



Regional
Housing
Programme

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Cover story

FIRST RHP HOUSING SOLUTIONS DELIVERED IN SERBIA



Photo by Goran Sivacki

On 2 October 2014, the Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration organised the inauguration event of the official launch of Serbia's Country Housing Project. The event consisted of a site visit to family Tepsic in Stara Pazova and a signing ceremony with nine municipalities.

RHP stakeholders visited family Tepsic, one of the 125 vulnerable families selected to receive packages of building material financed within SRB1 sub-project. The packages, worth around EUR 9 000 each, will allow the selected beneficiaries to finish their houses and finally settle in, in decent conditions.

The inauguration event was also attended by a number of high officials, Mr Ivica Dacic, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, stated: "We have overcome all administrative obstacles and now we are celebrating the first results. I am deeply convinced that Serbia has assured the international community that it is a reliable partner. Likewise, Serbia is also demonstrating that it is a reliable partner for the beneficiaries. As the President of the National Steering Committee for the RHP, I assure you that Serbia will continue to work with full enthusiasm."

Mr Michael Davenport, the European Union Ambassador to Serbia also attended the ceremony.

Mr Simon Henshaw, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State of the United States of America said: "I am delighted to be in Serbia to mark the start of the construction under the RHP. Just a few months back I had the honour to be at a similar RHP event in Croatia. The RHP is about the people who are finally able to lead normal lives with adequate housing so many years after the conflict ended. With the technical expertise of the Refugee Commissioner and his colleagues, and the political support of Foreign Minister Dacic and his staff, we have a winning team here in Serbia, which will ensure the steady advancement of the RHP."

Mr Mikolaj Dowgielewicz, Vice-Governor of the Council of Europe Development Bank also addressed the stakeholders: "I am very pleased to celebrate with you this important moment when the first beneficiaries can access decent housing conditions and can look to the future with optimism. We at CEB want to thank our Serbian counterparts for their relentless efforts, high motivation and professionalism. We look forward to continuing our close co-operation with Serbia, so that this painful chapter in history can be closed once and for all."

Mr Vladimir Cucic, Serbian Commissioner for Refugees and Migration, said: "This is a great day for all of us. We can see the first families benefiting from the RHP, which is a big event for us who have been working on this Programme. Soon we will launch public calls for the second and the third RHP sub-projects, and sign the Grant Agreement for the fourth sub-project, which proves that the RHP in Serbia has now fully come to life."

The inauguration event also hosted a signing ceremony, in order to mark the start of implementation of the second Serbian sub-project. The Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration signed contracts with 9 municipalities and towns. These local entities, together with the Serbian RHP authorities, will play a key role in the construction of new apartments to accommodate 200 families.

The second sub-project, worth approximately EUR 13 million, will provide durable housing solutions to 870 refugee families (some 2 600 people) through the construction of 200 apartments, the provision of 120 prefabricated houses and 300 packages of building material, and the purchase of 250 village houses.

The signing ceremony and field visit were also attended, amongst other, by the Swiss Ambassador Jean-Daniel Ruch, Mr Michael Uyehara, Deputy Head of Mission at OSCE Serbia and Mr Eduardo Arboleda, Head of UNHCR in Serbia.

Beneficiary Story



Photo by Goran Sivacki

Dragan Tepsic (59 years), his wife Dragica (62) and son Dragomir (32) had to flee their home town in Croatia in 1995. After leaving Croatia, the family lived in several places in Serbia before finally settling in the village of Krnjesevci. Dragomir is married to Aleksandra and they have two daughters Helena, 6 and Selena, 4. They still live in a private accommodation.

Family Tepsic had bought the land plot on which they had started constructing their house 14 years ago. Thanks to the package of building material that the family received through the RHP, they will be able to finally finish the house.

“We have submitted different requests for help seven times, and this time we were selected as beneficiaries for an RHP solution. I would like to invite other people, who are in a similar situation, to continue sending applications and not to give up, they will eventually receive help, as we did”, said Dagomir, while thanking Serbian authorities and RHP Donors in the name of his whole family.

Newsflash

MONTENEGRO AND CEB SIGNED TWO NEW GRANT AGREEMENTS

Mr Predrag Boskovic, Minister of Labour and Social Welfare of Montenegro and Mr Stephan Sellen, CEB's Deputy Director General for Loans and Social Development, signed two new RHP Grant Agreements in Podgorica on 7 October, 2014.

The signing ceremony was also attended by the EU Ambassador Mr Mitja Drobic, as well as by the U.S. Ambassador to Montenegro, Ms Sue K. Brown and the Mayor of Pljevlja.

The signed agreements, amounting to a total of just over EUR 8 million in grants, will provide financing for MNE3 "Construction of a home for 68 elderly refugees and IDPs in Pljevlja" and for MNE2 "Construction of two apartment buildings in Camp Konik for 120 most vulnerable families". Both projects were approved by the RHP Fund Assembly of Donors in October last year. With the signature of these two Grant Agreements, Montenegro has completed all signatures of the three sub-projects approved to date in favour of the Partner Country, amounting to a total of approximately EUR 10.2 million.



SERBIA AND THE CEB SIGN TWO NEW GRANT AGREEMENTS

Ms Jadranka Joksimovic, Minister without portfolio responsible for EU Integration and National IPA Coordinator, and Mr Stephan Sellen, the CEB's Deputy Director General for Loans and Social Development, signed two new RHP Grant Agreements in favour of Serbia in Belgrade on 9 September 2014.

The signed agreements, which combined amount to approximately EUR 26.7 million, will provide financing for the construction of 435 apartments in multi-apartment buildings throughout Serbia. It will also cover the construction of 200 pre-fabricated houses, the provision of 650 building material packages and the purchase of 300 village houses. In total, thanks to these grants, close to 1,600 most vulnerable refugee families will be provided with a durable housing solution starting in 2015. Almost half of the beneficiaries will be the inhabitants of the municipalities of the City of Belgrade.

On 4 September 2014, Serbia received the first disbursement of approximately EUR 1 million. This will enable prompt implementation of Serbia's first sub-project, aiming at providing 125 building material packages and 70 pre-fabricated houses for 195 vulnerable households. At the end of September, the first packages of building material were delivered to selected RHP beneficiaries.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA RECEIVES FUNDS FOR ITS FIRST SUB-PROJECT

After the successful completion of Bosnia-Herzegovina's CHP Implementing Structures verification exercise, Bosnia and Herzegovina received the first tranche for the first sub-project approved in favour of Bosnia and Herzegovina by the RHP Fund Assembly of Donors in April 2013. This disbursement, amounting to EUR 268 750, out of the overall grant amount of EUR 2 387 500, was received on 16 October and will secure building material packages for 20 families and turnkey reconstruction assistance for 150 families.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is expecting to finalise the selection of beneficiaries for this project during the month of November 2014. It is estimated that the implementation will start in early 2015.

WORKS IN KORENICA PROGRESSING

Since the first shovels hit the ground on the construction site of Korenica in Croatia in June 2014, three floors of an apartment building for 29 vulnerable families have already been finished.

As reported by the Chief Site Engineer, 40 persons are currently working at the construction site and the works are progressing according to schedule. The third floor has been completed recently and partition walls are finalised on the ground, first and second floors. The installation of water and sewage systems on the ground and first floors is also underway, with the objective of progressing as much as possible while the weather conditions are still good. Provided that the works continue as planned, the building will be ready in June next year. The handover of keys to the beneficiary families-vulnerable returnees from Serbia - could be envisaged for July 2015. The building with a surface area of 1 970 m2 will have 29 apartments.



KIRS ANNUAL MEETING DEDICATED TO RHP

From 22 to 24 October 2014, the 9th Annual Meeting of the Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration (KIRS) Trustees was held in Soko Banja. The meeting brought together approximately 400 municipal trustees, representatives from RHP Partner Countries, as well as representatives from the international community and Technical Assistance involved in the RHP.

The first day was dedicated to the closing of collective centers, while on the second and third day the central theme was the Regional Housing Programme. Over the course of the two days, RHP procedures were presented and explained. Amongst the issues discussed were: grants and contractual obligations, implementing and managing contracts, beneficiary selection, technical documentation, procurement under the RHP, and finally, monitoring and financial reporting.



Recent Activities

Regional Activities

Trainings and Workshops

- **Workshop with the Public Information Working Group (PI WG) to present RHP Visibility and Communication plan** was organised by CEB and TA communication team in Zagreb on 8 September 2014, with the aim to present RHP Visibility and Communication (V&C) Strategy, RHP V&C Guidelines, Video and Photo material and main RHP Communication channels. The Visual Identity of RHP was endorsed by the PI WG.
- **Training on Procurement** was organised by RHP TA in Belgrade on 9-10 October for the representatives of PIU offices in Serbia, with the objective to achieve basic understanding of procurement principles as well as procedures and processes applicable under the CHP.
- **Training on FIDIC** was organised by RHP TA in Bar on 3-5 October, for the representatives of LI and PIU in Montenegro.
- **Training on Master Technical Documentation** was organised by RHP TA in Belgrade on 7 October for the representatives of LI and PIU in Serbia.
- **Risk Management Training** was organized by CEB on 15 - 16 October in Belgrade. All appointed Risk Managers in the PIUs participated in the Workshop, together with key members from the Lead Institutions and UNHCR and OSCE representatives. The aim was to present the basic risk management principles and to introduce the concept of the risk register within the scope of RHP. The main outcome of the workshop was that Partner Countries' representatives developed a risk registry. In terms of next steps, each Partner Country will finalise its risk registry around February 2015. A follow-up workshop will take place in March 2015 to identify areas that need further capacity building.

Activities of the Working Group on Public Information

- Partner Countries' representatives continued promoting the RHP in national and local media. Signatures of the Grant Agreements were adequately covered by national media.
- Preparation of the photo archive Faces of RHP is progressing well, with photographing completed in Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia.

Preparation of new Grant Applications

- All four Partner Countries have successfully finalised and submitted new PAFs to CEB on the 1st of September 2014. The Assembly of Donors will decide about these sub-projects on its upcoming meeting on 20 November 2014.

Partner Countries



BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Legal Framework

BiH2 – Provision of housing solutions to 780 households for return and reintegration or local integration

- Two conditions precedent, namely: budget revision and cash flow forecast prior of signing of GA for BiH2 have been addressed.

Beneficiary Selection Activities

BiH1 – Provision of building materials to 20 families and turnkey reconstruction assistance to 150 families

- Conditions have been fulfilled completely for 70 beneficiary families, within the two groups – refugees from Croatia (20) and IDPs (50). Beneficiary selection continues and BiH sent additional 100 cases for verification in Croatia and 50 cases for verification in Serbia. Simultaneously, national stakeholders initiated a large field exercise in the country, aimed at identifying suitable beneficiaries among those who have returned, but still live in undignified conditions. BiH stakeholders will complete beneficiary selection for the 1st sub-project before the Steering Committee and Assembly of Donors meetings on 20 November.

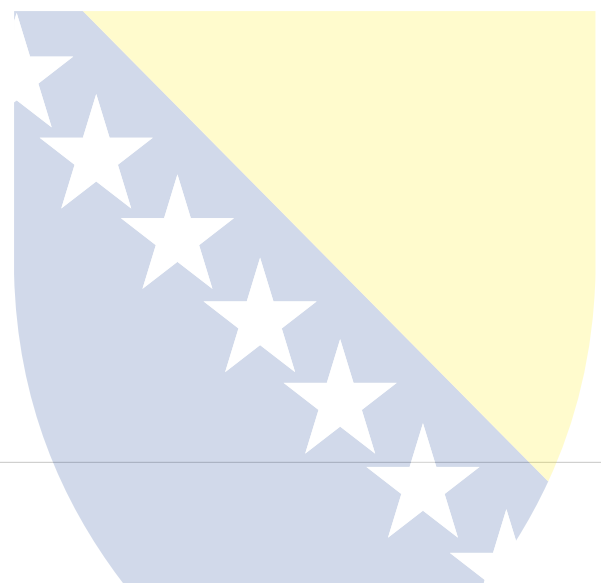
BiH2 – Provision of housing solutions to 780 households for return and reintegration or local integration

- The beneficiary selection process related to returnees (500 housing solutions, 250 from both Croatia and Serbia) will be conducted simultaneously with the selection for BiH1, for the same group. Beneficiary selection commissions will focus on processing applications of returnees while waiting for the results of field verification from Croatia and Serbia.

Status of Tenders

BiH1 – Provision of building materials to 20 families and turnkey reconstruction assistance to 150 families

- Tenders for the design of reconstruction of 50 housing units (25 in FBiH and 25 in Republika Srpska), and tenders for the supply of building materials for 20 housing units in the Republika Srpska were launched on 27 October 2014.



Legal Framework

- Croatia has signed Grant Agreements for the already approved sub-projects, except for **HR3 – Construction of a home for 75 elderly and disabled persons in Glina**, for the amount of up to EUR 3.6 million, which is currently undergoing an internal review process in HR.

Beneficiary Selection Activities

HR1 – Construction of an apartment building for 29 families in Korenica

- Beneficiary selection is completed. Following UNHCR's recommendations to the State Office for Reconstruction and Housing Care (SORHC), the issuance of positive administrative decisions on the right to housing care for the selected beneficiaries has started.

HR2 – Construction of two residential buildings in Knin for 40 beneficiary households

- Beneficiary selection has been completed (40 families) on 17 September. 189 families have been assessed by the joint WG of the SORHC and UNHCR, and a total of 68 have been assessed as meeting RHP criteria, so there is a sufficient number of beneficiaries on the reserve list. Selected beneficiaries are returning refugees, ex-occupancy/ tenancy right holders and residents of two collective centers.

HR3 – Construction of a home for 75 elderly and disabled persons in Glina

- UNHCR has approved the final list of beneficiaries (130 beneficiaries), which should be updated 6 months before the end of construction (in order to assess whether anything has changed).

HR4 – Purchase of 101 apartments throughout the country

- SORHC started with the selection of beneficiaries from the pool of 373 administratively processed/ positively assessed applications for the national Housing Care Programme (203 in so-called urban areas, 167 within Areas of Special State Concern). The beneficiaries will be selected according to the vulnerability criteria same as for the previous sub-project.

Status of Projects' Implementation

HR1 – Construction of an apartment building for 29 families in Korenica

- UNHCR, TA and the SORHC went to Korenica for a field check. TA and the SORHC confirmed that the construction is progressing according to the official work plan.

HR3 – Construction of a home for 75 elderly and disabled persons in Glina

- The precondition before signing the GA is a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the SORHC, Sisacko-Moslavacka County and the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth (MSPY), which should ensure that the facility will be included in the national welfare system. This MoU is scheduled to be signed shortly.

HR4 – Purchase of 101 apartments throughout the country

- HR presented a list of 47 apartments to be purchased within the Areas of Special State Concern to the Technical Committee. The Technical Committee gave its non-objection to the list and the SORHC should send the first disbursement request for this sub-project in early November. In addition, the SORHC will publish a new public call for the purchase of flats outside of the Areas of Special State Concern by early December at the latest. Out of this public call, the 54 remaining flats will be selected.

Status of Tenders

HR2 – Construction of two residential buildings in Knin for 40 beneficiary households

- It is expected that Knin municipality will issue a construction licence by 1 December 2014 and the tender for construction works and Supervision Engineer services is estimated to be launched by 15 December 2014.

Legal Framework

- Two Grant Agreements - **MNE2 – Provision of housing to 120 most vulnerable families from Camp Konik 1** and **MNE3 – Construction of a home for 68 elderly/handicapped persons in Pljevlja**, were signed on 7 October in Podgorica. (Please see section Newsflash for further information)

Status of Projects' Implementation

MNE2 – Provision of housing to 120 most vulnerable families from Camp Konik 1

- The main design for this sub-project has been prepared and is currently under review.

Beneficiary Selection Activities

MNE1 – Construction of two blocks of flats for 62 IDP families in Nikšić

- Beneficiaries have been pre-selected, while the final selection process shall start six months before the completion of construction, as per the national legislation.

MNE3 – Construction of a home for 68 elderly/handicapped persons in Pljevlja

- The pre-selection survey has been completed and 101 persons have been identified as eligible and interested in accommodation in the home for elderly. UNHCR and OSCE informed officially the LI that the condition precedent for disbursement of funds has been fulfilled.



Legal Framework

- Grant Agreements for **SRB2 – Support to 870 refugee families through four housing solutions** worth EUR 11 560 936 and **SRB3 – Support to 715 refugee families through four housing solutions** worth EUR 10 963 918 were signed on 9 September in Belgrade. (Please see section Newflash for further information)

Beneficiary Selection Activities

SRB1 – Provision of 125 building material packages and 70 prefabricated houses to the benefit of 195 households

- The beneficiary selection process has been completed for this sub-project. However, the tender for prefabricated houses has been delayed due to the floods, since some 20% of beneficiaries for this component are from the municipality of Obrenovac, which was severely hit by the floods. Although a parallel process of reconstruction/compensation is taking place for the flood victims, the tender for prefabricated houses is expected to be launched in November.

SRB2 – Support to 870 refugee families through four housing solutions and SRB3 – Support to 715 refugee families through four housing solutions

- The Grant Agreements were signed in September, so it is expected that the selection process will start by the end of November.

Status of Tenders

SRB1 – Provision of 125 building material packages and 70 prefabricated houses to the benefit of 195 households

- The tender for the part of SRB1 that is implemented through Serbia's national contribution was launched and successfully completed. The first 25 building material packages were delivered to the beneficiaries in early October. The Tender Dossier for the supply of 100 packages of building materials will be re-launched in November 2014, together with the tender for 70 prefabricated houses.

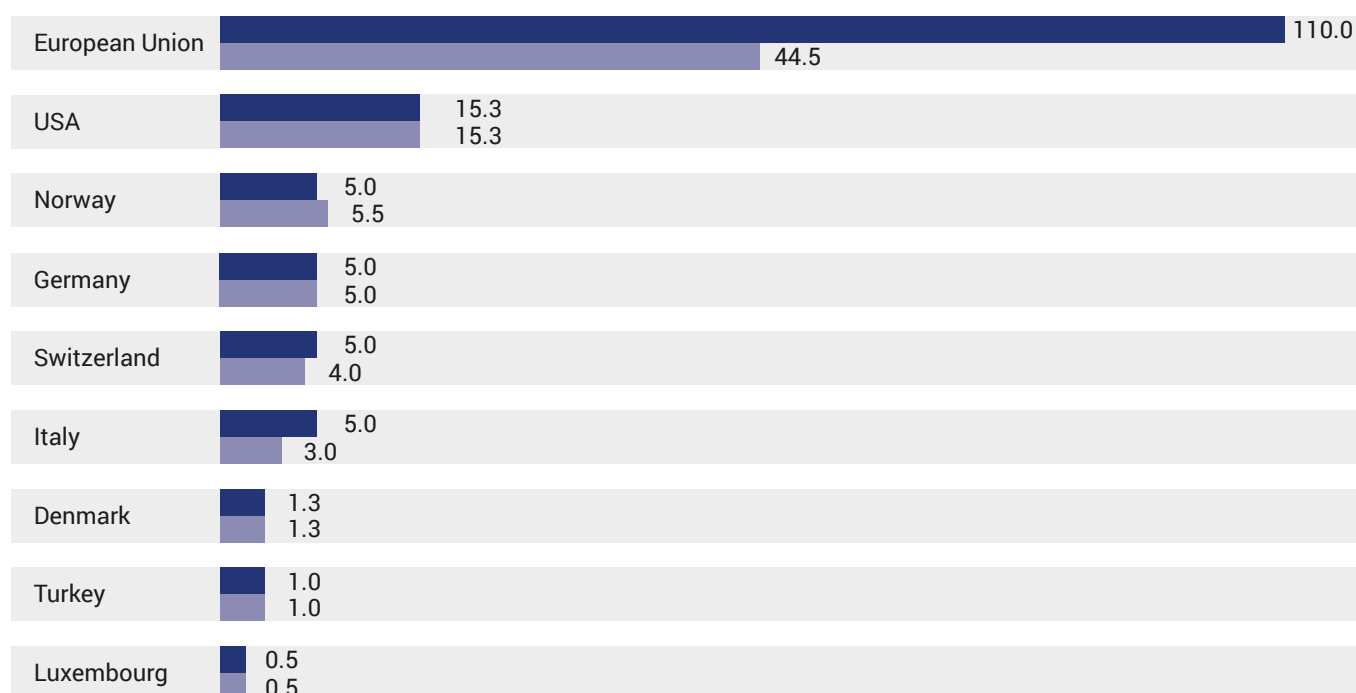


RHP FUND STATUS

Contributions committed and paid in (in EUR million at end–October 2014)

Total committed:
EUR 148.1 million

Total paid in:
EUR 80.1 million



Status of Disbursements during September–October 2014

- **SRB1 – Provision of 125 building material packages and 70 prefabricated houses to the benefit of 195 households:** In early September 2014, the first grant tranche amounting to EUR 996 500, was paid out of the RHP Fund.
- **BiH1 – Provision of building material to 20 families and turnkey reconstruction assistance to 150 families (Comp. 1):** In October 2014, the first grant tranche (for Component 1) to BiH, for the amount of EUR 268 750, was paid out of the RHP Fund.
- **HR4 – Purchase of flats for 101 eligible beneficiaries:** In mid-November 2014, the first grant tranche for this sub-project, for the amount of EUR 1 514 663 was paid out of the RHP Fund.

Upcoming activities (November - December 2014)

RHP Meetings

6 November 2014

11th Regional Coordination Forum - Belgrade, Serbia.

20 November 2014

8th Assembly of Donors and 5th RHP Steering Committee Meetings - Paris, France. Followed by the exhibition "Faces of RHP" with photographs of beneficiaries from the four Partner Countries, which is the result of a close cooperation between the Partner Countries, UNHCR and the CEB.

Trainings and Workshops

5 November 2014

Workshop on Communication and Visibility materials - Belgrade, Serbia.

December 2014

- Training on Tender Evaluation - Belgrade, Serbia
 - Monitoring Training - Podgorica, Montenegro
 - Workshop Transversal Procedures and Human Resources Development - Podgorica, Montenegro
 - Workshop Monitoring and Information Flow - Zagreb, Croatia
 - Workshop Transversal Procedures and Human Resources Development - Zagreb, Croatia.
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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 over five years with the support of the international community.

www.regionalhousingprogramme.org
