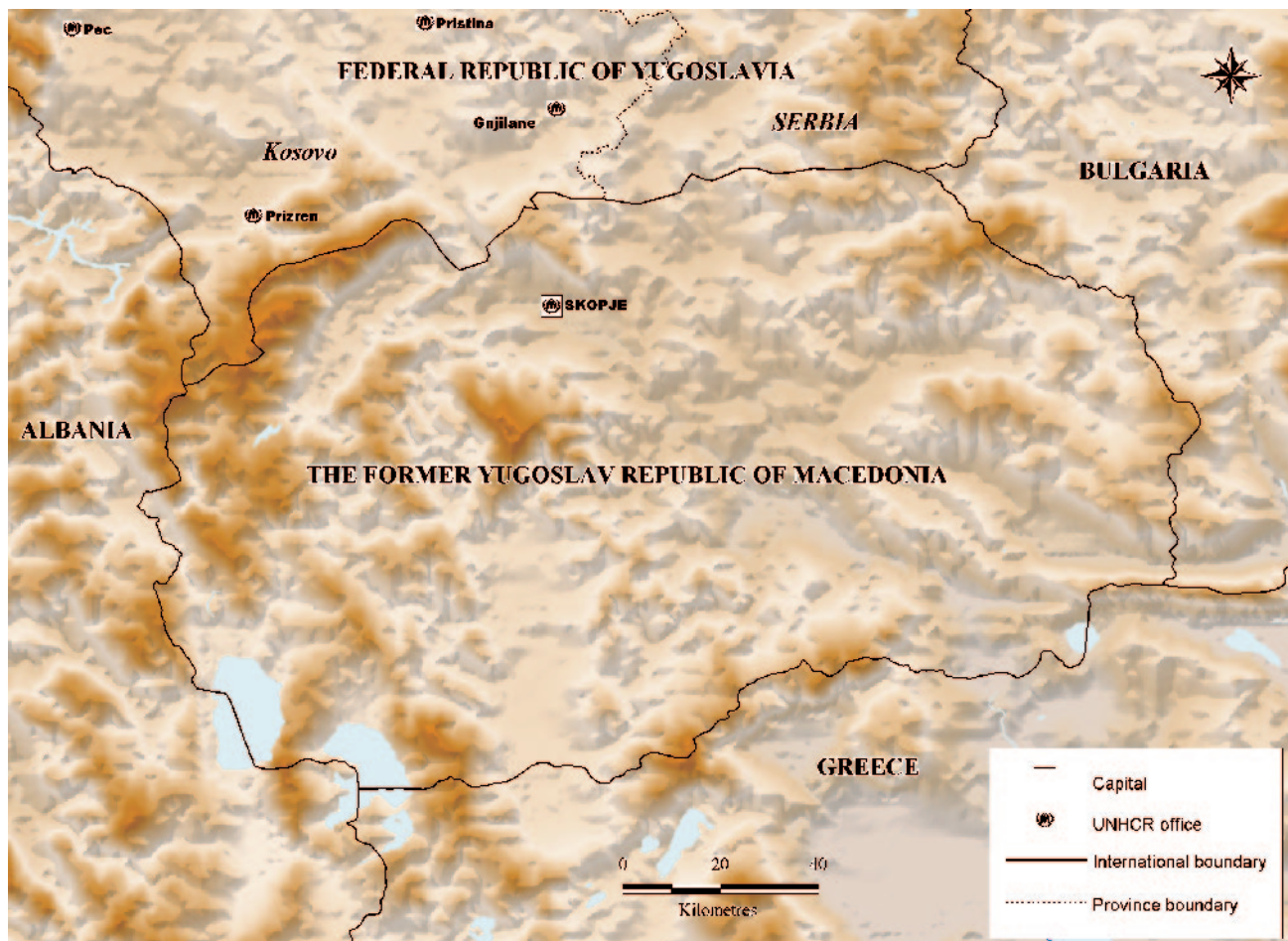


# The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia



## Main Objectives

Promote durable solutions for refugees through repatriation, local integration or resettlement. Continue to protect and assist refugees; provide targeted support to refugee women, children, adolescents, 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 government efforts to forge links with European institutions and the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe. 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. Main-

tain readiness (through contingency planning and a stockpile of relief items) for a possible displacement of 20,000 persons. Establish a presence at main border crossings, particularly with Kosovo. Introduce confidence-building measures to facilitate the return of refugees and IDPs.

## Impact

- Some 1,634 refugees repatriated voluntarily to FRY (Kosovo and southern Serbia), in cooperation with IOM.
- Return kits, firewood, hygiene parcels, and baby parcels were distributed; 1,678 families (estimated 8,390 persons) benefited from the shelter repair programme; 670 disabled IDPs received targeted assistance.

- 750 refugee families in private accommodation each received three cubic metres of firewood for heating. Some 256 families in Suto Orizari collective centre regularly received firewood for cooking and heating. All refugees regularly received basic and complementary food.
- Six collective centres for refugees were merged into two, allowing improved monitoring and logistics support, and a further reduction of management staff.
- A total of 9,748 refugees and IDPs were assisted with consultations and/or health advice, 604 were referred to specialists, and 258 referred to hospital (444 laboratory examinations, and 72 X-ray examinations).
- Temporary Humanitarian Assistance and Protection (THAP) was extended to minorities from Kosovo until March 28 2002. Some 1,839 families consisting of 3,354 persons (asylum-seekers, refugees, those in receipt of THAP and persons with unregulated citizenship) received free legal and social assistance.
- The Asylum Bureau processed the asylum claims of 195 persons from countries outside the former Yugoslavia, of whom 32 were granted refugee status. Forty-one cases were discontinued by the applicants, while 68 cases were rejected by a final decision. Fifty-four cases rejected by the Asylum Bureau are pending administrative appeal.
- Some 56 refugees departed for third countries under the resettlement programme; seven fami-

lies (26 people) are awaiting a decision. The files of 301 members of RAE (Roma, Ashkalija and Egyptian) ethnic groups from Kosovo were submitted for resettlement consideration.

## Working Environment

### The Context

The conflict between ethnic Albanian armed groups and the Macedonian armed forces began in February 2001 and continued into August, giving rise to urgent humanitarian needs in the northern and western areas. A joint UN contingency plan was implemented and guided the emergency response to the forced displacement of some 140,000 persons (50,000 within FYR Macedonia; approximately 90,000 to Kosovo and southern Serbia.) This development required an adjustment of the overall humanitarian strategy for FYR Macedonia, which had been focused on assisting the residual refugees and building a national protection system. By the end of 2001, an estimated 16,371 persons remained displaced within FYR Macedonia and all but 9,000 had returned from abroad. The majority of the IDPs were hosted with family and friends, while 2,871 stayed in collective centres. The return of these IDPs and the remaining refugees will depend on continued political progress and improvements in physical security, especially for localised minorities. In addition,

progress on legal security (amnesty), reconstruction of destroyed homes and public buildings, and access to basic services and economic activities is a prerequisite for the return process to continue.

### Constraints

The seven-month internal conflict in FYR Macedonia ended with the Framework Agreement (FA) signed in Ohrid in August 2001. The main impediments to return of people displaced by the crisis were lack of clarity on amnesty, lack of freedom of movement, the tense security

Persons of Concern				
Main Origin/ Type of Population	Total in Country	Of whom UNHCR assisted	Per cent Female	Per cent under 18
Returnees (from FRY)	82,000	10,900	-	-
FYR Macedonia (IDPs)	16,400	-	50	33
Returnees (from Albania)	4,600	-	-	-
FRY (Refugees)	4,300	4,300	50	48

Income and Expenditure (USD) Annual Programme Budget and Supplementary Programme Budget					
	Revised Budget	Income from Contributions <sup>1</sup>	Other Funds Available <sup>2</sup>	Total Funds Available	Total Expenditure
AB	6,733,063	2,336,547	3,124,692	5,461,239	5,445,738
SB	5,662,628	2,684,621	1,576,029	4,260,650	4,255,415
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12,395,691</b>	<b>5,021,168</b>	<b>4,700,721</b>	<b>9,721,889</b>	<b>9,701,153</b>

<sup>1</sup> Includes income from contributions restricted at the country level.

<sup>2</sup> Includes allocations by UNHCR from unearmarked or broadly earmarked contributions, opening balance and adjustments.

The above figures do not include costs at Headquarters.

situation, the presence of landmines and unexploded ordnance, destroyed homes, destroyed infrastructure and closed or damaged schools and healthcare facilities. The conflict also severely affected the running of government in general. Refugees and IDPs of mixed ethnicity have been affected by the deterioration of the situation. When the conflict reached areas where refugees enjoyed temporary protection, UNHCR designed a contingency plan to ensure their continued protection should the conflict worsen further. The need for physical relocation of some refugees to safer areas was an added burden for the refugee assistance programme.

## Funding

The refugee programme was revised downward in line with Actions 1 and 2. At the initial stage of the crisis it was also necessary to absorb unexpected costs within the annual programme. With the establishment of the emergency programme, funding requirements proved adequate for the newly displaced persons.

## Achievement and Impact

### Protection and Solutions

At the beginning of the year local integration was envisaged for the majority of the refugees, but that prospect soon became less viable. Nevertheless, the Office completed a survey of ethnic Gorani refugees to determine integration prospects. UNHCR also surveyed undocumented cases to assess their status and the chances of regularising their stay in FYR Macedonia.

The Draft Law on Asylum was revised by the Ministry of Interior (MOI) after the receipt of comments from the EU Directorate General for Justice and Home Affairs. It was then re-submitted to the Governmental Commission on the Political System for further processing. The Governmental Commission reviews appeals against decisions taken by

the Ministry of Interior (both asylum and citizenship). In 2001, this commission began to receive appeals from rejected asylum-seekers.

Institutional capacity-building activities for the Department for Asylum and Immigration (within the Ministry of Interior) were concluded. The Country Team, established within the framework of the Stability Pact Asylum and Migration Initiative, held its first meeting in Skopje and is expected to provide additional support to the development of the asylum system. UNHCR continued to support the MOI in the adoption of amendments to the Citizenship Law and continued its financial and capacity-building support to the local NGO Legal Network.

The resettlement strategy was revised and more systematic pre-screening was undertaken. UNHCR formally advised the Government to extend an amnesty to draft evaders and deserters.



The mixed emotions of coming home – not knowing what life will be like. Returnees from Kosovo in Skopje region. *UNHCR / B. Betzel*

### Activities and Assistance

**Community Services:** UNHCR's implementing partners continued to target women, children and vulnerable groups, particularly the Roma community, with projects on reproductive health, education, vocational training, psychosocial support, recreational activities and the training of local partners. Many of the projects were designed to help

refugees to adapt and integrate into local communities. As part of its exit strategy, UNHCR supported the Government Inter-municipal Centre for Social Work and the national college for vocational training, from which 182 refugees graduated.

**Domestic Needs/Household Support:** UNHCR distributed firewood to refugees, returnees, IDPs, schools and ambulantas. A total of 9,322 cubic metres of firewood was distributed: 5,200 in the Tetovo area (for 2,345 families and eight schools) and 4,122 in the Kumanovo area (1,905 families and seven schools). Each IDP family received two cubic metres and schools received three cubic metres per classroom. Three cubic metres of firewood per family were distributed to some 750 families hosting refugees. Hygiene kits consisting of soap, washing powder, toothbrushes, toothpaste and toilet paper were distributed. New underwear and second-hand clothes were provided. Sanitary napkins and nappies were provided on a monthly basis. Baby kits were regularly distributed to all refugee children (soap, powder and blankets.)

**Education:** UNHCR supported access to higher education for refugee students. Twenty-three students received grants from this programme, including 13 Roma, four Serb, and six Gorani refugees.

**Food:** Refugees continued to receive basic food from WFP and standard complementary food was provided by an international NGO. The Red Cross was responsible for distribution of basic and complementary food to refugees in host families. To ensure the effectiveness, accountability, transparency and impartiality of food distribution, an international NGO was tasked to support food distribution and to monitor overall food assistance to refugees across the country.

**Health/Nutrition:** Refugees had access to national health care facilities. Refugees in collective centres received primary healthcare, which included mother and child clinics, and referrals to public medical institutions when necessary. UNHCR provided accessible and affordable health care services to refugees and the vulnerable local Roma community. Basic medication was distributed in collective centres. The total number of consultations was 13,674. UNHCR met the material needs

of vulnerable and disabled IDPs and returnees. Some 670 vulnerable individuals benefited from this assistance.

**Legal Assistance:** UNHCR's border monitoring facilitated the spontaneous return of undocumented refugees from Kosovo to FYR Macedonia. Three mobile UNHCR teams were deployed to monitor 90 of the 102 affected villages in Tetovo, Kumanovo, and Skopje, to deliver assistance to returnees/IDPs and to assess and monitor the situation. Eleven bus services were established to ensure freedom of movement for the returnees and displaced persons. New arrivals from Kosovo and from outside of the region had access to a refugee status determination (RSD) procedure. UNHCR and legal NGO representatives were invited to attend RSD interviews conducted by the Asylum Bureau. The asylum-seekers' reception centre in Skopje is operational. NGOs provided free legal assistance to undocumented long-term residents and those who risk becoming stateless.

**Operational Support (to Agencies):** UNHCR contributed to the operational support costs of its implementing partners and provided programme and finance training to NGO's. A number of public information activities were organised throughout the year.

**Shelter/Other Infrastructure:** UNHCR merged the collective centres throughout the year in order to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of assistance. The collective centres were reduced in number from six to two, both located in the Skopje area. Some 13 quick impact projects were implemented: repairs to public buildings and roads; small water systems and reservoirs; the repair of latrines; sewage systems; and waste management.

UNHCR ensured the repair of 1,678 houses occupied by vulnerable families in Skopje, Tetovo and Kumanovo (either through the provision of materials only, or direct assistance). Of the 8,390 persons benefiting from the programme, 10 per cent were unable to undertake their own repairs and were therefore assisted with contract labour.

**Transport /Logistics:** This sector involved storage, procurement, transport and distribution of assistance to implementing partners and UNHCR field teams. Two warehouses were maintained.

## Organisation and Implementation

### Management

UNHCR implemented its phase-down (gradual withdrawal) in line with the strategy submitted under the Country Operations Plan in 2000, with the aim of reducing the number of staff to 34 by the end of 2001. Due to unforeseen events, the Office had to restructure its resources, both human and financial. Posts due to be discontinued were extended and emergency staff had to be deployed. A total of 30 members of staff were on mission at various times during 2001. Forty local members of staff were contracted. The radio network was extended to cover all agencies. Two satellite offices were temporarily established.

### Working with Others

UNHCR continued working closely with the Government, the EU, the UN agencies, and national and international NGOs to address the needs of the refugee caseload. UNHCR continued to work to strengthen the national protection system through training and other capacity-building measures for the Government, as well as representatives of civil society. Donors were given regular briefings. The Macedonian Government's Crisis Management Centre served as an effective conduit for communication with the Defence and Interior ministries.

## Overall Assessment

UNHCR adjusted its focus in response to the spring 2001 crisis, and succeeded in accomplishing its revised objectives. The return programme and procedures were discussed and approved by all relevant parties as an integral part of the political dialogue which resolved the conflict. Throughout the crisis period, a constructive dialogue was maintained with the authorities on asylum and citizenship issues, despite the pressures on them. UNHCR did not neglect its refugee assistance programme when the crisis erupted; it also played a complementary role to that of ICRC in providing assistance to IDPs.

### Offices

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Skopje

### Partners

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#### Government Agencies

Ministry of Interior  
Ministry of Labour and Social Policy  
Public Enterprise "Makedonska Posta"

#### NGOs

American Refugee Committee  
Catholic Relief Services  
Civil Society Resource Center  
*Cooperazione e Sviluppo*  
El Hilal – Humanitarian Organisation  
Handicap International  
IFRC  
International Rescue Committee  
Italian Consortium of Solidarity  
Macedonian Centre for International Co-operation  
Macedonian Red Cross  
OXFAM  
Shelter Now International  
VITRA Foundation

#### Others

Institute for Sociological, Political and Juridical Research  
WFP  
UNVs

Financial Report (USD)						
Expenditure Breakdown	Current Year's Projects			Prior Years' Projects		
	Annual Programme Budget	Supplementary Programme Budget	Total	notes	Annual Programme Budget	notes
Protection, Monitoring and Co-ordination	747,315	248,552	995,867		1,022,976	
Community Services	378,648	117,399	496,047		60,578	
Domestic Needs / Household Support	297,671	484,061	781,732		52,927	
Education	371	0	371		0	
Food	98,238	0	98,238		2,631	
Health / Nutrition	99,290	64,502	163,792		2,999	
Income Generation	296	0	296		0	
Legal Assistance	265,073	283,191	548,264		33,679	
Operational Support (to Agencies)	283,523	76,990	360,513		176,820	
Shelter / Other Infrastructure	947,855	1,048,491	1,996,346		286,115	
Transport / Logistics	572,679	281,822	854,501		53,307	
Water	0	11	11		0	
Instalments with Implementing Partners	579,138	755,231	1,334,369		(355,940)	
<b>Sub-total Operational</b>	<b>4,270,097</b>	<b>3,360,250</b>	<b>7,630,347</b>		<b>336,092</b>	
Programme Support	987,711	260,019	1,247,730		10,174	
<b>Sub-total Disbursements / Deliveries</b>	<b>5,257,808</b>	<b>3,620,269</b>	<b>8,878,077</b>	<b>(3)</b>	<b>346,266</b>	<b>(5)</b>
Unliquidated Obligations	187,930	635,146	823,076	(3)	0	(5)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,445,738</b>	<b>4,255,415</b>	<b>9,701,153</b>	<b>(1) (3)</b>	<b>346,266</b>	

#### Instalments with Implementing Partners

Payments Made	2,600,636	1,398,637	3,999,273		461,498	
Reporting Received	2,021,498	643,406	2,664,904		817,438	
<b>Balance</b>	<b>579,138</b>	<b>755,231</b>	<b>1,334,369</b>		<b>(355,940)</b>	
Outstanding 1st January	0	0	0		590,511	
Refunded to UNHCR	0	0	0		142,128	
Currency Adjustment	0	0	0		(69,566)	
<b>Outstanding 31 December</b>	<b>579,138</b>	<b>755,231</b>	<b>1,334,369</b>		<b>22,877</b>	

#### Unliquidated Obligations

Outstanding 1st January	0	0	0		464,578	(5)
New Obligations	5,445,738	4,255,415	9,701,153	(1)	0	
Disbursements	5,257,808	3,620,269	8,878,077	(3)	346,266	(5)
Cancellations	0	0	0		118,312	(5)
<b>Outstanding 31 December</b>	<b>187,930</b>	<b>635,146</b>	<b>823,076</b>	<b>(3)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(5)</b>

Figures which cross reference to Accounts:

- (1) Annex to Statement 1
- (3) Schedule 3
- (5) Schedule 5