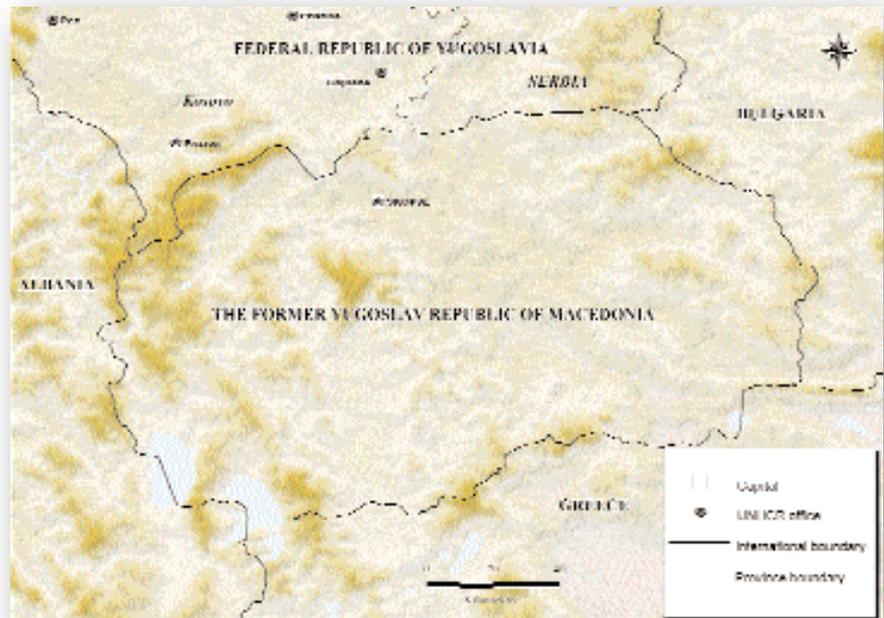


The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in short

Main Objectives

- Promote durable solutions for refugees through repatriation, local integration or resettlement (for selected eligible individuals).
- Continue to protect and assist refugees; provide targeted support to refugee women, children, adolescents, the elderly and vulnerable persons.
- Promote the adoption and implementation of a national asylum law, as well as the amendment of the citizenship law, and strengthen the national protection system.
- Support the Government of The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYR Macedonia) to forge links with European institutions and the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe on issues such as human rights, statelessness, full implementation of refugee law in line with the 1951 Convention, and burden-sharing.
- Pursue training and capacity-building activities for national and local institutions; support longer-term rehabilitation and development co-ordination mechanisms to lay the ground for phasing out UNHCR's activities.
- Remain ready (through contingency planning and a stockpile of relief items) for a possible influx of 20,000 refugees.



PLANNING FIGURES

Population	Jan. 2001	Dec. 2001
Kosovo Albanians	550	150
Ethnic Albanians from Southern Serbia	450	200
Roma	5,000	4,500
Others ¹	3,200	1,150
Total²	9,200	6,000

¹ Ethnic Serbs (from Kosovo province and Serbia) and other ethnic minorities from Kosovo will be surveyed to determine their numbers and establish a profile of their protection and assistance needs.

² An estimated 100,000 stateless persons residing in the country since the break-up of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia have not been able to regularise their citizenship. UNHCR will commission a survey on the situation of stateless persons in 2001.

TOTAL REQUIREMENTS • USD 8,061,783

WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Recent Developments

Democratic transition in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has begun to transform the internal political fabric of countries in the region and raise hope for long-term peace and stability. The international com-

munity's renewed confidence in the potential for peace in the Balkans will open the way for economic and social recovery and have a favourable impact on the search for durable solutions for the region's displaced. Local municipal elections in FYR Macedonia, while not yet meeting international standards, produced gains for a broad spectrum of opposition parties (without removing critical numbers of the Government coalition). As a result, there is a functioning coalition



favourable to creating an atmosphere of increased tolerance and maturity among political leaders. Thanks to UNHCR's efforts, in June the Government proposed to Parliament a new draft asylum law that is still being considered. The Government later extended the grant of Temporary Humanitarian Assisted Persons (THAP) status to refugees from September 2000 until April 2001.

Constraints

Recent positive political developments in South-Eastern Europe, though promising, have yet to engender concrete solutions for those displaced and disenfranchised by war. Economic conditions remain precarious in FYR Macedonia (with unemployment running at 33 per cent) exacerbating difficulties for the remaining refugees. Prolonged inter-ethnic tension in Kosovo province may continue to preclude early returns by Serbs, Roma and other minorities, many of whom are increasingly vulnerable to loss of accommodation due to host-family fatigue. Border incidents, particularly involving armed groups along the frontier with Kosovo, contribute to a lingering atmosphere of insecurity and sporadic hostility

among the local population towards refugees and asylum-seekers. Continued governmental protection for Kosovo Albanian refugees in 2001 is contingent on renewal of their THAP status, in conjunction with the adoption of a national law on asylum and introduction and implementation of a national refugee status determination procedure. Loss of THAP status could result in a reduction of food and non-food assistance. Financial resources for refugees continue to diminish. Some bilateral donors who were supporting UN agencies or directly funding activities for refugees have left the country or are departing. This will leave the remaining operational agencies with no other option but to finance priority activities which had previously received support from other sources.

STRATEGY

Protection and Solutions

The refugee programme began as an emergency operation in 1999 to protect and assist over 340,000 refugees fleeing or expelled from Kosovo. Following large-scale repatriation in

the same year, it has since evolved into a programme to protect and assist the 9,200 remaining refugees who reside with 1,200 host families and in six collective centres. Most of the refugees are minorities from Kosovo (Serbs, Roma, Groans, and others) and from southern Serbia (ethnic Albanians). UNHCR will continue to monitor their situation closely and provide information on repatriation opportunities to Kosovo province and Serbia. Where security and socio-economic conditions permit, the Office will promote and assist 'go-and-see visits' and voluntary return to areas of origin. Local integration will be supported in a limited number of cases, where this is the only viable solution. For a small number of eligible refugees, particularly women at risk, the Office will also promote resettlement.

UNHCR will continue to strengthen the national protection system by helping the Government to build and improve the legal and institutional framework for the protection of refugees and the reduction of statelessness. This will include training and provision of expert advice to raise awareness and build national capacity on refugee and asylum issues within government and non-governmental institutions and

among the refugees. High priority will be given to supporting the Asylum Bureau, the establishment of a fair and efficient refugee status determination procedure, and ratification of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. The Office will also continue support to the local NGO network established during 2000 to provide legal counselling to refugees.

Assistance

UNHCR will assist vulnerable refugees residing in collective centres or with host families. Community-based activities will continue to focus on support to the local education system, so as to ensure access to schooling for refugee children. Needy refugees will receive hygiene parcels, mattresses, blankets and other non-food items. In addition to the basic food ration provided by WFP, NGOs will provide complementary food items until May 2001. At that time, UNHCR will need to assume responsibility for this activity, including delivery of food commodities to both refugees and host families (as an incentive to alleviate host-family fatigue).



Health care will be provided to individual refugees in urban areas who cannot receive care from the local health system or who have serious medical problems. The Office will continue to promote preventive mother and child health care, improved management of and access to drugs, and will give particular attention to mental health services and medical assistance for the disabled. The Office will fund water and sanitation services in collective centres and in areas hosting refugees. UNHCR will complete the rehabilitation of water and sanitation facilities in schools attended by refugee children. UNHCR will continue to ensure the availability and quality of water and sanitation services through its partners. To encourage host families to continue to provide accommodation to refugees, UNHCR will support the most vulnerable hosts through the cash-for-shelter project and distribution of firewood or fuel. The six collective centres will be regularly maintained and then refurbished before they are handed back to the Government.

ORGANISATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Management

In 2001, UNHCR's operation in FYR Macedonia will be run by 45 staff (12 international, one Junior Professional Officer and 32 national). Since FYR Macedonia borders on countries which have experienced political, ethnic and social upheaval and is also confronted with growing criminal activities related to human and other trafficking in the region, security for both refugees and humanitarian staff will remain a high priority. UNHCR will continue to participate in UN-wide security arrangements managed by UNSECOORD.

OFFICES

Skopje

Co-ordination

To implement its operations, UNHCR will co-operate with six NGO partners (four international and two national), as well as with four government Ministries, the IFRC and two other organisations. Given its persisting lead agency role in the post-emergency phase, UNHCR will continue to ensure co-ordination of humanitarian assistance and to intervene with the authorities on the right to asylum and other protection and assistance issues. The Office will share information and participate in regular inter-agency and sectoral meetings with four government ministries, four sister UN agencies, ICRC, ECHO, and other international and regional bodies. A principal aim is to ensure a smooth transition from emergency assistance to rehabilitation and longer-term development activities.

BUDGET (USD)

Activities and Services	Annual Programme
Protection, Monitoring and Co-ordination	1,053,708
Community Services	450,000
Domestic Needs/Household Support	400,000
Education	300,000
Food	950,000
Health/Nutrition	400,000
Income Generation	300,000
Legal Assistance	1,400,000
Operational Support (to Agencies)	700,000
Shelter/Other Infrastructure	300,000
Transport/Logistics	500,000
Total Operations	6,753,708
Programme Support	1,308,075
Total	8,061,783

PARTNERS

Government Agencies

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ministry of Internal Affairs

Ministry of Labour and Social Policy

Ministry of Health

NGOs

American Refugee Committee

Civil Society Resource Centre

Danish Refugee Council

International Rescue Committee

Italian Consortium of Solidarity

Macedonian Red Cross

Other

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Institute for Sociological, Political and Judicial Research (CFRMS)

Public Enterprise *Makedonska Posta*

United Nations Volunteers