



**Bosnia and Herzegovina
Croatia
Montenegro
Serbia (including Kosovo)
The former Yugoslav Republic
of Macedonia**



South-Eastern Europe

| Working environment |

The legacy of the conflicts of the 1990s continues to affect developments in South-Eastern Europe. Displaced populations are still awaiting durable solutions, with the largest numbers in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. This protracted displacement remains of serious concern, particularly as many refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) live in dire conditions in collective centres. Though progress has been achieved in finding durable solutions for many of the displaced, returns are hampered by a multitude of obstacles.

Civil registration and access to social and economic rights remain key protection concerns, along with the problem of de facto statelessness, in particular for minority groups. The displaced require legal assistance to obtain personal documents, acquire citizenship, have their property restored and avail themselves of durable solutions. Another protection priority is to raise awareness of sexual and gender-based violence among refugees and IDPs.

With its proximity to the European Union (EU), the subregion is also an important migration route. As migration controls are strengthened elsewhere, including in the Mediterranean, asylum-seekers and irregular migrants attempt to find new routes, including through South-Eastern Europe. It is therefore important to build State capacity to implement protection-sensitive border policies. These policies should enable the identification of people seeking international protection within mixed migratory flows and provide them access to territory and procedures so that their needs can be properly determined.

UNHCR supports refugees still living in reception centres in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

UNHCR



Strategy

UNHCR is working to bring the protracted displacement situation in this subregion to a close by 2011. It will work with partners to encourage voluntary return, local integration and naturalization, as applicable, for people displaced by past conflicts. The High Commissioner's 2008 Dialogue on Protracted Refugee Situations, followed by his visit to the subregion in August 2009, gave new impetus to these efforts.

The three objectives UNHCR will pursue in South-Eastern Europe are to: (i) find durable solutions for the remaining refugees and IDPs; (ii) reduce statelessness and respond to the needs of de facto stateless people; and (iii) help States to develop and strengthen their national asylum systems in line with international and EU standards.

In the search for durable solutions, UNHCR will cooperate closely with partners and use participatory assessments to identify the most appropriate options for individuals. The Office will continue working to reinvigorate return strategies in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Serbia (including Kosovo), and to advance integration strategies in Montenegro and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, which will create new opportunities for IDPs and refugees.

To reduce statelessness, UNHCR will focus on the needs of people who are de facto stateless, primarily Roma. The objective is to ensure that they have access to personal documentation and citizenship, along with the accompanying social rights. UNHCR will also promote accession to the 1961 Convention on the

reduction of statelessness by Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

UNHCR is working throughout the subregion to build asylum systems compatible with international and European Union standards. UNHCR will strengthen efforts to ensure that people seeking international protection are identified, have their protection needs assessed fully and fairly, and can integrate locally if they require protection.

Constraints

The political situation in South-Eastern Europe and the inability to resolve outstanding issues affecting refugees and displaced persons remain major constraints. Renewed efforts by governments in the subregion and increased support from the international community will be required if this is to change. In particular, international assistance is needed to close the remaining collective centres and support the local integration of refugees and IDPs who do not opt for return.

Effective social protection policies and mechanisms, including housing, psycho-social support, and geriatric care, need to be strengthened to address the needs of refugees, IDPs and returnees. The rights of minorities must be ensured through advocacy and legislative development.

Operations

UNHCR's operations in **Bosnia and Herzegovina** and **Serbia** (including **Kosovo**) are presented in separate chapters.

In **Croatia**, UNHCR will continue to pursue durable solutions for returnees, refugees and IDPs generated by the conflict in the early 1990s. It will help the Government to develop an asylum system in line with international and European standards. UNHCR will also promote the development of a mechanism to identify and respond to the needs of stateless people.

Although refugee returns have been substantial in recent years, returnees continue to face difficulties in obtaining housing and taking advantage of socio-economic reintegration programmes. UNHCR will provide legal assistance related to access to housing for returnees. Joint reviews of persons found by the authorities not to be eligible for housing and reconstruction programmes will be conducted with the Government. Mobile field teams will assess the needs of extremely vulnerable individuals, as well as the situation of returnees and returnee-hosting communities. UNHCR will cooperate closely with the Government and the international community to resolve the remaining legal, social and technical problems regarding return and reintegration by 2011.

UNHCR will also work with the Government to prevent statelessness, advocate for simplified access to citizenship for groups at risk and for Croatia's accession to the 1961 Convention on the reduction of statelessness. To build the capacity for asylum, the focus will be on legal aid and finding alternatives to the detention of asylum-seekers. Adequate support for unaccompanied and separated children will remain a priority.

In **Montenegro**, UNHCR will support efforts to find durable solutions for people displaced by the conflicts in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia (including Kosovo), and to prevent statelessness. The Office will also support Montenegro's efforts to develop an asylum system that complies with international and EU standards.

UNHCR will advocate for the resolution of the legal status of some 24,000 displaced persons in Montenegro whose current status impedes their full enjoyment of economic and social rights. This lack of status hinders their integration in the country, although after more than 17 years, this is the most viable durable solution as interest in voluntary repatriation has largely been exhausted.

The Office will continue to assist extremely vulnerable individuals through legal assistance and social welfare programmes. Limited housing assistance will also be extended, in partnership with the European Commission and other donors. At the same time, UNHCR will facilitate decision

making on voluntary repatriation to Serbia (including Kosovo), particularly by providing up-to-date information to the displaced.

UNHCR will provide legal assistance to facilitate access to identity documents and civil registration for some 1,500 people, mainly Roma and other minorities, who are at risk of becoming stateless.

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continues to host some 1,770 people of concern to UNHCR. The majority are Roma and other minorities from Serbia (including Kosovo). UNHCR's focus remains on finding lasting solutions for this population.

UNHCR is assisting the Government to align its asylum, legal and institutional framework to international and European standards, though the number of people applying for asylum remains modest (54 in 2008, and 10 in the first half of 2009).

UNHCR will support voluntary repatriation and integration for the remaining refugee population, and anticipates that durable solutions will have been found by the end of 2010, in accordance with the Government's Integration Strategy for Refugees and Foreigners.

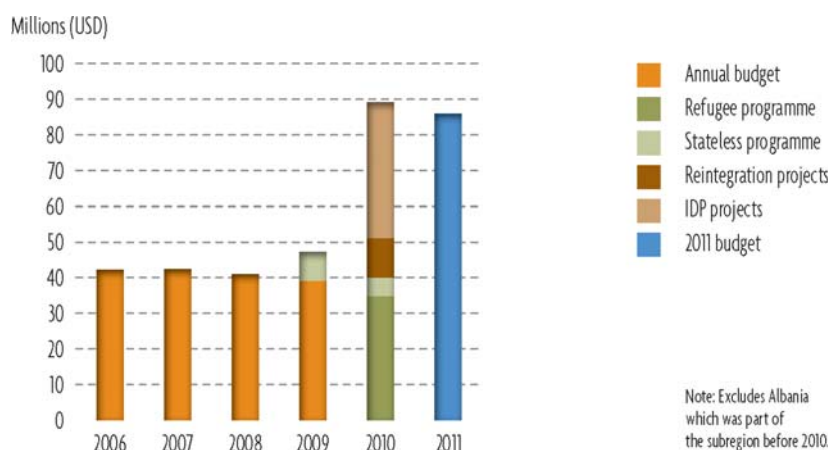
Housing remains a key concern in the context of integration. The Government is expected to provide accommodation, while UNHCR will support this process with small-scale income-generating projects and vocational training. UNHCR will continue to provide legal aid and community services to the most vulnerable individuals, and support the creation of an Integration Centre, which will develop projects in line with the National Action Plan on Integration.

To decrease de facto statelessness, UNHCR will continue to carry out a regional project to facilitate access to personal identity documentation and citizenship for Roma and other minorities.

Financial information

The comprehensive budget in 2010 amounts to USD 89.17 million, of which 39 per cent is allocated for refugees, 43 per cent for IDPs, 13 per cent for reintegration and 6 per cent for stateless people. The increase reflects UNHCR's strategic decision to bring the long-standing displacement chapter in South-Eastern Europe to a close within the next two years. The budget will also enable UNHCR to strengthen asylum systems throughout the subregion.

UNHCR's budget in South-Eastern Europe 2006 - 2011



UNHCR budget for South-Eastern Europe (USD)

COUNTRY	2009 REVISED BUDGET 1	2010					2011
		REFUGEE PROGRAMME PILLAR 1	STATELESS PROGRAMME PILLAR 2	REINTEGRATION PROJECTS PILLAR 3	IDP PROJECTS PILLAR 4	TOTAL	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	6,418,164	4,360,322	988,789	0	13,934,133	19,283,244	21,054,100
Croatia	4,034,104	5,944,377	550,264	0	0	6,494,640	7,000,000
Serbia	30,410,136	15,410,687	2,576,789	11,148,423	24,043,258	53,179,157	48,094,600
Montenegro	2,524,560	5,543,061	416,512	0	0	5,959,572	5,954,500
The FYR of Macedonia	3,007,236	3,655,146	595,515	0	0	4,250,661	3,701,200
TOTAL	46,394,200	34,913,592	5,127,869	11,148,423	37,977,391	89,167,275	85,804,400

¹ Includes supplementary programme requirements of USD 7,349,055.