



Regional
Housing
Programme

RHP NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2018





Messages from Partner Country Representatives



Semiha Borovac, Minister of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina

By December 2018, the construction of 776 housing units has been completed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, while the (re)construction of 781 housing units is currently in progress. A total of 3 192 beneficiary families or more than 10 000 refugees, displaced persons and returnees in BiH, will be given a roof over their heads under the RHP.

It is also important to mention the successful provision of complementary measures for social and economic sustainability of RHP beneficiaries in BiH, implemented by the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) from the funds provided by the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) and the Swiss Government, which have supported 433 RHP beneficiary families by the end of 2018. Furthermore, the funds to support additional 96 families in 2019 have been ensured. Through complementary sustainability measures, we continue to work on strengthening the capacity of local communities that play a crucial role in the improvement of social and economic infrastructure, creating conditions for employment, education and social and health care of the RHP beneficiaries.

In addition to providing adequate housing solutions for beneficiaries, BiH will further strive for increasing sustainability and visibility of the RHP in BiH, as well as continue to strengthen the successful cooperation with the other Partner Countries.



**Nikola Mazar, State Secretary,
Central State Office for Reconstruction and Housing Care of the Republic of Croatia**

Let me take this opportunity to highlight that, in the course of the year 2018, the Republic of Croatia has continued successfully to implement projects within the scope of the Regional Housing Programme. Five projects have been fully completed, allowing the delivery of 93 housing units to beneficiaries.

Bearing in mind that each beneficiary has to be provided with a housing solution, Croatia is determined, in 2019, to continue implementing one existing project and the three new ones that have been approved by the RHP Fund Assembly of Donors. We are looking forward to continuing, in the future, our fruitful cooperation with all stakeholders included in the Regional Housing Programme.



Kemal Purisic, Minister of Labour and Social Welfare, Montenegro

In the year 2018, Montenegro has achieved remarkable results in the implementation of the Regional Housing Programme. This year, we have completed the construction of 51 housing units in addition to the previously completed 120 apartments in Camp Konik, providing accommodation for 171 families and thus closing one of the largest refugee settlements in the Balkans.

We are especially proud of the completion of construction of the Home for the Elderly in Pljevlja, providing care and accommodation for the most vulnerable elderly population.

Construction of apartments in Berane and purchase of apartments in Herceg Novi are also activities implemented in the framework of the Regional Housing Programme, which have today entered their final phase.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the donors, the partner institutions and the countries concerned and to compliment the remarkable achievements of the RHP team.



Vladimir Cucic, Commissioner for Refugees and Migration of the Republic of Serbia

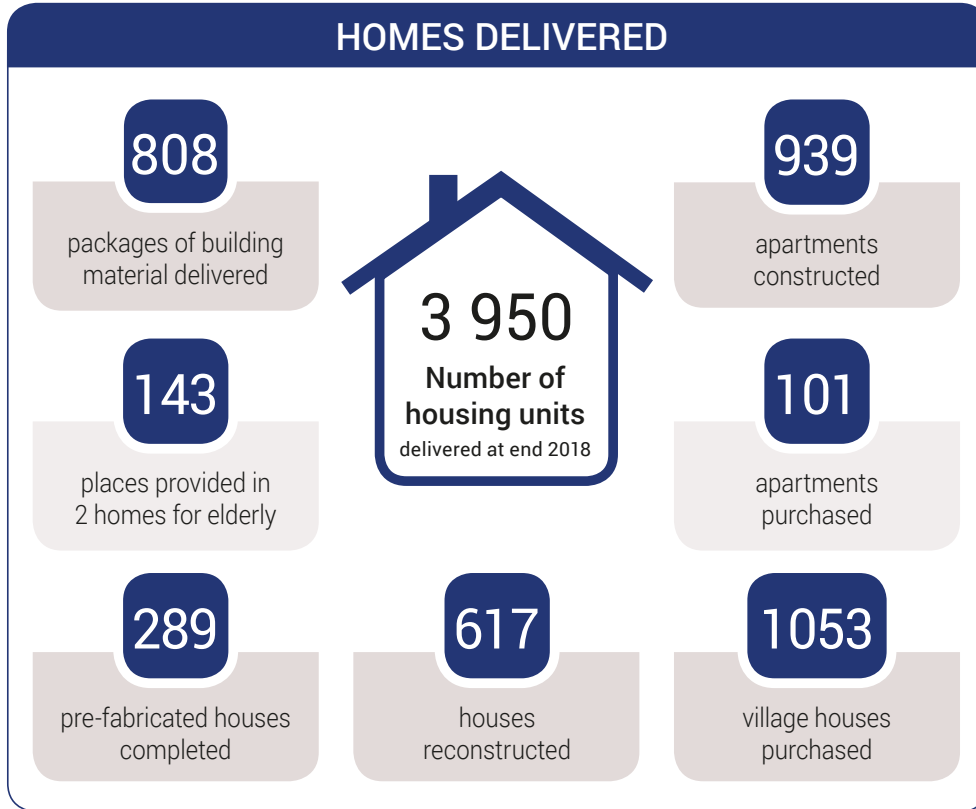
Implementation of the Regional Housing Programme in the Republic of Serbia continued at a strong pace also during the course of 2018. This year has been marked by a momentum towards construction of apartments, without simultaneously ceasing to put effort into delivering other housing modalities at the same pace. In March, 235 families moved into the housing complex in Ovca, while large apartment construction sites have been inaugurated in Novi Sad and Stara Pazova; therefore, in addition to a number of construction sites inaugurated this and last year, we are expecting a significant number of housing units to be completed in the year to come.

The Commissariat for Refugees and Migration of the Republic of Serbia remains strongly committed to the implementation of this project - highly significant for many beneficiary families in our country.



Milestones in 2018

At the end of 2018, a total of 3 950 RHP housing units will have been delivered in the four Partner Countries:



RHP IMPLEMENTATION STATUS - KEY FIGURES DECEMBER 2018

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| Number of approved sub-projects | 31 |
| Total estimated cost of approved sub-projects | EUR 277 million |
| Total approved grant amount | EUR 230 million |
| Total national contribution | EUR 47 million |
| Number of households concerned | 11 300 |
| Number of beneficiaries concerned | 34 000 |
| Total amount disbursed | EUR 120 million |
| Housing Units delivered | 3 950 |

Implementation Highlights



BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

In 2018, Bosnia and Herzegovina made good progress in implementing the four ongoing sub-projects. Under BiH1 and BiH2, 176 houses were delivered to beneficiaries, while five multi-apartment buildings were constructed and inaugurated under the sub-project BiH3 in the following municipalities/towns: Bosanski Petrovac (20 apartments), Ilidza (18 apartments), Prijedor (50 apartments), Zenica (62 apartments) and Olovo (16 apartments). These 166 apartments are managed under the social non-profit housing model. Also, works on the (re)construction of 435 family houses started under the sub-project BiH4. The Assembly of Donors approved the latest sub-project BiH6 (235 houses and 380 apartments) in June 2018. Furthermore, it was agreed to use the savings made under BiH2 to finance the missing infrastructure for houses (re)constructed under the sub-projects BiH1, BiH2 and BiH4, as well as for the design of houses and buildings that will be constructed under BiH6. A total of 776 housing units were constructed in BiH by the end of 2018. Works are currently in progress in 1 172 housing units in 83 municipalities, 2/3 of which are in the actual construction phase.

By the end of 2018, a total of 433 RHP beneficiary families were supported through social and economic sustainability measures, while the U.S. Government, the Government of Switzerland, the CEB, the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees and the Entity Ministries have ensured the funds to continue supporting sustainability of RHP beneficiaries in 2019.

By the first half of 2021, 3 192 housing units for about 10 000 refugees, displaced persons and returnees will be delivered within the RHP in Bosnia and Herzegovina.



REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

Year 2018 was the year that marked the close-out of several RHP projects in Croatia: sub-projects HR2, HR3, HR4 and HR5 entered the project close-out phase, which means that only expenditure verification and final reports have to be completed before final closure. Sub-project HR6, "Re/construction of 62 family houses", is ongoing and will be finished in 2019. The total cost of these six sub-projects amounts to approximately EUR 19 million, EUR 14 million of which is funded through the RHP and EUR 5 million through national contribution.

During 2018, in total 93 RHP beneficiaries moved into new homes in Croatia; 48 beneficiaries moved into the Home for Elderly in Glina (HR3), 4 families got their new flats through sub-project HR4, 21 families moved into the newly constructed building in Benkovac (HR5) and 20 family houses were re/constructed through sub-project HR6.

Despite the fact that considerable work has already been accomplished, the remaining needs for housing care in Croatia are still substantial. Therefore, the RHP Fund Assembly of Donors approved in June 2018 three new sub-projects for Croatia: HR7 - "Construction of an apartment building for 21 families in Vukovar"; HR8 - "Renovation, reconstruction or construction of 25 family houses"; and HR9 - "Purchase of 38 flats", thereby providing new housing solutions for an additional 84 families. The total cost of these new sub-projects amounts to approximately EUR 3.9 million, out of which EUR 2.7 million will be financed by the RHP Fund and EUR 1.2 million by national contribution. The Grant Agreement for the sub-project HR7 was signed in November 2018, and for the remaining two sub-projects, the Grant Agreements will be signed in 2019.

By the end of the RHP in mid-2021, in total 412 housing solutions will have been delivered to around 1 000 refugees, displaced persons and returnees within the RHP in Croatia.



MONTENEGRO

In 2018, Montenegro saw the successful completion of the construction works of 51 housing units in addition to previously constructed 120 apartments in the Konik Camp in Podgorica. These buildings now provide homes to 171 most vulnerable families who have spent almost 20 years in tents and containers.

Construction works on the Home for the elderly/handicapped persons in Pljevlja were finalised in April 2018, providing accommodation for 68 tenants.

The construction of 94 apartments in the municipality of Berane for 271 persons has also been completed and the beneficiaries should move in in January 2019.

In 2018, Montenegro also commenced with preliminary activities on two sub-projects: purchase of 36 apartments in the municipality in Herceg Novi and construction of 50 individual houses in various municipalities, altogether providing housing solutions to close to 400 RHP beneficiaries.



REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

In 2018, the keys for the first constructed apartments were delivered under the Regional Housing Programme in Serbia. A total of 235 beneficiary families moved into apartments in Ovca, Belgrade, while keys have been delivered to 40 families in Sremska Mitrovica. 15 refugee families moved into their new housing in Arilje.

The intensive construction of 270 apartments in Kamendin, Zemun, is currently in progress, scheduled for inauguration by the summer of 2019. Large construction sites have been inaugurated in Novi Sad, Stara Pazova and Nis, while construction works are in progress at nearly 30 construction sites across Serbia.

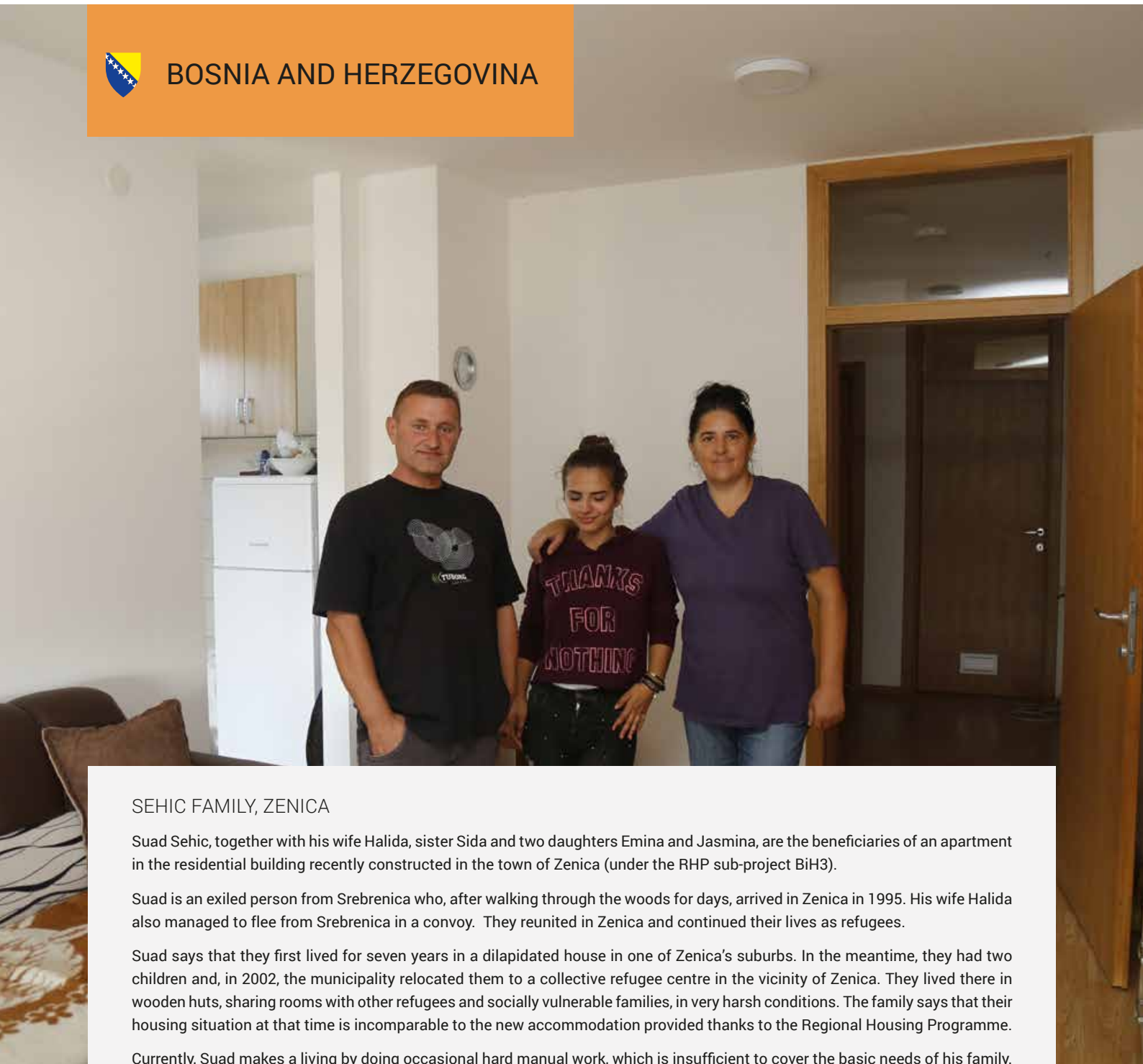
At the same time, additional donor funds have been approved for Serbia for the new sub-projects. In addition, new beneficiaries are currently being selected.



Meeting RHP Beneficiaries



BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA



SEHIC FAMILY, ZENICA

Suad Sehic, together with his wife Halida, sister Sida and two daughters Emina and Jasmina, are the beneficiaries of an apartment in the residential building recently constructed in the town of Zenica (under the RHP sub-project BiH3).

Suad is an exiled person from Srebrenica who, after walking through the woods for days, arrived in Zenica in 1995. His wife Halida also managed to flee from Srebrenica in a convoy. They reunited in Zenica and continued their lives as refugees.

Suad says that they first lived for seven years in a dilapidated house in one of Zenica's suburbs. In the meantime, they had two children and, in 2002, the municipality relocated them to a collective refugee centre in the vicinity of Zenica. They lived there in wooden huts, sharing rooms with other refugees and socially vulnerable families, in very harsh conditions. The family says that their housing situation at that time is incomparable to the new accommodation provided thanks to the Regional Housing Programme.

Currently, Suad makes a living by doing occasional hard manual work, which is insufficient to cover the basic needs of his family. Suad and Halida say that, as they have no permanent jobs, they are registered in the Employment Office of Zenica. Their elder daughter Emina graduated from the secondary school and is looking for a job, while the younger one, Jasmina, is still in school. Halida thinks that they need assistance from the local community in finding long-term jobs.

Despite their difficult financial circumstances, Suad says: "When we moved into our new apartment, it was as if I was reborn". Their younger daughter Jasmina is very happy in their new apartment, which is close to the town centre and her school. She is happy to do the household chores and proudly presents the new apartment to her friends.

In September 2018, after years spent in the dilapidated and damp accommodation in the refugee camp, the Sehic family finally became the beneficiaries of a new apartment in Zenica, which, Suad says, „couldn't be any better“.



Implementation Highlights

112 RHP BENEFICIARY FAMILIES RECEIVED KEYS TO THEIR NEW APARTMENTS IN PRIJEDOR AND ZENICA



Fifty RHP beneficiary families received keys to their new apartments on 13 July 2018 in Prijedor, while another 62 keys were handed over to beneficiary families in Zenica on 17 September 2018.

These multi-apartment buildings are part of the BiH3 sub-project, which foresees the construction of 27 apartment buildings with 552 flats throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina. Works have been completed in Ilidza, Pale-Praca, Foca FBiH, Tuzla and Bosanski Petrovac, and the construction is ongoing in 14 other municipalities, with planned completion in 2018/2019. The total investment amounts to more than EUR 17 million.

“There are 9 cities in the Republika Srpska where we are also building homes, which will solve the housing issue for beneficiaries currently living in temporary housing, socially vulnerable families and refugees from Croatia”, emphasised Davor Cordas, Minister for Refugees and Displaced Persons of Republika Srpska.

“The waiting has paid off”, said Milka Radakovic, one of the beneficiaries, who had lived with her mother Gospava and son Aleksandar in an alternative accommodation in Ljubija, a small iron-mining town near Prijedor. “We are grateful to all those who have contributed to making it possible”, added Ms Radakovic.

CONSTRUCTION WORKS STARTED IN GORAZDE, NEW APARTMENTS DELIVERED IN OLOVO



On 9 April 2018, the laying of the foundation stone marked the start of the construction works on the new RHP funded building in the village of Rasadnik, which will provide 20 housing units for socially vulnerable and displaced families from the Gorazde area.

The City of Gorazde provided the construction plot, urban and construction permits as well as the necessary connections to the communal infrastructure - electricity, water supply and sewage.

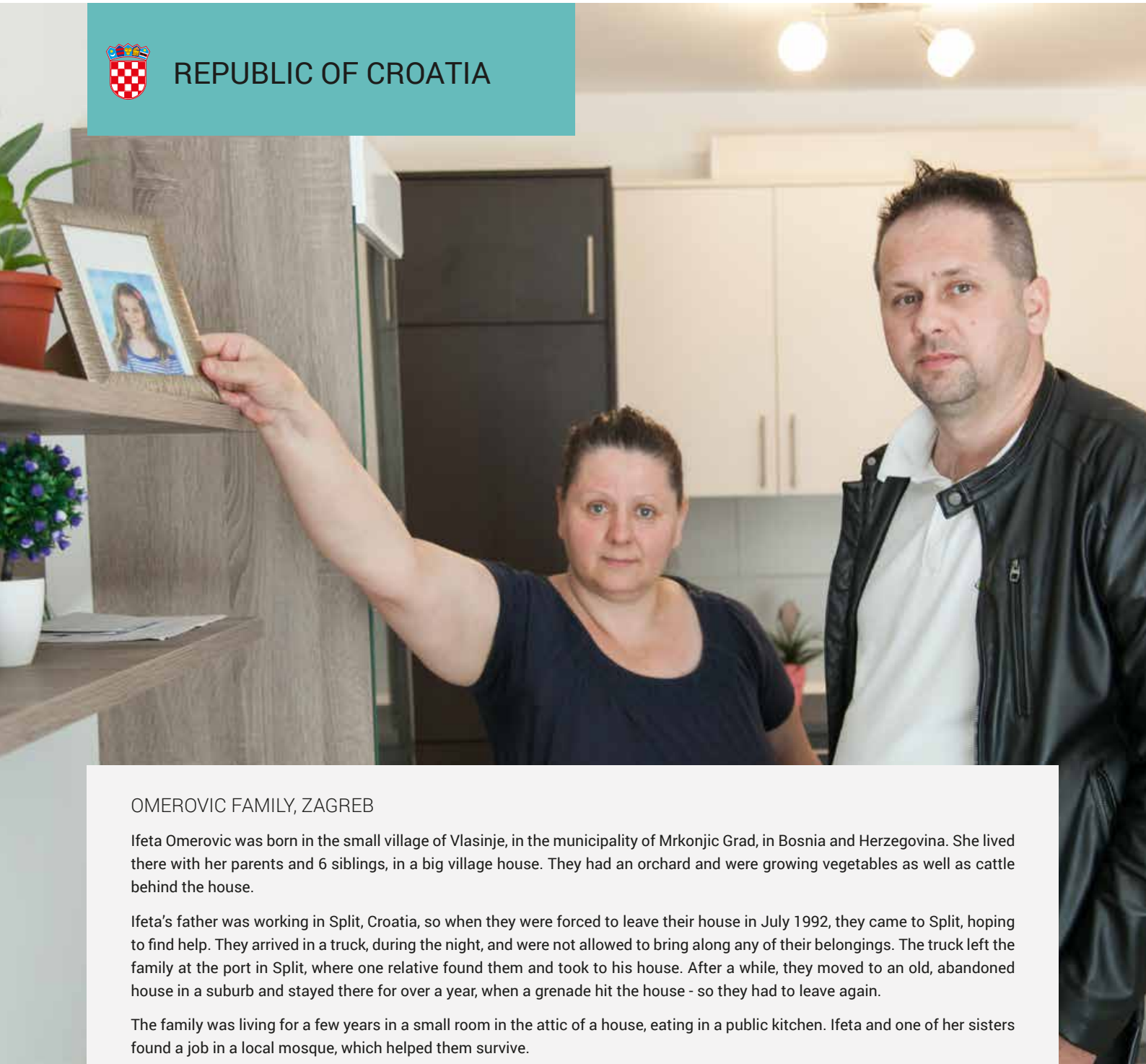
On 4 October 2018, 16 vulnerable families of returnees and displaced persons received keys to their new homes in a multi-apartment building in Olovo, in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Meeting RHP Beneficiaries



REPUBLIC OF CROATIA



OMEROVIC FAMILY, ZAGREB

Ifeta Omerovic was born in the small village of Vlasinje, in the municipality of Mrkonjic Grad, in Bosnia and Herzegovina. She lived there with her parents and 6 siblings, in a big village house. They had an orchard and were growing vegetables as well as cattle behind the house.

Ifeta's father was working in Split, Croatia, so when they were forced to leave their house in July 1992, they came to Split, hoping to find help. They arrived in a truck, during the night, and were not allowed to bring along any of their belongings. The truck left the family at the port in Split, where one relative found them and took to his house. After a while, they moved to an old, abandoned house in a suburb and stayed there for over a year, when a grenade hit the house - so they had to leave again.

The family was living for a few years in a small room in the attic of a house, eating in a public kitchen. Ifeta and one of her sisters found a job in a local mosque, which helped them survive.

She met her husband Dzevad, a refugee from BiH, and they got married in 2001. Their daughter was born in 2002 and their son in 2005. The four-member family lived in rented apartments, and Dzevad was accepting any odd jobs – deliveries on a bike, construction works, taxi driver – in order to provide for his family. In 2016, their daughter got ill with an autoimmune disease. UNHCR helped with hospital bills, as they did not have any health insurance.

They heard about the possibility to get an RHP apartment in Zagreb, but did not have much hope. They nevertheless collected all the required documentation and applied. In the spring of 2017, the Omerovic family moved into a three-bedroom apartment in a new building in Zagreb.

"I am 44 years old and this is the first time in my life that I sleep on a new mattress," said Ifeta, still unable to believe this.



Implementation Highlights

INAUGURATION OF HOME FOR ELDERLY/ DISABLED IN GLINA



On 7 May 2018, the RHP stakeholders celebrated the inauguration of a new home for 74 RHP beneficiaries in Glina.

The sub-project encompasses the reconstruction and extension of a home for elderly and disabled refugees, returnees and IDPs, in order to provide them with adequate accommodation, social and health care. The home in Glina is part of the homes for elderly included in the national welfare system.

The reconstruction works started in August 2015, and the usage permit was obtained in June 2017. Sisak-Moslavina County, as the owner of the facility, then proceeded with the hiring of the staff and other administrative arrangements, to enable the opening ceremony to take place in May 2018. The total cost of the reconstruction works, including medical and other equipment, amounts to some EUR 4.2 million, 25% of which is financed by Croatia and 75% by the RHP Fund.

21 FAMILIES MOVED INTO NEW HOMES IN BENKOVAC



On 7 February 2018 in Benkovac, keys were handed over to 21 RHP beneficiary families (75 persons) who are either former occupancy/tenancy right holders or most vulnerable refugee families from Bosnia and Herzegovina, currently living in the vicinity of Benkovac in collective centres or rented apartments. With a total cost of EUR 1.3 million, the building in Benkovac is one of the nine projects approved by the RHP Fund Assembly of Donors for Croatia, and the third one to be completed. Out of the 75 persons that received keys for their new homes on 7 February, 13 are children and 16 are ill or disabled.



Meeting RHP Beneficiaries



MONTENEGRO



ARBEN AJVAZI, KONIK CAMP, PODGORICA

Arben Ajvazi (24) fled with his parents and siblings from Kosovo Polje in 1999 and came to Podgorica, where they settled in one of the Konik Camp's tents. He had one severely ill brother and had to leave school in the third grade, in order to help his family. He remained illiterate until his was 19, when he made a deal with the Red Cross employees working in Konik: they promised to offer him a job if he finished school. Arben used this opportunity and became a Red Cross assistant, helping with the organisation of workshops, accompanying children to school, mediating between the Camp families in their disputes.

Arben was living with his wife and two children in a container, while his parents got an apartment in a building at the vicinity of the Camp. Arben's eight-year-old son, who is autistic, was spending most of the time at his grandparents, as the living conditions in a container without bathroom and with improvised kitchen were not adequate for this child's needs.

Arben is convinced that education is essential for this community's younger members, in order to overcome the isolation and prejudice and become equal members of the society. He helps the Camp's pupils in doing their homework, assists in distributing books and clothes and participates actively in youth workshops organised regularly in the Red Cross premises.

Arben and his family moved into a new apartment in one of the newly constructed RHP buildings in Camp Konik in December 2018. He said that his life can now finally begin.



Implementation Highlights

KONIK CAMP IN PODGORICA OFFICIALLY CLOSED



The entire Konik Camp was closed on 12 December 2018, when the remaining 51 families of the Camp moved into their new RHP-financed apartments, after almost two decades of living in sheds and containers.

The Konik Camp, located next to the city of Podgorica, was Europe's longest operating refugee camp, settled by Roma and Balkan Egyptians who fled violence in Kosovo in 1999.

To resolve the housing issues of this very vulnerable population group, the European Union has already financed 48 apartments in 2015, through the "Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance" (IPA) funds. The Regional Housing Programme provided additional 120 apartments in November 2017. Thanks to savings, a further 51 families have now received new homes, thus enabling the closure of the Camp.

INAUGURATION OF HOME FOR ELDERLY/DISABLED IN PLJEVLJA



On 11 April 2018 in Pljevlja, RHP stakeholders celebrated the inauguration of a RHP-financed home for 68 elderly/disabled persons. The construction works started in May 2016, on a land plot provided by the municipality of Pljevlja. The facility is now completed; the usage permit was obtained in early April 2018.

Over 20 beneficiaries have already been able to move in, and the rest are in the process of being selected. The total staffing need is 51 persons; the recruitment is on-going and the first employment contracts were signed in March 2018. The home for the elderly/handicapped is included in the social welfare system of Montenegro. It is managed by the municipality of Pljevlja, under the ownership of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare. The salaries and the institution's operational costs are covered by the State budget.

The total estimated cost of the project is EUR 2.2 million, of which EUR 1.9 million, or 86%, is financed by the RHP Fund and the remainder, EUR 0.3 million, from national contribution. The design of the building and other project preparation activities were financed with a EUR 150 000 grant from the Western Balkans Investment Framework (WBIF), approved in 2009.



Meeting RHP Beneficiaries



REPUBLIC OF SERBIA



DRAGAN AND KAROLINA KUZMANOVIC, SELENCA

Dragan was born in 1972 in the municipality of Sanski Most, Bosnia and Herzegovina and lived with his parents and siblings in the village of Tomina, where they had a big house with land and cattle. His father was working for the national railway and his mother was working on the farm and taking care of the three children and the cattle.

In October 1995, the family had to leave the village. They took with them some clothes and photographs, and, together with their neighbours, left their burning houses on tractors. Dragan was on the front line at the time, and when he returned home, he found an empty village and burned houses, without any idea where his family was, or if they were still alive. His parents were temporarily accommodated in a collective centre near Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina, where Dragan found them and they continued together towards Serbia. A relative of one of their neighbours in Tomina signed a guarantee letter for 27 people from the village and brought them all to his house in Mali Bac, Serbia, where they stayed together for several months, until each of the families managed to find some accommodation and work.

The Kuzmanovic family stayed in Mali Bac in rented houses for 3 years, Dragan taking any job he could find, mostly in nearby farms or on construction sites. He met his wife and, when they got married, they moved to her parents' house in Selenca in 1999. Dragan works on the field with a tractor, but also helps his neighbours with carpentry and construction works. Karolina works in a local restaurant.

Karolina heard about the Regional Housing Programme and the possibility to get a village house from the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration's trustee in Bac and decided to apply. They collected all the required documentation and submitted the application. In March 2018, the family moved into the 200m² house, with a large agricultural plot and several additional buildings for the cattle and chicken. Dragan and Karolina have two sons – 19-year-old Daniel and 16-year-old Darko – both very good students, helping their parents in everyday work on the field and with the animals.

"Finally, after so many years, we have our own house – I can call it a home now. And this was all thanks to my wife's persistence", says Dragan.



Implementation Highlights

START OF CONSTRUCTION WORKS AT SEVERAL LOCATIONS



On 21 April 2018, the Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration hosted an event to lay the foundation stone for the construction of 25 apartments for refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, who are residents in the territory of Kikinda. This project is part of the sub-project SRB2, which aims at providing housing solutions to 870 vulnerable RHP beneficiary families in Serbia. The entire sub-project is worth EUR 13 million.

On 27 August 2018, the construction of 169 new apartments started in Stara Pazova. With a total cost of close to EUR 4 million, the building complex in Stara Pazova is one of the largest RHP construction sites in Serbia and in the RHP in general. Under SRB5, close to 1 300 new apartments will be constructed; the works have already started in 16 municipalities while the remaining 11 municipalities are in the tendering phase.

On 6 September 2018, the foundation stone for 20 RHP-financed apartments was laid in Ub. In addition, construction sites have been opened in seven cities across Serbia: in Sremska Mitrovica, Bajina Bašta, Paracin, Krusevac, Prokuplje, Vrsac and Sabac. Altogether 1 847 vulnerable refugee families – or 5 500 persons – in 27 municipalities throughout Serbia will obtain a new home by the end of 2019 thanks to the RHP sub-project SRB5. SRB5 envisages the construction of 1 267 new apartments, in addition to the provision of 200 building material packages and the purchase of 380 village houses.

275 FAMILIES RECEIVE KEYS TO NEW APARTMENTS IN OVCA (BELGRADE) AND SREMSKA MITROVICA



On 5 March 2018 in Ovca, keys were handed over to 235 RHP beneficiary families, selected from among close to 1 600 applicants to obtain a durable housing solution in Belgrade. In total, four buildings have been constructed at the Ovca site which today accommodate 235 RHP beneficiary families or 652 persons.

The construction works started in August 2016 and were finalised in November 2017, with a total cost of EUR 6.9 million. Constructed on an undeveloped green field site with a total area of 75 000 m², the RHP financed buildings are part of a larger social housing/urban development programme undertaken by the City of Belgrade. Belgrade's investments also include a 995-apartment complex as well as other amenities such as childcare facilities, a primary school and a waste water treatment plant.

The RHP Fund contribution of EUR 11 million to this sub-project is complemented by a considerable national contribution of over EUR 4 million. All in all, the sub-project SRB3 aims at providing 715 housing solutions for refugee families living in Belgrade. In addition to the apartments in Ovca, it includes the purchase of 69 village houses, the delivery of over 300 building material packages as well as the construction of 49 pre-fabricated houses.

On 20 July 2018, keys to newly-built apartments were handed over to 40 beneficiary families, selected under the RHP sub-project SRB2. The sub-project foresees the provision of durable housing solutions in the places of local integration for 870 refugee families, or around 2 610 persons.



Support from the International Community

EU OFFICIALS VISITED RHP BENEFICIARY FAMILIES IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA



On 9 November, Genoveva Ruiz Calavera, Director for the Western Balkans at the Directorate-General for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR) of the European Commission, visited the Hadziahmetovic family in Ilidza, Sarajevo. This RHP beneficiary family had to flee during the war from the municipality of Trnovo. Before receiving a new apartment in Ilidza thanks to the Regional Housing Programme, they had moved 17 times, from one temporary dwelling to another.

Earlier this year, on 24 July 2018, Ambassador Lars-Gunnar Wigemark, Head of the EU Delegation to Bosnia and Herzegovina and European Union's Special Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina, visited RHP beneficiary families in a newly constructed building in Prijedor. This multi-apartment building provided 50 apartments for about 200 beneficiaries.

Both EU representatives were unanimous that the Regional Housing Programme is a good example of cooperation – on the one side at the regional level, and on the other side, at national level. The European Union, represented by the European Commission, is the largest donor to the RHP, with EUR 234 million pledged as of today.

CEB GOVERNOR WENZEL VISITED FLAGSHIP RHP PROJECTS IN MONTENEGRO AND SERBIA



On 3 October 2018, CEB's Governor Rolf Wenzel met the Mayor of the City of Belgrade Mr Radojicic. Together they visited the residential block of Ovca. Co-financed by the Regional Housing Programme Fund and the national contribution of the Republic of Serbia, Ovca has provided houses for 235 vulnerable refugee families. The construction works of the buildings started in August 2016 and were completed at end-2017.

A day after, during his official visit to Montenegro, Governor Wenzel and State Secretary of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare Vukica Jelić, together with representatives of the City of Podgorica, visited beneficiary families that have recently moved into their new homes in the Konik area. Thanks to RHP support, 171 families have left behind their dire living conditions and moved into new flats in the new apartment buildings.

RHP Visibility

RHP BENEFICIARY FAMILIES HOSTED A HOUSEWARMING PARTY FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF DONOR COMMUNITY IN BELGRADE



Within the framework of the Human Rights Week in Serbia, organized to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, OSCE Serbia, in cooperation with the United Nations Serbia, European Union Delegation to the Republic of Serbia, Council of Europe and Commissariat for Refugees and Migration of the Republic of Serbia, organized a housewarming party for refugees and former refugees – beneficiaries of the RHP in Serbia.

On this occasion, RHP beneficiary families hosted representatives of the RHP donor community, intergovernmental and international organizations, as well as state institutions and shared their personal impressions about how the RHP has contributed to the fulfilment of the right to adequate standard of living, and how the access to this right has changed their lives after many years in displacement.

Welcome speech was given by Aleksandra Sijelja, RHP beneficiary who fled to Serbia from Croatia, who introduced the other RHP beneficiary hosts to the event – families Borjan, Lackovic, Kovacevic, Manojlovic, Bunijevac, Sikljak, Mihajlovic, Brestovac, Janjatovic, Uzelac, Bozic, Despotovic and Jokic.

To date, over 2 300 housing solutions have been provided to RHP beneficiaries in Serbia, including village houses, pre-fabricated houses, building material packages and apartments.

18TH WORLD REFUGEE DAY – 20 JUNE 2018

20 June 2018 marked the 18th anniversary of the international observance of the World Refugee Day. The Council of Europe Development Bank presented the latest results of the RHP by introducing some of its beneficiaries in each of the four Partner Countries which are implementing the programme: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia.

Four RHP beneficiary clips and two short RHP films, presenting the main achievements of the programme, were posted on RHP and partner institutions' websites.

Links to the films:

[Bucan Family, Serbia / World Refugee Day, 20 June 2018](#)

[Gashi Family, Montenegro / World Refugee Day, 20 June 2018](#)

[Ivanisevic Family, Croatia / World Refugee Day, 20 June 2018](#)

[Hamzic Family, Bosnia and Herzegovina / World Refugee Day, 20 June 2018](#)

[New homes / World Refugee Day, 20 June 2018](#)

[Providing homes and new hope / World Refugee Day, 20 June 2018](#)

NEW RHP FILM – “HERE TO STAY”

At the end of 2018, a longer (25 minutes) film was prepared by the CEB and the RHP Technical Assistance team, summarizing the programme progress so far. The focus of the film was put on the RHP beneficiaries but it also presents the aspects of regional cooperation and other key values of the RHP. The objective is to broadcast the film widely, once finalised in early 2019, including in the Partner Countries on the main national and regional TV stations.

REGIONAL HOUSING PROGRAMME ON PRIZMA PROGRAMME (CROATIAN PUBLIC BROADCASTER HRT)

On 2 February 2018, Nikola Mazar, State Secretary, Central State Office for Reconstruction and Housing Care and Mario Pavlovic from UNHCR Regional Office for South-Eastern Europe were guests in the PRIZMA tv show, presenting the latest RHP achievements and future objectives.

On 30 June 2018, this programme also hosted Tatjana Vukobratovic Spasojevic, Deputy State Secretary from the Central State Office for Reconstruction and Housing Care and Neven Crvenkovic, UNHCR Spokesperson for South Eastern Europe. The discussions focussed on the RHP and, in particular, its implementation and achievements in Croatia.



RHP Meetings



MEETING BETWEEN EPTISA/GIZ/DRC AND CEB TO KICK-START RHP TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PHASE II

On 7 March 2018, a meeting took place at the CEB's premises in Paris between the representatives of the EPTISA Consortium and the CEB, to launch the second phase of technical assistance to the RHP. The technical assistance is financed by the European Union and managed by the CEB.

In addition to EPTISA itself, the Consortium that won the open tender in 2017 includes the GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit) and the DRC (Danish Refugee Council).

Phase II of technical assistance to the RHP will allow the RHP Partner Countries to continue to receive technical support for RHP implementation between 2018 and 2020.

Key figures (as at end December 2018):

Pledged to the RHP: EUR 285 million

Committed to the RHP Fund: EUR 206 million

Paid into the RHP Fund: EUR 171 million

Grants approved: EUR 230 million

Grants disbursed: EUR 120 million

THREE REGIONAL COORDINATION FORA (RCF) HELD IN 2018

During 2018, three Regional Coordination Fora were held: 22nd RCF on 31 January 2018 in Belgrade, Serbia, 23rd RCF on 4 April in Pljevlja, Montenegro, and 24th RCF on 4 October in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

At the 22nd RCF in Belgrade, RHP stakeholders took stock of RHP's current status and implementation plans for 2018. With over 2 600 housing units delivered to date and up to 3 000 more to be completed in 2018, it was concluded that RHP is indeed fulfilling the objective that was set 13 years ago.

At the 23rd RCF in Pljevlja, focus was placed on the two milestone dates in RHP implementation: December 2019 and June 2021. By December 2019, a large part of the EU funds will expire, while by June 2021, all RHP activities must be concluded on the ground so that the entire Programme can be wrapped up by end-2021. Importantly, the Partner Countries placed due emphasis on mitigation measures to avoid delays.

The 24th RCF in Sarajevo focussed on discussing RHP's activities on the critical path and how to address potential delays. Practical steps towards defining RHP's legacy were also discussed, as well as how the Partner Countries perceive the MMIS (Monitoring and Management Information System) put into place for RHP monitoring, and how it could be further improved.

IN 2018, RHP DONORS HIGHLIGHT GOOD PROGRESS AND APPROVE NEW GRANTS: FURTHER 5 400 VULNERABLE BENEFICIARIES TO GET DURABLE HOMES

The RHP Steering Committee and the RHP Fund Assembly of Donors held two meetings in 2018 – the first one in June in Zagreb, Croatia and the second one in November in Paris, France. During the year, seven new sub-projects and several sub-project extensions were approved, bringing the total amount of grants approved to EUR 230 million. The number of final beneficiaries is estimated to reach 34 000 persons.

On the Steering Committee meeting of 27 November 2018, the RHP governance bodies convened to take stock of RHP's progress and follow up on the strategy to ensure sustainable impact and a successful completion of the RHP in 2021. Approximately 4 000 vulnerable families will have entered into their new RHP financed homes by end 2018. This figure will almost triple by the end of the Programme in 2021. Besides houses of high technical standards delivered to their beneficiaries, in 2019 the Programme will continue striving for increased sustainability and visibility.

The European Commission and the United States of America – the Chair and Co-chair - praised the Partner Countries for the great progress that the RHP is now making and thanked the UNHCR, the OSCE and the CEB for their dedication and support.

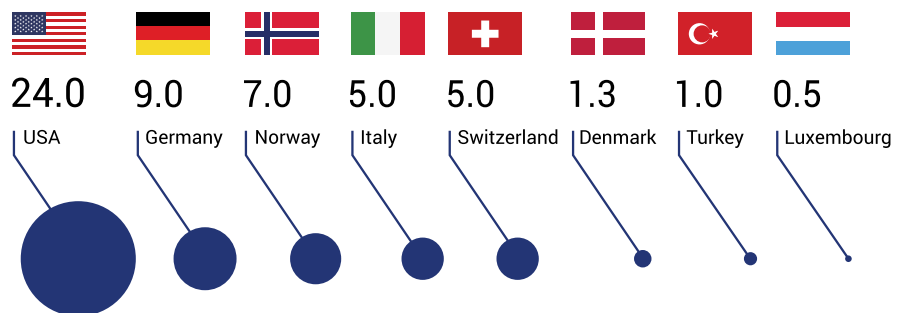
On behalf of the European Commission, the main RHP Donor, Colin Wolfe, Head of Unit for Western Balkans Regional Cooperation in DG NEAR, highlighted the reconciliatory and cooperation-inductive character of the RHP, at a time when regional and interstate cooperation in Europe is challenged. Semiha Borovac, Minister of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina, stated: "Besides the houses delivered to vulnerable families, the RHP has helped the Partner Countries establish enduring friendships that can foster continuous cooperation."



New Donor Contributions

During 2018, several donors pledged new funds to the RHP in recognition of the progress achieved over the past years. Another EUR 39.5 million was contributed by the European Union. The Government of Germany announced a fresh contribution of EUR 1.5 million to the RHP Fund, bringing its total contribution to the Programme to EUR 9 million. Spain also increased its contribution to the RHP and is now providing over EUR 200 000 for technical assistance.

FUNDS PLEDGED BY MAIN DONORS EUR 285 million





Outlook for 2019



2019 will be a record year for RHP housing unit deliveries: over 3 000 vulnerable families should get a new home during the year. The same intensive delivery pace will also continue in 2020 and 2021, to allow the Programme to be completed by end-2021.

To reach these impressive goals, it goes without saying that the hard work of the Partner Countries will have to continue in 2019, underpinned by strong and continuous support from the Donors, the UNHCR, the OSCE and the CEB.

In addition to maintaining the pace of implementation, the RHP stakeholders will also focus on reinforcing the sustainability of the housing solutions offered, as well as on identifying RHP's legacy – good practices, added value, lessons learned, etc.



The CEB's RHP team looks forward to a new year of intensive and fruitful co-operation with all RHP partners, and to the many inauguration events to come!





Bosnia and Herzegovina



Republic of Croatia

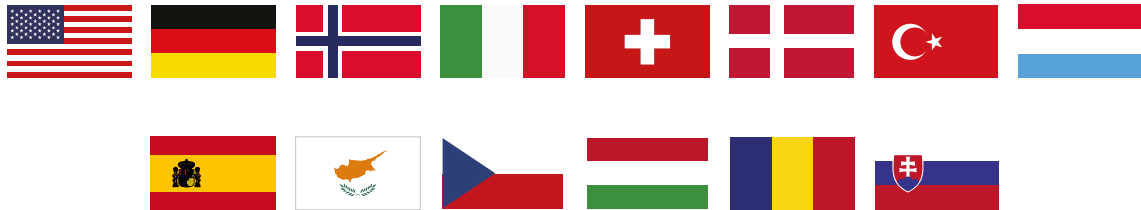


Montenegro



Republic of Serbia

The Regional Housing Programme is financed and supported by the international community



The Regional Housing Programme (RHP) was set up to provide durable housing solutions to vulnerable refugees and displaced persons following the 1991-1995 conflicts on the territory of former Yugoslavia. The RHP is implemented by Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia and mostly financed by the international donor community.

The main donor is the European Union. The other donors are the United States of America, Germany, Norway, Italy, Switzerland, Denmark, Turkey, Luxembourg, Spain, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and the Slovak Republic.

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