

# The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

## Quick facts

|   |                         |
|---|-------------------------|
| Number of IDPs                          | 770                     |
| Start of current displacement situation | 2001                    |
| Peak number of IDPs (and year)          | 74,000 (2001)           |
| New displacement in 2008                | 0                       |
| Returns in 2008                         | 0                       |
| Causes of displacement                  | Internal armed conflict |
| Human development index                 | 68                      |

Tensions in Macedonia between ethnic Macedonians and ethnic Albanians culminated in violent conflict in 2001 which displaced over 171,000 people, 74,000 of them within the country. Since then, over 99 per cent have returned and only around 770 people remained displaced. Most of those still displaced in 2008 were ethnic Macedonians or Serbs who did not feel safe to return to the Albanian-dominated Lipkovo-Aracinovo area. Among them, over 400 were accommodated privately while more than 300 still lived in very poor conditions in collective centres. The support from authorities was not sufficient for the most vulnerable among them, such as elderly and sick people and single-headed households, to obtain accommodation elsewhere.

The Orhid peace agreement of 2001 addressed the main claim from ethnic Albanians for equal participation in political, social, economic, cultural life. It provided greater protection of the rights of minority groups and set out the framework for the return of the displaced population. The government has largely supported the right of IDPs to return and implemented the reforms required by the framework agreement, but discrimination has continued between the ethnic Macedonian majority and the Albanian minority (who make up 25 per cent of the population) in areas such as education, employment and political participation.

During the 2008 parliamentary elections, electoral irregularities and incidents of violence in Albanian-dominated areas reinforced the reluctance of IDPs to return. Some have struggled to access compensation for property damaged during the conflict, though several IDPs have submitted claims before local courts or to the European Court of Human Rights.

Most organisations, including the EU and the OSCE, have phased out their assistance and monitoring of IDPs to focus on improvement of inter-ethnic relations.

