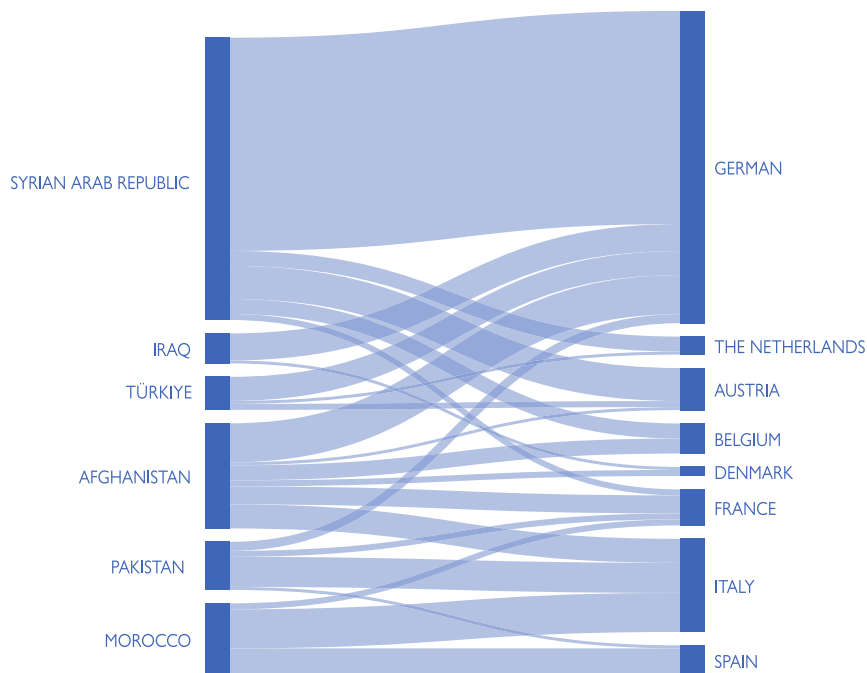


Figure 9: Intended country of destination by nationality (top 6) (n=194)

METHODOLOGY

This report uses a multi-source and multi-method approach with the aim of providing insights into the profiles, experiences, needs, movement patterns and intentions of migrants transiting through Serbia.

Some information which serves as context or explanation for particular concepts or trends are repetitive in each report, as it is important for new readers to be able to understand the information.

Survey interviews with migrants

The questionnaire is administered via Kobo Toolbox and collects information on the age, sex and nationalities of respondents, information about their journeys to Serbia, recorded numbers information and movement modalities within the country. The survey is anonymized, voluntary and respondents do not receive compensation for participation. Respondents can choose not to answer any question and can withdraw their consent at any moment.

Data was collected from 1 to 31 December 2024 in RCs/ACs (AC Krnjaca, AC Sjenica, RC Bujanovac, RC Presevo).

Key informant interviews

Key informants can help provide information on the modus operandi of migrant mobility. The purpose of the key informant interviews is to contextualize the quantitative data gathered through the survey.

LIMITATIONS

The data collection is conducted in the context of the following limitations:

1. The data is based on a convenience sample of migrants in the survey locations during the time frame indicated and can therefore not be generalized to the broader population of migrants in Serbia, or anywhere else.
2. The data collection is limited to reception and asylum centres, therefore data is not collected outside the centres.