

# REGIONAL HOUSING PROGRAMME FUND

## OPERATIONAL REPORT 2019



## MARCH 2020

Prepared by the Council of Europe Development Bank

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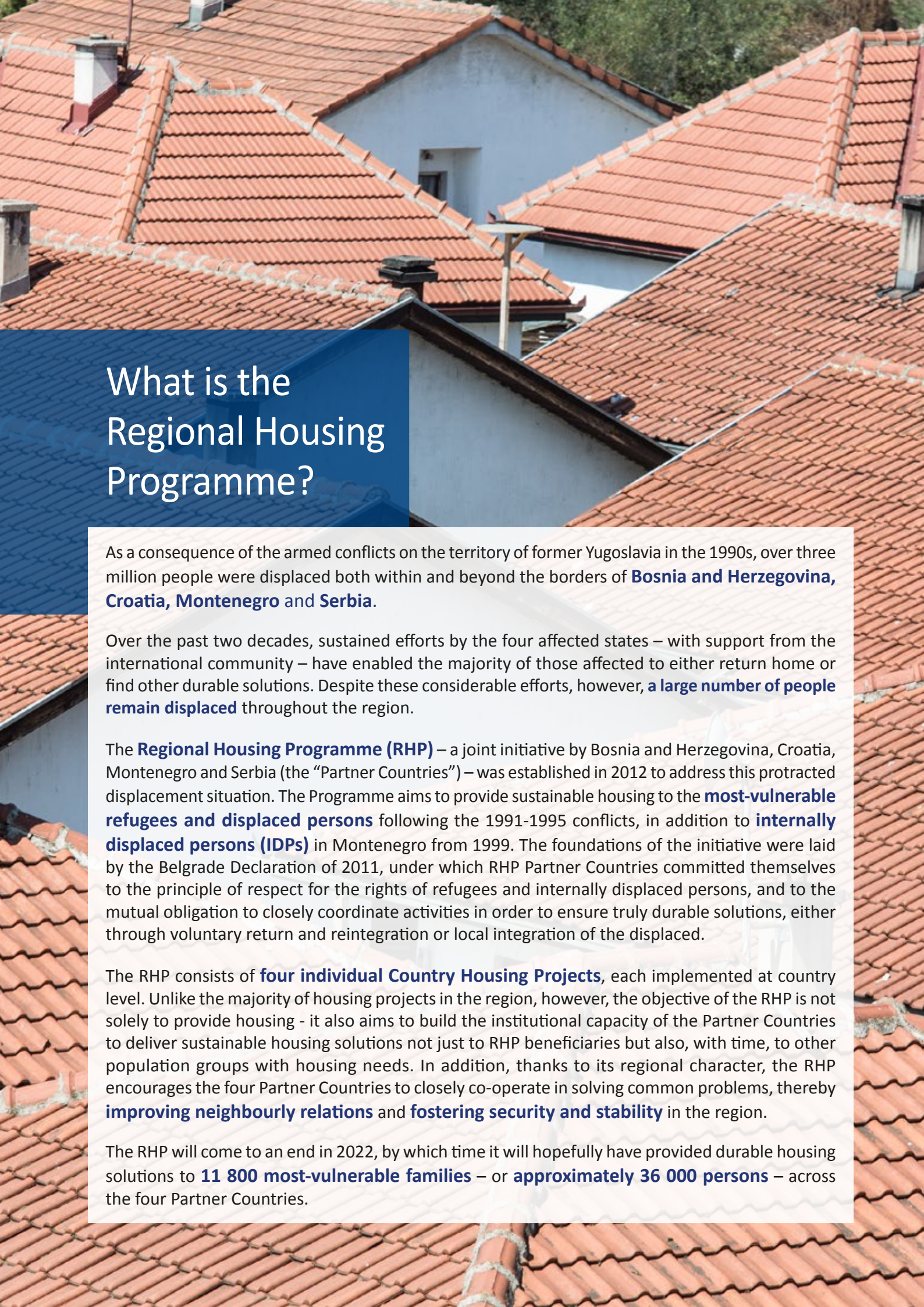
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Photo on the cover page:

RHP beneficiary in Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina



# What is the Regional Housing Programme?

As a consequence of the armed conflicts on the territory of former Yugoslavia in the 1990s, over three million people were displaced both within and beyond the borders of **Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia**.

Over the past two decades, sustained efforts by the four affected states – with support from the international community – have enabled the majority of those affected to either return home or find other durable solutions. Despite these considerable efforts, however, **a large number of people remain displaced** throughout the region.

The **Regional Housing Programme (RHP)** – a joint initiative by Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia (the “Partner Countries”) – was established in 2012 to address this protracted displacement situation. The Programme aims to provide sustainable housing to the **most-vulnerable refugees and displaced persons** following the 1991-1995 conflicts, in addition to **internally displaced persons (IDPs)** in Montenegro from 1999. The foundations of the initiative were laid by the Belgrade Declaration of 2011, under which RHP Partner Countries committed themselves to the principle of respect for the rights of refugees and internally displaced persons, and to the mutual obligation to closely coordinate activities in order to ensure truly durable solutions, either through voluntary return and reintegration or local integration of the displaced.

The RHP consists of **four individual Country Housing Projects**, each implemented at country level. Unlike the majority of housing projects in the region, however, the objective of the RHP is not solely to provide housing - it also aims to build the institutional capacity of the Partner Countries to deliver sustainable housing solutions not just to RHP beneficiaries but also, with time, to other population groups with housing needs. In addition, thanks to its regional character, the RHP encourages the four Partner Countries to closely co-operate in solving common problems, thereby **improving neighbourly relations** and **fostering security and stability** in the region.

The RHP will come to an end in 2022, by which time it will hopefully have provided durable housing solutions to **11 800 most-vulnerable families** – or **approximately 36 000 persons** – across the four Partner Countries.

# Forewords by the CEB and European Union



**Rolf Wenzel**

Governor  
Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB)

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The world is facing the highest level of displacement on record, with 71 million people forcibly displaced from their homes worldwide. This unprecedented number could further rise in the coming years, in particular because of climate change.

It is therefore imperative that the international community improve its response to displacements. We must learn from existing initiatives and apply the lessons learnt to other displacement situations.

In this respect, the Regional Housing Programme (RHP) offers valuable insights. Its innovative design, which is based on beneficiary accountability, substantial technical assistance and transnational cooperation, is having tangible effects.

The Partner Countries are delivering housing solutions in record numbers. In 2019, the number of beneficiaries served reached 19 000, a 60% increase compared with the previous year. In the process, thousands of much-needed jobs are being created in local construction companies.

Just as importantly, the Programme is building bridges between countries which were embroiled in bitter conflict twenty years ago. As such, it can pave the way for increased cooperation on other transnational issues in the region, such as transport, energy and communication.

These impressive achievements are drawing attention. This year, the Programme was one of the projects selected from 700 applications from all over the world to be showcased at the Paris Peace Forum, which presents novel solutions to global challenges.

RHP Partner Countries Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia, can be proud of the outstanding results they have achieved with the support of the international community. Yet, there is still much work to be done. Over the next two and a half years, the Partner Countries are to provide decent homes to a further 17 000 persons.

I encourage all four Partner Countries to maintain their strong commitment to the Programme, and to focus on achieving its objectives to their full extent. I am confident that they will rise to this important challenge.

For its part, the Council of Europe Development Bank remains fully committed to the RHP, and will continue to actively support the Partner Countries in line with its core mandate of assisting displaced persons.

**Olivér Várhelyi**

Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement,  
European Commission

The Western Balkans is a priority for the European Commission. I am also personally committed to strengthening the European Union perspective of the region and to accelerating the region's development to close the gap with the European Union.

Reinforcing regional cooperation is a major opportunity to boost the economies and essential for EU integration. Promoting good neighbourly relations contributes to the long-term stability and prosperity of the Western Balkans, and benefits the entire population, while reconciliation is a prerequisite for building a common future. To advance these processes, the European Union is supporting a number of concrete actions, such as the Regional Housing Programme.

This Programme is one of the flagship projects that helps displaced people who lost their homes during the conflicts in the region to get new ones, and through this supports them in overcoming the legacy of the past. The Programme has already transformed the lives of nearly 20 000 vulnerable people and the number continues to increase.

The concrete benefits extend well beyond displaced persons. The Programme is the largest homebuilding initiative in the region. It has created thousands of jobs in a clear reconciliation context, mostly in small and medium-sized local companies. Administrations in the region sit behind the steering wheel. Fully in charge of implementation, they have an opportunity to learn better how to deliver large-scale infrastructure projects.

This is an excellent example of the European Union's cooperation with the Western Balkans. The European Union has already contributed EUR 234 million to the RHP for infrastructure and for technical assistance. In recognition of the results already achieved by the partners, the European Union and its fellow Donors have agreed to extend the Programme until 2022, which will allow us to provide more homes to those in need.

# RHP Facts and Figures

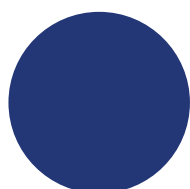
DONORS' CONFERENCE  
IN SARAJEVO,  
APRIL 2012



**15** DONORS HAVE CONTRIBUTED  
TO THE RHP



EUR **236** million  
European Union



24  
USA



10  
Germany



7.7  
Norway



6.4  
Switzerland



5.0  
Italy



1.3  
Denmark



1.0  
Turkey



0.5  
Luxembourg

EUR **291** million  
PLEDGED BY DONORS



**4** PARTNER COUNTRIES  
IMPLEMENTING  
THE PROGRAMME



Bosnia and  
Herzegovina



Republic of  
Croatia



Montenegro



Republic of  
Serbia



**3** IMPLEMENTING  
PARTNERS



CLOSE TO

**19 000**

VULNERABLE PERSONS  
NOW HAVE DECENT HOMES



UP TO

**36 000**

PEOPLE WILL HAVE A  
NEW HOME ONCE THE  
RHP IS COMPLETED

**31**

SUB-PROJECTS  
APPROVED



Young beneficiaries at the Konik apartment complex, Podgorica, Montenegro

EUR

**237** million

GRANTS APPROVED



EUR

**156** million

GRANTS DISBURSED



EUR

**52** million

NATIONAL CONTRIBUTION  
BY PARTNER COUNTRIES



# Meet the RHP Beneficiaries



Nuriz and Senada Mehmedović, Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Nuriz and Senada fled the Bosnian municipality of Zvornik following the outbreak of war. In their search for safety, they frequently changed lodgings, but living conditions remained inhumane. Accommodation included a classroom sheltering more than thirty people, and a house with broken windows and no water supply. After settling down in one of these shelters, they married in 1998.

The Mehmedović family subsequently heard about the RHP from the municipality of Tuzla. With their assistance, they managed to apply for an apartment, which they were thrilled to receive in 2017. “I could hardly believe that we were selected when they called us. It was unbelievable!” says Senada.

Today, Nuriz and Senada have three children. Despite the adversities faced, their eldest son, Dženan,

has trained in cycling for the last four years, and has won numerous medals. He is just as diligent and persistent as his younger brother and sister, who sometimes walk several kilometres just to get to school.

To overcome their financial hurdles, the family also received assistance for sustainable return from the Catholic Relief Services (CRS), and now grows tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers and onions in two 200m<sup>2</sup> greenhouses. Everything produced is sold to local residents.

“We are very satisfied. The demand for our goods is high, and if we were able to increase our production, we could still sell everything that we produced,” says Nuriz, who has also kept bees for the last 25 years in order to provide for his family.



Božidarka Ivošević and Danica Cvetnić, Petrinja, Croatia

Božidarka lived with her parents in a house in Petrinja, Croatia, before the war. After her parents' divorce, her father bought a house nearby. Danica, Božidarka's mother, worked in a local food-processing factory, while her father worked at an ironworks.

After finishing school, Božidarka found a job in Zagreb, married and gave birth to a son, but divorced soon after the child had been diagnosed with a mild development disorder. Some years later, she had to return to Petrinja to take care of her mother, who had fallen ill – untreated diabetes had required the amputation of her leg. As their homes lay in ruins, the two women lived in rented apartments for several years, before moving into Božidarka's father's house, which had been partially reconstructed. As this house was still in poor condition, and

unsuitable for the ill elderly woman and child with special needs, Božidarka applied to the RHP for the reconstruction of her mother's old house, and was fortunately accepted.

The three of them survive on Danica's pension and a small social contribution towards their medical care, as Božidarka has a full-time job taking care of her mother and son.

Within a year, the house was completely reconstructed, and all three moved into the warm, light rooms, full of new hope. "I can finally sleep calmly in my own bed, without worrying whether my son will fall ill due to humidity and cold," says Božidarka. "And my mother has access to a proper bathroom. Thank God – and all of you who helped this to happen."



Mihajlo and Kašira Vujošević, Berane, Montenegro

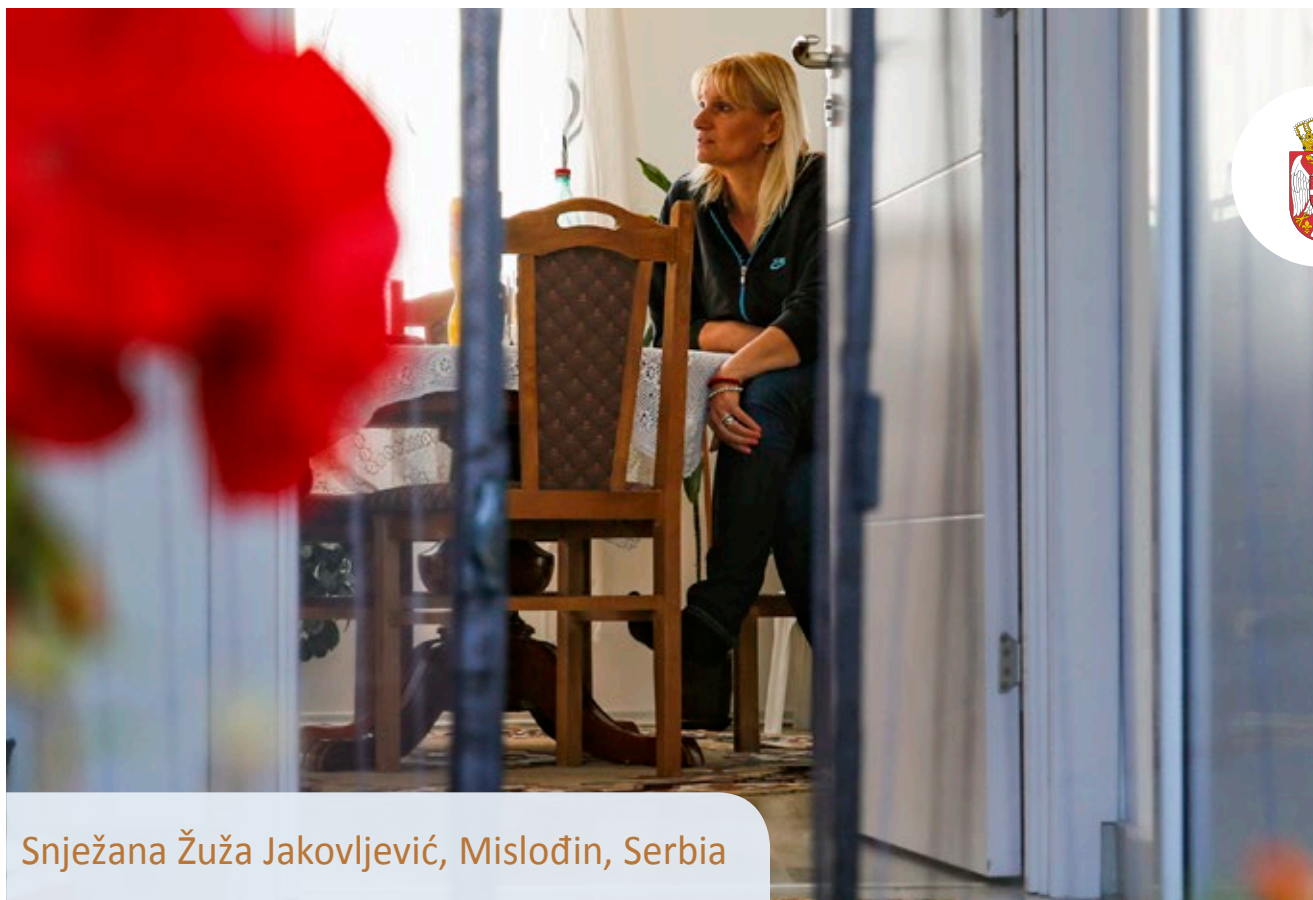
Mihajlo and Kašira met in a refugee camp near Rožaje, where they both arrived in 1999, after being forced to flee their native towns in Kosovo.

The couple stayed in the camp – located in a converted hotel – with their two sons, Milan (now 18) and Miodrag (17) for three years. Later, they moved to Berane, to wooden barracks which had been converted into temporary accommodation for Kosovo refugees. The living conditions in the barracks were extremely poor – there was no running water or bathroom facilities, and only the main room could be heated. Although they had initially planned to stay for a few months, this soon turned into 15 years, during which time two more children, Marko (14) and Kristina (9) – were born.

Mihajlo worked on construction sites throughout this period. More recently, the family has begun to receive a small amount of state financial support for their children.

In 2017, the family was informed by Berane municipality that new RHP buildings were to be constructed, and decided to apply. To their delight, they soon received the news that would utterly transform their lives – they had been accepted.

In March 2019, the Vujoševićs moved into a 60 m<sup>2</sup> apartment in the newly-constructed RHP building in Berane, which had been constructed on the same site as the old barracks. Kristina is proud to have her very own room, decorated in pink, while her brothers share another one.



Snježana Žuža Jakovljević, Mislođin, Serbia

Snježana has lived with her two sons in the Serbian town of Mislođin since 2016. Last year, they moved into a new prefabricated house, which had been built with the assistance of the RHP.

Originally from Mostar in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Snježana fled to the Bosnian town of Nevesinje following the outbreak of war. Several years later, she moved with her sons to Serbia, where they were obliged to move between temporary lodgings several times.

In 2009, Snježana managed to buy a plot of land in Mislođin. After learning about the RHP from the municipality, she applied for the prefabricated house in 2014 and – four months later – was thrilled to learn that they had been shortlisted.

After finalisation of the construction works, the necessary conditions for moving in were met in April 2019.

“Luckily, we managed to obtain the electricity, water and sewer connections soon after the completion of the house, so we were able to move in shortly after receiving the keys,” she says. “There is nothing more satisfying than having your own home! At just under 50m<sup>2</sup>, the house fits us perfectly. We are also very pleased that all installations and works have been completed and are of high quality.”

Snježana works as a cleaning lady at the Assembly of Serbia in Belgrade. The next thing she plans to do in her new home is to plant a garden and construct a fence. “After many years, I finally feel at home”, she laughs.

# Main Achievements in 2019

## A FURTHER 7 200 BENEFICIARIES WERE PROVIDED WITH DECENT HOMES

2019 was a record year for the RHP. Thanks to the joint efforts of all stakeholders, the Programme delivered new homes to an additional 7 200

*“ 2019 was a record year for the RHP ”* vulnerable beneficiaries who had endured very harsh conditions for two decades.

These new housing deliveries bring the total estimated number of refugees and displaced persons assisted by the RHP to approximately 19 000 – over 50% of its final target of 36 000.



Beneficiaries in Zrjenjanin, Serbia (new apartments for 11 families)

## SUSTAINED DONOR SUPPORT FOR RHP IMPLEMENTATION

In 2019, in recognition of the Programme’s progress, and to enable the Partner Countries to continue their efforts towards meeting the housing delivery targets, Donors agreed to extend the duration of the Programme by one year – until end 2022. In order to enable continued implementation support to the Partner Countries during this additional period, Donors pledged additional contributions. The European Union pledged EUR 2 million, Germany EUR 1 million,

Norway EUR 0.7 million, Switzerland EUR 0.5 million and Spain EUR 0.1 million. These new pledges build upon contributions previously made by these and other RHP Donors such as the United States, Italy, Denmark, Turkey and Luxembourg.

Indeed, one of the key features of the RHP is that it is implemented by the Partner Countries themselves, enabling them to build long-term capacities for similar projects in the future.

To help them to implement the Programme according to international best practice, Partner Countries benefit from implementation support. This support is financed mainly by the European Union – the principal Donor to the Programme. In addition to the EUR 193 million committed to finance housing projects, and EUR 1.2 million funding approved for UNHCR in 2012, the European Commission has also made a bilateral contribution of EUR 40 million to finance implementation support measures.



Nikšić, Montenegro (new apartments for 62 families)

The CEB is entrusted with overseeing and coordinating all RHP implementation support activities, including technical assistance, the bulk of which is provided by a consortium comprising EPTISA, GIZ and the Danish Refugee Council.

Beyond implementation support, RHP governance and visibility activities are supported by several Donor countries - Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and the Slovak Republic. Combined, these Donors have contributed EUR 0.2 million.

*“In recognition of the Programme’s progress, Donors pledged additional contributions”*



Vrnjačka Banja, Serbia (20 new apartments)

## SUSTAINABILITY AND RHP LEGACY REMAINED IN THE SPOTLIGHT

The challenge of addressing future prospects of beneficiary families remained a key area of focus throughout 2019. While the main objective of the RHP is to deliver secure homes, in reality the complex needs of beneficiaries often extend beyond housing. They encompass access to public services such as schools and health care, in addition to assistance with developing income-generating activities.

Ensuring that all these needs are met is key to creating decent living standards for the beneficiaries of the Programme in the long run. In addition to the essential involvement of UNHCR and OSCE in this respect, a number of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) play important roles in reinforcing the sustainability outlook of the RHP. These NGOs are often funded by the same Donors as the RHP.



RHP stakeholders gather at the 2019 RHP Legacy Workshop, Vienna

Ensuring the sustainability of housing solutions will be vital for the legacy of the Programme as a whole, a fact highlighted during the RHP Legacy Workshop in May 2019, at which RHP stakeholders gathered to consider the Programme's achievements and lessons learned to date.

A report is currently being drafted to capture the legacy of the RHP. It is hoped that the conclusions of this report will serve as a blueprint to inform future programmes of a similar nature in the Balkans and other regions.

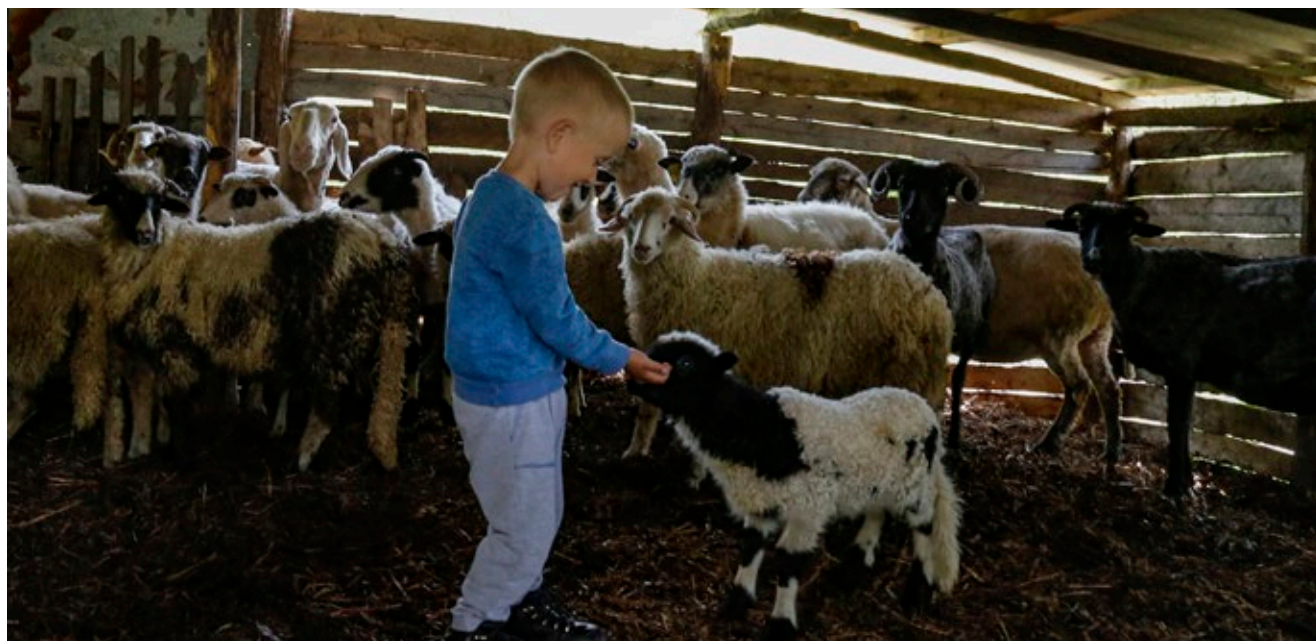


Recipients of the 1 000<sup>th</sup> RHP home in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in Mostar

*“ Ensuring the sustainability of housing solutions will be vital for the legacy of the Programme ”*

Indeed, the RHP is already recognised as a “model” for other programmes. In November 2019, the RHP was one of 114 projects selected – out of approximately 700 applications worldwide – to be showcased at the Paris Peace Forum, an event which convened 33 heads of state and civil society representatives from approximately 140 countries

with a view to advancing global governance solutions. The RHP team at the Forum – which drew approximately 7 000 attendees to Paris – was led by the CEB and joined by representatives from OSCE, UNHCR, and the Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration (KIRS) on behalf of all Partner Countries.



A young RHP beneficiary with his livestock in Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina

## ROBUST VISIBILITY ACTIVITIES CONTINUED

As the number of housing units delivered continued to increase throughout 2019, so too did the efforts to showcase these achievements and the generous support of the Programme's Donors.

More than 20 events took place across the four Partner Countries to mark the delivery of keys to beneficiaries or launch of construction, and were promptly highlighted via press releases and social media posts.

Four films which summarised the impacts of the Programme in each Partner Country were also released, in addition to a suite of factsheets and newsletters.

## OUTLOOK FOR 2020+

2020 will be another challenging year for the RHP, with almost 8 000 persons expected to receive new homes. Thereafter, in 2021 and 2022 combined, almost 9 000 additional beneficiaries should receive their keys.

This demanding delivery pace requires significant efforts by the Partner Countries, underpinned by robust support from the RHP Donors, UNHCR, OSCE and the CEB. Nevertheless, the intensive efforts are continuing to bear fruit, and by the time the Programme is completed in 2022, a total of 36 000 persons should have received new homes.

*“By the time the Programme is completed, 36 000 persons should have received new homes ”*



Beneficiaries in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina



# RHP COUNTRY HOUSING PROJECT

## Bosnia and Herzegovina

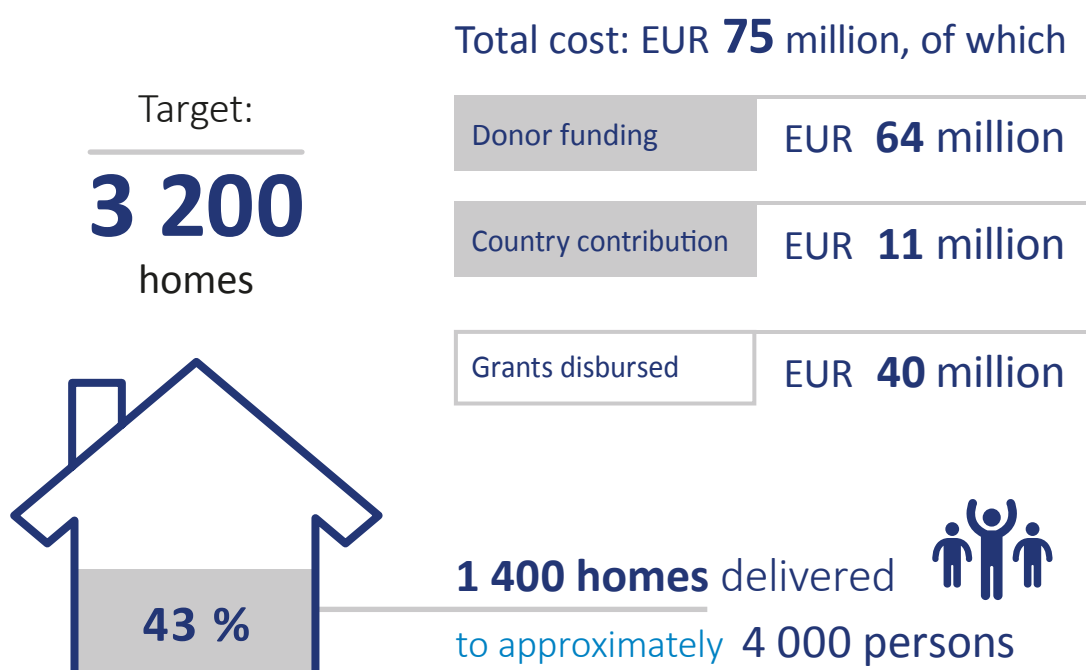


**Nina Mišković**

*RHP National Coordinator  
Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees  
Bosnia and Herzegovina*

The Country Housing Project of Bosnia and Herzegovina has gained tremendous momentum over the past year, with 1 300 housing units delivered by the end of 2019, and over 700 under construction. We are especially grateful to Donors for their positive response to the request to extend RHP implementation by an additional 12 months, until June 2022. This extension will enable the BiH institutions to provide all RHP beneficiaries with decent homes by the time of Programme closure. In addition, we recognise the importance of complementary projects and the provision of sustainability measures, with a view to achieving durable and sustainable solutions for RHP beneficiaries.

### Key Facts and Figures





# RHP COUNTRY HOUSING PROJECT

## Croatia



**Nikola Mažar**

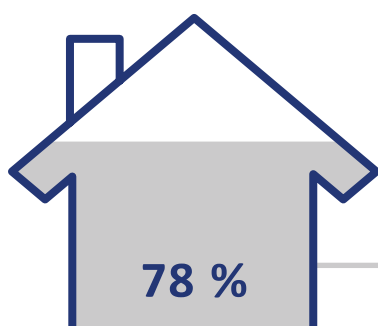
*State Secretary  
Central State Office  
for Reconstruction and Housing Care  
Croatia*

2019 was the year that marked the close-out of sub-projects HR2, HR3, HR4 and HR5 in Croatia. During 2019, in total, 73 RHP beneficiary families moved into new homes; 38 beneficiaries moved into the Home for Elderly in Glina (HR3), four families received new apartments under sub-project HR4, and 31 family houses were re/constructed under sub-project HR6. The approval of the extension of RHP implementation until June 2022, as well as the approval of two new sub-projects and the signature of Grant Agreements, will enable the Central State Office for Reconstruction and Housing Care to provide all 410 RHP beneficiary families with decent homes by the time of Programme closure.

### Key Facts and Figures

Target:

**410**  
homes



Total cost: EUR **23** million, of which

Donor funding	EUR <b>17</b> million
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Country contribution	EUR <b>6</b> million
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Grants disbursed	EUR <b>13</b> million
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**320 homes** delivered  
to approximately 1 000 persons





# RHP COUNTRY HOUSING PROJECT

## Montenegro

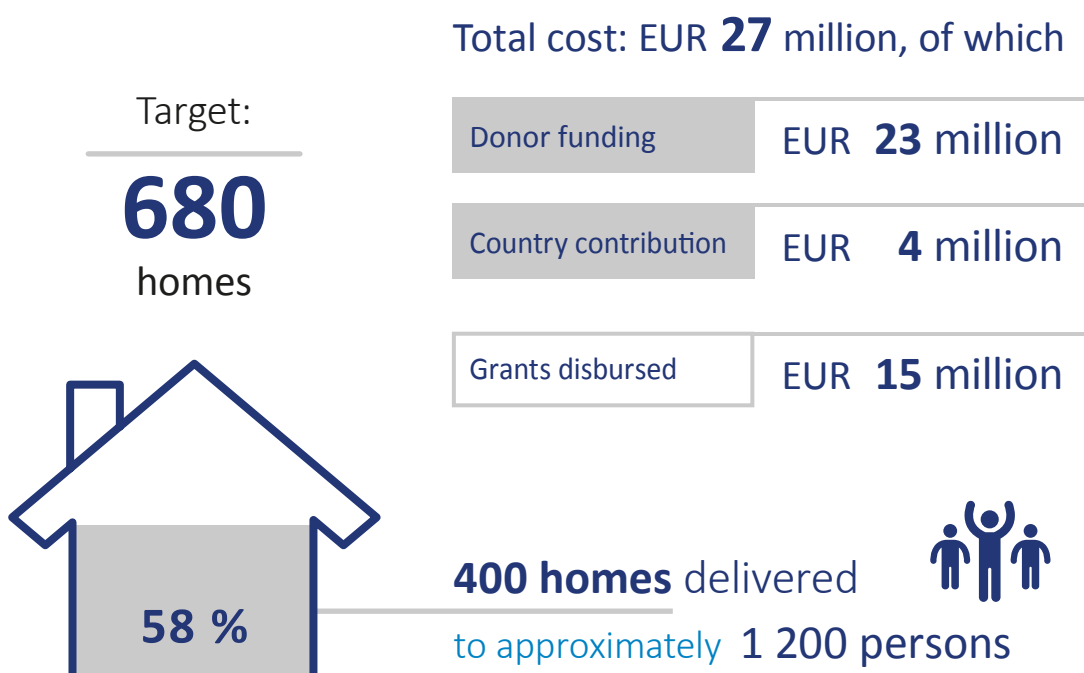


**Budimirka Đukanović**

*RHP National Coordinator  
Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare  
Montenegro*

In 2019, Montenegro completed many challenging tasks in the implementation of the RHP. Within the sub-project MNE4, 271 beneficiaries moved into their apartments in Berane, while under MNE6, foundations were laid for the construction of a home for 104 elderly persons and adults with disabilities in Nikšić. Completion of construction of this important facility is expected by the end of 2020. The RHP team also worked diligently to bring MNE7 - "Purchase of 36 apartments in the municipality of Herceg Novi" to its final phase, and we are confident that this project will be completed next year. Additionally, progress was made with respect to other sub-projects, in particular MNE8 - the construction of a minimum of 50 houses. Montenegro is confident that 2020 will mark the successful completion of many sub-projects, and we remain committed to the implementation of the RHP.

### Key Facts and Figures





# RHP COUNTRY HOUSING PROJECT

## Serbia



**Vladimir Cucić**

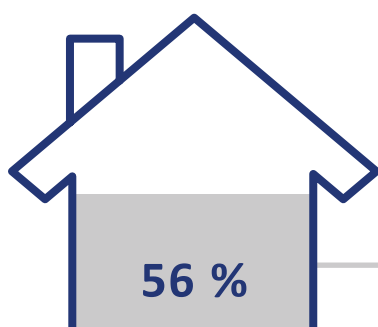
*Commissioner for Refugees and Migration  
Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration  
Republic of Serbia*

The Regional Housing Programme is being implemented at full speed in the Republic of Serbia. Residential buildings are being completed on a weekly basis, and the number of beneficiaries moving into their new homes is steadily increasing. This is testimony not only to the quality of the work, but also to how much hard work has been done behind the scenes over recent years in order to produce these remarkable results today. 2019 was an extremely successful year: on World Refugee Day, on 20 June, 270 families moved into a new apartment building in Kamendin, Belgrade – the largest building completed in the RHP to date – in addition to many smaller buildings across Serbia. And other residential solutions are being delivered with the same intensity. The Commissariat for Refugees and Migration remains fully committed to the implementation of the RHP in the Republic of Serbia in 2020 and beyond.

### Key Facts and Figures

Target:

**7 500**  
homes



Total cost: EUR **165** million, of which

Donor funding	EUR <b>134</b> million
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Country contribution	EUR <b>31</b> million
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Grants disbursed	EUR <b>88</b> million
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**4 200 homes** delivered   
to approximately **12 000** persons



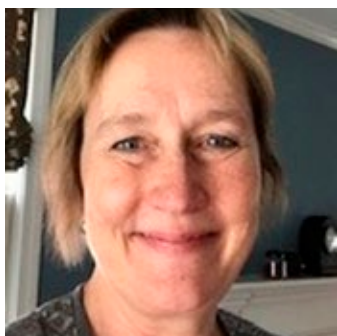


270-apartment complex in Kamendin, Belgrade, Serbia



Semiha Borovac, former Minister for Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with a young RHP beneficiary

# Statements by Main Donors



United States of America

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## **Dana J. Francis**

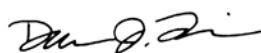
Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary  
Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration  
U.S. Department of State

I commend Partner Countries and Regional Housing Programme stakeholders on their continued, joint commitment to providing durable, dignified solutions for vulnerable displaced persons, which helped make 2019 such a successful year.

The RHP is a model for post-conflict durable solutions, as the Programme has facilitated lasting, productive, regional connections and development of institutional capacity.

Through its support to international and non-governmental organisation partners, the United States helps provide RHP beneficiaries assistance to break the cycle of displacement and become self-reliant, whether through access to the local economy or legal documentation to codify their rights. Our assistance has also supported the implementation of “social housing” policies at a municipal level, ensuring the sustainability of these units.

As Donors, we are committed to supporting and strengthening stakeholder cooperation in the coming year, and ensuring the sharing of best practices for sustainable, durable solutions for years beyond the official Programme.





Germany

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### **Susanne Schütz**

Director for South-Eastern Europe, Turkey and the EFTA States  
Federal Foreign Office, Germany

In November 2019, the Donors unanimously agreed to extend the Regional Housing Programme by one year to 2022.

With this decision, Donors have embraced their responsibility to the beneficiaries, who, after years of waiting in provisional accommodation, are now confident that they will finally be able to move into new homes thanks to the RHP. To support this extension, Germany has again made available to the Programme an additional contribution of one million euros, bringing Germany's total contributions to ten million euros.

However, not only the Donors but above all the Partner Countries need to assume responsibility. All stakeholders need to make a joint effort if they are actually to be able to meet the goals by June 2022. As far as the Partner Countries are concerned, this means that they need to intensify still further the considerable engagement they have shown to date and remove the various obstacles to full implementation of the Programme. The Donor countries will continue to stand by them, flanked by the CEB, UNHCR and OSCE.

Germany is confident that the Regional Housing Programme will be able to hand over all planned homes by 2022 and thereby ensure humane living conditions for just over 36 000 people.



Norway

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**Kristin Melsom**

Director  
Section for South East Europe  
Department for European Affairs  
Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Norway is a proud supporter of the Regional Housing Programme. The Programme is a model for addressing protracted refugee situations and we welcome the steps taken to identify its key success factors. At a time when the number of refugees and internally displaced persons worldwide is at a record high, the international community needs to know the best practices which can be applied to other displacements.

Norway commends the Partner Countries for the progress they have achieved over the last years. In recognition of this progress, we pledged an additional EUR 0.7 million to the Programme in 2019. This new pledge will bring the total contribution of Norway to the RHP to almost EUR 8 million. The funds will be used to support the Partner Countries in implementing the Programme according to best practice.

Norway looks forward to bringing the Programme to a successful completion, together with the Partner Countries and the other stakeholders.

A handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to Kristin Melsom.



Switzerland

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### **Ruth Huber**

Ambassador, Vice-Director  
Head of Department Cooperation with Eastern Europe  
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)  
Federal Department for Foreign Affairs (FDFA)

The Regional Housing Programme is an important partner of the Swiss cooperation with the countries of the Western Balkans. Switzerland particularly appreciates the positive contribution of the RHP at regional level. We therefore decided to increase our contribution, which will allow more beneficiaries to receive durable housing solutions and to put the agreed one-year extension of the Programme on a solid basis.

SDC welcomes the fact that more than half of the total funds have been disbursed, and that therefore more than 19 000 people already benefit from decent living conditions. But this means as well that an important part of the work plan still has to be accomplished – a challenge for both the RHP Fund stakeholders and particularly the Partner Countries.

It will be of utmost importance in the remaining years of the RHP to put a strong focus on sustainability and the social and economic integration of beneficiaries. Switzerland commits itself to actively contribute to the RHP Legacy Paper.

Switzerland would be pleased to see the Partner Countries deepen their regional cooperation and potentially even extend the gained experience to other sectors in order to work towards regional reconciliation and economic and social cooperation!



RHP beneficiary in Šljivovac, Croatia

# Complementary Measures

To improve the longer-term prospects of RHP beneficiaries – and therefore the sustainability of the housing solutions provided – several RHP Donors finance additional complementary measures on a bilateral basis. These additional measures are implemented by various non-governmental organisations in the region, two of which are presented below.

## Catholic Relief Services (CRS)

Thanks to the gift of the United States Government (approximately EUR 1 million) and supported by an approximately EUR 376 000 contribution by the Government of Switzerland, 327 RHP beneficiaries in Serbia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina received complementary income generation grants from the CRS in 2019. The beneficiaries use these grants to launch and expand small businesses in agriculture, small crafts, etc. Altogether, since 2017, the CRS has assisted 687 RHP beneficiary families in the three countries with the abovementioned grants.

In addition, it has assisted a large number of beneficiaries through the provision of legal aid, assistance in the preparation of applications for RHP housing, or support to municipalities to ensure that legislation and procedures for sustainable social housing are in place.



One of these beneficiaries, Daniela Jovanović, is a refugee from Bosnia and Herzegovina, now living in Serbia, where she has become a beekeeper and small entrepreneur. She produces honey, nuts and fruit mixtures, and brandies made from organic fruits and honey. She sells her products at fairs and online via her Facebook page.

Another beneficiary, Svetlana Marković, was displaced from Kosovo and now lives in Montenegro, where she is a proud owner of a catering business. She uses social media networks and word-of-mouth references to sell her home-made treats. Both women feel empowered, happy and proud to be breadwinners for their families.





In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Jozo Marić has moved into his house, which was rebuilt thanks to the RHP. Prior to this, Jozo was obliged to move homes nineteen times during and after the war. He generates family income from growing peppers and tomatoes in a greenhouse received from the CRS, and selling these on the local market.

As a result of these complementary measures, beneficiaries' incomes were found to have increased by 46% on average.

Photos: Catholic Relief Services, 2019

## Igman Initiative

The European Union-financed regional action, "CARE – Contribution to Access of Refugees and IDPs to Rights and Employment Opportunities," aims at contributing to the technical, socio-economic and socio-cultural sustainability of RHP beneficiaries.

CARE is implemented in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia by the Igman Initiative, in cooperation with the RHP Lead Institutions in each country, at a total cost of EUR 550 000.



In June 2019, the Igman Initiative, through CARE, provided kitchen fittings for eight RHP families who had received new flats in Brčko District, Bosnia and Herzegovina (photos above)

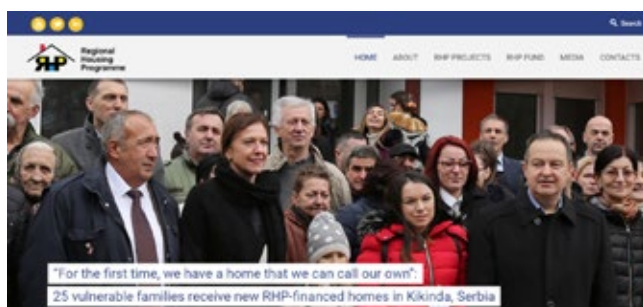
# RHP Visibility

Vigorous efforts to boost the visibility of the RHP and its Donors continued throughout 2019. A variety of media are used to promote the Programme, including publications, videos and social media. A key focus of visibility efforts are inauguration events, which bring together beneficiaries, Donors, Partner Countries and other stakeholders.

## PUBLICATIONS



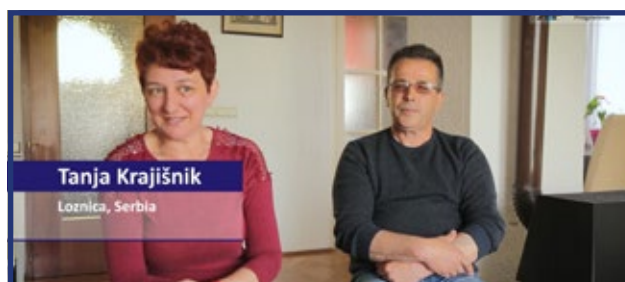
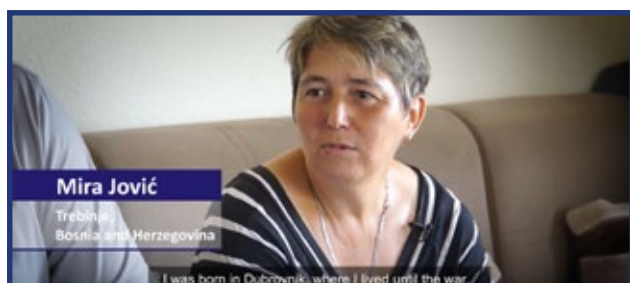
## ONLINE



Follow RHP on:



## VIDEO PRODUCTION



## MEDIA PRESENCE



### 19<sup>TH</sup> WORLD REFUGEE DAY

On 20 June 2019, RHP Donors, Partner Countries and international stakeholders celebrated World Refugee Day together with beneficiaries in Serbia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In Serbia, the RHP stakeholders gathered together in Kamendin, in the municipality of Belgrade, to hand over the keys to new apartments for 270 beneficiary families. This is the biggest RHP building constructed so far. In Sarajevo, the EU Delegation hosted an event at which RHP Donors and local and international organisations had the opportunity to learn from beneficiaries the impact that the RHP has had upon their lives. In addition, a special edition television programme was broadcast by the national television station, BHTV, during which three RHP beneficiary families presented their life stories.



### PARIS PEACE FORUM

On 11-13 November 2019, on the occasion of the Paris Peace Forum, the CEB presented the RHP to a diverse audience from approximately 140 countries. The RHP team was joined by representatives from OSCE, UNHCR, and the Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration (KIRS), on behalf of all Partner Countries.



# RHP Events



Ceremony to mark the delivery of keys to 94 families in Berane, Montenegro (March 2019)



Celebration of delivery of keys to eight families in Brčko District, Bosnia and Herzegovina (June 2019)



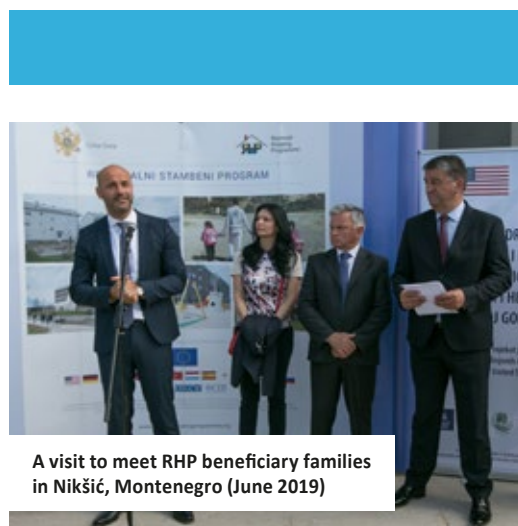
RHP stakeholders celebrating the handing over of the 1 000th home in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina (August 2019)



Delivery of keys ceremony for 50 beneficiary families in Golubinci, Serbia (September 2019)



Visit by RHP Donors and stakeholders to beneficiary families in Ilijaš, Bosnia and Herzegovina (October 2019)



A visit to meet RHP beneficiary families in Nikšić, Montenegro (June 2019)



Ceremony to mark the delivery of keys to 270 families in Kamendin, Belgrade, Serbia (June 2019)



Launch of construction of a new RHP building in Vukovar, Croatia (July 2019)



11 beneficiary families receive the keys to their new homes in Zrenjanin, Serbia (January 2019)



Ceremony to mark the delivery of keys to 94 families in Berane, Montenegro (March 2019)



Joint action in Konik camp to improve the quality of life of the residents, Podgorica, Montenegro (November 2019)

# Statement by UNHCR and OSCE



**Anne-Marie Deutschlander**  
Principal Situation Coordinator  
UNHCR Bureau for Europe  
UNHCR

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'AM Deutschlander'.



**Tuula Yrjölä**  
Ambassador  
Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre  
OSCE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Tuula Yrjölä'.

In 2019, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) continued to support the implementation of the RHP in line with our specific roles within the Programme. The provision of assistance to the Partner Countries in ensuring the transparent and fair selection of beneficiaries and ensuring the sustainability of housing solutions remained key areas of our focus.

UNHCR and the OSCE are particularly pleased that the number of housing solutions provided to the most vulnerable displaced populations in all four Partner Countries reached 6 280 by end-2019.

With 2 400 additional solutions provided in 2019, we have witnessed the highest number of beneficiaries finally rebuilding their lives in dignity.

RHP beneficiary selection has been carried out in a fair and transparent fashion. However, additional efforts are needed in the implementation of this component, as well as all other aspects of the RHP, in order to successfully meet the deadline for implementation in June 2022. In addition to efforts aimed at the delivery of housing, there is a strong need for focused actions to ensure sustainability of the Programme and its long-term success through comprehensive and efficient support offered to thousands of the neediest displaced in rebuilding their lives.

We commend the Partner Countries for initiatives undertaken in 2019 to ensure that the proposed solutions are genuinely durable and comprehensive, and hope to see even more such initiatives in 2020.

The RHP has become widely recognised as a uniquely successful project of regional co-operation and reconciliation. Its importance was recognised at the Paris Peace Forum in November 2019, with the RHP among the 114 projects selected to be showcased. In addition, Bosnia and Herzegovina, on behalf of the Partner Countries, presented the RHP as a good practice example at the first Global Refugee Forum in Geneva in December 2019.

UNHCR and OSCE believe that it is essential to continue nurturing the RHP's regional character, while simultaneously taking into account specific conditions and environments in each Partner Country, as a basis for the most appropriate, tailor-made solutions.

UNHCR and OSCE reiterate their readiness to further contribute to the joint efforts of the RHP stakeholders, and will continue to support the Partner Countries to ensure that all RHP funds are utilised in the most efficient manner to the benefit of the region's most vulnerable displaced people.

# Project Highlights

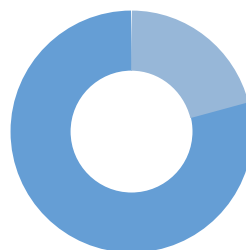


**Sub-project BiH3** (approved in 2014)  
Construction of 552 flats in Bosnia and Herzegovina



*From left to right: Multi-apartment buildings: 20 units in Goražde (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina); 8 units in Brčko District; 15 units in Bileća (Republika Srpska)*

This project consists of the construction of 552 flats in multi-unit apartment buildings for refugees and IDPs in Republika Srpska, in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the Brčko District. By end-2019, 256 apartments had been completed and handed over to beneficiaries, 145 were in the process of receiving usage permits, and the remaining 151 were scheduled for completion in 2020.



Funding sources:

- Donor contribution  
**EUR 13.8 million**
- Country contribution  
**EUR 3.6 million**

**Total cost**  
**EUR 17.4 million**

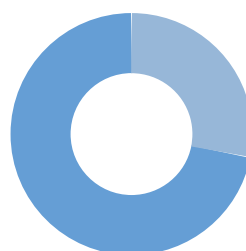


**Sub-project HR6** (approved in 2016)  
Renovation, reconstruction or construction of 62 family houses in Croatia



*Renovated houses in Petrinja and Paukovac*

The project concerns the provision of housing solutions to 62 vulnerable families whose houses were damaged during the conflict in Croatia and who have been unable to secure durable housing ever since. 62 family houses will be renovated, reconstructed or constructed. All beneficiary families have been selected, and 56 houses have been completed. The remaining six are under construction.



Funding sources:

- Donor contribution  
**EUR 2.0 million**
- Country contribution  
**EUR 0.7 million**

**Total cost**  
**EUR 2.7 million**

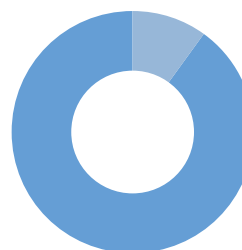


**Sub-project MNE4** (approved in 2014)  
Construction of 94 apartments in Berane, Montenegro



*Delivery of keys to 94 families in Berane, February 2019*

The project aims to provide permanent housing solutions to 94 families (292 persons) who have been living in the collective settlements of Rudes 1 (mostly displaced persons from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia following the 1991-1995 conflicts) and Rudes 2 (mostly IDPs from Kosovo from 1999). In total, four apartment buildings have been constructed. The beneficiaries moved into their new homes in February 2019.



Funding sources:	
● Donor contribution	<b>EUR 3.6 million</b>
● Country contribution	<b>EUR 0.4 million</b>
Total cost	
<b>EUR 4.0 million</b>	

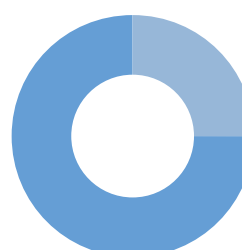


**Sub-project SRB5** (approved in 2014)  
Provision of housing to 1 847 refugee families in Serbia



*Inauguration of a 270-unit apartment building in Kamendin, Belgrade, June 2019*

This project comprises several housing modalities – namely the construction of 1 267 apartments, the provision of 200 building material packages and the purchase of 380 village houses – in 27 municipalities across Serbia. To date, close to 700 housing units have been completed and handed over to beneficiaries, and the entire project should be finalised in 2021. The multi-apartment building with 270 flats in Kamendin, Belgrade, is the largest RHP building constructed to date, at a total cost of EUR 11 million.



Funding sources:	
● Donor contribution	<b>EUR 38.8 million</b>
● Country contribution	<b>EUR 13.2 million</b>
Total cost	
<b>EUR 52.0 million</b>	



First row, from left to right: Beneficiaries in Golubinci and Paraćin, Serbia.

Second row, from left to right: Beneficiaries in Nikšić, Montenegro, and Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

*This document was produced with the financial assistance of the European Union.  
The views expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion  
of the European Union.*





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 established 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, Switzerland, Italy, Denmark, Turkey, Luxembourg, Spain, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and the Slovak Republic.

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

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