



Regional
Housing
Programme



Montenegro
Ministry of Labour
and Social Welfare

Konik Camp, Podgorica

From shacks to apartments

Construction of 171 apartments for the most
vulnerable Roma families from Kosovo



MISSION AND BACKGROUND

The Regional Housing Programme (RHP) is a joint initiative by Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia (the Partner Countries). Its aim is to contribute to the resolution of the protracted displacement situation of the most vulnerable refugees and displaced persons following the 1991-1995 conflicts on the territory of former Yugoslavia, including internally displaced persons in Montenegro from 1999.

Besides providing sustainable housing tailored to beneficiaries' needs, the RHP also fosters the institutional capacity of the Partner Countries, which should be able in the future to address the housing needs not just of RHP beneficiaries but of their populations at large.

Furthermore, thanks to its regional character, the RHP contributes to improving neighbourly relations thereby promoting security and stability in the region.

STAKEHOLDERS

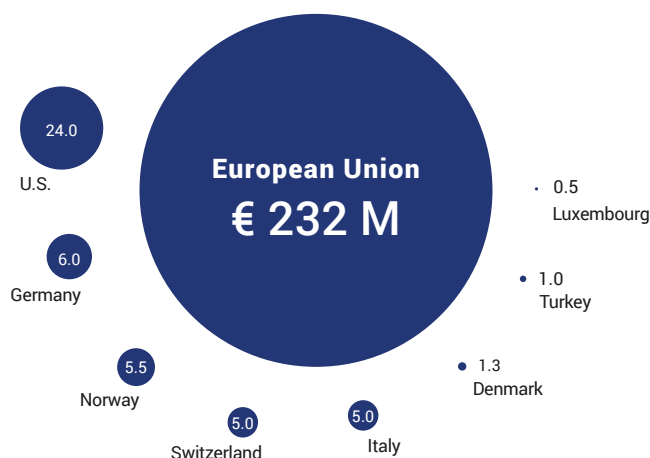
RHP consists of four individual Country Housing Projects which are implemented by the Partner Countries. RHP is primarily a donor funded programme; donor funds are held in the so-called "RHP Fund". In addition, the Partner Countries also participate with national contributions. The European Union is the largest Donor to this initiative having pledged EUR 232 million, out of a total of EUR 280 million pledged to date. Other Donors to the RHP Fund are the U.S., Germany, Norway, Italy, Switzerland, Denmark, Turkey and Luxembourg.

UNHCR and OSCE are tasked with helping the Partner Countries identify eligible beneficiaries, monitoring their selection and overseeing that they receive adequate protection. As such, these institutions play a crucial role in monitoring that the RHP provides sustainable housing solutions to those beneficiaries most in need.

The Council of Europe Development Bank's (CEB) roles include managing the RHP Fund and Programme implementation, including the Technical Assistance. CEB is also in charge of RHP coordination activities between all stakeholders.

PLEDGED FUNDS BY DONORS

EUR 280 million



CONTINUED DONOR SUPPORT:



A further EUR 84 million from the European Union over the period 2017 - 2018



An extra EUR 9 million from the U.S. in 2017



An additional EUR 1 million from Germany in December 2016

FOREWORDS

Christian Danielsson

Director-General for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, European Commission



"We can clearly see the importance of these works by looking at and comparing the living conditions on our left, where the new IPA-funded buildings stand, and on our right, where containers and barracks have so far hosted vulnerable individuals. However, we must not forget the other needs of this population, both social and economic, and we will do our best to help them access education, work and health services."

Kemal Purišić

Minister of Labour and Social Welfare, Montenegro



"As we have done thus far, we will continue our successful co-operation with the neighbouring Partner Countries, thereby strengthening and encouraging regional stability and collaboration while giving incentive to similar regional initiatives and projects."

Boris Mugoša

Deputy Mayor of Podgorica



"I am very proud to say that the City of Podgorica donated the land and the infrastructure for the whole project, and we will soon have the first 120 units completed and families moving in. This is another proof of our commitment to help the most vulnerable populations, together with the Montenegrin Government."

Budimirka Đukanović

RHP Coordinator to Montenegro



"Regional Housing Programme is implemented in more than 13 municipalities in Montenegro: Berane, Andrijevica, Podgorica, Ulcinj, Niksic, Budva, Rozaje, Plav, Herceg Novi, Bar, Danilovgrad, Tivat and Pljevlja. The RHP will significantly contribute to the final closing of the Camp Konik, currently the biggest collective camp in Montenegro, as well as to providing housing solutions to refugees and internally displaced persons in other collective centers."

REGIONAL HOUSING PROGRAMME IN MONTENEGRO

Country Housing Project at a glance

Number of sub-projects approved

6

Number of housing units concerned

481

Grants approved

€ 16.0 million

Grants disbursed

€ 10.9 million

Total national contribution

€ 2.3 million

BACKGROUND

Over the past 20 years, Montenegro has provided shelter to displaced persons from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, as well as to internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Kosovo. While some of the displaced persons and IDPs have already integrated locally, most of them are still in need of durable housing solutions due to their extreme socio-economic vulnerability.

The Montenegrin Government has over the years constructed some 1 300 housing units with the support of international donors; however, this has not been enough to cover the needs. In 2011, the Government of Montenegro adopted the National Strategy for Durable Solutions for Displaced and Internally Displaced Persons, with special emphasis on the Konik area. The Strategy has created a framework for the permanent and sustainable resolution of displacement issues in Montenegro.

RHP OBJECTIVES IN MONTENEGRO

In Montenegro, the Regional Housing Programme (RHP) is expected to provide durable housing solutions to the most vulnerable displaced and internally displaced persons through local integration (5 973 persons) or within institutions of the social welfare system (90 persons). In total, as per the original scope, 1 177 households (or 6 063 individuals) should benefit from the RHP.

Sub-project MNE2: Provision of housing to 171 most vulnerable families from Camp Konik 1 and its surroundings, through construction of 17 buildings in the city of Podgorica. The project will be completed in two phases: the first 120 apartments in 2017, and the remaining 51, in 2018.

Approval of the grant by the RHP
Fund Assembly of Donors

11/10/2013

Total estimated cost

€ 6.9 million

Grant amount approved

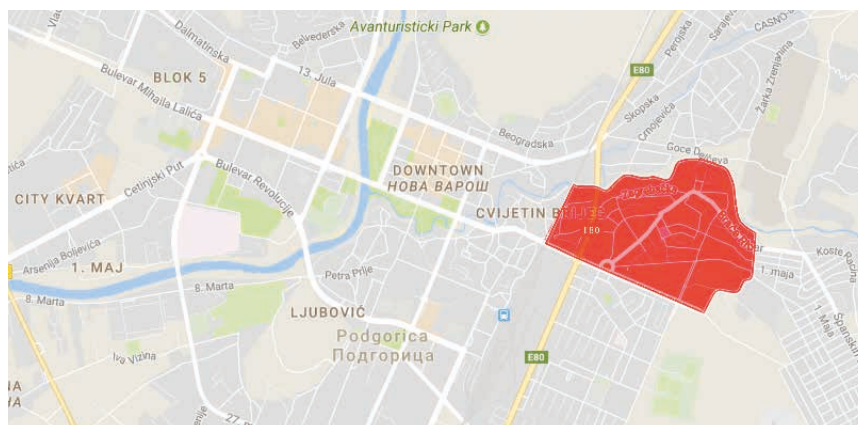
€ 6.2 million

National contribution

€ 0.7 million

Grant amount disbursed

€ 5.3 million



2011

Largest refugee camp in the Balkans



Konik Camp is settled by Roma and Egyptians who left Kosovo after the conflict in 1999 and came to Montenegro. At the time, there were around 4.000 people living in improvised huts built from scraps of wood, tin and waste material. They arrived from Kosovo without any civil documentation. In order to facilitate the process, national administration,

international and humanitarian organizations helped them to overcome the existing obstacles and obtain personal documentation from Kosovo. This help enabled them to regularise their legal status as refugees willing to remain in Montenegro, as well as of those wishing to voluntarily return to their country of origin.



Konik is one of the suburbs of Podgorica

In 2011, the Government of Montenegro adopted the National Strategy for Durable Solutions for Displaced and Internally Displaced Persons, with special emphasis on the Konik area. The Strategy created the framework for the permanent and sustainable resolution of displacement issues in Montenegro.



Buće and Šemsija Gaši

RHP Beneficiaries

Buće Gaši (45), came from Djakovica, Kosovo, in 1999 with her parents and lives since then at the Konik Camp. Buće is a mother of five, and her eldest daughter has four children. Pre-school aged children from the Konik Camp are provided with day care services at the nearby premises of the Montenegrin Red Cross, allowing their mothers to focus on other duties during at least part of the day.

Buće's sister-in-law, Šemsija (28) has a 13-year old son who goes to school by the Camp bus. The transportation to city schools is organised daily by the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare of Montenegro, for all children from the Camp, lowering the school drop-out rate to a minimum.



Buće and Šemsija regularly participate at women's workshops organised by the Red Cross of Montenegro, which provide an opportunity for Roma women to discuss challenges in their everyday lives and to look for solutions. Educational workshops on health and social issues are also organised, with a high attendance rate by the Camp tenants, contributing to Konik residents' social integration.

2012

Lost in the fire



In July 2012, a fire swept through the barracks inhabited by Konik Camp refugees. No one was injured during the fire which resulted in some 850 persons losing all their belongings. In November 2012, the Montenegrin Government, with a donation from the Council of Europe Development Bank, provided a container settlement that hosted some 1.500 persons.

Temporary housing in tents provided
by UNHCR and partners




2014

EU IPA funds provide homes to 48 Konik Camp families



With the long-term goal of closing down the Konik Camp, the Government has been trying to find financial resources for providing its residents with a permanent housing solution.



Construction of 48 apartments through IPA 2007-2013

In September 2014, the European Union started the construction of 48 apartments and a community centre for the tenants of the Camp. The project is accompanied by the EU funded social inclusion project “Support to the Integration and Voluntary Return of I/DPs and residents of Konik Camp”, to which the EU has provided EUR 1.8 million.

In December 2015, the project, which was financed through IPA 2007-2013 funds, was completed and the tenants moved into their new homes. The rest of the families from the Camp will get housing assistance through the RHP - the construction of 171 new housing units will allow the final closure of the Camp in 2018.



2015

Start of construction works
on 120 apartments

In the second half of 2015, the removal of containers started, enabling the start of construction works on the new apartments.



120 apartments for RHP beneficiaries

The total estimated cost of this project is EUR 6.9 million, of which up to EUR 6.2 million has been secured from the RHP Fund. In March 2016, the construction site was inaugurated and construction works started for the provision of 120 apartments for the most vulnerable Roma families living in the Konik Camp.

The works on 120 flats were completed in October 2017. Thanks to savings made under this first phase, a further 51 flats are currently under construction, to be completed in 2018.

2016
2017

Progress of construction works



May 2016



August 2016

A young boy with dark hair and a thoughtful expression sits on a yellow sofa with a large floral pattern. He is wearing a grey long-sleeved shirt and dark pants. The room is decorated with vibrant, colorful tapestries featuring large floral motifs in shades of pink, orange, and blue. A red rug is partially visible in the foreground, and a patterned curtain hangs in the background.

Hadži Paljaci, RHP Beneficiary

Hadži Paljaci came from Pec, Kosovo, in 1999 with his wife and four children. Today, he has another four children and supports the entire 10-member family from the salary he gets as a Konik construction site guard. His eldest, 20-year old son, helps him whenever he can. When they arrived in Konik, they lived in an improvised hut built from scraps of wood, tin and rubbish. Today, they all live together in a small container which they received as immediate assistance when the tent they lived in burned down in the fire during the summer of 2012, leaving them and the other Camp tenants without any belongings, once again.



The containers that they received after the fire were equipped with water and electricity installations, fridges, stoves and basic furniture, providing some form of a decent life to the residents.

Hadzi's younger children go to school regularly, thanks to the transportation which is organised to the city schools. After working hours, the tenants of the Camp gather in a community centre and play chess, domino or cards, listen to the music and chat.

2017

120 apartments completed



**120 beneficiary families will move in
by the end of 2017**



May 2017

Additional 51 housing units



An inauguration event to mark the beginning of the construction works on additional 51 apartments took place on 18 May 2017 at the newly opened construction site in Konik. The apartments are expected to be finalised in the second half of 2018.



Start of construction works

Once these 51 apartments are completed, all Konik Camp residents will have obtained a durable housing solution.

Support for integration



The transportation to city schools is organized for all the children from the Camp every day, lowering the school drop-out rate to a minimum. Educational workshops on health and social issues have had a high attendance rate and have successfully influenced the Camp's residents' adaptation to everyday urban life.

A photograph of a woman with long dark hair, smiling, standing behind a group of seven children of various ages. They are outdoors in what appears to be a refugee camp, with simple wooden and metal structures in the background. The woman is wearing a pink top and a floral cardigan. The children are dressed in casual clothing, including a red hoodie, a blue and orange jacket, and a blue and white jacket. A blue banner is at the top left, and a text box is at the bottom left.

Joint efforts are paying off

Over the years, the Montenegrin Government, with the support of the European Union and international organisations, in particular UNHCR, has managed to improve access to education, employment opportunities and social integration to the Camp's residents.



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Montenegro
Ministry of Labour
and Social Welfare



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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, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and the Slovak Republic.