

F.Y.R. MACEDONIA IN SHORT

THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

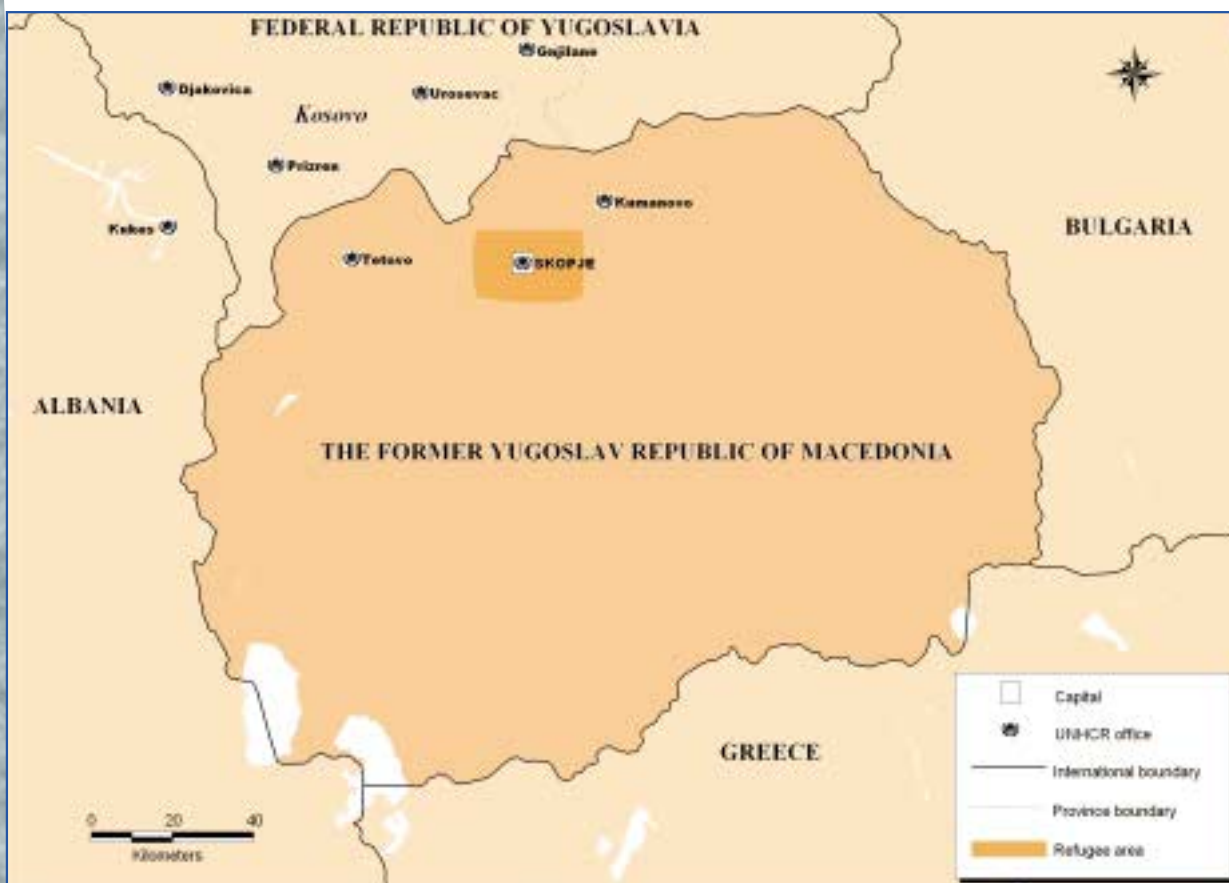
IN SHORT

Main Objectives

- Help the national authorities develop and implement an adequate system of asylum.
- Consolidate durable solutions for current refugees.
- Continue humanitarian assistance based on needs of the remaining refugee population.
- Rehabilitate and develop areas previously occupied by refugee camps.



Planning Figures		
Population	Jan. 2000	Dec. 2000
Ethnic Albanian		
Refugees from Kosovo	10,000	5,000
Other Ethnic Minorities from Kosovo/Federal Republic of Yugoslavia	5,000	4,000
Total	15,000	9,000
Total Requirements USD 15,100,891		





W

WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Recent Developments

As of early October 1999, the number of refugees in The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia stood at approximately 15,000. This figure contrasts with the 255,000 refugees recorded in mid-June, immediately before the massive spontaneous repatriation which followed the entry of NATO troops into Kosovo. Of this total, about 5,000 continue to be housed in the three camps and two collective centres that remain operational, while some 10,000 are hosted in private accommodation. Ethnic Albanians from Kosovo continue to comprise the bulk of the refugee population but there is also a sizeable number of refugees of ethnic Albanian origin from the Preshevo/Bujanovce area of Serbia (up to 3,000 in camps and host families) and a slowly but steadily growing number of Roma refugees (up to 4,000 in camps and host families). There are also about 400 refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina, who came before the recent emergency.

The attitude of the Macedonian Government towards refugees continues to be flexible and the working relationship with UNHCR can be described as cooperative. The Government is anxious to encourage voluntary repatriation and would like to see the existing camps closed before winter, with the remaining refugees transferred to alternative accommodation in collective centres or with host families. These objectives accord with UNHCR's own short-term goals.

UNHCR recognises the need to capitalise on the momentum created by the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe and on Macedonia's ongoing negotiations with the European Commission regarding association with the European Union (EU). At the same time, the OSCE and the Council of Europe aim to bring Macedonia's national law into line with recognised standards. The Government has embarked on constructive negotiations with European institutions and UN agencies, including UNHCR. The EU Presidency and the European Commission Monitoring Mission have been involved. UNHCR therefore looks forward to progress on human rights, statelessness, full implementation of refugee law in line with the 1951 Convention, and regional burden-sharing in the hosting of persecuted ethnic minorities.

Constraints

So far, the Government has provided refugees from Kosovo and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia with temporary protection until 28 March 2000. UNHCR will negotiate with the Government for the granting of asylum and protection for those persons in need of international protection.

STRATEGY

Protection and Solutions

UNHCR will focus on a national asylum procedure which will fulfil the obligations assumed by the country on acceding to the 1951 Convention. At the same time, voluntary repatriation will continue to be encouraged and other durable solutions sought, such as resettlement and local integration.

The Macedonian Government has decided to allow the remaining ethnic Albanian refugees from Kosovo to stay in the country until 28 March 2000 and has urged the UN and concerned organisations to step up activities to create conditions for their safe return to Kosovo. Voluntary repatriation remains the preferred solution for this group.

A different approach is needed for other groups such as Serbs and Roma from Kosovo, as well as ethnic Albanian origin refugees from south-eastern Serbia. Given the prevailing situation in Kosovo and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, asylum in The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continues to be the favoured option for this group, pending an improvement in the security situation. At the same time, resettlement may be considered for a few individual cases, and the authorities will be encouraged to allow local integration of those unable to return to their places of origin for protection reasons.

Assistance

Humanitarian relief assistance will continue to be provided to refugees, with a particular emphasis on the needs of the most vulnerable. This includes education for refugee children, assistance to host families and support for national institutions to sustain and strengthen their capacity to provide asylum to refugees. In this respect, UNHCR will provide necessary inputs and technical advice, as well as training activities for government officials and national NGOs.

ORGANISATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Host families will receive assistance including help with shelter repairs. Long-term shelter facilities for refugees may need to be identified or constructed in order to accommodate those who are unable to return to their places of origin.

Rehabilitation of former camp sites will be a priority, minimising environmental damage and encouraging sustainable development of the sites by national and local government, international organisations and multilateral development agencies.

UNHCR will ensure that refugees continue to enjoy access to health services by adequately supporting Macedonian health institutions. Together with WFP, IFRC and the Macedonian Red Cross, UNHCR will guarantee an appropriate nutrition level and regular provision of food to the refugees.

In the area of legal assistance, UNHCR will carry out a series of activities designed to strengthen the expertise and resources of national institutions. These activities will help to consolidate existing links or forge new ones with relevant government departments, legislators and the judiciary, as well as academic institutions and national NGOs dealing with human rights issues.

UNHCR will continue to offer repatriation assistance to refugees. Other durable solutions, such as local integration and resettlement, will be pursued and the necessary support given to the authorities.

Operations in Kosovo will continue to receive logistical, administrative, financial and communications support from the UNHCR office in Skopje.

Desired Impact

UNHCR's presence and activities in the country should result in enhanced protection of refugees and in durable solutions to their plight, while facilitating the adoption of a national asylum law. National institutions and organisations involved in refugee assistance will be supported in their work. The local population will also benefit from these improvements.

Management Structure

Until early 1999, before the influx of refugees from Kosovo, UNHCR had a Liaison Office in Skopje with nine staff members. During the emergency phase, the Office was headed by the Emergency Coordinator and approximately 100 national staff were hired and international staff sent there on mission. To protect and assist the remaining refugees after the emergency, it is expected that UNHCR will have a Branch Office with 18 international and 52 national staff members in the year 2000.

Coordination

As the lead agency, UNHCR will organise and chair sectoral coordination meetings and meetings of heads of UN agencies. Although the emergency phase is coming to a close, the continued importance of these meetings should not be underestimated. UNHCR's role includes overseeing all activities relating to refugees. This means directing the efforts of the various agencies so that all the refugees' needs are met, while ensuring that work is not duplicated and that no key activity is overlooked.

UNHCR, together with the Government, will in 2000 endeavour to form a handover strategy to development agencies.

Offices

Skopje

Partners

Government Agencies

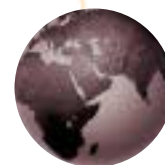
Ministry of Interior
Ministry of Labour
Ministry of Urban Planning and Construction

NGOs

American Refugee Committee
Arbeiter Samariter Bund
Danish Refugee Council
International Medical Corps
International Rescue Committee
Macedonian Red Cross
OXFAM
Swiss Disaster Relief

Other

International Federation of Red Cross
and Red Crescent Societies



Budget

Activities and Services	Annual Programme
Protection, Monitoring and Coordination	1,579,536
Community Services	130,000
Domestic Needs/ Household Support	1,060,000
Education	516,960
Food	383,790
Health/Nutrition	809,000
Income Generation	533,500
Legal Assistance	1,271,310
Operational Support (to Agencies)	400,000
Shelter/Other Infrastructure	3,633,840
Transport/Logistics	1,395,300
Total Operations	11,713,236
Programme Support	3,387,655
Total	15,100,891

