

# RHP Highlights 2014-2015



Regional  
Housing  
Programme



Delivery of building material packages to a beneficiary family in Stara Pazova, Serbia  
October 2014



# WHAT IS THE REGIONAL HOUSING PROGRAMME?

## A JOINT INITIATIVE

The “Joint Regional Programme on Durable Solutions for Refugees and Displaced Persons” known as the “Regional Housing Programme” is a joint initiative of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia (the Partner Countries).

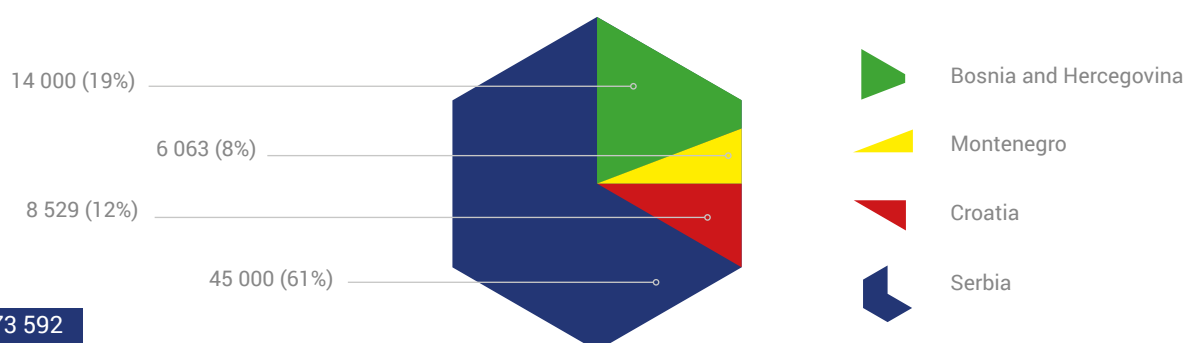
## WHY?

The aim of the Regional Housing Programme (the RHP), which is an integral part of the “Sarajevo Process on refugees and displaced persons”, 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.

## HOW?

The RHP will provide these refugees and displaced persons, who have been living in substandard accommodations for the last twenty years, with durable housing solutions. The RHP aims to provide sustainable housing solutions to close to 74 000 people or 27 000 households. It consists of four Country Housing Projects, which are implemented in parallel by the four Partner Countries, through several sub-projects. Its cost is estimated to be approximately EUR 584 million.

Number of expected beneficiaries per Partner Country

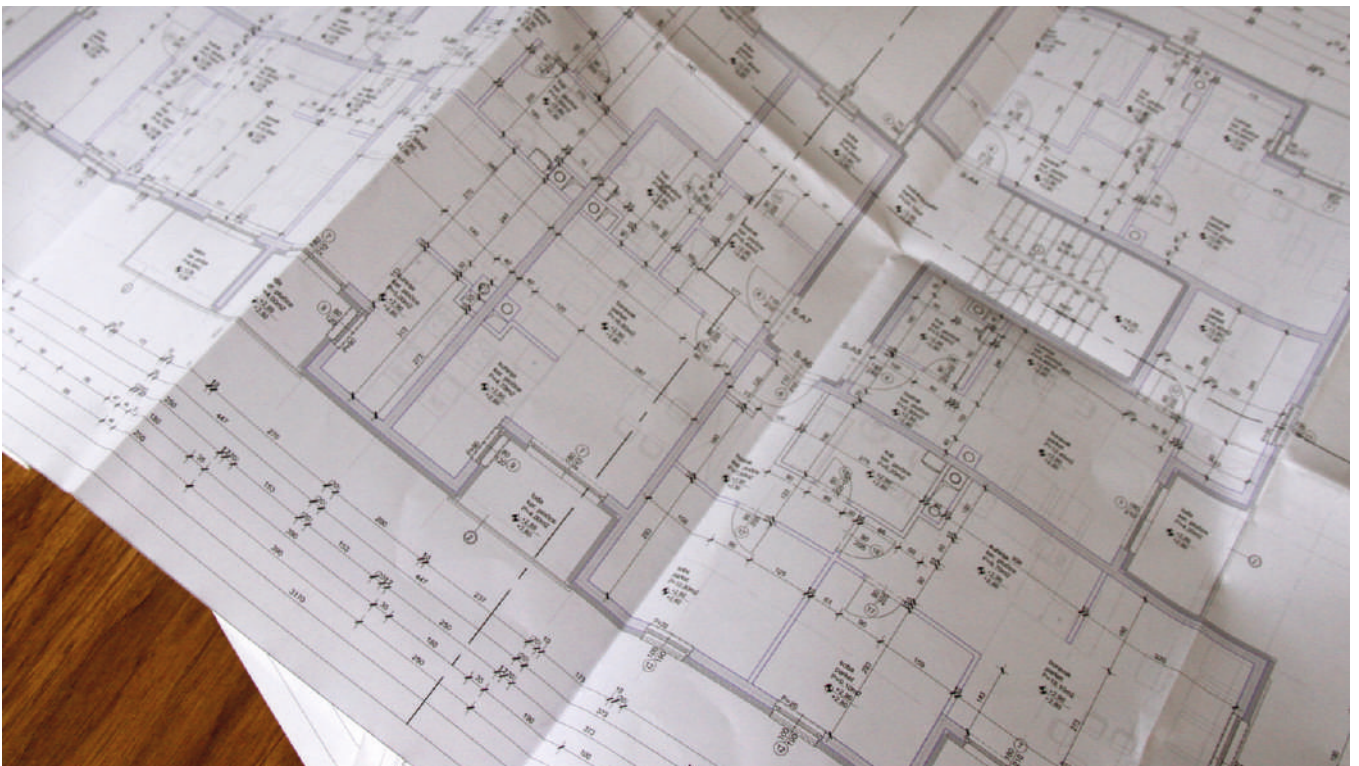




# PROGRESS OVER THE PAST YEAR

## FIRST HOMES DELIVERED

2014 marked an important turning point in the RHP. After two years of intense preparatory work, the Partner Countries delivered housing solutions to beneficiaries for the first time. The RHP is now fully operational and has started to improve the living conditions of the intended beneficiaries.





Status of works  
in May 2015  
Korenica, Croatia

### Construction of an apartment building in Croatia

In June 2014, the construction works of an apartment building in the town of Korenica started. The works should be completed in summer 2015. The building will accommodate 29 vulnerable families - former occupancy/tenancy right holders – who will be able to move in by late summer 2015.



First beneficiaries  
moving into their  
new homes in Knin,  
Croatia

### Purchase and delivery of 101 flats in Croatia

In December 2014, eight returnee families received the keys to their new apartments in the cities of Petrinje and Knin, after spending nearly 20 years in precarious living conditions. These eight apartments were the first of 101 apartments to be handed over to selected beneficiaries under this sub-project. The beneficiaries are former tenancy right holders or residents of collective centres. By June 2015, 22 beneficiary families have moved into their new apartments across the country, including in Knin, Obrovac and Benkovac.



Delivery of building material in Indjija, Serbia

### **Delivery of building material packages in Serbia**

In October 2014, selected refugee families in Serbia received packages of building material - worth EUR 9 000 each - which will help them finish their houses and finally settle in, in decent conditions. In total, 125 families will receive building material packages thanks to the first sub-project approved in favour of Serbia.

By the end of 2014, 25 packages had been handed over, and the delivery of the remaining 100 packages started in June 2015. The second component of this sub-project, which consists in the building and installation of 66 pre-fabricated houses, is scheduled to be completed in early 2016.



Delivery of building material, Trebinje, Bosnia and Herzegovina

### **Delivery of building material packages to 20 families and turnkey reconstruction assistance to 150 families in Bosnia and Herzegovina**

In March 2015, building material packages were for the first time delivered to RHP beneficiaries in Bosnia and Herzegovina, namely in the town of Trebinje. As of June 2015, out of the 20 targeted families - refugees from Croatia in Republika Srpska – 19 have already received building material packages.

The second component of this sub-project aims at reconstructing damaged houses for 150 returnee and internally displaced families in the two entities, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska. The works will start in the fourth quarter of 2015 and are scheduled to be completed by summer 2016.

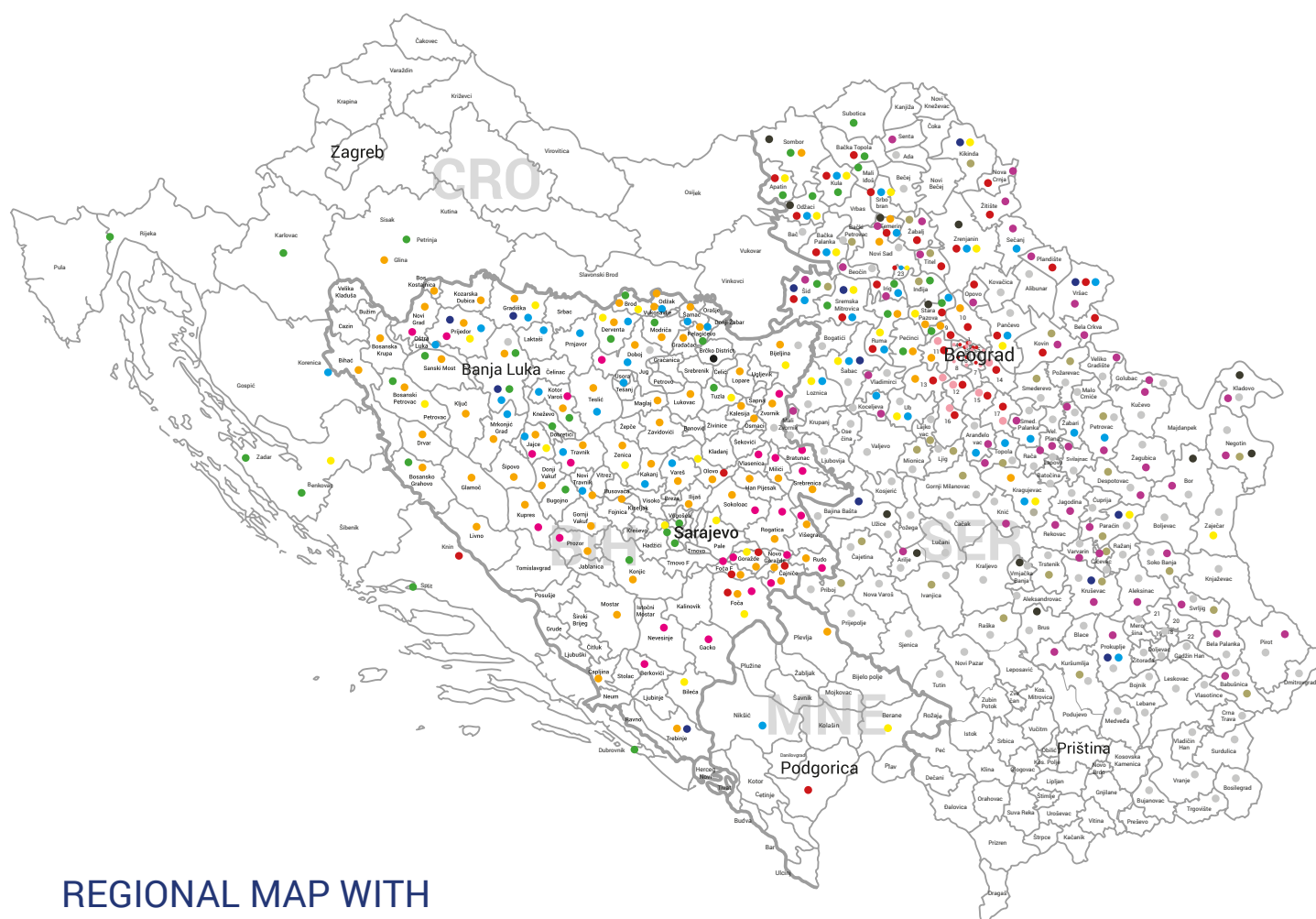




Beginning of construction works in Nikšić, Montenegro

### Construction of two blocks of flats for 62 vulnerable families in Montenegro

In May 2015, the construction of two apartment buildings for 62 I/DP families (Internally Displaced or Displaced Persons) started in Nikšić. The buildings should be completed within one year, i.e. in summer 2016. This sub-project is significant also in that it is the first time that a municipality in Montenegro offers land for a housing project for I/DP families.



REGIONAL MAP WITH  
SUB-PROJECT LOCATIONS

## BENEFICIARY SELECTION UNDERWAY

Beneficiary selection is a key aspect of the RHP. The Partner Countries follow a rigorous selection process to ensure that RHP housing solutions benefit the most vulnerable out of a large number of families in need of housing assistance.

To identify potential beneficiaries, the Partner Countries have launched large-scale domestic beneficiary data verifications, through administrative or field checks. The Partner Countries also carry out together cross-border data verifications, with the support from UNHCR/OSCE. For example, Croatia has conducted, over the past 12 months, over 2 000 administrative checks and 254 field checks, in reply to requests from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. Serbia in turn has conducted some 1 300 administrative and 480 field checks related to requests from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. This activity will continue intensively throughout 2015.

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, public calls for the selection of beneficiaries were launched in 2013. Close to 26 000 applications were received, concerning approximately 88 000 potential beneficiaries. To date, Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities have visited more than 50 municipalities and conducted on-site interviews with approximately 2 000 families. They have completed the selection of 170 beneficiaries and the selection of an additional 780 beneficiaries is in its final stages.



Beneficiary selection commissions visiting applicants in Bosnia and Herzegovina



In **Croatia**, the beneficiary selection has been completed for two sub-projects. These sub-projects, located respectively in Korenica and Knin, will provide housing to 69 families. For a third sub-project, which concerns a home for elderly and disabled persons located in Glina, the preliminary list of beneficiaries is ready and will be updated six months prior to the completion of the works. Finally, beneficiary selection for a fourth sub-project is currently on-going and 22 families have already been able to move into their new apartments.



A beneficiary who just moved into her new flat in Knin, Croatia

In **Montenegro**, the preliminary selection of beneficiaries for two sub-projects in Nikšić and Konik was finalised before the commencement of design activities. This will enable the housing units to be designed in line with the respective family structure of potential beneficiaries. The final selection of beneficiaries, which should total 182 families, will take place 6 months prior to the completion of construction works. The selection of beneficiaries for the home for elderly and disabled persons located in Pljevlja is on-going.

In **Serbia**, over the past year, 33 beneficiary selection committees have been operating actively. The selection of beneficiaries for one project, covering 195 families, has been completed. For a second sub-project which will provide housing to 870 refugee families, the municipalities involved will soon finalise their beneficiary selection. Concerning a third sub-project - provision of 715 housing solutions in Belgrade - four joint selection committees have launched the public calls and the process is therefore on-going. This is the case also for a fourth sub-project, which will provide housing to over 1 700 refugee families.

# KEY ROLE OF DONORS



## STRONG FINANCIAL AND OPERATIONAL INVOLVEMENT

Donors have been providing key support to the RHP since its inception. The European Union, represented by the European Commission (the Commission) and the U.S., Switzerland, Germany, Norway, Italy as well as other Donors have pledged a substantial amount of funds in favour of the initiative. To date, funds pledged amount to EUR 268 million, of which EUR 230 million come from the Commission, which is the largest contributor to this initiative. The Donors are also monitoring the Programme very closely, through the RHP governance and coordination structure. Their substantial involvement is instrumental for the successful completion and lasting impact of the Programme.

## REGIONAL COOPERATION

The international Donor community strongly supports the RHP because it should not only resolve a humanitarian tragedy, but more broadly contribute to peace and prosperity in the region. In the words of Johannes Hahn, European Union Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, "The initiative will benefit the region as a whole by setting the stage for a new era of cooperation. The lengthy displacement situation has strained interethnic and bilateral relations. By helping to remove this bone of contention, the Programme will contribute to reconciliation among populations and between governments."

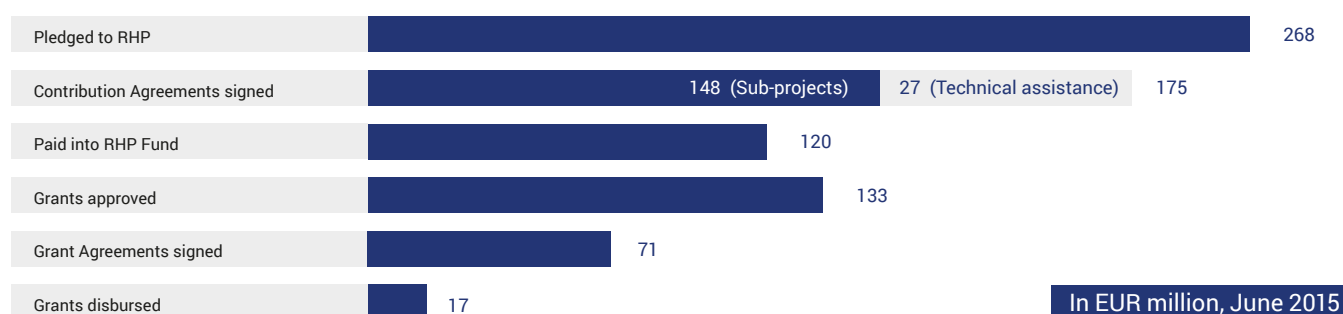
## ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

In 2014/2015, RHP Donors demonstrated their on-going support for the RHP by committing a further EUR 34 million and paying an additional EUR 50 million into the RHP Fund, the multilateral fund which holds contributions to fund sub-projects. Thanks to these new contributions, the total amount of funds committed reached EUR 148 million while funds paid-in stood at EUR 120 million in June 2015.

## ADDITIONAL APPROVALS

The Donors also prepared the future implementation of the Programme by approving new sub-projects. Between June 2014 and June 2015, the RHP Fund Assembly of Donors approved six new sub-projects for a total grant amount of EUR 72 million. These new approvals brought the total number of grants awarded to 18, amounting in total to EUR 133 million.

# FINANCIAL STATUS



“Pledged to the RHP” refers to funds promised by Donors. The total of EUR 268 million consists of EUR 261 million pledged during the Donors’ conference in Sarajevo in April 2012 plus EUR 7 million pledged by the U.S. in 2014.

“Contribution Agreements signed” refers to funds that Donors have legally committed to contribute by entering into a Contribution Agreement with the CEB. The total of EUR 175 million consists of EUR 148 million committed by the Donors to fund sub-projects, plus EUR 27 million contributed by the Commission to fund technical assistance to the Partner Countries as well as some of their operating costs, and part of the CEB’s management costs in relation to the RHP.

“Paid into RHP Fund” refers to funds that have been paid by Donors into the RHP Fund. To date, Donors have paid into the RHP Fund EUR 120 million, i.e. slightly more than 80% of the EUR 148 million they have committed to fund sub-projects.

“Grants approved” refers to funds that Donors have approved to finance the Partner Countries’ sub-projects. To date, Donors have approved 18 grants for a total amount of EUR 133 million.

“Grant Agreements signed” refers to funds that the CEB, as manager of the RHP Fund, has legally committed to provide to the Partner Countries by entering into Grant Agreements with them. To date, the CEB has entered into 13 Grant Agreements with Partner Countries, totalling EUR 71 million.

“Grants disbursed” refers to funds that have been disbursed to Partner Countries to enable them to finance sub-projects. To date, the CEB has disbursed from the RHP Fund EUR 17 million in favour of 12 sub-projects.



# PRINCIPLES

## COUNTRY OWNERSHIP, CAPACITY BUILDING AND REGIONAL FOCUS

One of the cornerstones of the RHP is that it is implemented by the four Partner Countries themselves. This sets the RHP apart from most other housing projects in the region, which are implemented by third parties such as non-governmental organisations. To ensure that they implement their sub-projects in accordance with best practices, the four Partner Countries receive substantial technical assistance, which is funded by the Commission.

Having the Partner Countries implement their sub-projects themselves postponed the start of implementation, as they needed time to set up appropriate implementing institutions. Furthermore, the RHP uses national country systems in areas such as procurement and financial management to deliver housing solutions. Therefore, it had to be ensured that adequate procedures and systems were in place which safeguard to a reasonable extent compliance with international standards for internal control, accounting, external audit and procurement.

However, this should bring two lasting benefits. First, it should increase the commitment of the Partner Countries to the Programme. This increased ownership should make the Programme more sustainable over the long term. Second, it should foster their institutional capacity to deliver housing solutions. Thanks to this enhanced capacity, the Partner Countries should, in the future, be in a better position to address the housing needs not just of RHP beneficiaries but of their populations at large.

Another important cornerstone of the RHP is its regional focus. Even though the Programme consists of four individual Country Housing Projects, the four Partner Countries work closely together. They meet regularly to address common issues, find synergies or learn from each other's practice.



Beneficiary of a newly purchased apartment in front of her old house Knin, Croatia



Young girl playing in her home which is being refurbished thanks to building material provided by the RHP  
Stara Pazova, Serbia

# SUPPORT BY INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS



## UNHCR AND OSCE

UNHCR and OSCE have been tasked with helping Partner Countries identify beneficiaries and monitoring their selection and protection aspects. As such, these institutions play a crucial role in ensuring that the RHP effectively provides sustainable housing solutions to those refugees and displaced persons most in need.

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, UNHCR and OSCE have continuously advised the authorities on beneficiary selection and sustainability elements during the development and implementation of projects (e.g. site selections, access to rights etc.). Regarding beneficiary selection, UNHCR and the OSCE have participated, in a monitoring capacity, in the work of selection commissions and in field visits that are crucial for verification of data for beneficiaries of other Partner Countries.

In **Croatia**, a joint working group of experts from the line institution, the State Office for Reconstruction and Housing Care, and UNHCR (OSCE is no longer present in Croatia), which was established in June 2013, continued with its activities that include initial assessment of preliminary beneficiary lists and identification of the beneficiaries' whereabouts. The working group discusses the particularities of each and every case, before making a joint decision on the eligibility of an RHP applicant.



In **Montenegro**, UNHCR and OSCE provided logistical support and valuable information from the field for the verification of beneficiaries' data and participated, as experts and monitors, in the process of identification and pre-selection of potential beneficiaries for the submitted projects. With the support of UNHCR and the OSCE, refugees in Montenegro obtained personal documents that are required for the status of a foreigner, which is a major precondition for regulation of their legal residence in the country beyond 2014.

In **Serbia**, UNHCR and OSCE monitor and support the process of identification of potential beneficiaries for the needs-assessment conducted by the Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration (SCRM). UNHCR and OSCE monitor the actual selection of beneficiaries by actively attending sessions of the selection commissions and by checking documents for every single application and the respective evaluation procedure.

To ensure that potential RHP beneficiaries are timely and adequately informed about RHP projects and opportunities, UNHCR and OSCE also support the Partner Countries in developing and implementing public information campaigns and by facilitating field visits for the media from the region.

#### THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE DEVELOPMENT BANK (CEB)

The CEB plays three roles within the framework of RHP. First, the CEB manages the RHP Fund, which holds contributions from Donors. Second, the Bank assists the Partner Countries in preparing and implementing their Country Housing Projects. In this capacity, the CEB supervises the Commission-funded technical assistance provided to Partner Countries to help them implement their sub-projects in accordance with best practice. Third, the Bank facilitates coordination between RHP stakeholders.



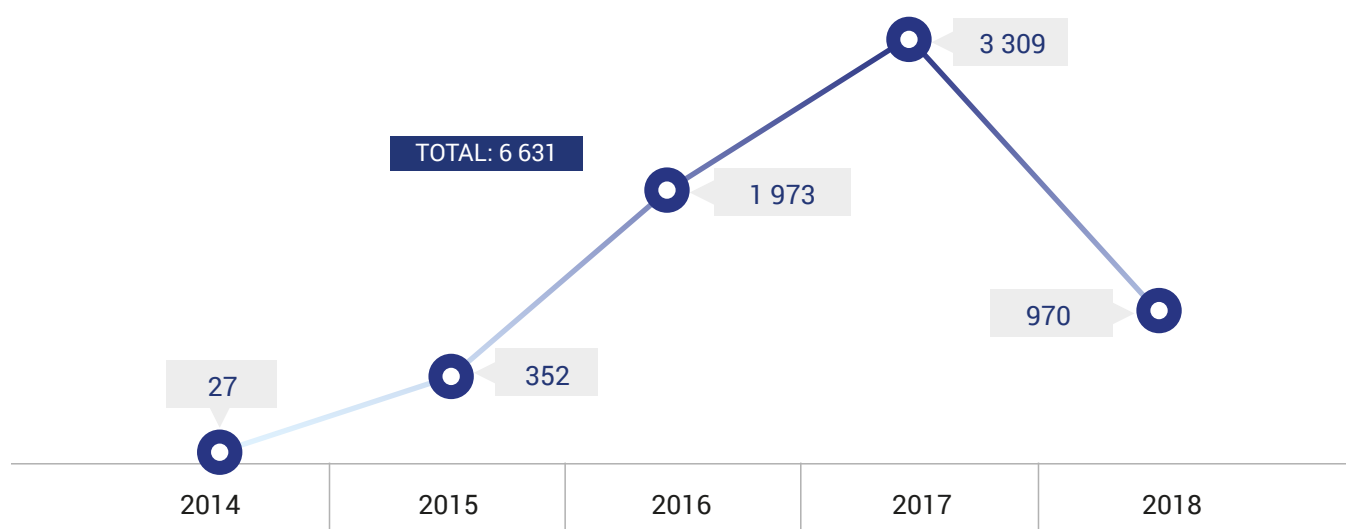
Children in Konik camp in Podgorica, Montenegro

# OUTLOOK FOR 2015-2016

## MORE HOMES DELIVERED

An important number of additional housing units will be delivered to RHP beneficiaries in the second half of 2015, as the implementing structures set up by the Partner Countries are now fully operational. By end-2015, the Partner Countries estimate that the number of homes delivered should reach almost 380. The number of homes delivered annually should further increase in the coming years. Peak years are likely to be 2016 and 2017 when some 2 000 and 3 300 beneficiary families respectively should be provided with durable housing solutions. By end-2018, the number of beneficiary families who have been provided with a home should be over 6 600. It is important to note that these figures only reflect the sub-projects approved until mid-2015. Any future approvals will increase the number of housing units to be delivered. Moreover, the final results will depend on how much further funding will be made available by the Donors.

Estimated delivery of housing units per year  
(Estimate as at May 2015)



### **MID-TERM REVIEW AND EVALUATION**

A Mid-Term Review of the RHP will be carried out in 2015, with the purpose of providing an overall independent assessment of the RHP's achievements to date and lessons learned. It will assess whether the original design (defined scope, objectives and assumptions, funding needs and implementation timeframe) remain valid. This review is expected to propose concrete and actionable recommendations for adjusting the programme design and/or implementation modalities, if deemed necessary. This exercise will be managed by the CEB, and the results are expected to be available in late 2015. In parallel, the Commission will carry out an evaluation focussing on RHP's status and achievements to date as regards beneficiary selection and sustainability-related aspects.

### **CONTINUED CAPACITY BUILDING SUPPORT**

Throughout 2015 and beyond, the Partner Countries will continue to receive considerable technical assistance, financed by the Commission. Special attention will be paid to procurement activities. Technical assistance can be redirected at short notice to ensure that it best fulfils the needs of the Partner Countries. During the second half of 2015, the Partner Countries will also receive comprehensive technical and logistical support, also funded by the Commission, to help them carry out cross-border data verifications of potential beneficiaries. Meanwhile, the CEB will continue to monitor that the project implementing structures and systems are operating adequately, so that implementation can continue in the best possible environment, yet leaving the Partner Countries firmly in charge.



# Approved RHP Sub-Projects

No.	Sub-project title	Ref. no	Date of approval	Total estimated budget in EUR million	Approved grant amount in EUR million	Estimated national contribution in EUR million
1	Provision of building materials to 20 families and turnkey reconstruction assistance to 150 families	BiH1	08/04/2013	2.7*	2.4*	0.3
2	Construction of apartment building for 29 families in the municipality of Korenica	HR1	08/04/2013	1.4	1.0	0.3
3	Construction of two blocks of flats for 62 families in the municipality of Nikšić	MNE1	08/04/2013	2.6	2.0	0.6
4	Provision of 70 pre-fabricated houses and 125 packages of building materials for 195 families	SRB1	08/04/2013	2.2	2.0	0.2
5	Provision of housing solutions to 780 households for return and reintegration or local integration in BiH	BiH2	11/10/2013	14.6	12.6	2.0
6	Construction of two residential buildings in Knin for 40 families	HR2	11/10/2013	3.5*	2.6*	0.9*
7	Reconstruction of a home for 75 elderly and disabled persons in Glinja	HR3	11/10/2013	4.3	3.1	1.2
8	Provision of housing to 120 most vulnerable families from Camp Konik 1	MNE2	11/10/2013	6.9	6.2	0.7
9	Construction of a home for 68 elderly/handicapped persons in Pljevlja	MNE3	11/10/2013	2.2	1.9	0.3
10	Support to 870 refugee families through four different housing modalities	SRB2	11/10/2013	13.1	11.6	1.5
11	Purchase of flats for 101 households	HR4	06/12/2013	5.7	4.3	1.4
12	Support to 715 refugee families through four different housing modalities	SRB3	06/12/2013	13.6	11.0	2.7
13	Support to 661 refugee families through four different housing modalities	SRB4	23/06/2014	12.0	10.6	1.4
14	Construction of 438 flats in multi-apartment buildings for refugees and IDPs in BiH	BiH3	20/11/2014	14.4	12.3	2.0
15	Construction of a residential building for 21 families in Benkovac	HR5	20/11/2014	1.4	1.0	0.4
16	Construction of 94 apartments for 271 persons in the municipality of Berane	MNE4	20/11/2014	4.0	3.6	0.4
17	Support to 1 712 refugee families through three different housing modalities	SRB5	20/11/2014	46.8	36.3	10.4
18	Reconstruction of 435 family houses for the return of refugees and IDPs and construction of 45 family houses for local integration of IDPs in BiH	BiH4	26/03/2015	9.6	8.6	1.1
TOTAL				160.9	133.2	27.8

\*amount revised



Delivery of building  
material packages to  
a refugee family in  
Stara Pazova, Serbia  
October 2014



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 was set up to offer durable housing to 74,000 vulnerable individuals who became refugees or displaced persons following the 1991-1995 conflicts on the territory of former Yugoslavia. The RHP is to be implemented with the support of the international community.

[www.regionalhousingprogramme.org](http://www.regionalhousingprogramme.org)

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