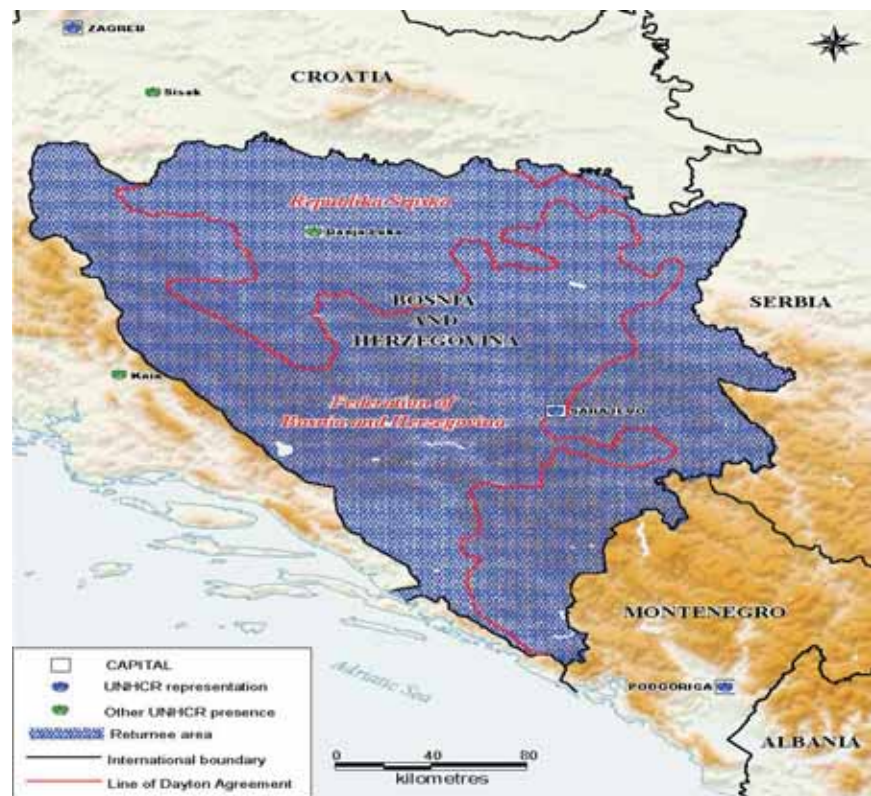


# Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)

## Working environment

### The context

Twelve years after the General Framework Agreement for Peace (GFAP or "Dayton Agreement") came into force, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) maintains a complex political structure. The country of approximately four million inhabitants has 13 constitutions, 14 legal systems, 13 Prime Ministers and some 140 ministries. In this context, negotiating compromises and finding solutions to a number of political, economic and social problems is a tremendous task. The process of bringing about much needed reforms, including those that directly affect the populations of concern to UNHCR, is slow.



Notwithstanding the notable progress achieved in BiH, a number of problems linked to the efficient functioning of State bodies persist: police reform is unfinished, constitutional reform is pending and further legislative amendments pertaining to the social and judicial spheres - including the area of asylum - are also pending. Considering the slowdown of reforms in the country as well as uncertainties about future developments linked to the province of Kosovo and their potential impact on the situation in BiH, the mandate of the Office of High Representative (OHR) was prolonged until June 2008.

The economic situation has somewhat improved but the trade deficit and unemployment rate are among the highest in the region. The latter diminishes employment chances of and decreases livelihood opportunities for the returning IDPs, refugees integrating locally and asylum-seekers. Women, minority and other vulnerable groups are primarily affected by the economic, social and legislative deficiencies.

Though the security situation is stable, ethnically-based incidents continue to be reported in some areas of return.

### The needs

The needs identified during the age, gender and diversity methodology used in BiH is the basis for UNHCR's planned interventions in 2008 and 2009. These identified needs include information regarding rights and entitlements; housing; adequate health care services; access to education; jobs; material assistance (basic relief items); physical security and equitable treatment. Refugees from Croatia specifically point out the lack of employment and health services. The elderly vulnerable groups regard health services and social protection as their priority concerns. Some 7,000 displaced persons in collective centres are particularly vulnerable and live in difficult conditions.

In June 2007, the application of Temporary Admission (TA) status for the displaced people from Kosovo was extended to September 2007. Most TA card holders in the reception centres have applied for asylum. Recognized refugees living outside reception centres will no longer receive subsistence allowances, but will benefit from labour-insertion and vocational training activities.

### Total requirements

2008: 5,615,204

2009: 5,584,304

## Main objectives

UNHCR's goal in BiH is twofold: to find appropriate durable solutions for refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), and to support the government to respond to the needs and rights of people of concern.

- Ensure access of all people of concern to protection, social and economic rights and services, as well as to provide care and maintenance assistance whenever required.
- Enhance the capacity of the national authorities to further develop a functional national legal framework and asylum system compatible with international standards.
- Promote durable solutions for all groups of concern in collaboration with the Governments in the region, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the European Commission.
- Seek durable solutions for extremely vulnerable residents in collective centres through cooperation with the Government and increased advocacy among international agencies and donor governments to respond to their needs.
- Reduce sexual and gender-based violence as well as human trafficking of populations of concern through expanded awareness-raising actions.

## Key Targets for 2008 and 2009

- 100 per cent of reception center residents receive assistance in the form of food and other relief items; 100 per cent of women in reproductive age receive hygienic items; 70 per cent of adult/adolescent residents participate in SGBV activities.
- 100 per cent of asylum-seekers are properly registered and possess legal documents.
- 500 Croatian refugees return home and receive repatriation grants prior to their departure; 150 refugees returning to Croatia receive transport assistance.
- 100 Croatian refugees who opt to remain in BiH receive one-time assistance in the form of construction packages, business grants, or assistance for legalization of small businesses.
- All IDPs, asylum-seekers, refugees and returnees have access to free legal advice.
- 50 vulnerable asylum-seeker and refugee families receive temporary monthly living allowances and receive vocational training and small business grants to integrate locally.
- 30 vulnerable IDP families from collective centres assisted with sustainable return or other durable solutions.
- 20 female victims of domestic violence or trafficking receive social and economic assistance.

## Planning figures

Type of population	Origin	Jan 2008		Dec 2008 / Jan 2009		Dec 2009	
		Total in country	Of whom assisted by UNHCR	Total in country	Of whom assisted by UNHCR	Total in country	Of whom assisted by UNHCR
Refugees	Croatia	6,300	1,500	800	800	400	400
	Serbia	300	300	560	560	360	360
	Various	20	20	30	30	30	30
Asylum-seekers	Serbia	800	800	600	600	500	500
	Various	30	30	30	30	30	30
Returnees (refugees)		1,200	100	1,000	80	800	70
IDPs		123,500	35,000	100,000	28,000	70,000	20,000
Returnees (IDPs)		4,000	2,500	3,800	2,400	3,000	1,900
Others of concern	Croatia	-	-	2,000	1,000	1,000	500
<b>Total</b>		<b>136,150</b>	<b>40,250</b>	<b>108,820</b>	<b>33,500</b>	<b>76,120</b>	<b>23,790</b>



UNHCR/V. Winter

An ethnic Serb family living in a Muslim-dominated region of Bosnia.

## Strategy and activities

UNHCR's strategy for 2008 and 2009 takes into account the multi-faceted difficulties hampering return, as well as the political, economic and social realities prevailing in BiH. Furthermore, the strategy seeks to address legislative gaps that have an impact on refugees and asylum-seekers as well as on other populations of concern.

### Refugees and asylum-seekers

Refugees from Croatia constitute the largest refugee population in BiH. Many have found a durable solution through repatriation and local integration. The remainder, some 7,000 people, were unable to repatriate primarily due to destroyed housing and/or lost tenancy rights in Croatia. The Office will continue its collaboration with OSCE, the European Commission and the BiH Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees to accelerate the full implementation of the Sarajevo Declaration (Sarajevo Process). UNHCR will provide one-time assistance to extremely vulnerable individuals who opt to remain in BiH.

In respect of refugees from other parts of the former Yugoslavia, primarily Kosovo, UNHCR will focus on coordinated assistance for their local integration as few opt for voluntary repatriation. Some specific, eligible cases will be considered for resettlement. Simultaneously, UNHCR will continue to support the authorities in developing relevant asylum by-laws and granting access to civil rights for all populations of concern. As of 2010, the Government is expected to manage refugee issues with only limited material support from UNHCR.

## Refugees and displaced persons in the process to return to and within BiH

UNHCR will play a catalytic role in the return process during 2008 and 2009, with a focus on the sustainability of returns. UNHCR's limited material assistance will target extremely vulnerable individuals and groups, with special attention to displaced people still living in collective accommodation. UNHCR will work with the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB) and the State Commission for Displaced Persons and Refugees to find durable solutions for these residents through housing reconstruction assistance, sustainability activities or social housing. UNHCR will actively advocate among donors and international agencies for additional funds to meet the needs of returnees and displaced. While pursuing durable solutions for these specific vulnerable groups, UNHCR will promote harmonization of laws and regulations at different levels in the country. The focus will be on the administration of justice, employment policies, pension schemes, health services, social welfare and education.

## Constraints

The complex domestic and regional political context will continue to affect BiH. Slow economic growth is likely to prevent the Government from allocating sufficient resources to the national health and social services to meet the needs of vulnerable refugees and IDPs.

High unemployment can further impede both returns to or within BiH. The implementation of the Sarajevo Declaration will require a concerted effort by all parties involved and the process will likely continue until the end of 2008.

## Organization and implementation

### UNHCR presence

	2008	2009
Number of offices	1	1
Total staff	37	35
International	4	4
National	26	26
UNVs	5	5
JPOs	1	0
Deployees	1	0

## Coordination

UNHCR will work closely with the authorities at all levels including as a member of the Board of Principals (which is chaired by the High Representative), the UN Country Team and the Sarajevo Process. UNHCR will also work with the OSCE, the European Commission, donor embassies in Sarajevo and multilateral and bilateral bodies.

### Partners

#### Implementing partners

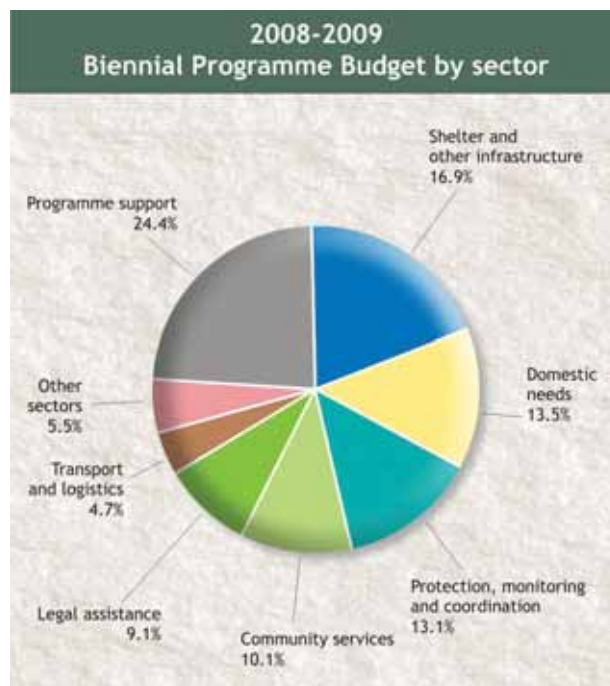
**Government:** Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees, Ministry of Security.

**NGOs:** Bosnia and Herzegovina Humanitarian Logistics Service, Bosnia and Herzegovina Women's Initiative, Foundation for Local Democracy, Catholic Relief Services, Hilfswerk Austria, Vasa Prava.

#### Operational partners

**NGOs:** *Hilfswerk Austria*, Mercy Corps (Scotland), Vasa Prava, Danish Refugee Council.

**Others:** Council of Europe Development Bank, European Commission, Swiss Development Corporation, World Bank.



### Budget (USD)

Activities and services	Annual Programme Budget		
	2007	2008	2009
Protection, monitoring and coordination	1,423,093	731,620	734,447
Community services	634,784	531,475	605,111
Domestic needs	467,069	745,877	766,938
Food	173,561	182,846	101,581
Health	42,406	18,285	10,158
Legal assistance	621,085	541,521	473,800
Operational support (to agencies)	183,412	147,362	150,749
Shelter and other infrastructure	1,219,468	1,021,230	1,174,957
Transport and logistics	338,216	311,403	216,707
<b>Total operations</b>	<b>5,103,093</b>	<b>4,231,620</b>	<b>4,234,447</b>
Programme support	1,599,071	1,383,584	1,349,857
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,702,164</b>	<b>5,615,204</b>	<b>5,584,304</b>