PROFILE OF INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT : YUGOSLAVIA (FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF)

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PROFILE SUMMARY

Until 1996, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia had experienced only refugee influxes, coming from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. Since 1998, the country has been hit also by several crises of internal displacement in Kosovo (1998-1999) and in Southern Serbia (2000-2001), followed by a refugee influx from Macedonia (2001). As a result, Yugoslavia, including Kosovo, hosted the largest displaced population in the Balkans as of January 2002, with more than 400,000 refugees and about 330,000 internally displaced persons (UNHCR 15 January 2002, UNMIK February 2002). The election of a democratic government at the end of 2000 opened a new era for the country, putting an end to a decade of isolation and opening the door to international support to the country's economic and social recovery. However, the transition from a mainly humanitarian agenda to a development long-term policy has created risks of gaps in the response to the needs of the destitute displaced population.

Causes of displacement

Internal displacement in Yugoslavia started in Kosovo, following a decade of Serb nationalist oppressive policy against the ethnic Albanian majority in the province since the abolition of Kosovo's autonomous status within Serbia in 1989. First opposing mainly a passive resistance to the Serb policy, the Albanian community supported the armed rebellion led by the Kosovo Liberation Army (UCK) from 1996, following the failure of the Dayton peace talks to address the Kosovo crisis. In 1998 and again in 1999, the nationalist regime in Belgrade implemented a deliberate policy of ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, by spreading terror among the Albanian majority and forcing the Albanian population into exodus. The NATO air campaign between March and June 1999 compelled the Yugoslav authorities to hand over the civilian and military control of the province to a NATO-led military force (KFOR) and a UN Temporary Administration Mission. The withdrawal of Serb security forces from the province enabled Albanian refugees or internally displaced to return to their villages but caused the departure of 230,000 members of non-Albanian communities, mainly Serb and Roma groups, to Serbia and Montenegro in fear of retaliation from the Albanian majority (USCR 1999, OSCE 1999).

In 2000, another conflict struck Yugoslavia in Southern Serbia, where ethnic Albanian armed groups launched attacks against Serb security forces, triggering the displacement of up to 15,000 civilians from Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja municipalities, mostly to Kosovo. The international community supported the Yugoslav authorities in restoring order in the area, in particular by allowing Yugoslav security forces to access the demilitarized Ground Safety Zone between Serbia and Kosovo, where the rebels were operating. Following a peace agreement signed in May 2001 between the Yugoslav authorities and the Albanian armed groups, only 10,000 persons remained displaced from Southern Serbia in Kosovo at the end of 2001 (UNHCR 30 November 2001, 15 January 2002, ICG 10 August 2001).

Humanitarian and human rights concerns

Since their departure from Kosovo in 1999, the Serb and Roma displaced have been confronted with a severe economic crisis in Serbia and Montenegro. High unemployment rates, very low salaries, and the collapse of essential services, such as health care, have undermined the conditions for their social integration in the country (UN November 2001, UN OCHA 31 January 2002). The most preoccupying group of displaced in Serbia and Montenegro have been those living in collective centres, (about 7 percent of the total internally displaced population). Various NGOs reported the inappropriate living conditions in collective centres, with too distant access to essential services, schools or job opportunities, lack of privacy, inadequate sanitation and water supply. The Roma displaced have also been another group of concern, as they have been often compelled to live with local destitute Roma communities by municipalities reluctant to accept them on their territory. The Women's Commission also reported a lack of attention to the situation of displaced adolescents, particularly in collective centres (Womens' Commission October 2001). The

destitution of elderly displaced has also been an issue of concern among humanitarian agencies, with high suicide rates among older people in collective centres being reported (HelpAge November 2001).

The situation for the displaced within Kosovo, and more generally for the ethnic minorities in the province, is extremely fragile. The persistent tensions between the Kosovar Albanian population and other ethnic groups, in particular Serb and Roma, has forced ethnic minorities to move to enclaves where their safety can be better ensured. However, life in the enclaves has been hardly sustainable, with no access to income-generating activities or public services. Security risks for ethnic minorities outside their settlements continue to be high. UNHCR and OSCE's regular reports on the situations of ethnic minorities in Kosovo confirmed that the level of serious crimes decreased in 2001. However, non-Albanian communities, especially the Serb, have continued to suffer disproportionately from major crimes and have remained exposed to threats, intimidation and harassment (UNHCR/OSCE October 2001, UNSC 7 June 2001).

Besides insecurity, unsolved property-related issues continue to hamper the implementation of durable solutions. The Housing and Property Directorate and the Claims Commission created in 1999 to solve property disputes in Kosovo have been far from effective, as suggested by the OSCE mission in Kosovo in its 2002 review of property issues (OSCE January 2002). There have also been reports of pressure exerted on the remaining ethnic minorities in Kosovo to sell their property in order to accelerate the departure of the communities (so-called strategic sales). In response, the UN Special Representative issued a regulation creating a procedure of registration for property sales in certain designated areas to protect minorities (August 2001). However, the regulation raised fear among minorities that the new procedure might prevent them from selling their main assets and using the money to resettle elsewhere (UNHCR/OSCE October 2001).

Return perspectives

Since the election of Volislav Kostunica as the president of the Federal Republic in October 2000 and the victory of democratic forces in the Serbian parliamentary election three months later, the relations between authorities in Belgrade and in Kosovo have improved significantly. The dialogue between the Federal government and the United Nations Interim Administration has resulted in particular in the adoption of a Common Document (November 2001) which encouraged the Kosovar Serb community to adopt a more constructive attitude towards the post-war reconstruction and reconciliation efforts in Kosovo (UNSC 15 January 2002). While the Serb community basically boycotted the municipal elections in October 2000, the turnout among the Serb community in Kosovo (47%) or the displaced population in Serbia (57%) during the November 2001 parliamentary elections in Kosovo marked a breakthrough in interethnic relations in the province (OSCE 17 November 2001)

The inter-ethnic dialogue has shown also some progress regarding the issue of return. A Joint Committee on Returns of Kosovo Serbs, with representatives of international agencies and the Serb Community was set up in May 2000. The Committee adopted a Framework on Serb Return (January 2001), and Return Principles for the return of the displaced Serbs was adopted in June 1001 by the Interim Administrative Council of Kosovo, which includes Kosovar Albanian representatives. An Action Plan for return to some 10 initial locations was also presented to donors in June 2001. Similar steps have been taken regarding the return of the Roma communities, with the adoption of a Platform for Action (April 2000) and a Statement of Principles (May 2001) by the leaders of the Roma and the Albanian communities (UNHCR 2001). Despite these encouraging developments, the return of the displaced to their homes of origin in Kosovo has remained extremely low, with hardly 2,000 return movements recorded in 2000 and 2001 (UNOCHA 16 January 2002).

National and international response

After two years of international presence in the country, and large-scale humanitarian assistance to the internally displaced populations, a transitional phase has been opened whereby the focus of the international community moved from humanitarian assistance to long-term development needs (UN

November 2001). As an example, the ICRC, which has been the main provider of food aid to IDPs in Serbia since 1999, tightened its criteria for assistance, targeting only 70,000 beneficiaries, as of end of 2001, based on vulnerability criteria. In parallel, the agency developed income-generating projects mainly in the agricultural sector to promote self sustainability among the displaced communities (ICRC 8 February 2002). In Montenegro, WFP has also planned to reduce its assistance to IDPs from April 2002 (WFP 22 February 2002). In July 2001, Refugees International warned against any premature reduction of humanitarian aid in Yugoslavia, arguing that reconstruction would be a slow process during which displaced would remain in need of assistance (RI 31 July 2001).

The Yugoslav government has played an increasing role in coordinating and implementing the policy with regard to the displaced, while the international humanitarian agencies have progressively limited its role to capacity building and advocacy (UN November 2001). The international community also backed the efforts of the FRY authorities in settling the crisis in Southern Serbia. It provided support to the peace plan negotiated between the Yugoslav government and the ethnic Albanian community in May 2001, by opening a UN Inter-Agency Support Office coordinating the international contribution to confidence building measures and reconstruction (UN OCHA 29 January 2002).

The gradual transfer of responsibility has also been implemented in Kosovo, where UNMIK has given increasing autonomy to the local communities, leading to the adoption of a Constitutional Framework for Provisional Self-Government in May 2001 (UN November 2001). Since 2000, international agencies have maintained direct material assistance only for selected minority groups with limited freedom of movements (including 22,000 internally displaced), displaced persons from Southern Serbia, and returnees. Beside the considerable contribution of the international community in restoring democracy, rule of law and human rights in the province, measures have also been implemented specifically to improve the security of ethnic minorities in Kosovo, for example through the creation of escorted bus services, the creation of legal advice centres, and the close monitoring of the minorities' situation (UNSC 15 January 2002, UN November 2001, UNHCR/OSCE October 2001). Since June 1999, reconstruction efforts have also allowed to meet all emergency housing needs in Kosovo. Nearly half of all families whose houses had been damaged or destroyed in 1999 were reported to live in decent accommodation as of October 2001. Housing authorities in the province estimated that up to 12,000 families (ie. 60 to 72,000 persons) were in need of reconstruction assistance in 2002 before going back to their homes (UNMIK February 2002).

(Updated February 2002)

CAUSES AND BACKGROUND OF DISPLACEMENT

Background

The conflict in Kosovo (1981-1999): International community finally imposes autonomy of the province to Yugoslav authorities

- Autonomous Republic of Kosovo, populated by a large majority of ethnic Albanians, remained part of Serbia following the dissolution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1991
- The autonomy of the province was further limited by constitutional changes in 1989 and state of emergency declared shortly afterwards
- For some years the Albanian struggle took the form of peaceful resistance that saw the creation of a parallel society
- When Kosovo's status was excluded from the agenda of the Dayton peace talks (1995), the struggle took a violent turn between the Kosovo Liberation Army (UCK) guerrillas and Serb police forces
- Yugoslavia agrees to a cease-fire and a partial pull-out of Yugoslav forces from Kosovo under the pressure of NATO following increased violence against Kosovo Albanians (October 1998)
- Following the resumption of violence during the winter of 1998, the United States sponsors talks in Rambouillet designed to get Yugoslav and Kosovo Albanian leaders to accept a peace plan (January-March 1999)
- Failure of talks in Rambouillet prompts the NATO to launch air strikes against Yugoslavia to end Serb violence in Kosovo (March-June 1999)
- UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (10 June 1999) upholds sovereignty of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia over Kosovo but places the province under UN authority (UNMIK)

"Prior its dissolution in 1991, the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) was made up of six constituent republics (Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Croatia, Slovenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina) and two autonomous provinces (Kosovo and Vojvodina). The SFRY Constitution of 1974 granted the two provinces very similar rights to those of the republics, providing them with their own parliamentary assemblies and seats in the collective Federal Parliament and on the Federal Presidency, despite the fact that they were considered as parts of the Republic of Serbia. However, when the SFRY broke up, the international community recognised only the claims to statehood of the republics. Kosovo and Vojvodina thus remained within Serbia, which, with Montenegro, formed a 'rump' federal State, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY)." (ICG 2000, p. 48)

"The total population of Kosovo is difficult to assess, as the Kosovo Albanians boycotted the most recent census in 1991. According to the previous census, in 1981, of a total of 1,585,000 inhabitants, 1,227,000 were Kosovo Albanian and 210,000 Kosovo Serb. Prior to the 1998 and 1999 conflicts, it is estimated that the total population was between 1,800,000 and 2,100,000, of which around 85-90% were Kosovo Albanian." (ICG 2000, footnote 74)

"In many ways, the Kosovo conflict represents a classic secessionist struggle. The 1981 uprising of Albanians demanding the separation of the Autonomous Province of Kosovo from the Republic of Serbia was followed in 1989 by constitutional changes that limited the autonomy of the province. Shortly afterwards, the Yugoslav government declared a state of emergency and assumed direct rule. For some

years the Albanian struggle took the form of peaceful resistance that saw the creation of a parallel society, including government structures, an education system and tax collection, which unofficially existed alongside Belgrade's repressive rule.

When Kosovo's status was excluded from the agenda of the Dayton peace talks, the struggle took a violent turn and, two years later, accelerated when anarchy in neighbouring Albania gave Kosovo Albanian militants ready access to arms through a porous mountain border. Communal violence became commonplace in areas of Kosovo that harboured Kosovo Liberation Army (Ushtria Clirimtare e Kosoves – UCK) guerrillas and were targeted by police forces.

Widely publicized massacres of Kosovo Albanians in February-March 1998 led to growing international concern and pressure to regulate the conflict. Following government military operations against the guerrillas and their population base during the summer, the second half of 1998 saw NATO moving down a path of military confrontation with Belgrade. In a policy of graduated threat articulation, NATO issued progressively stronger signals to Belgrade that military force might be used to secure the withdrawal of government forces and promote a political solution.

An increasingly assertive Western policy towards the conflict was above all the result of US initiatives. Following its role in the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Dayton peace process, the USA took the lead in encouraging NATO involvement and in negotiating a cease-fire, with Serb force withdrawals in October 1998 (Holbrooke-Milosevic Accord). When violence resumed during the winter months, the USA orchestrated the Rambouillet peace talks of January-March 1999 designed to get Yugoslav and Kosovo Albanian leaders to accept a peace plan promoted by the State Department. When this failed, the USA provided the core of the NATO force that carried out air strikes against Serb targets throughout Yugoslavia. The forces of NATO member countries that had earlier been deployed to the neighbouring FYR Macedonia were reinforced as the conflict escalated.

The NATO air strikes that began on 24 March 1999 were intended to end Serb violence in Kosovo and make the Yugoslav authorities accept the terms of the Rambouillet peace plan. The expectation was that this would be quickly achieved. Instead, the NATO strikes were accompanied by escalating violence on the ground and a large refugee outflow that included organized expulsions. The sequence of violence and displacement underlined the importance of the Western powers in the events that produced the refugee emergency, and made the same states take a direct interest in the humanitarian operation. At the same time, the allied campaign against Yugoslavia was premised on co-operation from Albania and FYR Macedonia, the two countries that also received most of the refugees. Humanitarian and strategic concerns thereby became further intertwined." (UNHCR February 2000, paras. 25-29)

"Kosovo, came under the authority of the United Nations Interim Administrative Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) in June following the NATO campaign in Kosovo, which began on March 24. U.N. Security Council Resolution 1244 upheld FRY sovereignty over Kosovo, but it also called for 'substantial autonomy and meaningful self-administration for Kosovo.' Although the peace settlement respects FRY territorial integrity, the Milosevic regime had no authority in the province after June 10. Dr. Bernard Kouchner, the Special Representative of the U.N. Secretary-General, became the chief administrator of UNMIK. Within UNMIK, the OSCE was given the responsibility for institution-building, democracy-building, and human rights. At year's end, there were also two other local ethnic Albanian established shadow governments operating in Kosovo, neither of which were recognized by the U.N. The leader of the 'provisional government' and former political head of the Kosovo Liberation Army was Hashim Thaqi; Dr. Ibrahim Rugova headed the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) and was named the 'President' of the self-proclaimed 'Republic of Kosova' after shadow elections in 1991." (U.S. DOS 25 February 2000, "Kosovo")

For a detailed review of the historical and political background of the conflict in Kosovo, see OSCE Kosovo/Kosova: As Seen, As Told*, 2000, chapter "Kosovo: The Historical and Political Background" [Internet]*

Election of a new president of the Yugoslav Federation opens new era of democracy (2000-2001)

- Dramatic political change took place in October 2001, with the ousting of Slobodan Milosevic and the election of a new President of the Federal Republic, Vojislav Kostunica
- Elections for the Republic of Serbia Parliament on 23 December 2000 led to an overwhelming victory of the Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS)
- The international community began to remove economic sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia after Kostunica's election and the transfer of Milosevic to The Hague Tribunal

"The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Yugoslavia), a constitutional republic consisting of the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Montenegro, has a president and a parliamentary system of government based on multiparty elections. The new federal Government, which was formed on November 4, dropped any claim to being the sole successor state of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (which dissolved in 1992), and was recognized by the international community. Vojislav Kostunica was elected President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on September 24, and took office on October 7, after mass demonstrations by citizens protesting Slobodan Milosevic's attempts to manipulate the Federal Election Commission and force a second election round led Milosevic to concede defeat. Prior to Kostunica's election, former Yugoslav President Milosevic had brought Serbia closer to open dictatorship than ever before. Immediately following the 1999 war in Kosovo, Milosevic moved to consolidate his weakened position in Serbia through a campaign of intimidation and violence against his political opponents, representatives of the independent media, student groups, civil society, and even, in certain cases, members of the regime. Prior to the September elections, Milosevic, who is also President of the Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS), continued to dominate all formal and informal governing institutions in the country. Although the SPS lacked majorities in both the Federal and Serbian Parliaments, it controlled key administrative positions. The SPS also controlled the governing coalition with the Yugoslav Left (JUL), controlled by Milosevic's wife, Mira Markovic, and the Serbian Radical Party (SRS), controlled by Vojislav Seselj, an extreme ultranationalist known for his radical politics during the wars in Croatia and Bosnia, who resigned from his government position in October. Milosevic also controlled the judiciary." (U.S. DOS February 2000, Introduction)

"As a key element of his hold on power, President Milosevic until his electoral defeat effectively controlled the Serbian police, a heavily armed force of some 80,000 officers that is responsible for internal security. Having been forced to withdraw from Kosovo in 1999, the police then repressed opponents of the regime in Serbia. In addition, Milosevic ignored the constitutional role of the Supreme Defense Council, essentially establishing himself as commander in chief of the Yugoslav Army (VJ), which, along with the police, was employed in the brutal campaign against the citizens of Kosovo in 1999. Several times in the past, Milosevic had purged those officers in both the police and military who either failed to follow his orders or who directly challenged his policies in Kosovo, Serbia, or Montenegro. The security forces committed numerous, serious human rights abuses." (U.S. DOS February 2001, Introduction)

"The dramatic political changes in Serbia launched with the ousting of Slobodan Milosevic in October 2000 continued into 2001. Elections for the Republic of Serbia Parliament on 23 December 2000 led to an overwhelming victory of the Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS) and removed Milosevic loyalists from control over the last levers of government in the Federal Public of Yugoslavia. In February 2001, DOS formed a government of Serbia." (UN CHR 22 March 2001, para. 20)

"Financial aid for FRY from the US was made specifically conditional upon Milosevic being handed over to the Hague by 31 March. Milosevic was eventually arrested on domestic charges of corruption, fraud and embezzlement in the early hours of April 1. Although no promises were made to extradite Milosevic to the Hague, his arrest was sufficient for the US to release aid of $50m to FRY. Milosevic was extradited to the Hague on June 28, just one day ahead of an international donors' conference in Brussels, called to raise

money for the reconstruction of FRY. Again the importance of pressure from the international community was a key factor, with the USA threatening to withhold donations unless cooperation with ICTY was forthcoming. The FRY donors' conference generated $1,280m in pledges for aid. Milosevic was initially indicted with charges relating to his actions in Kosovo, but further charges in respect of activities in Croatia have since been added.

The decision to extradite Milosevic was taken by the Serbian government, despite a ruling by the FRY constitutional court that no such action should be taken. Milosevic's extradition highlighted the growing differences between FRY President Kostunica and Serbia Prime Minister Djindjic. Kostunica's Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS) said that it would separate from the 18 party DOS alliance and press for a reshuffle in federal and republican governments. Zoran Zizic resigned as FRY Prime Minister, and his party (SNP) ended their coalition with DOS. A few thousand Milosevic supporters demonstrated in the streets of Belgrade, but support for the former president was relatively muted, suggesting that public resistance to his extradition had faded as evidence of Serb atrocities emerged over the preceding weeks.

DOS and Montenegro's 'Together for Yugoslavia' coalition eventually reached agreement on a new government, which was formed on 24 July, with Montenegrin Dragisa Pesic as Prime Minister. However, bickering between Kostunica and Djindjic has continued, leading to concerns that this is weakening the government and distracting from the urgent need to drive forward essential reforms." (UK October 2001 paras 4.11-4.13)

"In September [2001], the United Nations Security Council lifted its embargo on the FRY's purchase of weapons, military equipment, spare parts and ammunition imports. The Security Council established the embargo in March 1998, in response to the Milosevic's regime's military and police repression in the predominately Albanian province of Kosovo. The Security Council explained that the new decision reflected its approval of the increasing cooperation of the new Belgrade authorities with the UN civilian administration in Kosovo (UNMIK). The Yugoslav Defense Ministry welcomed the decision to lift the arms embargo, noting that it provided evidence of the growing trust of the international community in FRY policies." (USAID 30 September 2001)

War and isolation have ruined Yugoslavia's economy (2001)

- Corruption and mismanagement of the Milosevic regime also impacted on the economy
- Unemployment and underemployment remain as high as 30% while average monthly salaries are about $40 - $50
- New government has instigated a tough reform programme with the help of international financial institutions and donors
- Economic indicators in Montenegro show a slightly better situation than in Serbia but external financial assistance remains highly needed

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

"Following the formation of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) in 1945, Tito's Federal Government established a soviet style collective agricultural and industrialised economy. This was modified in 1950 with the introduction of self-management for the state-owned industries. The SFRY's economy was based chiefly on industry (including mining), agriculture and tourism. However, following a period of serious economic decline during the 1980s and the highly destructive break up of SFRY in 1991, all sectors of the FRY's economy were in a state of crisis from its inception in 1992.

With its reconstituted borders, FRY lost access to most tourist areas, thus depriving it of much needed foreign currency from tourism. The economy also suffered severely as a result of UN-imposed trade sanctions during the war in Bosnia and its exclusion from the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

(GATT) in June 1992 and from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in December 1992. FRY's gross domestic product, based on figures from all sectors of the economy, declined significantly in the period 1990-1996. As a result of the UN trade sanctions, the deprivation of foreign investment and poor economic strategy during the 1970s and 1980s, FRY experienced hyper-inflation, which was eventually controlled by the introduction of a new unit of currency. The suspension of UN sanctions following the Dayton Agreement in December 1995 failed to stimulate growth significantly and high levels of unemployment and underemployment remained.

With the corruption and economic mismanagement of the Milosevic regime, the FRY economy continued to decline in the latter part of the 1990s. Additional taxes were imposed and a major devaluation in 1998 was followed by renewed inflation. Following events in Kosovo, new economic sanctions were imposed by the EU and the FRY continued to be excluded from international financial institutions. The NATO bombing also impacted upon the economy. According to an estimate by the German Bundeswehr University in Munich, industrial and infrastructure damages caused by the bombing amount to some 18 billion Euros.

It is believed that the economy is operating about 50% of the level in 1989. The government has often resorted to printing cash to pay pensions and wages, in order to stave off social turmoil and it is estimated that money supply grew by 60% in 1999. GDP per capita is $820. Average monthly salaries are about $40 - $50 per month. The cost of food and utilities alone for a family of four is estimated to be $120 per month. Unemployment and underemployment remain high at about 30%. The social security system no longer functions effectively and has ceased to pay out benefits.

FRY is in default on virtually all its external debt, which totals nearly $13 billion. However, FRY was readmitted to the IMF and other financial institutions in November 2000, giving it further access to credit. The IMF approved an emergency loan of $155m to help stabilise the economy. International donors have pledged over $400m in aid. The lifting of sanctions will also ease pressure on the FRY economy. The new Government includes senior economic experts who have instigated a tough programme of reform including tax adjustment and spending cuts. They are eager to work with the international financial institutions on national economic reform. Stanley Fischer, the IMF's deputy managing director noted that the Yugoslav authorities had "embarked with impressive speed and commitment on the extremely difficult task of reconstructing their devastated economy".

However the economy remains in a very fragile state. Following the extradition of Milosevic in June, a total of $1,280m aid was pledged at the FRY Donors' Conference, but over a third of this will go to paying foreign debt. The World Bank estimates that FRY will require $4bn in foreign financial assistance over the next four years. There are signs that the Serbian people are becoming impatient at the perceived lack of progress. With inflation reaching nearly 80%, prices are significantly higher than a year ago, especially for electricity which is no longer being artificially subsidised. The Association of Serbian Trade Unions recently began a general strike in protest at a new labour law which freezes salaries at state owned companies.

Montenegro

The Montenegrin economy is in transition from a Communist system to a market-based system. The industrial sector remains largely in the hands of the republic Government and is very inefficient. The republic's tourism-dominated economy suffered as a result of the NATO air campaign against Serbia. Although Montenegrin sites were largely unscathed, tourist activity fell sharply. The government estimated that the economy contracted by 13.8%, tourism fell by $60m and industry declined by $75m. However Montenegro was exempted from most of the sanctions applied to FRY.

Unemployment is officially estimated at 42% but many work in the black economy, so that the true figure is likely to be about 22%. Large government enterprises, including all the major banks industrial and trading companies generally observe the minimum wage standard, which is $47 per month. This figure is comparable to unemployment benefits. The gross average wage is approximately $175 per month or $90

net; insufficient to provide a decent standard of living for a family. GDP per capita (including the unofficial economy) is estimated at $937 for the year.

In November 1999 the Deutschmark was introduced as a parallel currency; a year later the dinar was dropped altogether. There are also plans to privatise a number of state businesses, including telecommunications and electrical companies. Sanctions were imposed by Serbia in February this year which banned the export of food products to Montenegro. After Montenegro had received $20 million credit from Germany in March, Serbia closed the border for all goods and allowed only coal, steel and aluminium to cross from Montenegro. The government was forced to import from Slovenia and Croatia which was considerably more expensive.

The Government's budget deficit grew as it raised the minimum wage and strove to pay pensions on time to ensure social peace. Western governments continue to provide substantial financial backing to Montenegro and the anticipated budgetary shortfall is likely to be made up by financial aid from foreign donors. Smuggling has been a key element of the Montenegrin economy for centuries and remains so, with the involvement of senior elements of the Montenegrin ruling establishment." (UK October 2001, paras. 5.1-5-10)

Montenegro's relations with Serbia remains an open issue (2001)

- Formally a constituent republic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Montenegro has cult all links with Serbia and conducts its own foreign, fiscal and domestic policies
- Momentum towards independence was slowed by opposition from the international community
- Parliamentary elections in April 2001 indicated that the ethnic Montenegrin electorate is split between those favoring independence and those wanting to maintain links with Belgrade

"Montenegro, constitutionally a constituent republic (together with Serbia) of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Yugoslavia), made progress in its efforts to build a multiparty, multiethnic, parliamentary democracy; however, a deeply rooted patronage system and corruption continued to be dominant features of political life. During the year, the Government increasingly was excluded from federal functions by then Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic. The Government remains minimally subordinate to Yugoslavia in foreign affairs and defense matters. Units of the Yugoslav Army (VJ) are stationed in Montenegro. President Milo Djukanovic was elected in 1997 and until the end of December headed a reform coalition, which won power in 1998 parliamentary elections that international election observers judged to be generally free and fair. Events during the year effectively steered the Government further away from the federal control of Milosevic's regime in Belgrade. Milosevic's attempts to deny Montenegro its constitutional voice in federal functions, in particular by closing Supreme Defense Council meetings to Djukanovic and by Milosevic's unilateral amendments of the Yugoslav Constitution on July 6, further undercut Montenegro's already weak role and authorities in the Federation. With Djukanovic's efforts to redefine Montenegro's relations with Serbia through political discussions rebuffed, Montenegro acquired a large degree of de facto independence, establishing its own currency, central bank, customs and diplomatic service, and an embryonic army. The Government respects the constitutional provisions for an independent judiciary in practice. (U.S. DOS February 2001, "Montenegro")

"Montenegro does not recognize the jurisdiction of the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and conducts its own foreign, fiscal and domestic policies. The republic has cut monetary links with Serbia and introduced the German mark as its official currency, collects customs duties on its borders and has set its own course of institutional reform. Excluded illegally from many federal structures during the Milosevic regime, it challenged the legality of the 24 September election, officially choosing not to participate. Following recent changes in Belgrade, however, Montenegro's coalition is becoming increasingly strained between those favouring compromise with Serbia and those advocating independence. The Montenegrin

government has already indicated that the people of Montenegro will vote in a referendum to determine the nature of their relationship with Serbia early in 2001." (UN CHR 29 January 2001, para. 98)

"In Montenegro, momentum towards independence was slowed by opposition from the international community and unwillingness of the federal Government to negotiate a new federal relationship. Nevertheless, the Montenegrin authorities have scheduled elections to form a new government for 22 April, with a referendum on independence to follow shortly after." (UN CHR 22 March 2001, para. 20)

"The Montenegrin parliamentary elections of 22 April indicate that the ethnic Montenegrin electorate is split almost evenly between those favoring independence and those wanting to maintain links with Belgrade. Since President Milo Djukanovic failed to get the ringing endorsement for independence that he wanted, attention now centers on what inducements the Belgrade leadership will offer Montenegro to maintain the joint state.

The parliamentary elections have given Djukanovic's Victory for Montenegro coalition a less than two-point lead over its rival, Together for Yugoslavia. Djukanovic will be able to form a majority government only with the help of the often strong-willed, pro-independence Liberal Alliance and of ethnic Albanian deputies." (RFE/RL 24 April 2001)

See also RFE/RL, "2001: The Last Year of Yugoslavia?", in: The Balkan Report Volume 5, Number 84, 18 December 2001 [Internet: http://www.rferl.org/balkan-report/2001/12/84-181201.html]

Towards self-governance in Kosovo: progressive transfer of responsibilities from UNMIK to the local population (2000-2001)

- Kosovo is administered by UNMIK in cooperation with the OSCE and the EU in consultation with the local population, with international force KFOR responsible for security issues
- The KLA was officially disbanded on 20 September 1999, with many former members being absorbed into the newly formed Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC/TMK) a civil emergency service
- Following municipal elections in October 2000, local politicians assumed a greater role in the administration of municipalities
- The progressive transfer of responsibilities from the UN administration to Kosovar structures and institutions culminated with the promulgation of the Constitutional Framework in May 2001
- The Framework introduces the concept of Communities defined as 'communities of inhabitants belonging to the same ethnic or religious or linguistic group' and define their rights
- Kosovo Serbs boycotted the municipal elections in October 2000 but took part to the election of the Kosovo Assembly in November 2001
- No party gained enough seats in the Assembly to govern alone, requiring a power-sharing arrangement between the three main Kosovo Albanian parties

"On 9 June 1999, FRY signed an agreement requiring the withdrawal of all forces from Kosovo and the establishment of an international security presence under a UN mandate. An interim civil presence, the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) was established shortly after. Within weeks, over 800,000 of the million or so ethnic Albanians who left Kosovo had returned. Urgent work began to help hundreds of thousands of people to rebuild their homes and find access to food, water and electricity before the onset of the harsh winter. Fearing revenge attacks, more than half of the 200,000 population of Serbs and Roma left the province in the following months.

Kosovo is administered by UNMIK in cooperation with the OSCE and the EU; and in consultation with the local population via the Joint Interim Administration Structure (JIAS). Following municipal elections on 28

October 2000, local politicians have assumed a greater role in the administration of the municipalities. Elections to a Kosovo Assembly will be held on 17 November 2001. The future status of Kosovo and the eventual relationship between Kosovo and FRY remain uncertain.

Levels of violent crime have reduced considerably over the two years since the conflict ended. However, there are frequent incidents of violence, discrimination, harassment and intimidation, often directed against non-Albanians. Inter-ethnic tension remains particularly high between Serbs and ethnic Albanians in the northern town of Mitrovica. The town is divided along ethnic lines by the river Ibar, with the Serbs in the northern part and the ethnic Albanians to the south.

Much work has been done to establish the civic structures (police, judiciary, legal system etc) and to rebuild the physical infrastructure of the province. Water, electricity and heating supplies have improved greatly but are still not wholly reliable. Much reconstruction has taken place and "the emergency reconstruction phase" is now considered by UNMIK to be complete.

Under UN Security Council Resolution 1244, UNMIK, as the international civil presence, is responsible for performing basic civilian administrative functions and promoting the establishment of provisional self-government. [The international peacekeeping force known as] KFOR is responsible for security. UNMIK is led by the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General (SRSG), Hans Haekerrup, who replaced Bernard Kouchner in January 2001. The organisational structure of the administration is arranged in four distinct "pillars", run by the following organisations respectively: Law and Order - UN; Civilian Administration - UN; Institution Building - the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE); and Reconstruction - EU..

Until the municipal elections in October 2000, the involvement of the local population in the official administration was limited to their participation in various advisory bodies, the highest being the Joint Interim Administrative Structure (JIAS) and Kosovo Transitional Council (KTC).

The two main ethnic Albanian political parties in Kosovo are the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK) and the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK). The PDK evolved from the political arm of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA/UCK) and is headed by a former KLA commander Hashim Thaqi. The KLA was officially disbanded on 20 September 1999, with many former members being absorbed into the newly formed Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC/TMK) a civil emergency service led by former KLA commander Agim Ceku.

The LDK predated the existence of the KLA and they formed the main focus for resistance to the Serb regime in the years before the conflict. Led by Ibrahim Rugova, the LDK always advocated the achievement of their aims by peaceful means. They were critical of the violence against ethnic minorities following the conflict, much of which was alleged to have been perpetrated by extremists associated with the KLA. Both parties, (as well as the third most popular ethnic Albanian party, the Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK)) have independence for Kosovo as their principal policy.

There is considerable tension between the LDK and PDK and this was manifested in politically motivated violence in the run up to the municipal elections, though the elections themselves passed off peacefully. The LDK won a resounding victory, securing approximately 58% of the vote, with the PDK gaining 27% and the AAK 8%. This outcome was seen as victory for moderation over extremism and as a rejection of the violence which had been associated with the PDK. The LDK are expected to achieve a similar result in the Assembly elections next month.

The Serb community is divided in two distinct camps. The more moderate element, based largely in Gracanica, wish to take part in the political structures to ensure that they have an influence in the way the political process evolves. The more "hard line" element, mostly based in Mitrovica, suspect UNMIK of favouring the ethnic Albanian community and f condoning what they see as the gradual drift towards an

independent Kosovo. In their view, participation in the elections would be seen as endorsing a process that will inevitably lead to independence.

The Kosovo Serbs boycotted the municipal elections and the SRSG appointed members of municipal assemblies in the three Serb-majority municipalities of Leposavic, Zvecan and Zubin Potok, where no election had taken place." (UK October 2001, paras. 2.1-3.7)

The Secretary-General appointed Michael Steiner of Germany to be his Special Representative for Kosovo in replacement to Hans Haekkerup in January 2002. See press release of the UN Secretary-General, 23 January 2002 [Internet]

The Constitutional Framework
"The Constitutional Framework for Provisional Self-Government in Kosovo (Constitutional Framework) promulgated by the SRSG on 15 May 2001, provides the foundation for a new era of self-governance and self-administration in Kosovo. Regulation 2001/19 of 13 September on the Executive Branch of the Provisional Institutions of Self Government in Kosovo, includes more detailed provisions on the actual structures of government, including a number of annexes which outline the functions of each of the Offices and Ministries that will assume responsibilities for the day to day functioning of government in the future." (UK October 2001, para. 34)

"The Constitutional Framework provides for 120-seat Assembly based on proportional representation, with the first 120 seats going to all registered parties in Kosovo, 10 seats reserved for the Kosovo Serbs, and 10 more earmarked for other communities." (UNSC 7 June 2001, para. 23)

"The Constitutional Framework contains a number of principles which will directly impact on minority communities, and if fully implemented stand to enhance the protection of minority rights, by ensuring the participation and inclusion in the new structures. Chapter 4 introduces the concept of Communities as a mechanism to address the concerns of the various minorities living in Kosovo. Communities are defined as 'communities of inhabitants belonging to the same ethnic or religious or linguistic group.' Chapter 4 then goes on to outline in detail the rights of Communities and of their members, including such key issues as use of language and symbols and receipt of a range of services in accordance with application standards. Chapter 9.1.3 contains a non-exhaustive list of the different Communities in the context of describing the mechanism for assigning the 20 seats (of a total of 120) which shall be reserved for the additional representation of non-Albanian Kosovo Communities. Specifically mentioned are the Kosovo Serb Community, the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities, the Bosniak Community, the Turkish Community and Gorani Community." (UNHCR/OSCE 1 October 2001, para. 37)

The full text of the Constitutional Framework is available on the web site of the UN Mission in Kososo [Internet]

The Common Document
"An important concern in preparing the Assembly election was to ensure the participation of the minority communities, especially of the Serbian community, which had boycotted the municipal election in 1999 and whose participation in the ballot remained open until the last minute. While the Kosovo Serbs generally recognized that participation in the new political institutions was the key of having a say in Kosovo's future, they felt that the conditions for effective participation did not exist and were not confident that they could be created. On 25 October, Mr. Haekkerup, the Special Representative, met with President Kostunica in Belgrade. It was agreed to draw up a joint paper that would address these issues. After several drafts and intensive negotiations, in which both the Secretary-General and President Kostunica intervened, agreement was reached on a Common Document, which was signed in Belgrade on 5 November by Mr. Haekkerup and Dr. Covic, Deputy Prime Minister of Serbia in his capacity as the Special Representative of President Kostunica to Kosovo. " (UNSC 15 January 2002, para. 16)

The Common Document "provides a framework for cooperation on a series of Kosovo Serbs. The joint UNMIK and FRY document sends a strong recommendation to the Kosovo Serbs to take an active role in the future of the multiethnic Kosovo by participating in the November 17 elections and interim self-government institutions." (UN OCHA 9 November 2001)

The election of the Kosovo Assembly (17 November 2001)
"The election of the Kosovo Assembly on 17 November 2001 was generally considered a great success. […] Notwithstanding some instances of intimidation in northern Kosovo by groups opposed to Kosovo Serb participation, the campaign and the voting itself were orderly and generally free of violence. The ballot was conducted with the extensive involvement of domestic observers as well as joint observation teams from Kosovo Albanian and Serbian non-governmental organizations. […]

No party gained enough seats in the Assembly without to govern alone, and attention is now focused on the need to form a coalition. The main efforts concentrated on a power-sharing arrangement between the three main Kosovo Albanian parties. On 7 December, UNMIK arranged a meeting between Dr. Rugova, of the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), and Mr. Thaci, of the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK), on United Nations premises. […] It should be noted that the minority parties also have an important role to play; they have 35 of the 120 seats in the Assembly and, in accordance with the Constitutional Framework, will provide at least two Ministers. " (UNSC 15 January 2001, paras. 3-4)

"Twenty-six political parties and independent candidates, including representatives of five minority groups, were certified by the OSCE to contest the November election. These included a coalition of twenty Kosovo Serb parties and organizations, named Coalition Return, which decided to register at the last minute. In contrast with the 2000 municipal elections, Kosovo Serb and other minority voters registered in large numbers: 70,000 within the province and an additional 100,000 in Serbia and Montenegro. And in spite of the drawn-out hesitation both in Belgrade and among the Kosovo Serbs about their participation in the vote, about 46 percent of all eligible Kosovo Serb voters turned out to vote on November 17. In northern Kosovo, where Serbian extremists were responsible for widespread intimidation of voters into abstention, the participation of ethnic Serbs was considerably lower than the average." (HRW 2002)

Emergency reconstruction needs of Kosovo have now largely been met, according to UNMIK (2001)

- The emphasis has shifted to economic sustainability and capacity building
- For Kosovo Albanians, unemployment runs at about 70% and salaries are very low
- About 70% of private small and medium businesses have now restarted

"The economy inherited by UNMIK had been reduced to near collapse by 10 years of deliberate neglect from Belgrade and there was no administrative structure to build upon. The economy before the conflict had a substantial agrarian sector, which continues to support a large percentage of the population. Key industries were mining, metallurgy and related manufacturing enterprises, particularly centred around the Trepca mine complex which is currently inactive. Remittances from relatives abroad were and continue to be an important source of income.

The economy of Kosovo remains dominated by the presence of the NGOs and other international organisations and their highly paid staff. For Kosovo Albanians, unemployment runs at about 70% and salaries are very low (the average public service employee earns about £90 per month). GDP is approximately $400 per capita. Most Kosovo Albanians with language skills seek jobs as interpreters for international organisations, which has led to a shortage of language teachers at schools. Many survive by trading in the thriving black market.

UNMIK believe that the emergency reconstruction needs of Kosovo have now largely been met, with the emphasis shifting to economic sustainability and capacity building. Reliance on donor support has decreased as regulated and revenue generating commercial economy has begun to take root. The capital budget for 2001 still anticipates donor contributions of DM 1.346 billion, principally from the EU and US. However, UNMIK expects to raise about 70% of the total consolidated budget via revenue collection. During the period August 20 - 27 alone, UNMIK collected DM14 million at its collection points.

Policies that encourage the development of a market-oriented business environment have been pursued and progress has been made to establish an appropriate legal environment to support newly emerging enterprises. About 70% of private small and medium businesses have now restarted. The agricultural sector is also recovering: although about 50% of Kosovo's farm assets were destroyed as a result of the conflict, thanks to NGO project support, recent wheat harvests have been higher than recent pre-conflict harvests." (UK October 2001, paras. 5.1-5.4)

See also "Kosovo, a Strategy for Economic Development", a report by the International Crisis Group, 19 December 2001 [Internet]

Background to the conflict in Southern Serbia (2000-2001)

- The three municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja in the south-east of the Republic of Serbia are inhabited by ethnic Serbs, ethnic Albanians, Roma and other groups
- The ethnic Albianian "Liberation Army of Presevo, Medvedja, and Bujanovac" (UCPMB) was formed in January 2000 and operated in the demilitarized Ground Safety Zone between Kosovo and Serbia
- The government of Serbia put forward a plan to end discrimination against ethnic Albanians through a series of confidence-.building measures (the Covic Plan)
- NATO progressively allowed federal forces to reoccupy the Ground Safety zone (March-May 2001)
- Despite the agreement was concluded between ethnic Albanian leaders and the Serb authorities in May 2001, there continues to be reports of sporadic violence in the area

"The three municipalities of [Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja] in the south-east of the Republic of Serbia are adjacent to the UN administered province of Kosovo and are inhabited by ethnic Serbs, ethnic Albanians, Roma and other groups. A majority ethnic Albanian population exists in the municipalities of Bujanovac and Presevo, whilst in Medvedja it is a minority. Exact population totals are difficult to determine, as ethnic Albanians did not fully participate in the 1991 census. Due to the economic and social dislocation caused by the break-up of the former Yugoslavia, and the policies of the former regime, the region suffers from structural underdevelopment, characterised by poverty and unemployment, poor infrastructure, and a very weak private sector that has affected all communities.

The territories lie within and outside of the current 5km wide demilitarised 'Ground Security Zone' (GSZ) in Serbian Republic territory that was established in accordance with the Military-Technical Agreement (MTA, also known as the Kumanovo Agreement) of June 1999 and which marked the end of the Kosovo war. Following the subsequent creation of the GSZ, ethnic Albanian armed groups began to appear, coalescing into an armed insurgency through the publicly announced self-styled Liberation Army of Presevo, Medvedja, and Bujanovac (UCPMB) in January 2000. Over the past 14 months, the level of insurgency has fluctuated but had recently shown signs of intensifying. This not only has affected human security, but also threatens the stability of the Southeastern Europe region." (UN OCHA 11 April 2001, sect. 1)

"In the months following the change of government in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in October 2000, Serb forces were widely praised by the international community for their restraint in the face of regular attacks from the UCPMB. The Deputy Prime Minister of Serbia, Mr Covic, acknowledged that ethnic Albanians in the Presevo area had some genuine grievances in relation to the discrimination they suffered and indicated that the situation could only be resolved by negotiation. Mr Covic put forward a detailed peace plan, which was welcomed by UN Security Council member states and ultimately formed the basis of a negotiated settlement with the ethnic Albanian leaders in the area.

In May 2001, the UCPMB accepted an amnesty from the Serb authorities. The organisation handed over significant quantities of weapons, disbanded and withdrew from the Presevo area. By the end of May, with the agreement of the international community and ethnic Albanian leaders, the Serb armed forces were able to complete their phased return to the GSZ.

The Serb authorities undertook to implement a series of "confidence building measures" in Southern Serbia. These included:

- Making the ethnic balance of those employed in state services, business and social activities reflect that of the population of the area.
- Guaranteeing ethnic Albanians "an appropriate level of representation" in municipal councils and assemblies, as well as Serbia's parliament.
- Making the police force in the area ethnically mixed, with one ethnic Albanian police officer for every Serb.
- Economic regeneration of the area, including the repair of all Albanian houses to accommodate displaced Albanians who wish to return to the area.

Implementation of these measures is underway. In particular, a training centre for the multi-ethnic police force has been established with the assistance of the OSCE. Ethnic Albanians who fled to Kosovo are now returning to the area, with UNHCR assisting returns and organising "go-see" visits for those considering return. A number of other international organisations including UNICEF, OCHA, ICRC, WFP and UNDP are also working in the area. The World Bank has provided a $1million grant to a programme supporting municipal development, economic recovery and social rehabilitation.

The positive developments in the Presevo area have been hailed by the international community as a great success for the Serb administration and the local ethnic Albanian leaders. Given the recent history of the area, the potential for conflict to flare up again remains. But the willingness of all parties to engage in negotiation and the Serb authorities' commitment to addressing the needs of the local population mark a radical change of approach and give cause for optimism. However, some concern has been expressed by ethnic Albanian leaders that quicker progress needs to be made in implementing the confidence building measures to ensure that certain elements among their community do not revert back to violent tactics." (UK October 2001, paras. 7.17-7.21)

Attacks on Serbian forces continue to be reported despite the May 2001 agreement.
"At least six serious incidents occurred between August 2001 and January 2002 in which unknown persons attacked police targets of civilians, apparently with political motivation. Two new ethnic Albanian armed groups claimed to have organized in Southern Serbia or its hinterland in Kosovo. One of these groups took responsibility for the killing of two police officers in August" (UN OCHA 29 January 2002)

See also:

- *"Belgrade fears more rebel attacks in southern Serbia", AFP, 24 January 2002 [Internet]*
- *"Mortar attack on police checkpoint in southern Serbia", AFP, 18 January 2002 [Internet]*
- *"Two injured in armed incident in southern Serbia", AFP, 12 November 2001 [Internet]*

For more information on the development of the conflict, see "Response to the crisis in the Presevo Valley (Southern Serbia): UN agencies support local efforts (2001-2002)" [Internal link]

For more information on the peace process and its implementation,see also:

- *UN Interagency progress report and recommendations on the situation in Southern Serbia, FRY, 29 January 2002 [Internet]*
- *"Peace in Presevo: Quick Fix or Long Term Solution?", a report by the International Crisis Group, 10 August 2001 [Internet]*

The conflict in Macedonia: refugee influx in Serbia and Kosovo (2001)

- About 10,000 refugees from Macedonia are still in Kosovo as of January 2002

"The conflict in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia resulted in the influx of some 10,000 refugees into FRY (excluding Kosovo), mainly into Presevo in southern Serbia. Although the situation in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has stabilised for the present, there remains a significant risk of large population movement into southern Serbia, which could create a serious strain of the weak public service infrastructure as well as efforts to strengthen social cohesion." (UN November 2001, p. 21)

"The conflict in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia resulted in the arrival of over 81,000 mainly ethnic Albanian refugees in Kosovo, most of whom were accommodated with host families. The UN agencies and international and local organisations provided the refugees with humanitarian assistance as needed and helped UNMIK to integrate them into local services. Since peace talks began in July, refugees have been returning to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, but it is anticipated that up to 20,000 will remain in the province into 2002 for reasons of security and/or the destruction of their homes and infrastructure." (UN November 2001, para. 27)

According to UNHC, there were still a total of 10,000 refugees (ethnic Albanians) accommodated in Kosovo and 450 in Serbia/Montenegro as of mid-January 2002 (See map on Estimates of Refugees and Displaced Persons Still Seeking Solutions in South-Eastern Europe, 15 January 2002 [Internet])

Causes of displacement (1998-2001)

Displacement before and during NATO intervention (1998-1999)

- Violence during 1998 forced about 350,000 persons to internal displacement, including 180,000 Kosovo Albanians
- Only 100,000 internally displaced returned following the signature of the October 1998 Holbrooke-Milosevic agreement (as of end 1998)
- Human rights reports between October 1998 and June 1999 show a pattern of organized and systematic human rights violations perpetrated by Yugoslav and Serb forces against the Kosovo Albanian population
- Violations of human rights and humanitarian law include: summary and arbitrary killing of civilians, arbitrary arrests and detentions, torture, rape and other forms of sexual violence, forced expulsion, extortion, destruction of properties and looting

- Between March and June 1999, several hundred thousand Kosovo Albanians were displaced within the province by the conflict while 863,000 Kosovo Albanian were expelled from the province

Displacement in 1998

"In late February and early March 1998, a wave of violence swept through Kosovo […]. The early spring violence caused about 44,000 persons to flee their homes, including about 20,000 ethnic Albanians from the Drenica area, which bore the brunt of a Serb police crack down. Fighting and displacement continued to ebb and flow throughout the year." (USCR 1999, p. 247)

"Although the numbers changed rapidly during [1998], and estimates varied widely, UNHCR estimated that some 257,000 people were displaced within Yugoslavia at the end of 1998, of whom 180,000, almost entirely ethnic Albanians, were displaced within Kosovo, 50,000, predominantly ethnic Serbs from Kosovo, were displaced into Serbia, and 27,000, both ethnic Serb and Albanian, were internally displaced from Kosovo into Montenegro. The year-end figure for internal displacement reflected the return of more than 100,000 internally displaced people after the signing of the October 13 agreement between U.S. Special Envoy Richard Holbrooke and Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) President Slobodan Milosevic and the cease-fire that shakily held through year's end." (USCR 1999, p. 247)

Causes of displacement between October 1998 and June 1999 as identified by the OSCE Kosovo Verification Mission (OSCE-KVM)

"The OSCE-KVM's findings are presented by the OSCE/ODIHR from three perspectives. Approaching this data from any of these perspectives, the analysis reveals clear patterns and strategies of human rights violations.

The first perspective is an analysis of the nature of the human rights and humanitarian law violations that were committed in Kosovo. This reveals that:

- Summary and arbitrary killing of civilian non-combatants occurred at the hands of both parties to the conflict in the period up to 20 March. On the part of the Yugoslav and Serbian forces, their intent to apply mass killing as an instrument of terror, coercion or punishment against Kosovo Albanians was already in evidence in 1998, and was shockingly demonstrated by incidents in January 1999 (including the Racak mass killing) and beyond. Arbitrary killing of civilians was both a tactic in the campaign to expel Kosovo Albanians, and an objective in itself.

- Arbitrary arrest and detention, and the violation of the right to a fair trial, became increasingly the tools of the law enforcement agencies in the suppression of Kosovo Albanian civil and political rights, and - accompanied by torture and ill-treatment - were applied as a means to intimidate the entire Kosovo Albanian society.

- Rape and other forms of sexual violence were applied sometimes as a weapon of war.

- Forced expulsion carried out by Yugoslav and Serbian forces took place on a massive scale, with evident strategic planning and in clear violation of the laws and customs of war. It was often accompanied by deliberate destruction of property, and looting. Opportunities for extortion of money were a prime motivator for Yugoslav and Serbian perpetrators of human rights and humanitarian law violations.

The second perspective is to look at the specific and different ways in which communities and groups in Kosovo society experienced human rights violations during the conflict. Findings include:

- There was a specific focus - for killings, arbitrary detention and torture - on young Kosovo Albanian men of fighting age, every one of them apparently perceived as a potential "terrorist".

- Women were placed in positions of great vulnerability, and were specific objects of violence targeting their gender.

- There is chilling evidence of the murderous targeting of children, with the aim of terrorizing and punishing adults and communities.

- The Kosovo Serb community were victims of humanitarian law violations committed by the UCK, especially in the matter of the many Serbs missing following abduction. However, many Serb civilians were active participants in human rights violations, alongside the military and security forces, against the Kosovo Albanians. Other national communities and minorities also had specific experiences of the conflict.

- Prominent, educated, wealthy or politically or socially active Kosovo Albanians were a prime target to be killed. Local staff of the OSCE-KVM, and other people associated with the mission were harassed or forcibly expelled, and some were killed, after 20 March.

The third perspective is a geographical human rights 'map' of Kosovo. Proceeding municipality by municipality, the report presents descriptions of events in hundreds of communities across Kosovo. In some cases the descriptions are of events on a single day or within a short time period, and reveal how the most characteristic human rights violations of the entire reporting period - forced expulsion, inevitably accompanied by deliberate property destruction, and often by killings or other violence, or extortion - could be visited on a community with little or no advance indication, with great speed, and with great thoroughness. Such experiences were replicated in rural areas all across Kosovo, and would be repeated if villagers attempted to return to their homes. In other locations, particularly the towns, communities of Kosovo Albanian civilians experienced an onslaught over many days or weeks combining arbitrary violence and abuse with an overall approach that appeared highly organized and systematic. Everywhere, the attacks on communities appear to have been dictated by strategy, not by breakdown in command and control.
[…]

The scale on which human rights violations recur is staggering. It has been estimated that over 90 per cent of the Kosovo Albanian population - over 1.45 million people - were displaced by the conflict by 9 June 1999. The death toll as yet can only be guessed at, but the prevalence of confirmed reports and witness statements about individual and group killings in this report is indicative. The violence meted out to people, as recounted vividly, particularly in the statements of refugees, was extreme and appalling. The accounts of refugees also give compelling examples of the organized and systematic nature of what was being perpetrated by Yugoslav and Serbian forces, and their tolerance for and collusion in acts of extreme lawlessness by paramilitaries and armed civilians." (OSCE 1999, "Executive Summary")

Scope of displacement between March and June 1999

"Between March and June 1999 forces of the FRY and Serbia forcibly expelled some 863,000 Kosovo Albanians from Kosovo. Of these, 783,000 - the vast majority - stayed in the region - in Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro (FRY) or Bosnia-Herzegovina. More detailed figures are given in the table. As of 9 June 80,000 refugees were evacuated to 40 other countries participating in a Humanitarian Evacuation Programme (HEP), organized by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

In addition, several hundred thousand other Kosovo Albanians were displaced within Kosovo and remained in the province throughout the conflict. […] Figures for the numbers of internally displaced are less reliable than those for refugees, but it is clear from refugee accounts that many convoys and groups of IDPs, often numbering several tens of thousands, were on the move throughout the conflict. The UCK gave a figure of 650,000 internally displaced hiding in the hills and 100,000 missing, but it now appears that these figures may have been exaggerated. The UNHCR estimated that as of 13 May 1999 there were 590,000 IDPs in

Kosovo, although the lack of international personnel on the ground makes these figures difficult to verify." (OSCE 1999, chapter 14)

See also International Crisis group report Reality Demands, Documenting Violations of International Humanitarian Law in Kosovo *1999, 2000 [Internet]*

Massive return of Kosovo Albanians since end of NATO intervention (from June 1999)

- By the end of June 1999, some 500,000 displaced had returned, sometimes at a daily rate of 50,000
- By mid- November 1999, 810,000 Kosovo refugees had returned but 350,000 cannot return to their inhabitable homes

"The Military Technical Agreement signed on June 9 between KFOR (a NATO-led international force) and the Yugoslav government ended open military conflict in Kosovo. Serbian forces agreed to withdraw immediately. Some 45,000 KFOR troops entered the province on June 12. UN Security Council Resolution 1244 established the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to administer and help rebuild Kosovo. UNHCR, the OSCE, and the European Union became responsible for, respectively, humanitarian affairs, institution building, and reconstruction.

The vast majority of ethnic Albanians who had fled internally or abroad returned to their places of origin within weeks, despite warnings that their safety could not yet be guaranteed. By the end of June, some 500,000 people had returned, sometimes as many as 50,000 per day. By mid-November, 810,000 Kosovo refugees had returned, including about 60 percent of the UNHCR evacuees to third countries. However, because some 100,000 homes remained uninhabitable, many returnees became displaced within the province. About 350,000 returnees remained displaced at year's end." (USCR 2000, pp. 289-290)

Large scale displacement of ethnic minorities following the NATO intervention (1999)

- Desire for revenge among the Kosovo Albanian population against those who are believed to have actively or tacitly collaborated with the Yugoslav and Serbian security forces
- Climate conducive to human rights violations against the Kosovo Serbs, the Roma and the Muslim Slavs, forcing them into continuous exodus
- Many flee to Serbia and Montenegro or towards mono-ethnic enclaves in the province
- Violence against ethnic minorities include: killings, rape, beatings, torture, house-burning and abductions, or threats thereof, as well as denied access to public services, healthcare, education and employment
- During the first half of 2000, members of minority communities continued to be victims of intimidation, assaults and threats throughout Kosovo during first half of 2000

Findings of the OSCE Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM)(June 1998 - October 1999)

"[In the period between June and October 1999] no community has escaped breaches of human rights, including the Kosovo Albanians. Particularly in the Kosovska Mitrovica/Mitrovice area, their freedom of movement and rights of access to education and healthcare have been violated. The [OSCE KVM] report testifies to this and does not minimise the effect on the individuals concerned. However, the overwhelming weight of evidence points to violations against non-Albanians.

One discernible leitmotif emerges from [OSCE KVM] report. Revenge. Throughout the regions the desire for revenge has created a climate in which the vast majority of human rights violations have taken place. Through the assailant's eyes, the victims had either participated, or were believed to have participated, in the large-scale human rights abuses [between October 1998 and June 1999]; or they were believed to have actively or tacitly collaborated with the Yugoslav and Serbian security forces. Within this climate of vindictiveness a third category of victims emerged: those individuals or groups who were persecuted simply because they had not been seen to suffer before.
[…]
The first, obvious, group that suffered revenge attacks are the Kosovo Serbs. Despite the generally accepted premise that many of those who had actively participated in criminal acts left along with the withdrawing Yugoslav and Serbian security forces, the assumption of collective guilt prevailed. The entire remaining Kosovo Serb population was seen as a target for Kosovo Albanians. The [OSCE KVM] report repeatedly catalogues incidents throughout the area where vulnerable, elderly Kosovo Serbs have been the victims of violence. The result of this has been a continuous exodus of Kosovo Serbs to Serbia and Montenegro and an inevitable internal displacement towards mono-ethnic enclaves, adding fuel to Serb calls for cantonisation.

Other particular victims of violence documented in the [OSCE KVM] report are the Roma and Muslim Slavs. Many Kosovo Albanians labeled the Roma as collaborators: accused of carrying out the dirty work, such as disposing of bodies, they were tainted by association with the regime in Belgrade. The [OSCE KVM] report documents the decimation of the Roma community in many parts of Kosovo/Kosova, driven from their homes in fear of their lives. The Muslim Slav community, largely concentrated in the west of Kosovo/Kosova, may share the same faith as the Kosovo Albanians, but they are separated by language. To be a Serbo-Croat speaker in Kosovo/Kosova is to be a suspect and can be enough in itself to incite violence. Other non-Albanians that feature in the report as victims of human rights violations include the Turks and Croats.

A disturbing theme that the [OSCE KVM] report uncovers is the intolerance, unknown before, that has emerged within the Kosovo Albanian community. Rights of Kosovo Albanians to freedom of association, expression, thought and religion have all been challenged by other Kosovo Albanians. The [OSCE KVM] report reveals that opposition to the new order, particularly the (former) UCK's dominance of the self-styled municipal administrations, or simply a perceived lack of commitment to the UCK cause has led to intimidation and harassment. A further aspect of inter-Kosovo Albanian intolerance has been the challenges made in the Pec/Peje area to the rights of Catholic Albanians to express their religion.

Violence has taken many forms: killings, rape, beatings, torture, house-burning and abductions. Not all violence has been physical, however, fear and terror tactics have been used as weapons of revenge. Sustained aggression, even without physical injury, exerts extreme pressure, leaving people not only unable to move outside their home, but unable to live peacefully within their home. In many instances, fear has generated silence, in turn allowing the climate of impunity to go unchecked. The [OSCE KVM] report shows that not only have communities been driven from their homes, but also that the current climate is not conducive to returns. As a result, the spiral of violence has driven a wedge between Kosovo/Kosova's communities, making ever more elusive the international community's envisioned goal of ethnic co-existence.

The [OSCE KVM] report highlights that although many incidents were disparate, individual acts of revenge, others have assumed a more systematic pattern and appear to have been organised. The evidence in part points to a careful targeting of victims and an underlying intention to expel. This leads to one of the more sensitive areas of the report, namely the extent of UCK involvement in the period from June to October 1999. A consistent reporting feature has been assumed UCK presence and control. The [OSCE KVM] report is littered with witness statements testifying to UCK involvement, both before and after the demilitarisation deadline of 19th September ranging from reports of UCK 'police' to more recent accusations of intimidation by self-proclaimed members of the provisional Kosovo Protection Corps

(TMK). It is clear that the UCK stepped in to fill a law and order void, but this 'policing' role is unrestrained by law and without legitimacy. The highest levels of the former UCK leadership and current provisional TMK hierarchy have openly distanced themselves from any connection of their members to the violence that has taken place. They highlight the ease with which criminal elements who were never part of the UCK are now exploiting the UCK umbrella for their own nefarious purposes. Close scrutiny by the international community is needed to prove, or disprove, the veracity of these claims.

The [OSCE KVM] report also highlights many instances of other human rights violations, such as denied access to public services, healthcare, education and employment which have also been used as a tool by both the Kosovo Albanians and the Kosovo Serbs to prevent the integration of traditionally mixed institutions. Restricted access to education, with its long-term implications for the life-chances of those affected; poor healthcare; limited employment opportunities – these are the emerging elements that lock segments of the population into a cycle of poverty and divide communities both on ethnic and on economic grounds. They constitute violations of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights." (OSCE 1999, Part II, Executive Summary)

Pervasive insecurity continue to force ethnic minorities in Kosovo to leave their home areas (2000-2001)

- The pattern of ongoing displacement has continued to be small scale and low key, yet unremitting
- 'Low level' intimidation has become a feature of everyday life for many communities and continues to provoke departure
- Security concerns include not only fear for physical safety but also comprise freedom of movement restrictions and limited access to basic services and employment prospects

March - August 2001

"The general security situation for minorities across Kosovo stabilised noticeably during this period. The number of serious security incidents affecting minorities decreased for all minorities in almost all regions of Kosovo. As a result there have also been some improvements in freedom of movement, which may be interpreted as tentative confidence on the part of minorities in response to this relatively prolonged period largely free of serious security incidents resulting in fatalities. Additionally, information gathered on population figures shows that the overall estimated numbers of minority communities in Kosovo have remained fairly constant. Continued fears about security mean that few minorities have returned to Kosovo. At the same time the numbers of minorities leaving has tapered off. The motivation for ongoing departures is frequently linked to quality of life issues, in particular the lack of employment prospects, rather than immediate security concerns. However, such a conclusion should not be drawn in isolation from the reality that past, continuing and anticipated, violence continues to overshadow peoples' lives. What may on the surface appear to be solely socio-economic push factors are invariably influenced by the pervading climate of insecurity that exists within minority communities.

It must be stressed that the perceived improvement in security remains extremely tentative. The negative attitudes and perceptions that continue to drive the post-conflict situation, can come to the fore and lead to a sharp deterioration at any time. A shocking reminder of the fragility of the security situation was the shooting of a family of five Kosovo Albanians in Gllogoc/Glogovac on 22 August 2001 amidst allegations that one family member had collaborated with the previous Serbian regime. Such allegations, which have also been made against members of minority communities, heighten tensions and can easily trigger further violence. While there has been an improvement in the security situation, as measured by reference to the number of fatalities, lesser threats and incidents of intimidation against minorities remain far too common. Whilst provoking insecurity of a degree less obvious and measurable than the impact of recurrent murders, the cumulative effect of suffering daily harassment is extremely debilitating. For many members of minorities who live, or who are forced to live, in agricultural communities, the theft of cattle, often their

only livelihood, remains a key, and frequently unresolved, concern. In areas that have been the arena of protracted tensions the negative impact of intolerance is clear. For example, the daily harassment of minorities (including Kosovo Albanians) in north Mitrovice/Mitrovica continues to provoke departures, a key sign that the situation is far from being satisfactory even when open street violence has been reigned in. 'Low level' intimidation has become such a feature of everyday life for many communities that it is common for minorities to tell OSCE and UNHCR that they no longer report such incidents to the police because, in their view, little has been done to address past incidents." (UNHCR/OSCE October 2001, para. 1-2)

October 2000-February 2001

"The pattern of ongoing displacement as noted during the reporting period has continued to be small scale and low key, yet unremitting. Minority populations are still leaving Kosovo. The primary motivation for such departures is security related. Security concerns manifest themselves not only in fear for physical safety but also in more complex ways including freedom of movement restrictions and limited access to basic services and employment prospects. On this basis recent departures may be attributed as much to the occurrence of individual incidents of violence as to resignation after prolonged periods of lesser forms of intimidation and harassment. Lack of optimism for a longer-term future in Kosovo is a major contributing factor in the decision to leave." (UNHCR/OSCE March 2001, para. 12)

"While crime in Kosovo is generally declining, attacks against individuals from ethnic minorities remain disproportionately high. For example, UNMIK police sources indicate that during the period 2 January-28 October 2000, 122 Albanians (58 per cent of the total) and 78 Serb or other ethnic minorities (37 per cent) were reportedly murdered (in the remaining cases the ethnicity was not recorded), despite the fact that, overall, ethnic minorities constitute just some 10 per cent of the total population in Kosovo." (UN CHR 29 January 2001, para. 116)

June-September 2000

"Security continues to be an issue of overriding concern for minority communities. In many respects it is the issue and is more frequently raised in discussions about minority protection than any other. The degree of security or, as is more often the case, insecurity, experienced by minority groups is the basic yardstick against which the sustainability of their communities is measured.[…] Unless security can be improved, many minority communities will be neither socially nor economically viable, dependant on humanitarian assistance for survival and faced with little option but to leave. Murder, arson and lesser forms of intimidation are still a daily reality for many minority communities whose members figure disproportionately among the victims of crime. As significant as the individual incidents of violence is their cumulative effect and the continued perception among minorities that they are not secure. The lack of security continues to restrict freedom of movement, which, for many minority communities, remains possible only through the provision of special bus lines and escorts. As a result, minorities continue to face difficulties of access to essential services, such as secondary healthcare and education, and face a very poor quality of life.

Levels of security have fluctuated in light of local circumstances. The picture from municipality to municipality, and community to community, is diverse. Some communities have seen an easing in the level of violence while others continue to be subjected to unrelenting violent attacks. It is still not possible to say that any one ethnic group has experienced a lasting improvement in overall security; even after months of calm, violence can re-ignite and minority communities are all too conscious of the fact that the threat of violence is ever present. Indeed a recurrence of violence after periods of calm can send a community into panic, having deep and long-lasting consequences, to the detriment of any progress achieved." (UNHCR/OSCE October 2000, paras. 1-2)

Displacement caused by the armed conflict between the Serbian forces and ethnic Albanian rebels in the Presevo valley (2000-2001)

- About one third of the Albanian population of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja fled at one times but many of the Albanians who fled during the last 1,5 year have returned
- Internally displaced persons have fled out of fear of being caught between firing lines, and one of a general concern about the build-up of police and military forces in Presevo Valley
- The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Serbian authorities have reportedly acted with restraint and there have been no reports of atrocities or property being damaged recently
- Serb communities in Southern Serbia expressed concern about an increasing number of home sales by Serbs to ethnic Albanians after the peace agreement signed in May 2001

"There has been significant population movement in Presevo, Bujanovac, and Medvedja over the last 2 years. While the three municipalities were not heavily affected by the Kosovo war, approximately one third of the ethnic Albanian population fled at that time mostly due to fear of an escalating conflict, as well as in some cases in response to treatment by State forces. Most, however, returned quickly to their homes. A smaller number of ethnic Albanians, mostly from small villages near the boundary with Kosovo, again fled in early 2000 as they feared a Government crackdown on the recently formed UCPMB. The major turning point in the region occurred in November 2000 when the UCPMB attacked several police positions and gained control of the larger villages: Veliki Trnovac, Lucane, and Koculj. It is estimated that over 10,000 ethnic Albanians fled to Kosovo as a result of the fighting and the threat that the Yugoslav Army would in response enter into the GSZ. While many of the ethnic Albanians that fled over the last 1½ years have returned, it is estimated that approximately 15,000 remain in Kosovo." (UN OCHA 11 April 2001, sect. 2)

"The Special Rapporteur remains deeply concerned about the continuing violence in the Presevo Valley region of southern Serbia. Tensions have remained high as units of the ethnic Albanian Liberation Army of Presevo, Medvedja and Bujanovic (UCPMB) have continued to engage the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia security forces in firefights in and near the Ground Safety Zone (GSZ) along the border with Kosovo. Approximately 40 deaths have now been attributed to the violence in the area since the UCPMB became active in early 2000, including the deaths in early March 2001 of three Federal Republic of Yugoslavia soldiers killed by a landmine near the GSZ. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Serbian authorities have continued to act with restraint, seeking NATO, United Nations and international community assistance for a negotiated settlement to the violence. The authorities have prepared a detailed plan for addressing the structural discrimination affecting the Albanian majority in the Presevo Valley, and Albanian leaders in the region have developed their own proposal for discussion." (UN CHR 22 March 2001, para. 22)

"In mid-November [2000], there was an escalation of armed confrontation between the Serbian security forces and the self-styled Liberation Army of Presevo, Medveda and Bujanovac (UCPMB) in the group safety zone. Initially limited to harassing fire against the static Serbian Ministry of the Interior police (MUP), the attacks increased in size, duration, sophistication and aggessiveness. On 23 November, three MUP officers were killed in attacks some 5 kilometers south-west of Bujanovac. The clashes triggered an influx of almost 5,000 displaced persons from the ground safety zone and other locations into Kosovo. While the number of those displaced was relatively small, the potential implications for peace and stability in the region were quite serious.

After monitoring movements of internally displaced persons into Kosovo and speaking with ethnic Albanians in southern Serbia proper, UNHCR reported that internally displaced persons had fled out of fear of being caught between firing lines, and one of a general concern about the build-up of police and military forces in Presevo Valley. While ethnic Albanian representatives claimed not to be disturbed by local police from southern Serbia proper, they indicated that the presence of security forces previously stationed in Kosovo served as a major source of intimidation. It should be noted that there have been no reports of

atrocities committed or of property being damaged recently, although some ethnic Albanians did complain of intimidation and harassment by MUP inside the ground safety zone." (UN SC 15 December 2000, paras. 21-22)

Reports of Serbs leaving the Presevo valley after the May 2001 peace agreement
"Serbs living in Presevo municipality (Southern Serbia) and the Presevo-based Serbian Council for Human Rights expressed concern about an increasing number of home sales by Serbs to ethnic Albanians. According to the Council for Human Rights, limited financial prospects and an uncertain future appear to be the main reasons for the home sales, although there is concern that Serbs feel increasingly unwelcome in the predominately ethnic Albanian municipality." (USAID 30 September 2001)

For return movements to the Presevo Valley, see "Return of IDPs to Southern Serbia is largely seen as a success (2001)" [Internal link]

Housing shortages in Kosovo force refugees to return to situation of internal displacement (2000-2001)

- Refugees returning to Kosovo are not always able to return to their original homes while other shelter possibilities are now largely exhausted

Return of refugees to situation of internal displacement
"Despite the limited absorption capacity and the shattered infrastructure in Kosovo, with few exceptions those who have returned this year have managed to find accommodation, if not in their original homes, with friends and relatives. Given the large number of returns since June 1999, however, shelter possibilities are now largely exhausted. UNHCR continues to advocate that countries of asylum should give preference to voluntary returns and to supporting the funding of community-based reconstruction efforts in Kosovo. As winter once again approaches, it is recommended that forced returns should be avoided to the extent possible and should take place only after due consideration has been given to existing individual vulnerabilities. UNHCR further recommends that persons who are known to lack accommodation upon arrival should not be returned during the winter months." (HIWG 1 September 2000, para. 23)

"The housing issue is far from being resolved. With about 120.000 houses damaged or destroyed during the war, about 83.000 are still in need of renovation or reconstruction. Kosovo has a capacity of constructing approximately 7.000 housing units per year, but no more. The newly installed Housing and Property Directorate does not have the financial means to cope with a large amount of problems, ranging from reconstruction, allocation of houses and reconstruction material to the liberation of illegal occupied houses and apartments. In April 2001, approximately 3.500 persons still lived in temporary community shelters." (COE 23 April 2001, para. 19)

Ethnic Albanians forced to leave Serb enclaves in Kosovo (2000-2001)

- Violence and intimidation by Kosovo Serbs in their enclaves, in particular northern Mitrovica, lead to additional departures of Kosovo Albanian families

"Serbs and Roma who did not leave when Yugoslav forces withdrew lived primarily in enclaves, except for the Serbs in the north of the province, where Serbs and Albanians effectively partitioned Mitrovica. Serbs lived largely in the northern Kosovo municipalities of Leposavic, Zubin Potok, and Zvecan, and in the northern part of Mitrovica, and in scattered enclaves under KFOR protection elsewhere. KFOR and UNMIK provided security to these enclaves, settlements, and camps, and escorted minority members who

left their residence areas as well as convoys of private Serb vehicles. The UNHCR provided buses to transport Serbs in larger numbers between enclaves and into Serbia to take care of personal business.

In Mitrovica Serb and Albanian Kosovars restricted each other's freedom of movement (see Section 2.d.). After Serbian forces withdrew in 1999, many ethnic Serbs from throughout Kosovo fled to Mitrovica and occupied homes, including those belonging to ethnic Albanians in the northern part of that town. Ethnic Albanians who sought to return to their homes in the north were subject to violence and intimidation by ethnic Serbs, and about 1,500 who live in the northern section of town reported repeated harassment. For example, in April a group of Serbs set fire to 3 Albanian homes and damaged over 20 U.N. vehicles in north Mitrovica. Ethnic Serbs stationed near the bridges monitored persons who crossed the Ibar River from southern Mitrovica into the northern part of the town. Serbs in the northern part of the city continued to seize Albanian property, resulting in over 60 reported illegal house occupations during the summer months. At the same time, ethnic Serbs, including some who owned property there, were unable to move freely in the southern part of the town without similar harassment from ethnic Albanians." (U.S. DOS February 2001, Kosovo, sect. 5)

"Repeated violent flare-ups in Mitrovica have provoked renewed ethnic tension and have led to additional departures of Kosovo Albanian families from the northern side of the city. In July alone, more than 20 ethnic Albanian families from northern Mitrovica registered for assistance with UNHCR on the southern side of the city. Some families have reported being verbally or physically threatened, having their homes attacked or entered by force, receiving phone calls warning them to leave, or being summarily "evicted" from their homes. This renewed displacement appears to have been sparked by fear of reprisals following the arrest by UNMIK police of a Kosovo Serb suspected of arson, theft and assault in the northern part of the city. Displaced Kosovo Albanians have been accommodated either with host families or in a temporary transit centre. UNHCR has daily contact with many ethnic Albanian families still in northern Mitrovica and continues to monitor the situation closely." (UN SC 18 September 2000, para. 34)

"[W]ithout clear orders from legal authorities to evict people, the law enforcement agencies (primarily KFOR and UNMIK Police) are unable to carry out lawful evictions. Again, there appears to be no general policy on how to address eviction issues: with local police drawing up their own policies in this area, practice varies greatly. The lack of clear and consistent policies is demonstrated most clearly by the continuing eviction of minorities (including Kosovo Albanians) from north Mitrovica. While the law enforcement authorities in July 2000 announced a co-ordinated policy for evicting recent occupants, this does not appear to have been widely or uniformly applied, and the evictions and illegal occupations have continued." (OSCE 25 September 2000)

For more information on situation in Mitrovica, see "Yugoslavia: Violence in Mitrovica shows ethnic tension still high in Kosovo", 31 January 2001 [Internet]

The ethnic minorities in Kosovo

The Serbian population in Kosovo: 100,000 persons as of end of 1999

- About 190,000 ethnic Serbs were living in Kosovo prior to the conflict, together with some 19,000 Serb refugees from Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina
- According to KFOR estimates in September 1999 and to the Kosovo Serb National Council , about 100,000 Serbs have remained in the province
- The majority of the pre-war and the current Serb population is to be found within the Eastern Plateau from Mitrovica/Mitrovice down through Kosovo Polje/Fushe Kosove and

Urosevac/Ferizaj and then further up to Gnjilane/Gjilani and Kamenica in the south-east of the province

"According to the 1991 census there were 1,954,747 people living in Kosovo, 195,301 of them Serbs. During the aftermath of the wars in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina a substantial number of Serb refugees from Krajina and other parts of Croatia and from Bosnia-Herzegovina were forcibly sent to Kosovo. By the summer of 1996, there were some 19,000 Serb refugees living in Kosovo." (OSCE 1999, Part IV, Chapter 19)

Table 1 : Serb Population and Beneficiary Registration Data

Serbs	Pre-Conflict Population (UNHCR)	Remaining Popn, Sep'99 (KFOR)	No. of Beneficiaries Registered, Oct 1999	% Population remaining (based on KFOR data)
North-West (incl. M/Vice)	36,000	29,000	see table footnote[1]	80%
Eastern Plateau & bordering Forests	105,000	60,000	57,000	55%
Strpce/Shterpce	8,000	9,000[2]	9,000	115%
Elsewhere	41,000	6,000	4,000	15%
Totals:	190,000	104,000	-	55%
Totals (excl. North-West)	154,000	75,000	70,000	50%

[1] Beneficiary registration data from the north-west do not provide an indication of total population. In this area WFP currently provides assistance to the following categories of beneficiary:
a. IDPs from Kosovo,
b. 10% of the resident population,
c. Krajina Serbs living in collective centres,
d. Roma living in collective centres and 2,900 minority Albanians in northern Mitrovica/Mitrovice and Zubin Potok municipalities.
[2] Beneficiary Registration data taken for Strpce/Shterpce, rather than KFOR's estimate of 3,400, which seems rather low.
(UNHCR/WFP 5 February 2000, sect. 5)

"The numbers are disputed. The Kosovo Serb National Council claims that about 100,000 Serbs are still living in Kosovo. By some accounts, up to 25,000 Roma are still living in Kosovo. By some accounts, up to 25,000 Roma are still living in Kosovo. The sum of Serb s and Roma who reportedly have fled (230,000) and those who reportedly remain (125,000) would be a larger number than the estimated 250,000 Serbs and Roma living in Kosovo before the war, casting doubt on the accuracy either of the past-war count or of the pre-war estimate." (USCR April 2000, pp. 2-3)

"The north-west is an almost exclusively Serb area consisting of Leposavic/ Leposaviq, Zubin Potok, Zvecane and northern Mitrovica/Mitrovice municipalities, bordering Serbia to the north. There is relatively little concrete information on the current population of this area, since KFOR estimates may not include the relatively large number of IDPs from Kosovo.

The majority of the pre-war Serb population, and the bulk of the population now, is to be found within the Eastern Plateau and neighbouring Forests food economy areas (a relatively agriculturally productive corridor running south from Mitrovica/Mitrovice down through Kosovo Polje/Fushe Kosove and Urosevac/Ferizaj and then around and up to Gnjilane/Gjilani and Kamenica in the south-east of the province […]).

Strpce/Shterpce is a municipality lying to the south of the province in the mountains bordering Macedonia. The exclusively Serb villages in the centre and west of the municipality lie within an enclosed mountain valley; they are now almost completely cut off from surrounding areas.

Outside of these three areas, the few remaining Serbs are to be found mostly within a number of very specific locations, including Prizren and Orahovac/Rahovac towns and the villages of Velica Hoca (Orahovac/Rahovac) and Gorazdevac (Pec/Peje)." (UNHCR/WFP 5 February 2000, sect. 5)

The "Gypsies" in Kosovo

- The Gypsies comprise various groups with different linguistic and religious traditions
- The ethnic Roma constitute the main group but other groups include the Ashkaelia and the Egyptians
- In the 1991 Yugoslav census, the number of Roma/"Gypsies" in Kosovo was calculated at around 45,000 but many did not register as such
- By some accounts, up to 25,000 Roma are still living in Kosovo as of end of 1999
- Roma are concentrated in the Eastern Plateau, in Pec/Peje, Djakovica/Gjakove and Prizren municipalities in the west

"The several groups generically described here as Kosovo 'Gypsies' (Maxhupet) have different allegiances and different linguistic and religious traditions. The groups identify themselves quite distinctly.

The so-called 'ethnic Roma', identify themselves as Roma and use Romani as their mother tongue, and also speak Albanian and Serbian. They have proud cultural traditions and align themselves with Roma communities in other countries (they include a small Catholic Romani community living near the Kosovo Croat communities in Lipljan/Lipjan municipality, as well as one group which has a nomadic lifestyle, known as the Cergari, who follow the Orthodox faith and speak Serbian).

The Ashkaelia are Albanian-speaking and live close to the Kosovo Albanians with whom they have always been identified.

The Egyptians, whom many consider to be Ashkaelia, speak Albanian but claim to have originally come from Egypt. They are perceived by Kosovo Albanians to be Maxhupet for whom a separate identity was created roughly 10 years ago by the Yugoslav regime in order to further the image of a multi-ethnic, rather than an Albanian-dominated Kosovo. It is also believed to be an effort of self-identification in order to escape the derogatory qualification of Maxhupet in Kosovo and to differentiate themselves from the Romani-speaking "ethnic Roma". Both the Ashkaelia and Egyptians follow the Muslim faith.

Kosovo Albanians and Kosovo Serbs alike generally treat the 'Gypsy' (Maxhupi) population and groups as separate from themselves, despite their varying levels of integration. As is the case with majority populations in other central and east European countries, the Kosovo Albanians and Kosovo Serbs consider Maxhupet/Cigani as second-class citizens." (OSCE 2000, chapter 20)

Population numbers

"Although it is difficult to assess the exact numbers of Roma/'Gypsies' living in Kosovo before the conflict and up to early June 1999, it was estimated by some Romani refugees from Kosovo and Serbia living in third countries to be around 100,000-150,000 people. In the 1991 Yugoslav census, the number of Roma/'Gypsies' in Kosovo was calculated at around 45,000. Many did not declare themselves as Roma/'Gypsies' in the census either because of a feeling of being fully integrated in the Kosovo Albanian or

Serb communities, or because their registration as Romani/'Gypsy' could prevent their integration within the community and therefore deprive them of their basic rights. Based on data from the 1991 census, Romani/'Gypsy' communities could be found in almost all municipalities of Kosovo." (OSCE 2000, chapter 20)

"The numbers are disputed. The Kosovo Serb National Council claims that about 100,000 Serbs are still living in Kosovo. By some accounts, up to 25,000 Roma are still living in Kosovo. By some accounts, up to 25,000 Roma are still living in Kosovo. The sum of Serb s and Roma who reportedly have fled (230,000) and those who reportedly remain (125,000) would be a larger number than the estimated 250,000 Serbs and Roma living in Kosovo before the war, casting doubt on the accuracy either of the past-war count or of the pre-war estimate." (USCR April 2000, pp. 2-3)

Geographical distribution

"Typically, the Roma have made a living as casual labourers and itinerant market traders. Geographically, they are concentrated in the Eastern Plateau and Mediterranean food economies (Pec/Peje, Djakovica/Gjakove and Prizren municipalities in the west), areas where there has traditionally been a demand for agricultural labour.

For the Roma, questions of identity, which before the war were of relatively little importance, are now paramount. This is because many Roma are believed to have sided with the Serbs during the recent conflict, taking part in the widespread looting and destruction of Albanian property (Roma communities were themselves generally spared the widespread displacement and destruction suffered by other groups).

Most of the Roma remaining within the province are recognised by their immediate neighbours as being innocent of any direct involvement in looting and destruction. However, they are likely to encounter hostility from Albanians that do not know them personally, particularly if they move outside their local area. Most identify themselves with the majority Albanian population, generally referring to themselves as 'Askali' in the east and 'Egyptians' in the west. (UNHCR/WFP 5 February 2000, sect. 6)

Other ethnic minorities in Kosovo

- In addition to the Kosovo Albanians, Kosovo Serbs and Roma, there are a number of other groups in Kosovo which had the status of "national communities" in the FRY
- There were also small ethnic groups not designated as "national communities"

"Kosovo Turks

The 1991 census in Yugoslavia put the number of Kosovo Turks at 10,833, but that figure is not thought to reflect the true size of the population. The Turks in Kosovo continue to use Turkish as their mother tongue (in the 1974 Constitution of Kosovo, repealed in 1989 by the federal government, Turkish was recognized as the third official language of Kosovo),2 and there are a number of Turkish schools in the province. The Turks have traditionally taken a neutral stand between the Albanians and the Serbs and they have traditionally had good relations with both.

There are contradictory reports about how Kosovo Turks experienced the conflict up to June 1999. In the predominantly Turkish village of Mamusa/Mamushe (Prizren), which was attacked by Yugoslav and Serbian forces in late March 1999 (this is covered in more detail in the entry for Prizren municipality), people interviewed by the OSCE-KVM reported that the inhabitants of Turkish origin were allowed to stay as the Yugoslav and Serbian forces expelled the Kosovo Albanians.

In other parts of Kosovo, Turks were reportedly attacked and expelled together with Kosovo Albanians, or otherwise left the province. Many found refuge in Turkey.

Kosovo Croats

The Kosovo Croats are also known as Janjevci after the village of Janjevo/Janjeve (Lipljan), where they made up two-thirds of the population. As well as Janjevo, Lipljan/Lijpan town also had a sizeable Croat population, and four villages at the eastern end of Vitina/Viti municipality - Letnica/Letnice, Sasare/Shashare, Vrnavokolo/Vrnakolle and Vrnez/Vernez - had Croat majority populations.

In the data collected by the OSCE-KVM there are no references to human rights violations against Kosovo Croats.

Gorani

This community consists of persons of Slav ethnicity and Islamic faith from Gora/Dragash municipality in the south of Kosovo (the term Goran roughly translates as "Highlander"). They are distinct from the group described as Muslim Slavs (see below). A survey conducted jointly by UNHCR and the OSCE found that "Despite their shared religion, their relationship with [Kosovo] Albanians is not always easy given their ethnic and linguistic links with the Serbs, as well as their political attitudes."
[…]

Muslim Slavs

This group consists of Serbian speaking Slavs who are associated with the "Muslim nationality" as classified within the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Many of them describe themselves as Bosniac. In the data collected by the OSCE-KVM there are no references to human rights violations against Muslim Slavs. In Ozrim/Ozdrim (Pec/Peja) Muslim Slavs are described as having been spared when Kosovo Albanians were attacked and expelled in May [1999] […].

Cerkezi

The Cerkezi, who are a tiny minority group not recognized as a national community in the FRY, are of the Cherkess nationality from the north Caucasus region of Russia. The Cerkezi arrived in Kosovo more than 80 years ago and settled in Milosevo/Millosheve in Obilic/Obiliq municipality. They number around 100 persons, are Muslims, and speak Albanian, Serb and Cerkess. None of the data gathered by the OSCE-KVM specifically referred to the Cerkezi of Malisevo, but it is known that at some point during the period between late March and early June 1999 they were expelled and some of their houses were burned by Serbs, and that all of them became refugees in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Roman Catholic Kosovo Albanians

These are a religious, not an ethnic minority, numbering an estimated 70,000 people. They live mainly in the municipalities of Djakovica/Gjakova, Klina/Klina, Prizren/Prizren and Vitina/Viti." (OSCE 1999, chapter 21)

POPULATION PROFILE AND FIGURES

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (excluding Kosovo)

Total internally displaced population in Serbia and Montenegro: 231,000 persons (as of January 2002)

- Of these, 196,300 have been registered in Serbia and 32,200 in Montenegro
- There is agreement that there are also unregistered internally displaced persons from Kosovo in both republics
- The IDP caseload has slightly increased since UNHCR registration undertaken in March/April 2000
- About 65 % of the caseload in Serbia was registered during the second quarter of 1999

"During May 2000, the joint registration of internally displaced persons from Kosovo undertaken during March and April 2000 was finalised. The exercise was conducted by the Yugoslav authorities with support from UNHCR and was independently monitored by the Swiss government. This exercise, and the earlier registration conducted in Montenegro in November and December 1999, revealed that some 188,000 displaced people from Kosovo have registered in Serbia, while 31,000 have registered in Montenegro." (UNHCR 15 June 2000, p. 4)

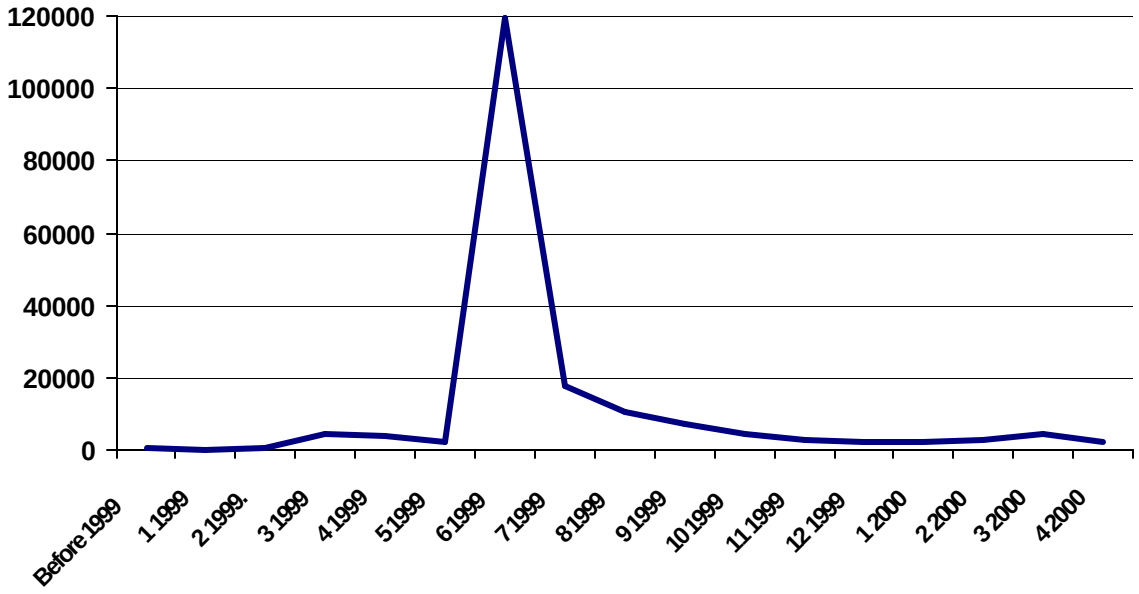
"As at 1 February 2001, 228,500 persons had been registered as internally displaced from Kosovo in FR Yugoslavia. Of these, 196,300 had been registered in Serbia and 32,200 in Montenegro. There is agreement, however, that there are also unregistered internally displaced persons from Kosovo in both republics. The process of departures of non-ethnic Albanians from Kosovo has not yet stopped, but is continuing at a slow pace." (UNHCR March 2001, para. 3)

The figure of the IDP population in Serbia and Montenegro has not changed significantly in 2001. UNHCR reports a total population of 231,000 internally displaced persons from Kosovo in Serbia as of 15 January 2002. (UNHCR 15 January 2002)

Dynamics of displaced

"Displacement from Kosovo and Metohija in the period prior to 1999 was sporadic. Only 449 internally displaced persons arrived during that period. Due to the well known events the year 1999 was the most striking, especially the second quarter thereof, when 125,653 persons or 67.2% were registered. The third quarter is very important as well as when 35,532 internally displaced persons or 18.9% were registered. Therefore, it is evident that the most massive displacement of population from Kosovo and Metohija took place in these two quarters of the year. In the fourth quarter, as well as in the year 2000 (until the moment when registration of the internally displaced persons was finished - in April 2000) the movement of population from Kosovo and Metohija started to decrease, although it is still continuing. Namely, in these two intervals 9,119 and 11,115 persons respectively were internally displaced, continuing almost 11%."

Graph. 1 Dynamics of displacement from Kosovo and Metohija



(UNHCR/Commissioner for Refugee of the Republic of Serbia 2001, p. 13)

Overwhelming majority of the displaced in Serbia/Montenegro live in private accommodation (2000)

- The majority of the displaced in Serbia/Montenegro live with family and friends and do not pay rent
- A small portion of the displaced live in homes they have constructed prior to their flight
- About 7% of the internally displaced live in collective centres (2000-2001)
- A third of the IDPs living in collective centres are squatting unoccupied buildings where they receive no assistance from state authorities
- Most of the displaced have rented an apartment or have found accommodation with relatives and friends

"Although the overwhelming majority of refugees and internally displaced persons (about 90 percent) are living in private accommodations, the lack of housing - along with the lack of jobs - remains a principle obstacle to local integration. Refugees living in private accommodation divide in three groups:
1) The majority of the refugees and displaced people are living with family and friends, and may or may not be paying rent.
2) Many refugees (fewer among the displaced) have moved out of the homes of family and friends, and are not paying rent. In order to afford to rent, such persons usually have jobs of other sources of income.
3) Finally, a relatively small, but not insignificant, portion of refugees and displaced people live in homes they have constructed themselves. In the case of the internally displaced from Kosovo, some built homes (or partially built them) in Serbia proper prior to their flight.
Although the majority live with relatives and friends, finding and visiting such people is often difficult precisely because they are living in someone else's home." (USCR April 2000, pp. 10-11)

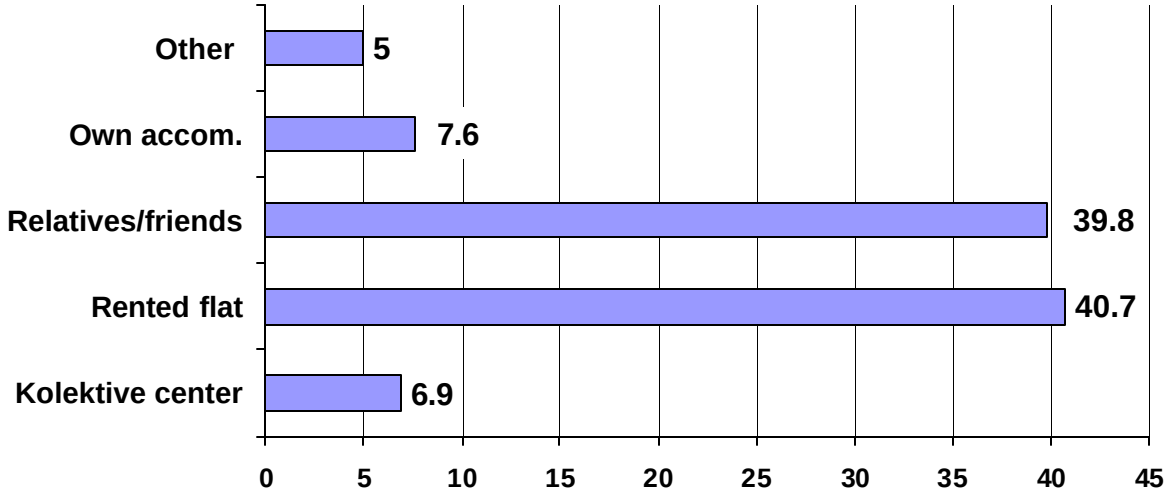
In Serbia /Montenegro, some 30,000 Serbs lived in some 200 former municipal and 'socially owned' buildings transformed into collective centres, sometime mixed with refugees from Croatia or Bosnia and Herzegovina. (USCR 2000, pp. 288, 290, 292)

"The Serbian or Montenegrin Commissioners have provided 10,517 Internally displaced persons (in addition to 21,704 refugees from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina) with (collective) accommodation for Refugees. An additional 5,932 internally displaced persons have found accommodation in so-called "unrecognised collective centres", meaning that they have squatted unoccupied buildings, in which they receive no assistance from the state authorities. All other internally displaced persons have had to find their own individual accommodation throughout the country. Many did so by renting accommodation." (UNHCR March 2001, para. 9)

In Serbia

"As regards the type of accommodation, the majority of the internally displaced persons have rented an apartment (40.7% or 76,149 persons). Almost as equal number of internally displaced persons found accommodation with relatives and friends (39.8% or 74,523 persons). 14,231 persons or 7.6% secured their own accommodation, while collective centers accommodate 6.9% or 12,959 persons. The share of other types of accommodation is 5%." (UNHCR/Commissioner for Refugees of the Republic of Serbia 2001, p. 37)

Graph. 20. Structure of internally displaced persons by type of temporary accommodation



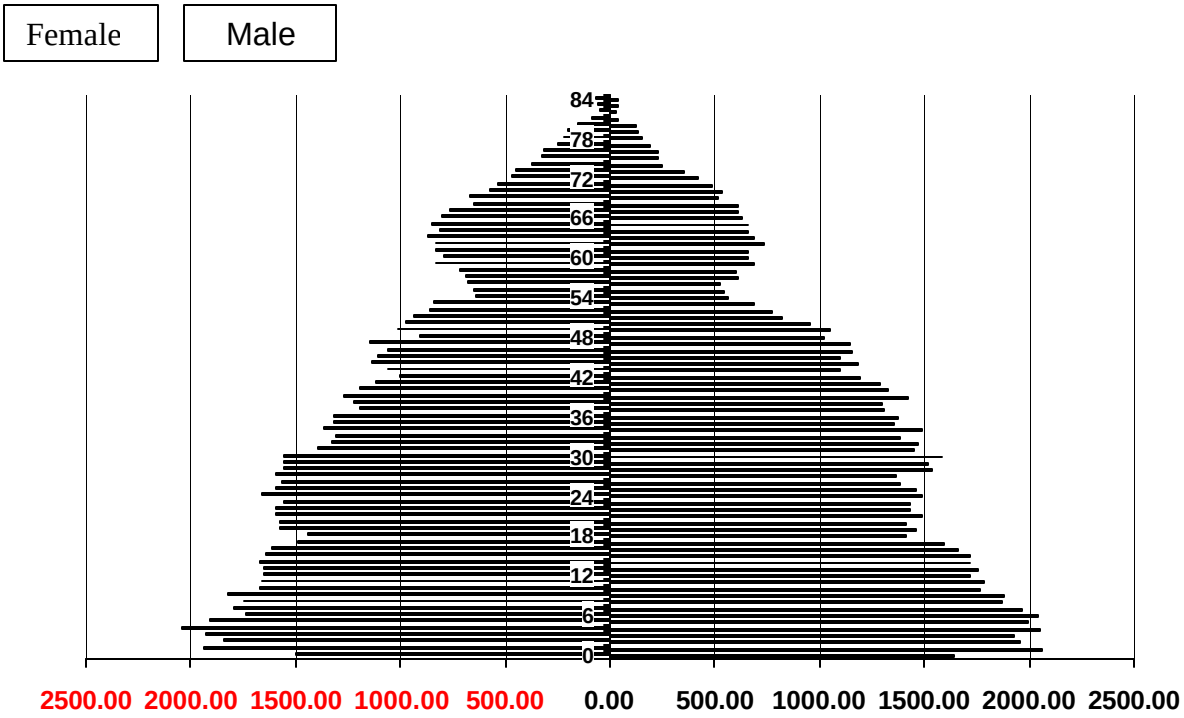
(UNHCR/Commissioner for Refugees of the Republic of Serbia, p. 37)

Demographic characteristics of IDPs in Serbia: Gender balance and prevalence of younger age groups (2000)

- The number of internally displaced persons according to gender is almost identical, and the structure according to functional age groups is relatively balanced
- Younger age group prevail in the age structure of the internally displaced population, while the age structure of population in Central Serbia and Vojvodina is much older
- Every tenth internally displaced person is either widowed, divorced or separated

"The gender structure of the internally displaced person is almost balanced. According to the obtained results women constitute 50.6% or 94,320 persons and men 49.4% or 92,809 persons. In comparison to the Central Serbia and Vojvodina gender breakdown this proportion is very similar. The share of women is higher by 0.6% only.

Graph 7. Age-gender pyramid of the internally displaced persons



The age structure of the internally displaced persons is also relatively balanced. Among the internally displaced persons the highest share is that of the middle-aged population (20-59 years of age) accounting for 50.6%, or 94,616 persons. The internally displaced population of school age (7-19 years of age) occupies the second place according to its share of 23.4% or 43,728 persons. Children in the age group 0-6 years constitute 14.2% that is 26,600 persons, while the share of the elderly population (60 and over) is 11.8% or 22,185 persons.

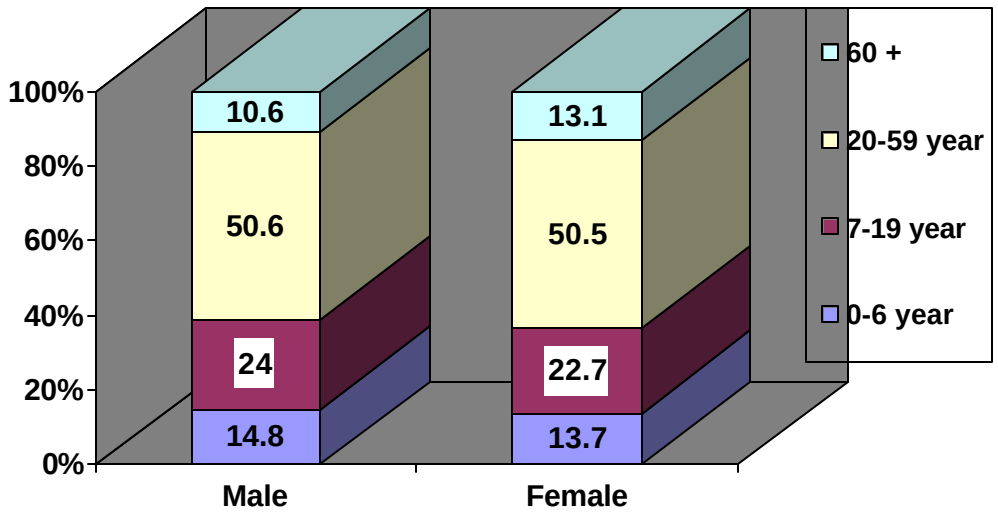
Table 2 - Breakdown of the internally displaced population by functional age group

	Total	Children 0-6 years	7-19 years	20-59 years	60 + years
Total	187129	26600	43728	94616	22185
Central Serbia	176219	24773	40904	89447	21095
Vojvodina	10910	1827	2824	5169	1090

Unlike the gender structure, the age structure of the internally displaced persons differs significantly from the age structure of the population of central Serbia and Voljvodina, since among them younger population prevails. In comparison to the total population of Kosovo and Metohija the difference is somewhat sma ller - the population of Kosovo and Metohija is even younger. Namely, the share of children in the structure of the internally displaced population is by 7% higher than their share in the population of Central Serbia and Vojvodina, and only 0.5% lower than the share of children in the total population of Kosovo and Metohija. Similarly, the share of school children in the structure of the internally displaced persons is by 6.5% higher compared to their share in the structure of population in Central Serbia, or by 6.3% higher in comparison with their share in the structure of population of Vojvodina, and 5.2% lower compared to the share of children in the total population of Kosovo and Metohija.

As regards the younger and middle-aged population in the structure of the internally displaced persons, it is by 3.6% lower in comparison to its share in the structure of population in Central Serbia and Vojvodina, and 2.3% higher in comparison with its share in total population of Kosovo and Metohija. The elderly population has a significantly smaller share in the structure of the internally displaced persons - 9.9%, and 10.1% respectively compared to population in Central Serbia and Vojvodina. With respect to total population of Kosovo and Metohija, the share of elderly population share is by 3.4% higher in case of the internally displaced persons.

Graph 8. Breakdown of the internally displaced persons by functional age groups



The average age of the internally displaced persons is 30 (male 28.2, female 30.8), which means that it is by 9 and 10 years respectively lower than the average age of the population of Serbia and Vojvodina, and by 3 years higher than the average age of the total population of Kosovo and Metohija.
[...]
The average age of population, as an indicator of the age structure confirms the fact that the internally displaced persons are relatively young, especially in comparison to the population of Central Serbia and Vojvodina, but still somewhat older if compared to total population of Kosovo and Metohija which is markedly young.

The observed differences in the age structure of the internally displaced population with respect to population of Kosovo and Metohija are the result of displacement of the predominantly non-Albanian population, which, by its basic demographic characteristics differs from the Albanian population, irrespective of the fact of having inhabited the same territories.

Marital status

Almost two thirds of the internally displaced persons over fifteen years of age are married, and every third person is unmarried. Every tenth internally displaced person is either widowed, divorced or separated." (UNHCR/Commissioner for Refugees of the Republic of Serbia 2001, pp. 21-24)

Ethnic structure, level of education and employment status of the internally displaced population in Serbia (2000)

- The Serbs account for 76% of the internally displaced population, followed by the Roma (11%)
- Almost one half of all the internally displaced persons over 15 years old has secondary school education
- One third of the internally displaced persons over 15 years of age where employed prior to leaving Kosovo

"Ethnic Structure of the internally displaced population is relatively homogeneous because one entity is predominant - the Serbs, which account for 76% of all the internally displaced persons. Roma come the second with a significant share of 11%.

The data on ethnic structure are the result of the freely expressed ethnicity of the internally displaced person, that is the parent (guardian), in case of children under 15.

In the national structure of the internally displaced persons, Serbs dominate constituting over two thirds (75.5% or 141,396 persons) followed by the Roma with 10.5% or 19,551 persons. 9,646 persons or 5.1% did not respond. Montenegrins account for 4.1% or 7,748 persons. The share of Muslims and the others is in the realm of 2%, while the share of Egyptians and Albanians is very small." (UNHCR/Commissioner for Refugees of the Republic of Serbia 2001, p. 25)

Level of education

"According to the definition of ILO (International Labour Organization) the working age population is the population from 15-65 years of age. Almost one half of all the internally displaced persons over 15 years old has secondary school education. Every fifth internally displaced person completed primary education, while one in ten persons has no education. The internally displaced males have somewhat higher level of education than females, and, from the aspect of ethnic composition, the most educated are the Serbs and Montenegrins." (UNHCR/Commissioner for Refugees of the Republic of Serbia 2001, p. 27)

Detailed figures of the level of education of the internally displaced persons can be found in the report of UNHCR and the Commissioner for Refugees of the Republic of Serbia, p. 27 and 28, and table 8 (appendix)

Employment status

"One third of the internally displaced persons over 15 years of age where employed prior to leaving Kosovo and Metohija, while the share of the unemployed was approximately 15%. In addition to that, more than one third were dependants - children, pupils and students, and the share of pensioners was much lower (7.3%)." (UNHCR/Commissioner for Refugees of the Republic of Serbia 2001, p. 28)

Detailed figures of the employment status of the internally displaced persons can be found in the report of UNHCR and the Commissioner for Refugees of the Republic of Serbia, p. 29 to 30 and Table 10 (appendix)

Geographical origin and distribution of the internally displaced population in Serbia: From Pristina to Belgrade (2000)

- The majority of the displaced originates from the Kosovo County, especially the municipality of Pristina
- Central Serbia host 96% of the internally displaced while the rest has settled in Vojvodina
- In Central Serbia, the county of Serbia has been the most attractive, followed by the counties of Raska, Sumadija, Toplica, Pcinj, Nisava and Podunavlje

Geographical origin of the displaced

"Observed per counties of Kosovo and Metohija, the largest number of the internally displaced persons originates from the Kosovo county - 76,881 persons (41.1%), followed by the county of Pec with 39,563 persons (21.1%), the county of Prizren with 26,304 persons (14%), the Kosovsko-Pomoravska county with 28,179 persons and finally the county of Kosovska Mitrovica with 16,202 persons (8,7%)." (UNHCR/Commissioner for Refugees for the Republic of Serbia 2001, p. 14)

Major directions of movement of the internally displaced persons

"Registration of the internally displaced persons from Kosovo and Metohija covered 187,129 persons out of which 176,219 or 94.2% were registered in Central Serbia, and 10,910 or 5.8% in Vojvodina." (UNHCR/Commissioner for Refugees of the Republic of Serbia 2001, p. 13)

One out of three internally displaced persons from the county of Kosovo and Pec and one out of two internally displaced persons from the Prizren county is temporarily accommodated in the Belgrade county, followed by the county of Rafka

The majority (approximately 40% of the internally displaced from Kosovska Mitrovica county is accommodated in the county of Rasha, and approximately one third of the internally displaced from Kosovsko-pomoravska county found accommodation in the county of Pcinj.

"The major directions of movement of the internally displaced persons indicate that the majority of persons who fled from the county of Kosovo were accommodated in Central Serbia. According to the results of the registration, 71,352 or 92.8% persons found shelter in Central Serbia, while in Vojvodina, only 5,529 internally displaced persons were registered. The largest number of these persons was registered in the county of Belgrade (20,936 or 29.4%), followed by the counties of Raska and Toplica where 9,870 and 9,305 persons respectively found accommodation, amounting to approximately 13%. The shares of other counties are below 10%.

Similarly, the majority of the internally displaced persons from the county of Pec, found accommodation in Central Serbia in which 38,037 persons were registered accounting for 96.2%. In Vojvodina only 1,526 internally displaced persons were registered.

The county of Belgrade is still the most attractive one, for 3 1. 1 % or 11,821 persons are accommodated in it. It is followed by the county of Raska with 22.5% or 8,564 persons and the county of Sumadija with 14. 1 % or 5,350 persons, while the shares of other counties are below 10%.

Out of the total number of internally displaced persons from the county of Prizren (24,919 or 94.7%) the majority registered in Central Serbia. 12,360 persons or 49.6% were registered in the Belgrade county; the county of Raska is in the second place with a total of 3,203 or 12.8% internally displaced persons registered. The shares of other counties are considerably below 10%. In Vojvodina only 1,385 persons who came from the above mentioned county were registered.

Generally speaking the internally displaced persons from the county of Prizren found somewhat different places of temporary accommodation from those who fled other counties of Kosovo and Metohija. Namely, although the highest number of them has been registered in Central Serbia, its share is below 90%, or exactly 88.7% or 14,375 persons. Consequently, the share of the internally displaced persons registered in Vojvodina is higher - 11.3% or 1,827 persons. The breakdown per counties of Central Serbia is as follows: the largest number (5,713 persons, or 39.7%) was registered in the county of Raska, followed by the county of Belgrade (3,289 persons or 22.8%), the county of Sumadija (2,319 persons or 16. 1 %) etc.

Out of the total number of the internally displaced persons from Kosovsko-pomoravska county 97.7% or 27,536 persons were registered in Central Serbia, in the county of Pcinj - 8,343 persons or 30.3%. The county of Belgrade, which, according to the number of the registered persons occupies the second place, has a share of 16.7% or 4,607 persons, followed by the county of Podunavlje with 12.4% or 3,427 persons and the county of Pomoravlje with 11.9% or 3,289 persons. The share of other counties is below 10%. The number of the internally displaced persons originating from the above mentioned county and registered in Vojvodina is small, only 643 persons." (UNHCR/Commissioner for Refugees of the Republic of Serbia 2001, pp. 17-18)

"A comprehensive report outlining the registration process of IDPs from Kosovo and Metohija has recently been made available from UNHCR. The ECHO funded report, compiled and researched jointly by UNHCR and the Commissioner for Refugees of the Republic of Serbia provides statistical information detailing the

ethnic, gender, education, age, civil status and employment compositions of the 187,129 IDPs registered in Serbia. Out of total 187,129 persons, 94.2% (176,219) are located in Central Serbia while the remaining 5.8% (10,910) are registered in Vojvodina. The Government of Switzerland provided 6 Observers to independently oversee the regularity of the registration process, which was completed in April 2000." (UN OCHA 6 April 2001)

Detailed statistics on the geographical origin and distribution of the internally displaced population in Serbia can be found in Tables 2, 3 and 4 in the appendix to the report of UNHCR and the Commissioner for Refugees of the Republic of Serbia.

Geographical distribution and ethnical composition of the internally displaced population in Montenegro (July 2000)

National structure of IDPs from Kosovo in Montenegro

Municipality	Albanian	Montenegrin	Egyptian	Muslim	Roma	Serb	Other	Total
ULCINJ	375	46	3	180	189	141	37	971
TIVAT	18	223	100	118	138	356	19	972
ROZAJE	109	14	161	645	50	40	3	1022
PODGORICA	181	3161	415	457	3454	1068	95	8831
PLUZINE	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
PLJEVLJA	7	79	0	16	3	61	1	167
PLAV	208	341	6	919	7	179	13	1673
NIKSIC	16	210	21	25	644	132	40	1088
MOJKOVAC	0	102	0	1	0	66	2	171
KOTOR	39	98	11	43	17	113	5	326
KOLASIN	0	148	0	5	0	81	4	238
HERCEG-NOVI	5	270	0	19	106	316	20	736
DANIOVGRAD	13	337	0	0	4	81	1	436
CETINJE	0	25	0	0	0	18	0	43
BUDVA	8	426	0	68	9	515	32	1058
BIJELO POLJE	36	266	0	528	39	182	19	1070
BERANE	19	2451	149	465	521	1538	51	5194
BAR	105	1723	51	388	645	1977	83	4972
ANDRIJEVICA	5	745	0	1	14	535	6	1306
SAVNIK	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
ZABLJAK	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	11
TOTAL	1144	10679	917	3878	5840	7400	431	30289
%	3.80%	35.30%	3.00%	12.80%	19.30%	24.40%	1.40%	

UNHCR July 2000

Refugees and IDPs in Montenegro (December 1999)

Municipality	Inhabitants	Refugees	% Refugees	IDPs	% IDPs	Total	% Total

ULCINJ	24537	620	2.53%	971	3.96%	1591	6.48%
TIVAT	12588	2649	21.04%	972	7.72%	3621	28.77%
ROZAJE	23429	277	1.18%	1022	4.36%	1299	5.54%
PODGORICA	155372	5767	3.71%	8831	5.68%	14598	9.40%
PLUZINE	5199	443	8.52%	2	0.04%	445	8.56%
PLJEVLJA	39503	1531	3.88%	167	0.42%	1698	4.30%
PLAV	19455	436	2.24%	1673	8.60%	2109	10.84%
NIKSIC	75274	2233	2.97%	1088	1.45%	3321	4.41%
MOJKOVAC	10860	232	2.14%	171	1.57%	403	3.71%
KOTOR	22540	918	4.07%	326	1.45%	1244	5.52%
KOLASIN	11056	368	3.33%	238	2.15%	606	5.48%
HERCEG-NOVI	29115	6022	20.68%	736	2.53%	6758	23.21%
DANIOVGRAD	14847	565	3.81%	436	2.94%	1001	6.74%
CETINJE	20336	256	1.26%	43	0.21%	299	1.47%
BUDVA	12186	1251	10.27%	1058	8.68%	2309	18.95%
BIJELO POLJE	55686	760	1.36%	1070	1.92%	1830	3.29%
BERANE	38799	780	2.01%	5194	13.39%	5974	15.40%
BAR	38153	2827	7.41%	4972	13.03%	7799	20.44%
ANDRIJEVICA	6696	143	2.14%	1306	19.50%	1449	21.64%
SAVNIK	3614	50	1.38%	2	0.06%	52	1.44%
ZABLJAK	4870	210	4.31%	11	0.23%	221	4.54%
TOTAL	624115	28338	4.54%	30289	4.85%	58627	9.39%

(UNHCR July 2000)

UN Administered Province of Kosovo

Available figures suggest a total of nearly 100,000 persons still internally displaced in Kosovo (January 2002)

- UNHCR reports 22,500 minority IDPs and 10,000 IDPs from Southern Serbia as of mid-January 2002
- Reconstruction figures suggest that between 60,000 and 72,000 persons are still in need of reconstruction assistance

There is currently no reliable figure for the total population displaced within Kosovo. The exact size and location of the internally displaced persons in Kosovo have not been determined so far by any of the agencies present in the province. Existing statistical information on the IDPs in Kosovo concerns only specific categories among the IDPs in Kosovo, mostly compiled according to the mandate of the agencies providing the data.

1. Displacement within Kosovo from June 1999

In a map dated 15 January 2002, UNHCR reports a total of 22,500 "minority IDPs", ie members of "community that lives in a situation where they are a numeric minority relative to the communities surrounding them." (OSCE/UNHCR October 2001). However, this figure only includes IDPs currently assisted by UNHCR while the total population of minority IDPs may be higher (UNHCR 15 January 2002).

2. Displacement from Southern Serbia

UNHCR reports that up to 10,000 persons originating from Southern Serbia are still displaced in Kosovo, as of mid-January 2002 (UNHCR 15 January 2002).

3. Estimates for the population displaced before June 1999

There is no reliable figure for the population that has been displaced before June 1999 and has since remained unable to return to their destroyed or heavily damaged houses. However, UNMIK evaluation for the remaining reconstruction needs in the housing sector in Kosovo can be used to estimate the number of persons still displaced before June 1999.

Of the 40,000 remaining damaged houses, 25 percent are in need of reconstruction assistance, according to the Housing and Construction Division of the Transitional Department of Health, Environment and Spatial Planning. The Housing Division estimates that 10,000 to 12,000 vulnerable families will need reconstruction assistance before going back to their homes in 2002. With a ratio of 6 persons per household (as established by IOM in May 2000), the total number of persons still unable to return to their pre-war homes may be between 60,000 and 72,000 persons. (Transitional Department 15 February 2002)

For more detailed information on reconstruction needs in Kosovo, see:
The housing reconstruction need assessment 2002, Department of Reconstruction Housing Directorate, 20 June 2001 [Internal link]
Regional Workshop, Housing Reconstruction Programme 2002, February 2002 [Internal link]

IDPs in collective centres: More than 4,000 persons concerned (January 2002)

- This population comprises ethnic Albanians, Serbs and Roma

A small portion of non-Albanian IDPs are currently living in collective shelters. According to data provided by UNMIK, there are at least 2,400 minority IDPs in collective shelters (or Temporary Collectives Shelter, TCS, under UNMIK supervision) as of January 2002. In addition, about 660 Roma living in a camp under UNHCR responsibility.

According to UNMIK figures, there are still about 2,800 ethnic Albanians residing in collective shelter (TCS) as of January 2002. (UNMIK 6 February 2002)

For more details, see also UNMIK statistical information relating to:
Majority Albanian TCS [Internal link]
Ethnic Minority TCS [Internal link]

See also UNMIK TCS Map, January 2002 [Internal link]

About 36,000 persons are internally displaced in Kosovo as the result of human rights violations and conflict (UNHCR - December 2000 - February 2001)

- 10.800 internally displaced from the Presevo Valley are currently in Kosovo according to UNHCR estimates
- UNHCR also reported 25,000 internally displaced persons in Kosovo as of December 2000, mainly members of Kosovo minority groups

Displacement from the Presevo Valley

"UNHCR used an approximate figure of 15,000 persons by the end of 2000, indicating that this figure was in need of verification since due to ongoing movements across the boundary line and lack of de-registration for humanitarian assistance, double registration could not be excluded. This verification exercise took place in February 2001 in the Pristina and Gnjilane areas. Based on this, our current best estimate is some 10.800 IDPs currently in Kosovo. UNHCR highlights that this is an estimate only and it cannot be excluded that more ethnic Albanians from Southern Serbia are in Kosovo who however have not come forward for assistance and therefore are not known to the local NGOs providing assistance and/or UNHCR." (UNHCR 11 April 2001)

Other IDPs

There is no systematic registration of the IDPs in Kosovo while especially the Serb minority communities have boycotted the UNMIK civil registration. For the annual statistics UNHCR had to produce estimates for the IDP population in Kosovo and came up with the following breakdown of the 25,000 reported:

i) ethnic Serb IDPs in North Mitrovica, Zubin Potok, Zvecan and Leposavic municipalities: 10,000 (originating from municipalities south of the river Ibar)

ii) ethnic Serb IDPs in Strpce municipality: 2,000 (mainly originating from Prizren and Ferizaj/Urosevac municipality)

iii) ethnic Serb/Roma IDPs in collective accommodation in various parts of Kosovo: 2,500

iv) ethnic Alb. IDPs mainly in south Mitrovica municipality: 8,000

v) ethnic Serb and Roma IDPs dispersed in various municipalities: 2,500. (UNHCR 11 April 2001)

Geographical distribution

"Kosovo continues to bear the scars of conflict, ethnic hatred and displacement. Across the province there are examples of all ethnic groups still unable to return to their places of origin. For Kosovo Albanians this is particularly the case for those originating from northern Mitrovica and other locations dominated by Kosovo Serbs. Relatively large numbers of Kosovo Serbs and Roma also remain in situations of displacement awaiting the possibility to return to their places of origin. Kosovo Serbs displaced from Prizren and Urosevac/Ferizai for example have concentrated in Strpce/Shterpce. Roma and Ashkaelia from various locations around the province continue to live in semi-permanent collective accommodation in Plemetina/Plementine IDP camp and in three locations north of Mitrovica/Mitrovice. The number of displaced absorbed into host family arrangements is difficult to assess but this is certainly a continuing reality." (UNHCR/OSCE October 2000, para. 114)

Displacement as the result of the Kosovo conflict (March-June 1999): no reliable estimates for the persons still unable to return to destroyed houses (2000-2001)

- 120,000 houses were destroyed or seriously damaged in the conflict
- 42,000 houses still in need of rehabilitation work as of April 2001, which suggests that about 250,000 persons may still be unable to return to their homes

"No reliable estimates of the numbers of internally displaced persons within Kosovo are available. However, given that some 120,000 houses were seriously damaged or destroyed in the conflict, there are presumed to be a significant number of people still to return to their pre-conflict homes." (UN OCHA 6 July 2000, p. 62)

Estimate as of 31 December 1999: "In Kosovo, 350,000 ethnic Albanians remained unable to return to their uninhabitable homes." (USCR 2000, p. 288)

There are no precise figures available on the number of persons who are still unable to return to their houses because of destruction or heavy damages as of April 2001. Most of them rent an accommodation, live with relatives or friends or occupy abandoned properties.

According to UNMIK department for reconstruction, 28,000 houses were rehabilitated in 2000 with the support of the international community while between 35,000 and 40,000 houses were rebuilt privately. UNMIK has also identified 10,000 houses which will be rebuilt with international support during 2001. This leaves about 42,000 houses still in need of rehabilitation work as of April 2001. With a ratio of 6 persons per house (as established by a survey conducted by IOM in May 2000), the total number of persons still unable to return to their pre-war houses may be of 250,000. (UNMIK reconstruction department, 27 April 2001)

Other minorities in Kosovo exposed to displacement and isolation: The Goranis and the Bosniac Muslims (1999-2000)

- The Gorani have left other parts of Kosovo to their home villages in the Gora municipality as a result of their marginalisation by the Kosovo Albanians
- Bosniac Muslims become increasingly isolated because of a significant language barrier with the Kosovo Albanians

The Gorani

"The Gorani are a relatively prosperous minority group with a geographical base in Gora municipality in the south of the province, and in neighbouring areas of southern Prizren. These are resource poor areas, in which people have diversified out of forestry/farming/livestock rearing into small business and employment (often at a professional level in the civil administration and public services), activities which they pursued, until recently, throughout Kosovo and the former Yugoslavia. They currently face a number of problems due to their linguistic links to the Serbs, their employment within the former Serb administration and the fact that a number of Gorani businesses operated throughout the conflict and are therefore seen as having collaborated with the former regime.

Most of those working in the public sector and in the factories are no longer employed, and a number of Gorani businesses are now closed. Many Gorani are internally displaced from other parts of Kosovo to their home villages. Unless security conditions and employment opportunities improve these IDPs are likely to leave Kosovo for other parts of former Yugoslavia or to join relatives abroad. The Gorani communities visited by the mission have an appearance of relative prosperity, and it seems likely that their short-term need for food is relatively small.

The Gorani are currently assisted through locally constituted multi-ethnic emergency committees.

The Bosniac Muslims

Bosniac Muslims populations are located in Pristina/Prishtine, Prizren, Mitrovica/Mitrovice, Pec/Peja and Djakovica/Gjakove. Before the war, the Bosniak Muslims were the third largest ethnic group in Kosovo with an estimated population of 100-120,000. About 40% of the population are thought to have left during the air-strikes and a further 15% after the war. Before the war, the majority of the population was considered to have been relatively well off e.g. engaged in professional and administrative roles in Pristina/Prishtine, trading in Prizren and farmers in rural areas of Pec/Peja.

Although closely linked with the Albanian population through religion, most Bosniac Muslims do not speak Albanian. In the current context, language is the key constraint for this population to become food

secure, particularly with respect to urban populations who need to access employment and are market dependant.

Food assistance is being provided for the Bosniac Muslims through the MTS mechanism (e.g. Pec/Peja) or through a local NGO ('Zaman') in Pristina/Prishtine. Where food assistance is being provided through a general mechanism, this should be promoted and supported. There is a risk that the Bosniac Muslims will become increasingly isolated, will face increasing harassment and discrimination because of a significant language barrier, and will consequently become increasingly food insecure." (UNHCR/WFP 5 February 2000, sects. 7-8)

PATTERNS OF DISPLACEMENT

Initial phases of the displacement process

Small-scale but steady displacement from and within Kosovo (2000-2001)

- The pattern of departure is more in the nature of a slow trickle rather than the massive outflow seen in 1999
- Roma or Serb minorities in rural areas tend to leave their villages and concentrate in enclaves in urban areas
- The reported increase in inter-ethnic houses sales in 2000 and 2001 may be the result of pressure to sell on ethnic minorities
- Departures of minorities can be both temporary and permanent, with Serbs traveling regularly between Kosovo and Serbia depending on security, the education cycle and agricultural seasons

"[D]iscussion about return must remain grounded in current realities, not overlooking the fact that ongoing displacement of minority communities has not ceased. Kosovo Serbs and Roma continue to leave the province for security related reasons. The current pattern of departure is more in the nature of a slow tric kle rather than the massive outflow seen last summer. For other ethnic groups including Gorani, Muslim Slavs, Turks and Croats individual departures have also been noted. Some departures have been sparked by an isolated incident against members of a given group whereas others would appear to be more related to a perception that there is limited space for minorities in a Kosovo Albanian dominated society." (UNHCR/OSCE October 2000, para. 118)

Serb communities

"The pressure on minority Serb communities to sell their properties is increasing and more and more Kosovar Serbs residing in the isolated enclaves are leaving Kosovo. On February 13, in a meeting in Rahovec/Orahovac with KFOR, OSCE, UNHCR and UNMIK, the Serb leaders announced that 90% of the residents in the area wanted to leave for Serbia proper due to lack of security. KFOR made a commitment to try to improve security conditions. It was agreed that a meeting should be held fortnightly to discuss security issues.

According to local KFOR 40 Serb families in Gjilan/Gnilane are selling their properties; only about 250 Serbs still live in Gjilan/Gnilane. In Obilic town there is a strong pressure for the remaining Serb families living in a building in the centre of the town to sell their apartments following the illegal occupation of empty flats by 18 ethnic Albanian families. On 15 February, the last Serb in Podujevo town, an elderly lady, sold their property and left for Serbia proper as she could no longer cope in such isolated conditions." (UN OCHA 22 February 2001)

"In Obiliq/Obilic municipality, the situation of the Kosovo Serbs remains precarious. Numbers however are relatively stable with the exception of Obiliq/Obilic town, which has experienced a small scale but steady trend of departures, both temporary and permanent. In May four families left for Serbia proper, although one family returned to Obiliq/Obilic, due to the dire economic conditions they face there. In July [2001], another four families left for Serbia proper. Obiliq/Obilic is characterised as a predominantly Kosovo Albanian town, with the relatively small Kosovo Serb community now calculated to total than no more 650 persons comprised of; original residents, (281 families/590 individuals); and Kosovo Serb IDPs, (32 families/60 individuals), most of whom hail from nearby villages. This restricted urban community has extremely limited opportunities to buy or sell basic goods, and limited access to health care. In late 2000,

inter-ethnic houses sales began to steadily increase and in early 2001 the illegal occupation of flats temporarily or permanently abandoned by Kosovo Serbs increased dramatically, with the suspicion remaining that the pressure to sell is organised. The difficult conditions of life in town directly contribute to a continuing sense of frustration, isolation and vulnerability among the remaining Kosovo Serbs. " (UNHCR/OSCE October 2001, para. 62)

"In Gjilan/Gnjilane region, minority population levels have generally remained stable. However, considerable variations exist in the statistical information held by different organisations, which makes it difficult to draw clear conclusions. Many Kosovo Serbs travel regularly between Kosovo and Serbia proper and some maintain accommodation in both locations, alternation between one and the other depending on factors such as overall security, the education cycle and agricultural seasons. " (UNHCR/OSCE October 2001, para. 67)

The Roma and other communities

"In Gjilan/Gnjilane town the current Roma population is estimated at 320 persons. Whilst this has not decreased notably since the previous report it should be remembered that the pre-conflict population numbered several thousands and those who remain, feel an ever increasing sense of isolation and desperation. Small-scale return prompted by slight improvements in security has been offset by a roughly equivalent number of departures by those who simply see no long-term future for this decimated community." (UNHCR/OSCE October 2001, para. 111)

"Serbs throughout Kosovo and Roma in some areas reported that they were afraid to leave their enclaves due to fear of intimidation and attack by ethnic Albanians. On November 8, unknown assailants shot and killed four displaced Ashkali who had returned to their village of Dosevac (Dashevc) near Srbica (Skenderaj) to rebuild their houses, which were destroyed during the war. Most minorities--including Bosniaks, Egyptians, Ashkali, Gorani, and some Roma--lived alongside ethnic Albanians and reported that their security situation improved over the course of the year, although incidents of violence and harassment continued to occur and their freedom of movement is restricted in some areas of Kosovo. The Turkish community is more closely integrated with Albanians and is less threatened than other minorities. The remaining Roma in Kosovo largely were settled in enclaves and settlements and were dependent almost wholly on humanitarian aid." (U.S. DOS February 2001, Kosovo, sect. 2)

Volatility of the situation in the Presevo Valley causes repeated displacements (2000-2001)

- Reports of persons moving forth and back between southern Serbia and Kosovo according to security conditions

"Tensions have remained high in southern Serbia, which has been to scene of repeated clashes between armed ethnic Albanian militants and Yugoslav and Serbian security forces. A rise in tension last November led to the exodus of some 5,000 ethnic Albanians from southern Serbia to neighbouring Kosovo. About 4,000 of them have since gone back to their homes in southern Serbia but the situation continues to be very fragile." (UNHCR 31 March 2001, p. 2)

"The Fragile security situation in Southern Serbia deteriorated in the last two weeks of January [2001], with new clashes between Serb security forces and the so-called "Liberation Army of Presevo, Medvedja and Bujanovac" (UCPMB). These incidents follow a fresh outbreak of conflict last November [2000], which resulted in a new wave of more than 3,000 displaced persons into Kosovo. While most of those displaced in November had returned to southern Serbia following a period of relative calm, the latest clashes have

caused fresh displacement of the civilian population, with more than 50 people crossing the boundary into Kosovo." (UNHCR January 2001)

Serbian population left Kosovo following retreat of Yugoslav forces (from June 1999)

- Withdrawing Yugoslav forces told Serb villagers that their safety could no longer be ensured
- Convoys of cars, tractors, and villagers on foot set off in a matter of hours, heading north for other parts of Serbia and Montenegro
- Displaced encountered difficulties in finding temporary settlements and in accessing basic social services due to lack of residence documents

"Some 175,000 ethnic Serbs from Kosovo remained internally displaced in the rest of Serbia and Montenegro at year's end. The majority of the displaced resided in municipalities in central and southern Serbia. Some 30,000 Serbs lived in former municipal and "socially owned" buildings transformed into collective centers. In December, USCR visited eight facilities housing displaced persons throughout Serbia and Montenegro. Newly displaced Serbs often expressed a strong desire to return to their homes in Kosovo, provided the Yugoslav army and police would be present to ensure their safety.

Many recounted to USCR the circumstances of their departure. Immediately after the June cease-fire, retreating Yugoslav forces told villagers that their safety could no longer be ensured. Convoys of cars, tractors, and villagers on foot set off in a matter of hours, heading north for other parts of Serbia and Montenegro. Many had to move several times to find temporary accommodation for the winter months. They were not always welcomed by Serbian authorities keen to retain demographic control over Kosovo; nor by local populations under severe strain themselves, and occasionally resentful of what some perceived as the Kosovo Serbs' privileged treatment by the regime since the late 1980s.

The vast majority of the Serbs displaced from Kosovo were Yugoslav citizens, yet many cited lack of residence documents as their chief complaint. In their haste to leave their homes, many had not been able to retrieve these important documents issued by municipalities and generally required for access to basic social services. School enrollment remained impossible until the government—which had hoped for this population's quick return to Kosovo—relented in the fall and allowed displaced children to register." (USCR 2000, pp. 290-291)

Reports of evacuation (1999-2000)

- Absence of freedom of movement for ethnic minorities in Kosovo has resulted in the need of humanitarian evacuation by international agencies
- UN Human Rights agency receives frequent requests from family and friends in Serbia asking for assistance with evacuation of relatives from Kosovo
- UNHCR has assisted some 602 individuals to leave Kosovo to Serbia or Montenegro, as of June 2000
- Reports of Kosovo Albanians evacuated from northern Mitrovica by UNHCR (June 2000)

"Given the precarious security situation, many Serbs and Romas have virtually no freedom of movement and are essentially prisoners in their own homes, unable to go out for food, medical care or other needs. This desperate situation has resulted, in some circumstances, in the need for humanitarian evacuation out of Kosovo.

OHCHR visited the Orthodox seminary in the centre of Prizren where approximately 180 local Serbs including injured persons, had taken refuge, some more than a month previously. Some Albanians in mixed marriages and about 30 Roma had also taken refuge there. The seminary is heavily guarded by KFOR. On 2 August, UNHCR evacuated 88 Kosovo Serbs to Serbia. UNHCR and KFOR are transporting Serbs still living in their homes to the seminary, and in some cases advising others to move there. Approximately 120 Serbs remain living in their own homes in Prizren. Of those sheltering in monasteries, some are waiting to see if the situation calms down, while others have already decided to be evacuated if international agencies agree that their case meets the criteria for humanitarian evacuation.

OHCHR receives frequent requests from family or friends in Belgrade and other areas of Serbia for information about the whereabouts and assistance with evacuation of Serbs, particularly elderly parents, from Kosovo to Serbia proper. Serbs and Montenegrins in Kosovo who want to visit family in Serbia or Montenegro are fearful of travelling either by public transport or private vehicle owing to security concerns. Family members from outside Kosovo are similarly fearful of visiting their relatives in Kosovo owing to the tense security situation." (UN CHR 27 September 1999, paras. 98-100)

"Many Kosovo Serbs and Roma live under heavy KFOR guard or in mono-ethnic enclaves, without access to public services and at risk of physical attack. Property owned by minorities is frequently targeted for destruction, unlawful occupation and sale for less than reasonable value. Kosovo Albanians purchasing property from Kosovo Serbs are increasingly the victims of attacks, often resulting in damages to, or destruction of, property. In life-threatening situations or particularly vulnerable circumstances, UNHCR has resorted to assisting minorities wishing to depart to Serbia and to Montenegro. Some 602 individuals have so far benefited from this last resort protection measure." (UN SC 3 March 2000, para. 54)

"In the third week of June [2000], serious violence broke out in Serb-controlled northern Mitrovica. During the violence, many Kosovo Albanian and Muslim Slavs, who are minorities in the northern part of the town, were harassed and evicted from their homes. For their safety, UNHCR had no choice but to evacuate several of these families to the relative safety of Albanian-controlled southern Mitrovica." (UNHCR 30 June 2000, p. 2)

Serbs and other minorities in Kosovo victims of eviction (1999)

- Minorities forced to leave as a result of physical violence, harassment and confiscation and forced transfer of properties

"Kosovar Serbs and other minorities continue to be forcibly evicted from their places of residence. The methods employed vary from physical force and harassment to those which evidence an attempt to ensure the legal loss of the property under a subsequent property scheme. One such example in Pristina, which unfortunately echoes schemes used in other parts of the Balkans, is the forced signature of a document transferring the property ownership or occupancy to person or persons who seize the property under threat. / In Pristina, in early August, four Serb women were forced under threat to sign contracts giving their flats to Albanian families. / KLA "military police" are called to respond to cases of eviction and in the absence of clear civil law and ownership use their own methods for resolving the dispute." (UN CHR 27 September 1999, paras. 104)

Multiple displacement

Displaced in Serbia and Montenegro change accommodation several times (1999-2000)

- Red Cross survey shows that up to 40 % of the internally displaced persons in Serbia and Montenegro have changed accommodation at least twice
- A large proportion of internally displaced now living in collective centers, were first accommodated by friends and relatives who were not able to help them for a longer period of time

"Collected data clearly show that the residence problem is the most dramatic for refugees as well as for IDPs. In Serbia only 14% of respondents did not change the place where they had first settled. In Montenegro 12%. One quarter, 25% (31% in Montenegro) changed place once, 24% (32% in [Montenegro]) two times and 19% (13% [in Montenegro]) three times. As much as one fifth or 20% (12%) changed place four or more times. This means that 86% of respondents in Serbia and 88% in Montenegro changed the place where they had first settled.

Due to the fact that IDPs left their houses some ten months ago and refugees a number of years ago, there are significant differences among them. While 9% of refugees in Serbia changed placed 6 or more times, none of the IDPs families moved more than 5 times yet.

Most of refugees respondents families in Serbia changed accommodation three (23,2%) or two times (21,4%), and most of the IDPs respondents families changed accommodation once (35,5%) or two times (27,5%). Double percentage of refugees's families changed place three times (23,2%) compared to IDP families (11,9%).
[…]
Upon arrival to Serbia or Montenegro more than one half of [Refugees and IDPs] lived with relatives or friends, one quarter lived in collective centers (13% in Montenegro) and one fifth lived in rented flats or houses in Serbia and Montenegro. Of all IDPs now living in collective centers 47% did not live in centers in the beginning (mostly lived with relatives). As much as 62% of IDPs now living individually lived with relatives or friends at the beginning. This data confirms the conclusion that, due to general poverty, relatives were not able to help them for a longer period." (ICRC/IFRC/YRC May 2000, p.11)

Displaced returning from Serbia to Kosovo to situations of internal displacement (1999-2000)

- Security concerns remain the primary factor in the decision made by people to leave or return
- Difficult economic conditions prevailing in Serbia and low level of assistance provided have resulted in the return of displaced Serbs to situations of internal displacement in Kosovo

"The mission considered the possible interaction between the provision of food assistance to minorities and population movements. Does the provision of food aid, by enabling minorities to remain within a given location, increase their exposure to insecurity (because without food aid they would have to move somewhere more secure), or decrease it (because they no longer have to take the risk of travelling to market)? Or, equally importantly, could a shortage of food and a lack of food aid be a reason for leaving?

The finding is that decisions about movements are multi-factoral, with security the primary concern and food very much a secondary issue. Where people have chosen to remain within a relatively insecure location the evidence is that this has more to do with a reluctance to abandon homes and assets than it has to do with any expectation of receiving material assistance. Equally, decisions to move out of an insecure area have primarily been made for security reasons; there is no evidence that people have so far been forced to move primarily because of a shortage of food.

Where security is less of a concern, then the availability of food seems to play a larger part in decision-making. Some of the movements between Kosovo and Serbia, particularly recent movements of IDPs back into Kosovo, may well be linked to the levels of assistance provided in the different locations. There is, however, no evidence that people are moving back to particularly insecure locations. Rather they are moving to places in Kosovo where they feel relatively safe, even if this means remaining an IDP (as in the case of returns to Strpce/Shterpce, for example)." (UNHCR/WFP 5 February 2000, paras. 10.2)

"Strpce/Shtrepce continues to be divided between Kosovo Serb and Kosovo Albanian villages with four purely Kosovo Albanian villages remaining and five previously mixed villages now populated only by Kosovo Serbs, with the exception of Vica/Vice where a few Kosovo Albanians remain in a separate part of the village high on the hillside. The Kosovo Serb population by estimates calculated in November continues to stand at about 9,000 including IDPs. Some 952 IDPs are registered with the Yugoslav Red Cross (YRC) from a highpoint of 1,800 immediately after the conflict. This subsequently went down due to departures to other parts of FRY but current indications are that some people have returned (to conditions of internal displacement) citing difficult economic conditions there. Freedom of movement within the municipality is relatively easy but travel further afield requires a security escort. Regular commercial bus lines linking up with destinations in FRY and fYROM benefit from KFOR security escort. Kosovo Albanians, a minority within this municipality, also face freedom of movement constraints in certain areas." (OSCE/UNHCR February 2000, para. 87)

Refugees from Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina who had been settled in Kosovo forced to leave again (1999-2001)

- Serbian authorities settled 15,000 Serb refugees from Croatia and Bosnia Herzegovina in Kosovo beginning of 1998
- The refugees left Kosovo in mid-1998 when the situation of Kosovo deteriorated into armed conflict
- Other refugees left from June 1999 as a result of the human rights abuses perpetrated by ethnic Albanians against members of the minority communities
- Settlements of ethnic Serb refugees in Kosovo were particularly vulnerable to attack by the ethnic Albanian nationalists
- Many of these refugees left Kosovo without documentation supporting their previous refugee status

"Between 1991 and 1995 Serb refugees have flooded into Serbia and Montenegro from Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Some 15,000 of these people had been settled in Kosovo by the Serbian authorities as at the beginning of 1998 and the total refugee population in the FRY was 550,000. Some of these refugees and part of the indigenous Serb population started to leave Kosovo in mid-1998 when the situation in Kosovo deteriorated into armed conflict. However, from June 1999 thousands more Kosovo Serbs and Roma fled into Serbia and Montenegro as a result of the human rights abuses perpetrated by ethnic Albanians against members of the minority communities. The bulk of the refugees from Croatia and Bosnia were among those fleeing into Serbia. This month the General Assembly urged the international community to support programs which aim to ensure that the humanitarian needs of refugees and internally displaced persons in the FRY are met and that they support durable solutions, including repatriation and reintegration." (AI January 2000)

"Many of the uprooted in Serbia have been displaced multiple times. Among the people recently displaced from Kosovo are thousands who were already refugees from Croatia or Bosnia, known locally as 'double refugees.' Many had been placed in collective centers in Kosovo, part of Belgrade's effort to alter Kosovo's ethnic demography. Ethnic Albanian nationalists saw the settlement of ethnic Serb refugees in Kosovo as a provocation; they became a target of ethnic Albanian anger. Often Serbian police or military were quartered

in these same collective centers, making the refugees living in them even more vulnerable to attack." (USCR April 2000, p. 15)

"Many families have been twice displaced because, between 1992 and 1996, thousands of refugees from Croatia and Bosnia were forced by the Milosevic government to resettle in Kosovo. Their presence was expected to dilute the Albanian majority and reduce pressure for a restoration of Kosovo's autonomy. Both Serb and Roma refugees were part of this forced resettlement. Many of them subsequently fled Kosovo when the NATO bombing ended in Serbia and Kosovar Albanians returned home from their exodus. Many left Kosovo because of a perceived threat of Kosovar Albanian retaliation and others left after their houses had been burned and/or they were threatened with, or experienced, retaliatory violence. When these refugees left Kosovo, many did not come with identification or other official documents because they had burned or there was no time to get them. Without the papers supporting their refugee status, they came to be identified as displaced people and therefore lost some possibilities afforded to them by their previous refugee status." (Women's Commission September 2001, p. 8)

Other factors

Lower living costs in Serbia have pushed several internally displaced in Montenegro to move to Serbia (June 2000)

[UNHCR] FO Belgrade random check of about 100 out of 6,000 IDPs who registered both in Montenegro and in Serbia showed that many are actually based in Serbia, primarily due to lower living costs. All of them are either Montenegrins or of Montenegro origin, all come from Pec, Istok, Klina and Decani area in Kosovo and most of them have spent some time in Montenegro after fleeing Kosovo. (UNHCR 11 June 2000)

"Ethnic concentration" process in Kosovo

- Pattern of displacement of ethnic Serbs and other minorities leaving ethnically mixed villages or urban neighbourhood to ethnically "pure" enclaves in Kosovo
- From a UNHCR protection point of view, an "enclave" is a population whose movement is limited by considerations of insecurity
- WFP questions the value of the "enclave" concept in relation to food aid planning since absence of freedom of movement may not necessarily coincide with food insecurity
- Smaller enclaves have tended to disappear, transforming Kosovo into a juxtaposition of ethnically homogeneous zones and societies (2000)

"In Gnjilane municipality there is an ongoing 'ethnic concentration process' in which Serbs and Albanians are leaving ethnically mixed villages for ethnically "pure" enclaves, adding to the new group of internally displaced persons. Even within towns, Serbs are retreating to ethnic enclaves. This is similar to the patterns observed in Prizren, Pec, Djakovica and other areas where Serbs, often elderly, are retreating to Orthodox Church institutions after harassment, looting or attempted burning of their property.

In Mitrovica, Serbs are concentrating in the northern part of town and further north towards Serbia proper in the municipality of Leposavic. All Roma are reported to have left the Albanian part of Mitrovica. Continuing tension in Mitrovica, which presents a Mostar-style divided city patrolled by French units of

KFOR, has resulted in repeated confrontations between Serbs and Albanians, apparently fueled, at least in part, by excessive media presence." (UN CHR 27 September 1999, paras. 96-97)

In September 1999, WFP and UNHCR established a programme of blanket distribution for ethnic 'enclaves', defined for food aid planning and distribution purposes as 'areas within which people are living very strictly confined, with minimal access to markets or to crop or livestock production due to insecurity.' The mission reviewed the concept of ethnic 'enclaves' and concluded that it was not useful in terms of planning food assistance to minorities, since it does not simplify the process of assessing their food aid needs. It is no easier to determine whether a population is an enclave than it is to assess food needs directly. In fact, the information required (i.e. information on access to food) is the same in both cases, and the step of classifying a population as an enclave is a redundant step in the assessment process.

There are two other points in relation to enclaves. Firstly, there is a problem of definition in that the term 'enclave' is used by different organisations to mean different things. From a UNHCR protection point of view, for example, an enclave is a population whose movement is limited by considerations of insecurity. The difference is important because freedom of movement is clearly not synonymous with food security (if the population concerned has stocks, for example). Such definitional differences could easily give rise to misunderstandings over the levels of assistance that should be provided in different circumstances. This is a potential problem that can most easily be avoided by abandoning the concept of 'enclaves' altogether, at least as far as food security is concerned (this does not, of course, mean that minorities living within 'enclaves' as defined by UNHCR would not be eligible for food assistance, but that the level of assistance would depend upon the food security of the population). The second point is that defining a community as an 'enclave' can have the effect of discouraging further enquiry and analysis of the situation within the 'enclave'. (UNHCR/WFP 5 February 2000, sect. 10)

"Most of those [Gorani] working in the public sector and in the factories are no longer employed, and a number of Gorani businesses are now closed. Many Gorani are internally displaced from other parts of Kosovo to their home villages. Unless security conditions and employment opportunities improve these IDPs are likely to leave Kosovo for other parts of former Yugoslavia or to join relatives abroad. The Gorani communities visited by the mission have an appearance of relative prosperity, and it seems likely that their short-term need for food is relatively small." (UNHCR/WFP 5 February 2000, sect. 7)

"Nor are the Albanians spared who are brave enough to remain in the North of Mitrovica, in the Serbian part of the town. Lying low in their apartments, dependent on humanitarian aid, harassed every day by threats and incessant anonymous phone calls, they hold out as long as they can, live on tranquillisers, and end up by leaving. The exodus continues and the definitive splitting of the town between the north of the Ibar for the Serbs and the south for the Albanians is slowly but surely becoming a reality.
[…]
So it is that increasingly the small enclaves tend to disappear. The Serbs leave the mixed villages and districts to go to Serbia, the north of Kosovo - the Zubin Potock, Zvecan, et Leposavic regions are almost exclusively Serbian - or the big enclaves such as Gracanica. Similarly, the Albanians are increasingly leaving the north of the province. It is the same with the Gypsy populations who are fleeing to Serbia and Montenegro.

Gradually, Kosovo is becoming organised into a juxtaposition of ethnically homogeneous zones. Day after day, two ethnic entities, two parallel societies are being created, brought together in a single province. Each community has its territory, its towns, its markets, its schools, its hospitals. If a member of one community dares to cross the demarcation line, his chances of being insulted, beaten, or even killed are considerable." (MDM 20 December 2000, p. 5)

Displacement furthers migration to urban areas in Kosovo, except for the Serb minority

- Population of Pristina has at least doubled since June 1999, partly as a result of an influx of refugees and displaced from rural areas
- It was believed that many of the displaced Kosovo Albanians living in urban centres in Kosovo would go back to their rural homes in the spring, however few seem to have returned so far
- Serb population in Kosovo remain predominantly rural due to the generally better security prevailing in rural areas

Migration of the Albanian population to urban areas

"A year after war ended in Kosovo, chaos and dislocation continue, manifested in the doubling or even tripling of the population of Pristina, now home to more than half a million people, reports the New York Times. Mostly they are people from the villages, refugees who have abandoned their burned-out homes and sought work and shelter in the capital." (Refugees Daily 7 July 2000)

"Over the last year, IDPs have been one of the main groups of beneficiaries of food aid assistance, particularly throughout the winter when they were among the most vulnerable in Kosovo. In Pristina town, in March 2000, over half of the total number of food aid beneficiaries (some 90,000 people) were IDPs. It was believed that many of the ethnic Albanian IDPs living in urban centres in Kosovo would go back to their rural homes in the spring, however few seem to have returned so far. While some of the IDPs now have employment opportunities in the urban centres, others may apply for assistance provided, as of July 2000, through the UNMIK Social Welfare Scheme. (Up to June 2000, UNHCR, WFP, and Food for Peace funded targeted food assistance programmes for the more vulnerable populations in Kosovo)." (UN OCHA July 2000, p. 64)

Marked shift of the urban-rural balance of the Serb population in Kosovo

"Before the war, 60% of the [Serb] population was rural, now the figure is 80%, reflecting the generally better security prevailing in the rural areas, and the continued access that villagers have to their crop and livestock production." (UNHCR/WFP 5 February 2000, sect. 5)

"Displacement of the majority Kosovo Albanian population has generally been from rural areas to urban centres. This contrasts with the movement of minority population which has been from urban to rural areas, as well as to northern Mitrovica and Serbia proper." (UN OCHA 6 July 2000, p. 63)

PHYSICAL SECURITY & FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (excluding Kosovo)

Freedom of movement of Kosovo Serbs in Serbia continue to be de facto restricted (2001-2002)

- Many of the displaced are confined to Southern Serbia
- IDPs from Kosovo are not permitted by local police authorities to change their permanent residence from Kosovo to Serbia proper
- The refusal of police authorities to issue identity documents with permanent residence in Serbia disadvantages the displaced in the enjoyment of their rights, including employment and education

"Following their exodus from Kosovo, there were reports that Serb refugees were prevented from traveling to Belgrade in 1999. Reports continue to indicate that their freedom of movement is restricted, with many of them being confined to Southern Serbia." (U.S. DOS February 2001, sect. 2d)

IDPs prevented from changing permanent residence: NRC has heard repeated general complaints that 'exiled' officials of the Ministry of the Interior prevent IDPs who wish to change their permanent residence from Kosovo to Serbia proper from doing so. Apparently while local officials are willing to permit IDPs to obtain a new permanent residence, this is by law conditioned on the prior de-registration of permanent residence in Kosovo. The refusal or failure of the 'exiled' Kosovo police to grant de-registration reportedly prevent gaining new permanent residence in Serbia proper. Such a refusal by local police violates the right of these IDPs to freely move within their own state and to choose their place of residence in violation of Article 2, Protocol, ECHR, Article 12, paragraph 1, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (hereinafter 'ICCPR') as well as Principle 14, Guiding Principles on International Displacement (hereinafter 'GPID'). Further, the refusal of police authorities to issue new identity documents with permanent residence in Serbia proper disadvantages internally displaced persons in the enjoyment and exercise of their legal rights, including employment and education, in violation of Principle 20, GPID. NRC continues to seek out concrete cases raising this problem in order to verify and seek a solution. Serbian officials should permit IDPs from Kosovo to change their permanent residence upon request. (NRC 10 February 2002)

Pattern of discrimination against the Roma in Serbia and Montenegro (2000-2001)

- The Roma community, in particular the Ashkaelians, have difficulties in being accepted by the Serb majority
- Many displaced Roma live illegal settlements without access to public utilities
- Registration and attendance of Roma children at schools is very low

"There are approximately 45,000 displaced Roma in Yugoslavia. Roma faced a difficult position during the Kosovo conflict. As neither Serb nor Albanian, the Roma in Kosovo tended to adapt to the ethnic group they perceived as dominant. As a result, many of Kosovo's Roma were perceived as Serb collaborators by returning ethnic Albanians, and many fled Kosovo for other areas of Yugoslavia. Living conditions for

Roma in Serbia are extremely poor. Local municipalities are often reluctant to accept Roma, hoping that if they refuse to provide shelter or assistance, the Roma may move on." (U.S. DOS February 2001, sect. 2d)

"The Roma community faces a far more complicated challenge in FRY. The Roma community is confronted with a pattern of subtle discrimination in the entire region, and the situation of Roma in FRY has worsened during the last 10 years of sanctions and economic decline. Many Roma in displacement live in truly deplorable conditions, often below the level of human dignity. In the Kosovo conflict Roma are viewed with suspicion by all sides, and accusations of collaboration with one or other side are multiple. Of particular concern is the situation of Albanian speaking Ashkalija. Not only is this group likely to have more difficulties in integrating and being accepted by the majority Serb community but a stay in other parts of the FRY may increase suspicions of collaboration by the majority Albanian population of Kosovo jeopardising further their eventual return to the province.

In and around Belgrade and other towns in Serbia and Montenegro many Roma IDPs live in illegal settlements, without access to electricity, drinking water or sewage systems. Occasionally, local authorities evict Roma from such illegal settlements. Registration and attendance of Roma children at schools is very low. Lack of familiarity with the Serb language will add to the obstacles faced by Roma children for their success in the school." (UNHCR March 2001, paras. 14-15)

Mines in Southern Serbia: a risk for children (2001)

"Southern Serbia is regarded as a low risk mine area. There are reported to 920 mines near settlements in the southern Serbia region, of which 70% are anti-tank and 30% are anti personnel. While data on mine incidents are unreliable, up to 70 people, mainly from the Army and Police, have been injured/killed in mine incidents in the last two years. The Yugoslav Army is responsible for mine mapping and clearance. Children are considered to be the most vulnerable to future mine incidents and mine awareness activities are directed mainly to children." (UN November 2001, p. 26)

UN Administered Province of Kosovo

Security of minorities in Kosovo remains precarious: From murder to daily harassment (2001)

- KFOR reports an increase in cases of inter-ethnic intimidation and violence, with a number of juvelines involved in stone-throwing incidents against minorities
- While there has been an improvement in the security situation, as measured by reference to the number of fatalities during 2001, lesser threats and incidents of intimidation against minorities remain far too common
- Violence against minorities takes the form of intimidation, harassment, assault, arson and murder
- Non-Albanian communities, particularly the Kosovo Serbs, continue to suffer disproportionately from major crimes, with over 20 percent of the victims of major crimes

"Security and freedom of movement for Kosovo's minority communities remain a serious concern. Although the level of serious crime involving members of minority community decreased, the attack against two elderly Kosovo Serbs in Kosovo Polje at the end of November, resulting in the death of one,

was a chilling reminder of the potential for violence against members of this community. KFOR reported an increase in cases of minor inter-ethnic intimidation and violence, with a number of juveniles involved in stone-throwing incidents against minority community targets, including individuals, convoys, vehicles, trains and houses. A slight increase in inter-ethnic violence in Gnjilane region was also reported, following the demobilization of the former so-called Liberation Army of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja, operating in Southern Serbia, and of the so-called National Liberation Army, operating in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia." (UNSC 15 January 2002, para. 21)

"My Special Representative remains concerned at continuing instances of ethnically motivated violence against Kosovo minority communities, including an increase in the number of attacks at the beginning of August and the beginning of September. Violence directed towards members of all minority communities takes the form of intimidation, harassment, assault, arson and murder. […]

The number of incidents involving the use of weapons remains alarming, and a number of Kosovo Serbs and Roma in particular have been hospitalized with injuries caused by hand-grenade attacks." (UNSC 2 October 2001, paras. 7-8)

"The general security situation for minorities across Kosovo stabilized noticeably during the period. The number of serious security incidents affecting minorities decreased for all minorities in almost all regions of Kosovo. As a result there have also been some improvements in freedom of movement, which may be interpreted as tentative confidence on the part of minorities in response to this relatively prolonged period largely free of serious security incidents resulting in fatalities. […]

It must be stressed that the perceived improvement in security remains extremely tentative. The negative attitudes and perceptions that continue to drive the post-conflict situation, can come to the fore and lead to a sharp deterioration at any time. A shocking reminder of the fragility of the security situation was the shooting of a family of five Kosovo Albanians in Gllogoc/Glogovac on 22 August 2001 amidst allegations that one family member had collaborated with the previous Serbian regime. Such allegations, which have also been made against members of minority communities, heighten tensions and can easily trigger further violence. While there has been an improvement in the security situation, as measured by reference to the number of fatalities, lesser threats and incidents of intimidation against minorities remain far too common." (UNHCR/OSCE October 2001, para. 2)

"Continuing violence of ethnically and politically motivated violence, regarding which briefings have been given to the Council, as well as organized crime, remain a great concern of my Special Representative and pose a tangible threat to the fulfilment of the UNMIK mandate. Over the past three months, there has been a general increase in tensions in the Mitrovica, Gnjilane and Pristina regions, as well as specifically targeted attacks on individuals. These tensions have resulted in both loss of life and a severe limitation of freedom of movement, particularly for the Kosovo Serb community as a result of the temporary suspension of bus lines operated by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the interruption of train services. The most disturbing and extreme individual act of violence was the bomb attack in the centre of Pristina on 18 April, which killed the head of the passport office of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Committee on Kosovo and injured four others. An investigation by UNMIK Police and the Kosovo Force (KFOR) led to the swift arrest of one suspect two days after the bombing. Kosovo Albanian leaders were swift to condemn this terrorist attack, reflecting a relatively recent readiness on their part to condemn terrorist acts of this nature." (UNSC 7 June 2001, para. 6)

"The situation of Kosovo's non-Albanian communities, including the continued lack of adequate security and conditions conducive to return, remains a major concern for UNMIK. The communities, particularly the Kosovo Serbs, continue to suffer disproportionately from major crimes (accounting for over 20 percent of the victims of major crimes) and ethnically motivated acts of intimidation, such as arson. This situation continues to erode the confidence of minority communities and to undermine my Special Representative's efforts to include all of Kosovo's inhabitants in both the current administrative structures and the future of self-government." (UNSC 7 June 2001, para. 16)

For more details about security incidents, consult UNHCR/OSCE regular assessments on the situation of ethnic minorities in Kosovo [Internet]

See also for example:

- *AFP, "Serb woman shot and killed in Kosovo", 23 February 2002, [Internet]*
- *Amnesty International, "Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: Kosovo elections: Time to right the wrongs", 20 November 2001 [Internet]*
- *Reuters, "Kosovo Serb woman shot dead, husband hurt", 23 November 2001 [Internet]*
- *AFP, "A Serb woman killed in Kosovo: UNMIK", 20 September 2001 [Internet]*
- *AFP, "Serb villager killed in Kosovo", 4 September 2001 [Internet]*

The situation in divided city of Mitrovica: ethnic tension between the Albanian south and the Serbian north (2000-2001)

- Violence between the two communities peaked in 2000, with reports of grenade attacks, shootings and violent demonstrations, requiring KFOR intervention
- The international community is trying to reinforce its influence in the Serb-dominated northern part of the town but problems persist with Kosovo Serb hardliners

"The area of greatest ethnic tension and hostility in Kosovo is the city of Mitrovica. Divided by the river Ibar, the city has about 9,000 Serbs controlling the north bank and more than 90,000 ethnic Albanians living on the south side. The presence of 2,000 Albanians in the north, living under great pressure to leave from extremist Serbs, adds to the tension. Violence first swept the city after a rocket attack on a UNHCR bus killed 2 elderly Serbs in the south of the city on 2 February 2000. Revenge attacks left 2 ethnic Albanians dead and soon afterwards grenades at two Serb cafes injured 25. Others died in a series of clashes and shootings across the city.

A curfew was introduced in the city and a large KFOR presence installed at the bridge across the Ibar. Ethnic Albanians held a series of mass protests against the partition of the city. The most dramatic of these was a march from Pristina to Mitrovica by a crowd estimated at about 70,000 people, which had to be kept at bay by KFOR using tear gas. Demonstrations by both ethnic Albanians and by Serbs required the intervention of KFOR troops with several injuries sustained.

In August 2000, UNMIK assumed responsibility for and subsequently shut down the Zvecan lead smelter, (part of the Trepca mining complex, once the main source of Yugoslavia's mineral wealth.) because of concerns about high levels of lead pollution. Together with KFOR, UNMIK is seeking to reinforce the influence of the international community in the entire northern (Serb-dominated) part of Kosovo. UNMIK hope that their success in assuming control over the Zvecan smelter and subsequently cultivating the confidence with the facility's Serb workforce may provide a platform for gradually securing the support of the population of the northern part of the province.

The security situation in Mitrovica improved during the second half of the year 2000. However, in late January and early February 2001, violent protests by the ethnic Albanian population following a grenade attack against the 'little Bosnia' neighbourhood in the north resulted in the burning of KFOR and UNMIK police vehicles.

The situation in Mitrovica municipality has remained tense in recent months. UNMIK and KFOR are seeking to develop a comprehensive strategy for the municipality, with concrete measures in a number of key areas, including local government and public administration; security; economic development and job creation; and returns. An integral part of the strategy will be to develop a cooperative relationship and political dialogue with Belgrade." (UK October 2001, paras. 4.4.-4.8)

The security situation in Mitrovica remained stable but tense. The number of violent incidents recorded by KFOR dropped over the last three months, despite continuing difficulties in establishing UNMIK's authority in the north. The improvement is partly attributable to a more active and robust approach by UNMIK police and KFOR towards the so-called 'bridge-watchers'. Through increased search and arrest

operations, enhanced community policing, and targeted public information activities, the 'bridge-watchers' appeared to be losing some of their support in northern Mitrovica. Problems persist, however, with Kosovo Serb hardliners, who remain capable of mobilizing their supporters quickly. A case in Orthodox Christmas Eve, when KFOR arrested one of the 'bridgewatchers' for possession of a rifle. A crowd of Kosovo Serbs gathered and temporarily freed the individual, who was then rearrested by KFOR. In the period covered by the report, KFOR was the target of several grenade attacks and shots fired on its troops in northern Mitrovica." (UNSC 15 January 2002, para. 23)

Reports of improved judicial system but access for minorities remain a problem (2001)

- The promulgation of the Constitutional Framework and various regulations have enshrined the principle of non-discrimination while UNMIK has worked to establish an effectively functioning independent judicial system
- However, access to an impartial court or other remedy mechanism remain a problem for non-Albanian minorities
- The situation is further aggravated by the inadequate civil and administrative remedies
- One notable failure of the courts to give an effective remedy is in employment cases
- There have been concerns that members of the judiciary are subject to intimidation and harassment.
- The institution of the Ombudsman has been established to investigate discriminatory practices

"Providing effective remedies requires a number of inter-related steps. First, the rights of minorities, and in particular the principles of non-discrimination must be clearly enshrined in law. This is already effectively the case in Kosovo through the promulgation of the Constitutional Framework and a number of key regulations such as Regulation 2000/45, which inter alia addresses the issue of non-discrimination in the exercise of municipal functions. Next, aggrieved persons must have effective access to a court or other appropriate body. Currently this is unfortunately rarely the case, although the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) does have a civil rights project, funded by UNHCR, which has done significant work to provide minorities with appropriate legal advice and guidance. A major failing point in the delivery of effective remedies in Kosovo at present relates to the ability of the existing courts to impartially receive and judge cases of discrimination and other cases affecting minorities. Even assuming that courts were ready and willing to receive cases, the realistic possibilities for many minorities to present themselves in court, along with a legal representative of their choosing is very limited. More than 18 months after the reactivation of the legal system under UNMIK administration, court capacity is still largely limited to attending to criminal matters and effective civil remedies still lag far behind. This fact is compounded by the complete absence of effective administrative remedies. Repeated allegations of discrimination in service delivery are at worst shrugged off as inevitable and un-resolvable under the circumstances and at best investigated in an ad hoc manner that relies more on the personal motivation and commitment of individuals than on a systematic institutional approach to counter discrimination.

One notable failure of the courts to give an effective remedy is in employment cases as illustrated by documented experiences in Prizren. Numerous cases alleging discrimination in public employment have been recorded by the NRC (totalling approximately 40 during this reporting period alone). The courts have not yet issued a single formal judgement in these cases, although some have been resolved through alternative means. It has become increasingly clear that the courts are avoiding hearings in these employment cases, giving reasons such as the lack of specialist employment judges. This argument does not stand up to scrutiny, as there are no specialist judges in any other area of law. Although the Department of Judicial Affairs has taken action in the form of circulars confirming that the courts have jurisdiction over employment cases, it is clear that more urgent proactive action is needed, including the highlighting of

precise procedures on, among other things, time limits for the hearing of cases. Until minorities are able to identify and advocate for remedies to their problems, confident that their concerns will be examined in an objective and transparent manner, they will remain helpless to resolve them." (UK October 2001, paras. 43-44)

"It has taken UNMIK time to establish an effectively functioning independent judicial system. The climate of revenge made it difficult to recruit impartial judicial personnel, but the numbers are now up to target levels. It has been difficult achieve and maintain an ethnic balance in the judiciary. There have also been concerns that members of the judiciary are subject to intimidation and harassment.

UNMIK have introduced international judicial support, which is taking the lead in processing the large number of war/ethnic/organised crimes as well as other cases that may affect the security situation. There are now twelve international judges and five international prosecutors in place, who take part in judicial proceedings at all levels. An additional seventeen judges and prosecutors are being recruited. It is hoped that these appointments will remedy concerns that the courts have shown bias in their treatment of ethnic minorities.

As part of the drive to raise the quality of the domestic judicial system, the first disciplinary hearings against local judges and prosecutors, resulting from investigations conducted by the Department f Justice's Judicial Inspection Unit began in mid-September 2001. Most cases arose from complaints against Kosovo Albanian judges by other Kosovo Albanian judges.

A working group has been set up to expand the availability of legal aid and to guarantee access for minorities. Also, the institution of the Ombudsman has been established to investigate cases pertaining to employment disputes, property rights, social rights, access to public services and discriminatory practices." (UK October 2001, 4.9-4.12)

For more information on UNMIK work relating to the judicial system in Kosovo, consult the reports of the UN Secretary-General on the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo: 15 January 2002 (S/2002/62), 2 October 2001 (S/2001/926), 7 June 2001 (S/2001/565) [Internet]

Consult also the website of the Ombudsperson institution in Kosovo [Internet]

Limited freedom of movement aggravates vulnerability of minority communities (2001)

- Minorities have internalized the consequence of limited freedom of movement despite the serious impact on their access to job opportunities or essential services
- The vast majority among minority communities relies on the provision of security escorts to travel outside the immediate confines of their places of residence
- Transport mechanisms used by minority communities continued to be subject to attacks, ranging from threatening gestures, to stoning and even shooting
- Kosovo Albanians transiting areas predominantly inhabited by Kosovo Serbs have been subjected to the same violent treatment on a number of occasions

"The inability to exercise their right of freedom of movement continues to be one of the most visible indicators of the vulnerability of minority communities. Freedom of movement restrictions is a direct result of insecurity. Severe curtailments on the freedom of movement of some communities have become so entrenched over time as to become almost invisible. The security measure themselves are of course highly visible, the point is rather that people simply become numbed to the inherent anomaly. Many individuals and community groups have internalised the consequences of limited freedom of movement to such a degree that it is considered natural not to move beyond certain unseen but clearly defined outposts. That this has become habitual practice does not make it normal or the causes of it in any way acceptable. The

adverse consequences of such extreme adaptation are beyond doubt. For example, a UNHCR returnee monitoring exercise, covering a number of Roma, Ashkaelia and Egyptian returnees revealed that while they consider security within their immediate neighbourhoods to be acceptable, few, if any, had ventured beyond that limited area. As a consequence their ability to find employment and access a wide range of essential services remained extremely limited. The fact that many seemed to view this as a necessary price to pay for preserving their physical security is a matter of utmost concern.

Minority populations in many locations, most notably Kosovo Serbs, rely on the provision of security escorts in order to travel outside the immediate confines of their places of residence. Exploratory moves towards independent travel have met with mixed success. For example while there is anecdotal information to the effect that Ashkaelia and Egyptians enjoy increased freedom of movement, they along with Roma are still frequently intimidated by racist slurs and intimation when outside areas habitually inhabited by their own communities. This is particularly the case for those whose physical appearance characterises them within the generally held stereotype of their ethnicity. There is also anecdotal information emerging that indicates some increased willingness on the part of Kosovo Serbs to undertake unescorted travel. However, such tentative steps can easily suffer setbacks. In a recent incident Kosovo Serbs from Lipjan/Lipljan were shot at whilst travelling unescorted in the Podujeve/Podujevo area, close to the Kosovo/Serbia proper boundary line. The fact that some minorities may show an increased willingness to travel without escort does not necessarily mean that they are convinced of improvements in the security situation. In some cases they simply take greater risks out of frustration with their prolonged confinement, or out of urgent necessity to access services despite the possible danger involved.

The reporting period has seen some important developments vis-a-vis the provision of special transport arrangements. Escorted bus services, previously operated under the auspices of UNHCR, are managed by UNMIK, JIAS Department of Transport and Infrastructure, as of 1 July 2001. Operational aspects remain unchanged and the buses still run under armed escort provided by KFOR. It is hoped however, that the transition to UNMIK management will prove to be the first step towards the longer-term objective of mainstreaming minority transport services in the general Kosovo network. Some encouragement can be drawn from the fact that a limited number of additional services have been instituted on routes beyond those originally developed by UNHCR. Some even operate with the involvement of local staff and the resources of local companies. The crucial train service linking areas in central Kosovo with Zvecan continues to be a lifeline for many isolated Kosovo Serbs. Increased co-ordination between bus and train routes has improved the ability of many communities to take full advantage of the combined benefits of these transport services. The recent inclusion of Lipjan/Lipljan in the rail network is another small boost to alleviate the sense of isolation of minority communities. It has to be noted, however, that all transport mechanisms availed of by minority communities continued to be subject to attacks of varying degrees of seriousness, ranging from threatening gestures, to stoning and even shooting. Kosovo Albanians transiting areas predominantly inhabited by Kosovo Serbs have been subjected to the same violent treatment on a number of occasions." (UNHCR/OSCE October 2001, paras 10-12)

Issue of landmines and UXO in Kosovo to be solved at the end of 2001

- A total of 101 people were been killed and 395 injured in mine or unexploded ordnance incidents between June 1999 and June 2000
- Landmines and UXO threat in Kosovo were an obstacle to return
- Majority of landmines laid by Yugoslav forces were along Kosovo's borders with Albania and Macedonia
- Areas most affected were roads, populated areas such as houses and schools, and forests

"Funding permitting, the UNMIK Mine Action Programme is scheduled to complete clearance of all known minefields and the vast majority of NATO cluster bomb-affected areas and pass responsibility for the long-term residual threat to UNMIK Department for Civil Security and Emergency Preparedness (DCSEP) on 15 December 2001. The situation in Kosovo will then be comparable to European countries that have experienced war in the 20th century. (UN November 2001, p. 31)

"It is estimated that the task of clearing or marking all mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) in Kosovo will be complete by December 2001. Casualties from mines and UXO have decreased significantly as a result of mine awareness training and a change in strategy that has increased the rate at which cluster bomb units are cleared." (UK October 2001, para. 5.11)

"Approximately 2,500 individual areas of Kosovo have been reported to the [Mine Action Coordination Centre (MACC)] as dangerous due to mines or UXOs. Over 300 of these areas were identified by NATO as areas bombed with cluster munitions. Estimates by KFOR put the number of unexploded bomblets at over 12,000, and in addition the Yugoslav Army has provided records for 624 minefields. The remaining areas are suspected as mined but no record exist. Mines and UXO have killed 54 and injured 245 people since 12 June 1999, with the highest risk group being 18-24 year olds. As well as causing casualties, the mine and UXO threat in Kosovo is preventing people from rebuilding their lives, as many can not return to their villages or fields and resume a relatively normal life. The threat from mines also hinders the work of many relief and rehabilitation organisations attempting to restore essential services and repair infrastructure." (UN November 1999, p. 115)

"[A]reas along the borders between Yugoslavia and Croatia, in the north and south, and along borders between Yugoslavia and Albania, and Yugoslavia and Macedonia are the most mine-affected. Only the Yugoslav Army has information about how many kilometers of the border areas are mined.

Within Kosovo, the most affected areas are roads. The second most affected areas populated areas, particularly houses and schools. The third are forests. It would be very difficult to determine the actual amount of mine-affected land." (Landmine monitor report 1999)

"The anticipated increase in mine and unexploded ordnance casualties coinciding with the arrival of spring has occurred as expected, with the rate now averaging 15 persons killed or injured per month. A total of 101 people have been killed and 395 injured in mine or unexploded ordnance incidents since June 1999. Incidents involving cluster munitions dropped by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization continue to occur. The most recent incident killed a young boy and critically injured two more children." (UN SC 6 June 2000, para. 77)

Influx of refugees from Macedonia increases risks for the minorities in Kosovo (2001)

- International agencies however confirm that the temporary presence of refugee from Macedonia did not provoke any visible increase in violence against minority communities
- There have been reports of temporary appropriation of minority owned property by the new arrivals

"The six-month period covered by this report was witness to a **sizeable influx of ethnic Albanian refugees from neighbouring fYRO**M. In reaction to the fluctuating security conditions in fYROM some 9,000 persons had already entered Kosovo in search of protection as of April 2001. From May onwards the number of persons fleeing fYROM sharply increased, reaching a peak of just over 81,000 persons at the height of the crisis. This number has subsequently begun to drop, as many people return to fYROM, their confidence bolstered by the extended cease-fire which preceded the arrival, in late August, of a NATO contingent tasked with the implementation of a weapons collection programme - Operation Essential Harvest. The number of fYROM citizens/residents remaining in Kosovo is estimated to have dropped below 30,000 persons at the time of writing of this report and it continues to fall steadily. However, given

the volatile situation in fYROM, further violence could trigger a reversal of this trend and a renewed influx of refugees cannot be excluded. From the outset of the crisis UNHCR was careful to highlight the potential impact on minority communities and, in co-ordination with other institutions, to plan accordingly. Two possible scenarios were envisaged; firstly the prospect of displacement of minority communities from fYROM into Kosovo, most likely RAE, whose arrival in existing RAE communities within Kosovo could provoke instability and stretch already scarce resources to the limit; and secondly the potential for increased pressure on minority communities within Kosovo caused by the arrival of large numbers of ethnic Albanians in areas where their presence represented a dramatic shift in local demographics. To minimise the possibility of any adverse impact UNHCR and other agencies factored these concerns into their contingency planning and emergency response capacity. Increased monitoring was instituted in minority communities to serve as an early warning system of any noticeable increase in tensions. At the end of the reporting period with the number of fYROM citizens sheltered in Kosovo continuing to drop it can be reported that their temporary presence did not provoke any visible increase in violence against minority communities. Apart from some minor tensions due to competition over accommodation resources (e.g. temporary appropriation of minority owned property by the new arrivals) no significant problems were reported." (UNHCR/OSCE October 2001, para. 17)

There remain 10,850 refugees from Macedonia in Kosovo, as of 15 January 2002 (UNHCR 15 January 2002).

SUBSISTENCE NEEDS (HEALTH NUTRITION AND SHELTER)

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (excluding Kosovo)

Displaced population in Serbia continue to require humanitarian food aid (2000-2001)

- The cost of minimum food and non-food consumption food basket continued to increase

"According to the latest WFP VAM Bulletin, assessing the level of vulnerability in the FRY (excluding Kosovo), there is an increase in the cost of minimum food and non-food consumption basket. In previous months, the summer definition of the food basket averaged USD 22.6, while the winter definition is at USD 27 in December 2000. The VAM report also indicated that refugees residing in collective centres appear to be the most vulnerable caseload, followed by social cases, refugees in private accommodations and pensioners. In terms of analysing a regional pattern for high vulnerability, the VAM survey found that 53,5% of the households interviewed in Belgrade and 52% in Nis, have the highest incidence of vulnerability." (UN OCHA 6 April 2001)

See latest VAM bulletin, February 2001, No. 4 [Internal link]

See also "Yugoslav Refugees and Internally Displaced Need Continuing Aid", Refugees International, 7 August 2001 [Internet]

Disastrous situation of the health care system in FRY (2000-2001)

- Internally displaced persons have access to medical services, but anything beyond emergency medical services requires payment at the time of treatment
- During 2000, UNHCR and its implementing partners provided medical services to around 20,000 refugees and IDPs

"According to many recent studies, the health and social welfare system in the FR Yugoslavia, is at best under tremendous strain and at worst, near total bankruptcy and collapse. This situation potentially endangers the health of the population and therefore the social stability of the FR Yugoslavia. Anecdotal evidence suggests that patients in need of surgery are requested to purchase the necessary surgical consumables and drugs (including anesthetics) from the private sector, prior to surgery. However, the most vulnerable can barely afford to feed themselves properly, let alone fund their own health care. Therefore it is not surprising that sobering statistics are emerging from the FR Yugoslavia, with UNICEF's May 2000 Mobile Team Assessment stating that in some areas of Serbia, the number of deaths in the first quarter of 2000 increased by 30-50% compared to the same period in 1999." (IFRC 20 October 2000)

"IDPs, being citizens of FRY, have access to medical services. However, anything beyond basic or emergency medical services requires payment at the time of treatment (with past-facto reimbursement by the republican Health Insurance Fund), which obviously limits access to treatment. During 2000, UNHCR and its implementing partners provided difference medical services to around 20,000 refugees and IDPs." (UNHCR March 2001, para. 13)

For more details on the situation of the health care system in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, see UN OCHA Humanitarian Risk Analysis No. 14, Health Status in FRY - Part II - Trends in Health Indicators, 13 November 2000 [Internet]

Serious shortages in the public health system in Serbia aggravates conditions of the displaced (2001)

- Public health system in Serbia does not meet the minimum needs of the population
- Inadequate treatment, stress, poverty and poor living condition have resulted in the deterioration of health indicators
- 80% of refugee and IDPs' households do not have sufficient income for food and hygiene expenses, according to recent UNICEF survey

"A recent UNICEF report concluded that the public health system in Serbia does not meet the minimum needs of the population. Although Serb citizens are legally entitled to free health treatment, years of neglect and corruption under the Milosevic regime have virtually destroyed the health service. 'Hospitals are ruined, doctors impoverished and corrupt and patients are compelled to pay for all services and medicines.' (Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia) In hospitals, as well as paying for the bed and food, patients have to pay for everything else they need for their treatment. Pregnant women have to pay for everything else they need for their treatment. Pregnant women have to pay for check ups, even though the birth rate in Serbia is almost zero. Most hospitals are very old, some lacking running hot water and heating. The ratio of hospital beds to patients is very low (1 bed for 184 patients) and yet they are under-utilized (70%) because of inefficiency.

There have been extreme shortages of drugs. Substandards and 'expired' medicines have been imported from China and India, including dangerous pig-based insulin for diabetics. Medicines supplied by international aid organizations were repackaged and then sold by corrupt administrators in the Milosevic regime. When the new government took over in October 2000, it found widespread abuses and misappropriation of funds, describing the situation in the health service as 'critical'. In late 2000, the entire health system subsisted on foreign aid in kind.

The collapse of the health service in Serbia is paralleled by the deterioration in the health of the population. As well as inadequate treatment, likely causes are stress, poverty and poor living conditions. The 1999 statistics indicate highest death rate, the highest suicide rate and lowest birth rate since 1945. Infant mortality is up by 3% in the last ten years. Cases of tuberculosis, heart disease and cancer have also increased in recent years. In 2000 there were outbreaks of flu, salmonella and hepatitis. The mental health of the population has also deteriorated. Four million packages of Bensadine are sold per year, suggesting that one in every two people in Serbia are reliant upon sedatives." (UK October 2001, paras. 8.1-8.3)

"Official government policies ensure universal access to medicine, but in reality the state pharmacies are empty. In addition to a lack of medicine, there has also been a decrease in funding by international agencies for much-needed psychosocial programs for those experiencing the trauma of forced exile. A UNHCR representative told the Women's Commission that she suspected the suicide rate was going up in the population as a whole. She also stated that there were many cases of childhood tuberculosis, cancer and polio, for which drugs were not available. (Women's Commission September 2001, p. 7)

"Institute of Public Health of Serbia presented the results of the study 'State of Health, Needs and Use of Healthcare by the Population of Serbia'. The study was conducted in cooperation with WHO and UNICEF and is based on WHO methodology. 17,000 citizens of all age groups participated in the survey in June-July 2000. The study analyzes household profiles, health conditions and health needs of children up to 7

years, youth from 7-19, adult population and of refugees and IDPs as a separate category. The major findings are:
[…]
80% of refugee and IDPs' households do not have sufficient income for food and hygiene expenses and 95 % do not have sufficient income for clothes and shoes;
15% of refugees and IDPs never consume milk;
50% of them consume meat less than once a week;
33% of them do not consume fresh fruits and vegetables;
64% of them are under stress." (UNOCHA 31 January 2002)

See detailed results relating to the refugee and IDP population in Serbia in "Health status, health needs and utilisation of health services - in 2000 - Report on the analysis for adult population in Serbia: Differences between domicile population, refugees and internally displaced persons", Institute of Public Health of Serbia [Internal link]

For more details on the situation of the health care system in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, see UN OCHA Humanitarian Risk Analysis No. 14, Health Status in FRY - Part II - Trends in Health Indicators, 13 November 2000 [Internet]

15 % of displaced families live in spaces of between 3-10 square metres (2000-2001)

- Number of refugees and IDPs living in collective centre increased in 2000 by some 3,000 persons
- The reception capacity in Serbia and Montenegro is not capable of absorbing many more newly arrived displaced
- The greatest shelter need lies in Southwest Serbia (53% of all IDP households) and Southeast Serbia (28.5% of all IDP households)

"The number of refugees and IDPs living in collective accommodation increased in 2000 by some 3,000 persons. Economic hardship was obviously the main cause that made people move from private to collective accommodation. Many IDPs have after over one year in displacement spent whatever savings they managed to take with them from Kosovo, while many host families could no longer bear the costs of providing hospitality.

At present, it can be said that the reception capacity in Serbia and Montenegro is stretched to the utmost, and not capable of providing accommodation to many new arrivals, be it directly from Kosovo, or from third countries." (UNHCR March 2001, paras. 9-11)

"The IDP Shelter Assessment Report organised by ECHO and the International Rescue Committee (IRC) is now available. The survey's objectives were to provide a comprehensive description of shelter conditions and assistance for Kosovar IDPs throughout Serbia (excluding Kosovo), to determine the level of shelter vulnerability, and to quantify these levels of need and the cost of meeting them. Findings indicate that IDP shelter needs are relatively low in northern areas where there are fewer IDPs (NB the survey does not include refugees, who tend to be concentrated more to the north), while the greatest need lies in Southwest Serbia (53% of all IDP households) and Southeast Serbia (28.5% of all IDP households). The report concludes that an estimated 14,000 IDP households are in need of continuing assistance, with estimated costs of DEM 510 per person, or DEM 35 million for the entire IDP population. The report also outlines recommendations for IDP self-reliance programmes, such as access to agricultural land or the provision of gardening or livestock grants to generate a means of food or income support." (UN OCHA 24 February 2001)

"Living conditions for IDPs and refugees and miserable - 15 % of displaced families live in spaces of between 3-10 square metres. Most live in dilapidated collective centres and sports halls while others simply squat in abandoned or ruined houses. Because of widespread poverty, many of those who used to live with host families are now seeking shelter in collective centres where they are provided with free meals, water and electricity. The psychosocial impact of living in these conditions is extremely negative, warns the report." (IFRC 7 August 2000)

For more information on conditions in collective IDP settlements in Serbia, see also "Refugee and Internally Displaced Women and Children in Serbia and Montenegro", a report by the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, September 2001 [Internet]

See also IRC/ECHO Shelter Assessment Report, January 2001 [Internal link]

Displaced living in spontaneous settlements in coastal areas of Montenegro face risk of eviction (2000-2001)

- 20 % of the internally displaced population in Montenegro reside in non-official collective centres
- Reports of legal actions taken by owners of private premises on the Montenegrin coasts to obtain eviction of occupants
- UNHCR closely monitors the situation to ensure that beneficiaries who received an eviction order are offered alternative accommodation in official collective centres
- Evicted displaced refuse relocation options in the north of the Republic

"There are also cases in which IDPs have occupied buildings. In some instances these situations have been regularised by the Serbian or Montenegrin Refugee/IDP Commissioners granting collective accommodation status to these premises, which means that the inhabitants will receive some additional assistance, i.e., hot meals and some non-food items. In other instances, however, the owners of the premises have taken legal action to have the occupying IDPs evicted." (UN OCHA 6 July 2000, p. 58)

"On 31 March-1 April, approximately 200 Serb IDPs were evicted from a hotel they have been occupying in Becici on the Montenegrin coast, due to legal action taken by the hotel's owner, 'Electroserbia' (Serbian state electricity board). The Montenegrin Commissioner for Displaced Persons has expressed disappointment over this eviction. While alternative accommodation was being offered, the local media reported that over 100 IDPs had slept outdoors during the weekend." (UN OCHA 6 April 2000)

"Regarding last week's eviction of some 100 IDPs from a collective center in Becici [Montenegro], UNHCR expressed concern that this may become an ongoing problem as 10% of refugees and 20% of IDPs currently reside in non-official collective centers. The Becici case may serve as an impetus to other owners to undertake legal actions in order to evict IDPs/refugees from the illegally occupied premises." (UN OCHA 13 April 2000)

"Evictions: With the beginning of the summer season, the eviction of illegal refugees or IDPs occupants of private accommodations in the coastal area continues. UNHCR closely monitors the situation to ensure that beneficiaries who received an eviction order from the Court are offered alternative accommodation in collective centres recognised and financially supported by the MCDP. However, considering the lack of available accommodations in the South, the persons concerned are offered alternative accommodation in CC in the North of Montenegro. For various reasons, including local integration and better possibilities in terms of work, the beneficiaries refuse to be relocated in the North. On 01/06/00, 5 remaining IDP families were evicted from ex-unofficial CC Elektro distribucija Kraljevo in Budva and refused MCDP offer for

alternative accommodation. After two days in the open sky, 4 families moved into trailers, donated by Montenegrin church, while one family moved to Podgorica. Appearance in the court for IDPs in illegally occupied CC Kamenovo in Budva (IDPs from ex-Elektrodistribucija) postponed for 20/06/00." (UNHCR 10 June 2000)

For more information on conditions in collective IDP settlements in Montenegro, see also "Refugee and Internally Displaced Women and Children in Serbia and Montenegro", a report by the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, September 2001 [Internet]

Elderly IDPs in collective centres: HelpAge report suggests need for humanitarian and developmental assistance (2000-2001)

- A third of the displaced population in collective centers are aged 65 and over
- Many older Serb refugees and displaced people in collective centres are effectively destitute
- HelpAge reports that older people in collective centers live in basic conditions, often with poor food, facilities and inadequate clothing
- Poor sanitation, difficult access to health care and inadequate food in collective centers increase health risks for older displaced
- Suicide rates among older people in collective centres are worryingly high over 200 older people killed themselves in one recent year alone, according to HelpAge research
- The longer-term prospects for older people in collective centres remain confused and uncertain
- The elderly displaced are especially affected by the irregular payments of their meager pension

"Half a million Bosnian, Croatian and Kosovan Serbs were displaced by war over the last decade. Refugees and internally displaced people now make up 7 per cent of the total population of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. HelpAge International was told that 100,000 out of a total refugee population of 750,000 still live in collective centres – a third of them aged 65 and over.

The public and voluntary sectors face huge challenges in ensuring adequate living standards for such significant numbers of refugees. The Red Cross, for example, says that a large proportion of those who fled Kosovo live in rented accommodation they simply cannot afford.

HelpAge International's experience worldwide has shown that older refugees are among those who find it hardest to recover from the disruption and trauma of conflict, and as a group tend to suffer from its effects longer. In Serbia, older people typically form a disproportionate share of those in collective centres, and face significant barriers to re-establishing themselves economically and socially.

We visited three collective centres, in Belgrade, Smederevo, and Vrsac. Older people in the centres told us that, without pensions or some other source of income, they could imagine how they would rebuild their lives in Serbia. Those who wished to return home remained profoundly uncertain about their safety and status, and in many cases had lost their homes and villages in the fighting.

The National Commissariat for Refugees, a government body, formally appoints management boards for registered collective centres, but funding and running them to consistent standards is extremely difficult. International agencies have proved an important source of short-term support, supplying food and non-food items, but in longer-term strategies must help older people help themselves.

At HelpAge International's workshop, there was a clear consensus that older refugees form a substantial and highly vulnerable group, requiring both humanitarian and developmental assistance.

Economic issues

HelpAge International found that many older Serb refugees and displaced people in collective centres are effectively destitute. Unable to claim pensions in their country of origin or host country, and with little likelihood of finding work, they face a daily struggle to meet basic costs such as medicines.
[…]
Many older people told us they longed to have a home of their own again – 'Nothing else really matters!' said one. Above all, they want to live independently, be secure, and enjoy a clear legal status. Many said that they would be happy to continue to live within Serbia, rather than return home, if housing or help with loans could be provided.

Their chances of finding work, in the context of high unemployment and few job opportunities even for younger people, are slim. High unemployment levels amongst younger people were a major cause of concern.

In the collective centres we visited, older people appeared to be living in basic conditions, often with poor food, facilities and inadequate clothing. Questions about coping mechanisms were largely irrelevant – it was clear that, for most older people, the issue was basic survival.

Many of the collective centres are industrial or prefabricated buildings remote from centres of population, so that contact with the local community is difficult. They are often unhygienic and in poor repair, due to lack of funds. In one centre, where families or groups sleep and eat together in large rooms, often damp in the winter, some residents told us they had left and moved into private accommodation. But they could not earn enough to pay the rent, and had been forced to come back.

During one visit, older people told us there were often few clothes suitable for them in the care packages they received. One older woman said she did not know the last time she had something new to wear; another pointed to her ill-fitting
shoes.

Workshop participants felt that the government needed urgently to identify ways of addressing older refugees' almost complete lack of resources by providing them with clear legal entitlements and status. They should either be made eligible for state pensions, or offered short-term loans to help them get re-established. Those in collective centres should be allocated pieces of land to grow food and generate a source of income.

Health issues

In the collective centres we visited, older people spoke of a high incidence of health problems, coupled with difficulties in accessing adequate healthcare. Chronic conditions associated with age included diabetes and cardiac conditions.

Poor sanitation emerged as a recurrent issue. In one centre, where there were two showers and four lavatories to each 'barrack' of 15 and 20 people, older people told us that the system didn't work properly, and were worried about disease. In the summer, the sewage sits in pools under the buildings – 'We sleep on top of it,' said one. So far, no repairs had been done. There had also been problems with electricity – for example, during the previous winter, had been no heat or lighting for a fortnight.

While older refugees and displaced people are in theory eligible for free healthcare, in practice necessary medications are often not available and difficult to access treatment. At one centre we visited, for example, older people had the right to emergency treatment in hospital, but first had to written referral from the doctor 3km away, then find their way to the town 13km away. They had no money for bus fares, and little contact with anyone outside the centre who could help.

Most of the older people we talked to ate in central canteen facilities, and many said they would like to be able to cook their own food. In one centre, international aid agency provided fresh food and other items, all much appreciated. In another, older people were concerned that the sort of food they were given – for example, fatty foods, with few fresh fruit and vegetables would increase their rates of heart disease.

Workshop participants felt there was an urgent for regular medical check-for older people in refugee camps, to identify diseases such as tuberculosis and cancer, and what kinds of medicines should be supplied on a regular basis. Older people's nutritional needs should be systematically researched and planned for.

Social issues

HelpAge International's visits suggested that older people in collective centers felt isolated and invisible, both within the local community, and to policy makers. They wanted to be seen, heard and understood.

They had few contacts with local people and felt their presence was sometimes resented, given levels of hardship in the wider community. In the district surrounding one of collective centres we visited, for example, many ex-farmers were struggling to make ends meet on low-level pensions, and there were levels of unemployment. In another centre, there was no public telephone, adding to residents' feeling of being cut off from the wider world.

There were few organised social or other activities. Many older refugees from rural areas, where they led active lives as part of the community. In centre, a 75-year-old older woman had managed to get work helping out local farm. In another, residents were beginning to set up individual vegetable gardens, in order to grow their own food, generate income, and get back work. A staff member commented: 'Older people have been very shaken their experiences as refugees. I think the gardens are really important for they help them feel part of a community, and keep them busy. When they active, they are not so sad.'

Older people in one centre said they felt the government didn't really understand their situation or care about it. 'They could ask us more about what we need,' says one. 'Really, we need several different organisations donors and government – to get together and look at our problems.'

Non-government organisations spoke of a culture of disempowerment in collective centres, which can be particularly acute among older people. Some of the older residents we met were worried about being evicted, though was not a real danger. Others feared they would die in the camps.

Suicide rates among older people in collective centres are worryingly high over 200 older people killed themselves in one recent year alone, according research commissioned by HelpAge International from Dr Irena Grozdanic.

Legal and political issues

The longer-term prospects for older people in collective centres remain confused and uncertain.

Non-government organisations working in the centres point out that the exact numbers of those wishing to leave or remain in Serbia has never been established. Without this information, it will be difficult to plan realistic solutions.

Many of the older people we talked to felt they were too old to make a new life, and wanted to be buried in the place they originally came from. But feared they would not be able to claim pensions or property at home, and would not be welcome. Croatian refugees in one collective centre, for example, told us they no longer had rights to benefits or land there, but want to go to a Croatian transit centre because they would not be safe there.

For those who wanted to stay, lack of money was perceived to present an impossible obstacle to setting up a new home. Some older people worried that the centre they were in would close down, and they would be homeless.

In general, older people felt they did not know what the future would bring. Those who wanted to go home were worried about getting the right documents, feared their families would not be able to find work, and said was difficult to get visas. Others wanted to get Yugoslav citizenship, but knew it was a complex process. The future of family units was a key consideration. 'Our children and grandchildren are what we care most about,' said one person. 'What they do will affect whether we go home.'

HelpAge International's needs assessment found that there was a lack of or legal aid available to older people trying to work out their options. Many did not know if they had a right to reclaim property in their country of origin, or whether they could get their pensions restored on the basis of past contributions. Efforts to provide legal advice are now beginning.

In some collective centres, residents receive money from donors, and can to save for the future. Older people told us that they would find this very helpful. They said they did not want gifts, but a way of getting life back to normal. 'We want to work with others to sort things out.'" (HelpAge November 2001, pp. 12-15)

"The elderly are a particularly impoverished sector of society, with their coping mechanisms having been eroded over the past decade. They often live in appalling conditions. While the 1.5 million pensioners of Serbia and Montenegro receive an average DEM 37 a month, payments remain irregular with the elderly refugee and IDP populations more often than not. Receiving nothing at all. The plight of the elderly, combined with a lack of facilitates or programmes to assist them, will become more alarming as their numbers increase." (IFRC 20 October 2000)

Serious gaps in the water supply and sanitation facilities in collective settlements in Serbia and Montenegro (2000-2001)

"There are indications that the water supply and sanitation situation in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (excluding Kosovo) may further deteriorate, with possible adverse impacts on public health. This would seriously affect the most vulnerable, such as IDPs, who are already suffering from poor living conditions. Inadequate water supply and sanitary facilities in densely populated settlements and buildings increase the danger of public health risks. This emphasizes the need for promotion and maintenance of basic hygienic practices. The main focus of humanitarian assistance in this sector is rehabilitation and upgrading of water supplies and sewage systems in collective centres and private accommodations, where refugees and displaced persons are living." (UN OCHA 6 July 2000, p. 59)

Deficient hygiene in Montenegro

"In Montenegro, a significant lack of hygiene items in various IDP settlements has been reported by NGOs. ICRC, the main provider of hygiene parcels, held a meeting with the Montenegrin Red Cross to discuss possible distribution problems. NGOs are concerned with the situation and trying to find a solution to fill the gaps." (UN OCHA 25 May 2000)

For more information on the situation of the water supply system and sanitation in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, see UN OCHA Humanitarian Risk Analysis No. 15 Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, 9 January 2001 [Internet]

Marginalised displaced Roma face extremely precarious housing conditions in Serbia and Montenegro (1999-2001)

- Roma displaced from Kosovo have found accommodation with local destitute Roma communities
- Local municipalities object to the settlement of Roma displaced in their areas
- Report of forced closure of a Roma IDP camp near Belgrade airport (June 2000)

"Although the ethnic Albanians in Kosovo may have perceived the Roma as being aligned with the Serbs, that has hardly made them welcome to local communities in Serbia. Pre-existing Roma communities in Serbia occupy the lowest rungs of the socio-economic ladder. They appear at night as street cleaners and live in squalid slums in industrial sectors or in makeshift encampments under bridges or in abandoned buildings. The new arrivals from Kosovo often gravitate to local Roma settlements, making it difficult to distinguish the displaced from the general, and also destitute, Roma communities." (USCR April 2000, p. 12)

"If you are a Serb refugee or IDP, the shelter conditions you must live with depend on a number of factors – your own resources, possible family links, and which municipality or centre you end up in. If you are a Roma IDP, however, your needs for adequate shelter are unlikely to be met. The Roma IDPs were the most marginalised group in terms of national and international attention to their plight and in the services they could access – shelter, help with legal questions, healthcare, and education.

In both the north (Vojvodina) and south (Kraljevo, Kursumlija and Kragujevac) the [EVCRE/ICVA] team found evidence that Roma IDPs were isolated from the range of services offered to other refugee and IDP groups. In some cases humanitarian food and sanitary aid was getting through to Roma IDP groups; however, services such as advice on legal or citizenship matters did not appear to penetrate, and there seemed little liaison with Serbian Roma NGOs on behalf of both IGOs and international NGOs. In the Kraljevo area, the local UNHCR office had worked to find shelter for all the Kosovan IDPs but were simply unable to achieve this for Roma groups – in most cases local municipalities or communities objected to the temporary settlement of Roma IDPs in their areas. The local UNHCR office estimated that there were some 6,000 Roma IDPs in their area of responsibility – though, since in many cases the IDPs tended to try and settle in existing Serbian Roma settlements (thus stretching already impoverished communities), it was difficult to pin down reliable figures.

One particularly shocking example of this marginalisation the team witnessed was a 'settlement' of some 500 – 600 Roma from Kosovo in the centre of Kursumlija, a small town near the Kosovo border. This group, with an element which spoke Albanian and were Muslim, were 'stuck' in 'inhumane living conditions' (as described by the local branch of the Yugoslav Red Cross) because they could find no other place willing to allow them to settle.

The 'settlement' was within and around a part-built 'cultural centre' – basically a concrete shell without a roof, many internal walls or windows. Families had constructed dark, damp dwellings in small spaces within the shell; there was no heating apart from a few wood-fired stoves, no light, no sanitation, no washing facilities. There were many small children and a high prevalence of illness. In the basement there was a large, deep pool of contaminated water, oil and other undetermined substances. The local Orthodox Church and Yugoslav Red Cross branch were delivering some basic aid in terms of firewood and food, but there was little evidence of other aid or support reaching the group. UNHCR were looking at other shelter solutions (such as winterised tents), but there seemed both confusion and tension between UNHCR and the group's leaders about what exactly was promised. There seemed little sense of urgency in finding a solution." (ECRE/ICVA May 2000, paras. 4.8.10-4.8.13)

"Approximately 150 people (including IDPs) have been living at the Roma settlement, "Antenna", close to Belgrade Airport. Last week police forcibly closed this camp, dislocating inhabitants. A number of

humanitarian agencies have been involved in assisting this group, including UNHCR, WFP, ICVA, DRC, IOCC, ICS, and the Democratic Association of Roma." (UN OCHA 14 July 2000)

For more details about conditions in Roma camps, see "Refugee and Internally Displaced Women and Children in Serbia and Montenegro", a report by the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, September 2001 [Internet]

See also "Assessing the Needs of the Roma Community in the Federal Republic of Kosovo of Yugoslavia (excluding Kosovo)", a Humanitarian Risk Analysis by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), 26 September 2001 [Internet]

Basic food needs of the internally displaced in coastal areas in Montenegro are met (May 2000)

"In Bar, Montenegro, UNHCR has distributed its final report on the joint UNHCR/ICRC Food Household Survey on the Montenegrin Coast. The survey was conducted on 6-28 March to assess food consumption patterns in both refugee and IDP communities along the coast, with the aims to provide recommendations for targeting and distribution of future food aid and to suggest strategies (other than food aid) for maintaining the food security. The total number of surveyed households was 481 (228 IDP and 253 refugee households), and results indicated that their basic food needs were met. No cases of severe malnutrition were reported among Roma IDPs, although they had initially been considered as the most "at risk" population group. It is recommended to implement the same survey in all of Montenegro, in order to have an overview of the Montenegrin situation and to apply the same policies in all areas." (UN OCHA 25 May 2000)

Serbian Health Insurance Fund refuses to cover health care costs of entitled internally displaced in Montenegro (May 2000)

"In Montenegro, WHO convened a meeting with the Montenegrin Health Insurance Fund (MHIF) to discuss referral procedures for IDPs to medical institutions in Serbia. MHIF does not cover costs for such referrals since IDPs, while living in Kosovo, had contributed to the Serbian Health Insurance Fund, which now refuses to reimburse their costs. MHIF requested UNHCR to cover treatment costs for hospitalized IDPs. Another request was made to UNHCR by a psychiatric hospital to speed up the repatriation of refugees hospitalized there, or to cover their treatment costs. Although no conclusions were reached, humanitarian agencies came to a better understanding of MHIF's policy and obstacles faced by IDPs." (UN OCHA 11 May 2000)

Serious health concerns among the displaced population (1998-2000)

- 13 % of the internally displaced persons have a serious medical status (chronic disease requiring permanent medical treatment or infirmity)(UNHCR registration 2000)
- 8% of them are accommodated in collective centres
- Chronic diseases reported include cardiovascular, hematological, respiratory, muscle-skeletal and digestive diseases
- Internally displaced persons are also exposed to psychological troubles

"Out of the total number of internally displaced persons 23,356 persons or 12.5% have serious medical problems. The situation is even more alarming because the majority of them (72%) have some chronic

disease requiring regular medical treatment. According to their share, the internally displaced invalids occupy the second place among the persons with health problems and their share is 12.9%. The internally displaced persons who are the recipients of care and help and the persons with psychiatric disorders have a share of 4.1%, and 4.4% respectively. The share of both the deaf and the blind in the structure of the internally displaced persons with serious medical problems is 3.3 %.
[…]
Collective accommodation is definitely the least favourable category of accommodation not only for an individual who must live in the conditions of complete alienation - pulled out from the domicile family - but also for the competent institutions which, in this case become fully responsible for both theirs subsistence and the medical treatment.

Out of total number of the registered internally displaced persons with serious health problems approximately 8% o 1,599 persons, are accommodated in collective centres. Within that group the share of chronically ill persons is the highest.

Although categorised as a more favourable type of accommodation from the aspect of an individual, the accommodation with relatives and friends also requires engagement of the competent institutions tot a certain extent, since the families and friends are living on subsistence level themselves. Meeting the medical needs of the handicapped in these circumstances is an issue by itself.

Out of total number of the registered internally displaced persons with serious medical problems, 44% or 10,193 persons are accommodated with relatives and friends. Among them the highest share, again, pertains to the chronically ill.

In view of the very high share of internally displaced persons with medical problems accommodated with relatives and friends, special measures should be defined and long-term activities implemented to support the handicapped people this accommodated as well as the families of relatives and friends hosting them. Naturally, this form of accommodation is temporary in many cases. Therefore, a permanent solution should be found.

Out of the total number of the registered internally displaced persons with serious medical problems, approximately 35% or 8,149 persons are accommodated in rented apartments. Among them, the highest share is again that of the chronically ill persons.

Nevertheless, the internally displaced persons with medical problems in rented apartments, which may be categorised as the most favourable type of temporary accommodation, still require an engagement and the assistance of a wider community in satisfying their special needs, especially their medical health status." (UNHCR/Commissioner for Refugees of the Republic of Serbia 2001, pp. 31-34)

"A UNHCR/WHO survey in 1998[1] indicated that poor food aid quality is a serious concern among the displaced, though calorie intake defficiency does not appear problematic. It fond anemia as a problem among 43.3% of women and 40.6% of children under five.

Among elderly refugees, 46.9% and 51.9% of women were found overweight, and the most prevailing diseases were cardiovascular diseases (66.5%), osteoarticular (50.9%) and respiratory diseases (22%).

A more recent (April/May 2000) vulnerability assessment by IFRC [2] showed that almost one third of the surveyed refugees/IDPs suffer from chronic diseases, with 33% with cardiovascular diseases, 15% (11%) [3] with hematological diseases, 14% (21%) with respiratory diseases, 16% (29%) with muscle-skeletal diseases, and 12% with digestive diseases. Furthermore, 53% indicated that changes in their life conditions affected the psychological condition of their family members.

Note [1]: WHO/UNHCR, 'The Health and Nutrition of the Refugee Population in FRY', November 1998
Note [2]: IFRC/ICRC/YRC, 'IDPs and Refugees Living Conditions', May 2000

Note [3]: Data in brackets refer to the data in collective centers."
(UNOCHA 13 November 2000)

UN Administered Province of Kosovo

Access to water and sanitation facilities for minority communities in Kosovo (2001)

- Poor access of minority communities to water is not necessarily the result of discrimination but rather the effect of the poor maintenance of the water system throughout Kosovo
- Gypsy communities complain that lesser attention and resources are dedicated to resolving the problem where they primarily affect their communities

"[W]ith reference to safe water and basic sanitation, many minority communities have complained of scant and irregular attention to these issues and expressed concerns about the potential for adverse effects on the overall health and welfare of their communities. It should be noted, however, that sporadic water supply and sub-standard sanitation are problems that affect many communities throughout Kosovo. This is the net result of years of neglect and poor maintenance compounded by more recent war damage. It is not necessarily the case that minority communities suffer such problems as a direct result of discrimination but rather they share them in common with many of their Kosovo Albanian neighbours. In the case of some RAE communities the problem was noted as being more acute and in some instances there were complaints of lesser attention and resources being dedicated to resolving such problems where they primarily affect RAE communities." (UNHCR/OSCE March 2001, para. 31)

Access to health care: discrimination against minority members (2000-2001)

- The gradual devolution of responsibility for the provision of primary health care to municipalities raises concerns about how minority populations will be treated

"Regulation 2000/45 on the Self-Government of Municipalities in Kosovo envisages the devolution of responsibility for a number of activities from central to municipal level. Amongst these activities is listed responsibility for the provision of primary health care. In anticipation of a transfer of responsibility on January 1, 2001, the Department of Health and Social Welfare (DHSW) drafted an overview document by way of guidance which aimed to answer the questions of municipal administrators and health authorities with regard to the organisation of primary health care services at municipal level. The aim of the DHSW was that this document would serve as a helpful tool for the municipal authorities rather than a definitive instruction as to how to organise their services. Within the existing legal framework and with reference to the relevant guidelines issued by the Department of Local Administration, each municipality is free to establish their own system.
[…]
The assumption of responsibility by municipal authorities has not been uniform across the province and is affected by a number of factors. After 28 October when the municipal elections occurred, the establishment of municipal structures took place at varying speeds depending in many cases on the degree of consensus or lack thereof in each location. As a result it can not be said that there was a uniform and simultaneous act of decentralisation. The DHSW originally envisaged a comprehensive hand-over of the responsibility for primary health care to the municipalities as and from January 1, 2001. However, in recognition of the difficulties faced by some municipalities in fully assuming their responsibilities, this target date was pushed back to March 1. In reality the process of transition is likely to be gradual and ongoing and ultimately will vary from one location to another according to local circumstances. This is particularly so in the case of

services provided to minority populations as the practice in each municipality can vary considerably according to the actors involved and the specific needs of the beneficiary populations." (UNHCR/OSCE March 2001, paras. 26-29)

More details on the access of minority groups to health care in Kosovo can be found in paragraphs 25 to 40 of UNHCR/OSCE Assessment of the Situation of Ethnic Minorities in Kosovo (March 2001)[Internet]

Nutritional survey in Kosovo: vulnerability of the urban displaced (January 2000)

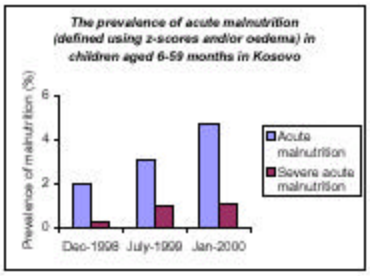
- Internally displaced in urban areas and marginalised minority groups more vulnerable to malnutrition
-

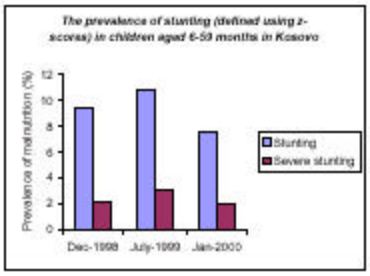
"AAH-UK undertook a nutritional survey of children aged 6-59 months, mothers, and older persons in January 2000. The prevalence of acute malnutrition was low in all groups. There has been a slight (non-significant) increase in the prevalence of acute malnutrition in children aged 6-59 months since December 1998 and July 1999 (see graph). The prevalence of stunting was 7.5%, including 1.9% severe stunting (see graph) (AAH-UK – 03/00).

The mean age of the mothers measured was 31 years. Their mean BMI was 24kg/m 2 . The prevalence of maternal undernutrition was low when diagnosed using either the BMI (see table) or the MUAC or both in conjunction. (The prevalence of maternal malnutrition was estimated at 4.9% using a MUAC<220mm, 5.4% using BMI<18.5 kg/m 2 and as 3.2% using BMI and MUAC in conjunction.) These prevalences are lower than those found in the UK. In fact, the prevalence of overnutrition, and obesity, was considered to be a greater public health risk than that of under-nutrition in this group (10.7% of the sample had a BMI>30kg/m 2). There was no statistical association between maternal and child malnutrition (AAH – 03/00).

A low prevalence of undernutrition was also reported for the older age group (defined as aged 65 years or over). Overweight and obesity were more common than under-weight (see table). In similar studies in Bosnia-Hercegovina in 1995 older persons were found to be at higher nutritional risk than either young children or adults, particularly in the elderly who lived alone. Possible explanations for the low prevalence of malnutrition in Kosovo are the traditional practice of family co-habitation with older people, and also the fact that the conflict period was shorter in Kosovo than in Bosnia-Hercegovina (AAH – 01/03). It should be noted that the number of elderly per household was lower than expected. The survey in Macedonia also showed a lower than expected proportion of elderly people.

The results of these surveys do not suggest an alarming nutritional situation. However, the author observed that the urban IDPs, marginalised minority groups, people living in isolated mountain areas, and families with social problems appeared to be more vulnerable to malnutrition. These problems were compounded by poor shelter and the cold. Chronic malnutrition remains a cause for concern (AAH –03/00)." (ACC/SCN 31 March 2000, p. 48)





Access to health care for minorities in Kosovo of concern to international agencies (2000)

- State and parallel, Albanian-run, health structures generally deficient as a result of the war, mismanagement and lack of practical expertise
- Most Kosovo Albanians displaced within Kosovo have been integrated in the general health care system
- Minority population continues to experience difficulties in accessing the health care system as a result of insecurity and discrimination on ethnic grounds
- Minority population tend to rely on separate health care systems or programmes or to obtain health care in Serbia itself
- International health promotion programmes designed to reach displaced minorities and isolated communities

"State health services generally collapsed after the war as a result of infrastructure damage, ten years of mismanagement, a lack of upgrading in technological advances, and a general deficiency of practical expertise among the local population that remained. While the Kosovo Albanians had established parallel structures, the focus in the health sector was mainly on training and theory rather than on practice. According to WHO, as lead UN agency in the health sector working to support the UNMIK Department of Health, the main challenge is the creation of a modern and consistent health care system for all communities within Kosovo.

While reconstruction efforts progress, most of the ethnic Albanians displaced within Kosovo have been integrated into the general health care system. Access to health care for the minority population in Kosovo however, including many IDPs, has been of particular concern to the international community over the past year. Prior to the entry of KFOR, state health services were run almost exclusively by Serbs. Today however, the majority of medical staff are ethnic Albanians and the facilities are often located in areas that are difficult for minority communities to reach without KFOR or UNMIK Police escort. Even when escort is provided, minority patients often have fears for their safety while in the hospital and are therefore reluctant to avail of public health services outside of their enclaves. There have also been reports of

restricted admission and discrimination based on ethnic grounds, and more specifically against Serbo-Croatian speaking patients.

The result is that the minority populations have been either forced to create a separate health care system within enclaves, or to rely on KFOR health facilities which are often not equipped for the needs of the population and are not sustainable. Populations living outside the enclaves, and most Roma IDPs, rely on mobile health teams run by NGOs. Obtaining health care in Serbia proper has also been an alternative for some Serbs, but there is concern that this option ultimately encourages persons to depart from Kosovo and leads to further displacement.

Another challenge for the health sector has been reaching displaced minority and isolated communities, who are often the most vulnerable and susceptible to health risks, through information campaigns. The Institute of Public Health in Pristina has designed a health promotion programme, in conjunction with WHO and with the collaboration of many NGOs, which takes into account the difficulties in reaching these populations and which is working on disseminating information in Albanian, Serbian, and English to all communities within in Kosovo." (UN 6 July 2000, pp. 63-64)

See also UNHCR/OSCE Update on the Situation of Ethnic Minorities in Kosovo (Period covering February through May 2000, *June 2000, paras. 42-45 [Internet]*

Collective shelters in Kosovo accommodate displaced with heavily damaged homes or coming from mined border villages (2000)

- Spontaneous collective settlements also receive winterization assistance from international agencies
- UNMIK has taken over the responsibility for collective shelters from UNHCR as of June 2000 but has not secured enough funds for their maintenance

"According to UNHCR/Pristina, as of February 17, some 563 people were living in the eight UNHCR-sponsored community shelters in the Pristina region, which have a total capacity of 2,245 spaces.

UNHCR reports that those beneficiaries living in temporary community shelters (TCS) in the Pristina region come from homes that have significant damage, and would otherwise be supported by the social welfare system.

There are five unfinished buildings in the Pristina area where some 3,000 people are squatting. These buildings are not sponsored by UNHCR, however, UNHCR is coordinating with UNMIK to provide winterization assistance, such as provisional roofing, doors and stoves.

In the Peja region, approximately 1,000 people are currently living in community shelters, occupying roughly 50% of the total capacity. In addition, there are three self-managed facilities in Peja that are being occupied by squatters.

Prizren is housing nearly 2,000 people in TCS. Most of the occupants have houses with category five damage and are from border villages that are heavily mined.

The majority of TCS occupants report that they have no means to rebuild their homes and are counting on international assistance." (USAID 7 April 2000)

"The last resort for Kosovars is community collective centres. UNMIK assumed responsibility for 40 centres with 6,000 residents and 70 unoccupied sites from UNHCR at the end of June [2000]. UNMIK has

not, however, secured and allocated to its municipalities adequate funds for their maintenance." (RI 10 July 2000)

High level of destruction and population influx leave many without proper shelter in Kosovo (1999-2000)

- 49,000 houses damaged beyond repair as a result of the conflict
- Shortage of shelter throughout the province triggers migration to urban areas where housing capacities are equally insufficient
- Returning refugees force families occupying their premises to leave for more precarious shelters

"The pre-conflict housing stock of Kosovo was approximately 365,000 dwelling units. Of these, approximately 125,000 houses were damaged, according to estimates from UNHCR and the International Management Group (IMG).

49,000 houses were damaged beyond repair. The remaining 76,000 houses are repairable.

The fact that approximately 49,000 dwellings sustained serious structural damage and are uninhabitable and beyond repair means that 49,000 families - some 294,000 people, given an estimated average family size of six, must have alternate means of shelter this winter." (USAID 9 December 1999)

"A year after war ended in Kosovo, chaos and dislocation continue, manifested in the doubling or even tripling of the population of Pristina, now home to more than half a million people, reports the New York Times. Mostly they are people from the villages, refugees who have abandoned their burned and sought work and shelter in the capital.

As more than 700,000 Kosovo flocked from refugee camps last summer, or came down from the hills, many seized Serbian houses in Pristina, forcing Serbs and Gypsy residents to flee. The Kosovo war forced about two-thirds of the province's two million people from their homes. Hundreds of thousands remain displaced, living in tents and shacks in villages, in drab refugee centres, or doubled up with relatives in the cities, as many as 30 to an apartment. Only a few thousand mostly old and sick refugees remain in Macedonia and Albania.

In Kosovo, people are still returning every day. In front of Pristina airport stand two large white tents where local officials register the hundreds of refugees returning on daily flights from Western Europe or further afield. As many as 140,000 people will be returning to Kosovo this summer.

Despite the enormous building activity obvious in every corner of Kosovo, UN officials are growing concerned that Kosovo simply does not have enough housing. 'Capacity is limited,' said Gottfried Koefner assistant chief of UNHCR in Kosovo. 'People are squeezing, and we are already seeing secondary displacement. People are ending up in tents.' Some of those returning are forcing other families out on the streets.'" [based on "In the Hundreds of Thousands, Kosovo Homeless Feel Forsaken", The New York Times] (Refugee Daily 7 July 2000)

See also Refugees International "Ensure Shelter for the Most Vulnerable in Kosovo this Winter", 10 July 2000 [Internet]

Ethnic minorities in Kosovo: access to food remains difficult (1999)

- Serbs in urban areas outside the north-west of the province have very limited access to either income or markets and should receive a full ration from humanitarian agencies
- In the rural areas the situation is somewhat better, as most families have access to their own agricultural production, except for the elderly and the internally displaced who cannot cover their needs
- Economic decline in the north west has resulted in an increasing social caseload
- The Roma population has suffered a loss of income as a result of a limited freedom of movement and the lack of job opportunities
- Food aid need will tend to decline, according to international humanitarian agencies, despite possible return to Kosovo of Serbs currently displaced in Serbia

"Initial efforts to assess needs and provide humanitarian assistance in Kosovo focused on the majority Albanian population. Concerns about the minority populations soon arose as they became subject to increasing insecurity, losing their normal access to income and markets as a result. As a result of these concerns, a joint UNHCR/WFP food assessment mission of minorities was undertaken in November (UNHCR/WFP – 29/11/99).

The objective of providing food aid to these groups was not only to ensure access to 100% of food aid needs but also to minimise exposure to physical insecurity by reducing the need to access markets.

The assessment focused on the Serb and Roma minorities as these groups have the highest profiles. The Serb population in Kosovo lives in three geographic regions: the north-west is an almost exclusively Serb area, the Eastern Plateau (where the bulk of the pre-war Serbs lived) and Strpce, a municipality in the south of the province which borders Macedonia. Outside these areas there are few Serbs remaining. In all areas there has been a marked movement from urban to rural areas; 60% of the Serb population lived in rural areas before the war, now 80% live there. In addition, much of the younger and more active section of the population has left for Serbia, leaving behind a population with a relatively high proportion of older people and social cases (the handicapped, single parent families etc.).

The Serbs in urban areas outside the north-west of the province have very limited access to either income or markets. Many are older people. The mission recommended that these groups receive a full ration. In the rural areas the situation is somewhat better, as most families have access to their own fruit, vegetable, bean and livestock production. These products should cover approximately 50% of the population's needs until the next wheat harvest (July 2000), except for the elderly and IDPs who cannot cover their needs. These groups are estimated at 20% of the population. The main factor affecting food security in rural areas is the availability of wheat flour derived from this year's crop production. Access to mills for wheat milling has been a significant problem and many farmers have stocks of wheat grain that still need milling. Income for rural Serb families is much reduced, as is access to markets (this includes older people who need to collect their pension).

The effect of the conflict in the north-west of the province has been to accelerate the already existing economic decline. Linked to this decline has been a progressive increase in the social caseload. It seems unlikely that the north-west of the province will benefit from the general economic improvement expected in the rest of Kosovo in the coming year.

For the Roma, recent problems of insecurity are superimposed on chronic problems of poverty and disadvantage. The majority of families, in both rural and urban areas, relied on low-paid formal and informal employment for their main source of income before the conflict. The post-conflict situation of the Roma varies within the province and according to whether they were perceived to have supported the Serbs or not. All groups have suffered loss of income since the conflict, as they are regarded with suspicion by the majority Albanian population, which severely limits their movements, and also because there is less work available than before the conflict.

Projecting future food needs for the minority population is difficult. Currently, the main problem facing these groups is the prevailing insecurity. It is difficult to foresee how the security situation will develop and also to predict how the minority groups will react to any developments – if the security improves they may either stay, or take advantage of the situation, sell their homes and leave the province. It is unlikely that there will be major changes in security or food aids before the end of the winter. The mission, however, suggested that food aid needs will tend to decline with time if either (i) the security situation improves, leading to improved access to food and markets, or (ii) the security situation deteriorates or remains as it is, when it is likely that an increasing number of Serbs will leave the province. There may, however, be a slight increase in the number of Serbs in Kosovo as IDPs in Serbia are experiencing difficulty in finding employment and accommodation and hence may return home." (ACC/SCN 20 December 1999, pp. 43-44)

ACCESS TO EDUCATION

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (excluding Kosovo)

Education of Roma displaced children: Cultural, practical and psychological barriers to school attendance (2001)

- None of the children living in one Roma collective center visited by the Women's Commission attend school
- It is hard to get Roma children to attend school due to chronic illnesses, lack of proper clothing, prejudice from local children, language barrier, and cultural attitudes among the Roma communities

"In theory, education is free for all, including refugees and IDPs, but due to lack of resources there is no money for school necessities or a hot meal for children. In some cases, collective centers are far from schools, making it difficult for children to attend. Finally, language is a barrier for Albanian- or Roma-speaking IDPs.

None of the children living in the Roma collective center Stari Aerodrum outside of Kraljevo attend school, and many never have. When interviewed by a Women's Commission delegate, they unanimously stated that they wanted to go to school but could not because they did not have enough clothes or shoes to wear. Later, a UNHCR community services field officer in Kraljevo, revealed that all the children in the settlement had been given clothes, new shoes and book bags by an international NGO, but that there was no sign of these commodities one week later, and no children had entered school. Some agencies are helping to set up some play activities and Save the Children has created a playground for all to share – refugees, IDPs and local children – in this area, and it is the one bright spot in the camp.

It is very hard to get the Roma children to attend school due to chronic illnesses, lack of proper clothing and prejudice from local children. Many of the children's parents are illiterate, especially the women. Traditionally the Roma have not valued education, and most of the IDP children from Kosovo have either never been to school or had dropped out before completing the fourth year. Even when the children show an interest in school, cultural attitudes to education compound the practical and psychological barriers to school attendance.

In the electric company collective center of Kalanic […], all the approximately 50 primary school-age IDPs are bused six kilometers to the nearest school. The younger ones get out one-and-a-half hours before the older ones but must wait for the same bus that takes them all back to the collective center at 3:00 p.m. During this 90-minute wait, the younger students are unsupervised while they play outside the school between a railroad track and a busy highway." (Women's Commission September 2001, p. 15)

See also "Assessing the Needs of the Roma Community in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (excluding Kosovo)", a Humanitarian Risk Analysis by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 26 September 2001 [Internet]

Lack of attention given to displaced adolescents (2001)

- Many refugee and IDP adolescents are not in school because secondary school is not compulsory for children who have reached their 15th birthday
- Problems include distance to secondary schools, inadequate clothing or lack of money for school supplies
- In spite of programs that target refugee and IDP youth, adolescents continue to be perceived as particularly underserved

"Adolescents affected by war and displacement are as a group at particular risk for poor adjustment. They are often underserved by humanitarian assistance programs. Many refugee adolescents have been displaced for up to nine years and have spent much of their childhood and teenage years with little autonomy over their lives.

They still have strong memories of their old lives, which can keep them focused on their loss instead of moving forward. Often family roles have disintegrated as a result of long-term displacement, and parents are not able to provide normal boundaries and role models for their adolescent children. When fathers are present, they have lost their roles as family providers and protectors, and this has affected their self-esteem. Often the fathers turn to alcohol, which causes or adds to family violence and dysfunction.

Youth in such situations are understandably angry and have feelings of helplessness. Peers are the most important relations for this age group and with anger and lack of direction, they are prone to turn together to destructive behavior. If they remain without good role models and opportunities to constructively be involved in creating a more positive future for themselves, they are at risk of growing into angry young people who perpetuate the circle of violence and retaliation.

Many refugee and IDP adolescents are not in school because secondary school is not compulsory for children who have reached their 15th birthday. […]
It is common for those who do to attend classes with over 50 children per classroom. Many areas where refugees and IDPs live are far from secondary schools. Others miss school because they don't have adequate clothing or money for school supplies.

The Women's Commission had a chance to meet such youth living in the electric company collective center of Kalanic. The approximately 50 primary school-aged children are bused six kilometers to primary school, but there is no secondary school in the area and no transportation to any secondary school.

The Women's Commission interviewed several adolescent girls who live at the Roma collective center Stari Aerodrum, near Kraljevo. Ana, 12, and Shameila, 13, are from the Klina area of Kosovo. Shameila completed four years of primary school, but Ana has never been to school. They speak a Roma language with their families and are not fluent in Serbo-Croatian. Both say they would like to go to school but cannot because they do not have appropriate shoes, clothes, books or supplies such as book bags and pencils. Although clean, their clothes look tattered, and their shoes are in such bad condition that they hardly manage to cover their feet.

When asked what they dreamed of for the future, Ana said she would like to be able to buy makeup and pretty clothes. Shameila agreed with Ana and added she also would like to have a boyfriend. When asked if they wanted to get married and have their own children when they grow up, both girls vigorously shook their heads, 'no.' When asked what they would do instead, they said they would like to work. When asked if they would like to work outside of the family or in the family like their mothers do, they replied that they wanted to work like their mothers do.

During the interview, which was conducted by the only running water source, community women were scrubbing clothes by hand with cold water. At this point, one of the women interrupted to say that the girls would be better off working for money outside of the community so that they would be able to buy what they wanted.

The women and an older girl started talking about the fact that it was important to go to school and learn to read and write. 'At least to be able to write your own name,' added a middle-aged woman. One went on to say that the only way that could happen would be if a school was started in their settlement. The Women's Commission delegate asked a 17-year-old girl if she would attend a school if it was in their settlement. She answered that she would not be able to because she had to care for her one-and-a-half-year-old baby.

A few local and international NGOs have programs that specifically target youth. The Novi Sad Humanitarian Center (NSHC), a local implementing partner of UNHCR, has a program providing education to Roma youth. A Women's Commission delegate visited an NSHC class in Novi Sad. Fifteen youth between the ages of 13 and 19 were drawing pictures and sharing stories about the pictures. Because their Roma community does not emphasize activities such as drawing and coloring when children are young, these youth were drawing pictures with images more typical of much younger children. They were enthusiastic about this activity and eager to share their pictures and stories with the psychosocial worker leading the class. These same youth also participate in another NSHC class that is teaching them beginning reading and writing skills which help prepare them to enter a special government school for youth who have not finished primary school. Because these 15 youth are not literate, they need special catch-up activities in order to have a chance of succeeding in the special government school.

The local NGO, Group 484, also has psychosocial workshops for adolescent refugees. These workshops have the stated goal of promoting civil society values by supporting cultural activities and educating youth about principles of democracy and respect for differences. Many more local NGOs have programs promoting the development of civil society through activities with children and youth but do not target refugee and IDP youth. Many international NGOs have psychosocial programs that target refugee and/or IDP children and youth together.

In spite of programs that target refugee and IDP youth, either separately or more commonly as part of a larger children's program, adolescents continue to be perceived as particularly underserved. UNICEF's Project Officer, Svetlana Marojevic, sums it up well: 'Adolescent refugees and IDPs are especially affected by the wars and displacement and remain the most neglected group. They need to feel useful and included and to get some qualifications. They are in need of psychosocial support and interventions, educational encouragement, counseling and clubs where they can talk about their animosity and how they can work through it to help in the process of building civil society.'" (Women's Commission September 2001, pp. 16-17)

Montenegro:
"The Women's Commission found few programs that focused specifically on refugee and internally displaced adolescents. UNICEF noted that the lack of attention to adolescent concerns was a problem. 'Children 15 and older cannot go back to primary school officially,' noted one aid worker. The Montenegrin Ministry for Refugees observed that refugee and internally displaced youth faced similar problems to Montenegrin youth in that there were few employment opportunities.

Among the few agencies targeting adolescents and young adults are the Red Cross, which runs youth clubs with education projects on drug prevention and HIV/AIDS, and the Danish Refugee Council, which has developed a youth partnership program on the coast." (Women's Commission September 2001, p. 25)

Serbia: An estimated 20 percent of the displaced children do not attend classes (2000-2001)

- Schools damaged during the war or turned into collective centres for the displaced from Kosovo
- Catch-up classes are being carried out in schools, collective centres and community rooms for an estimated 20,000 displaced children

- Alternative non-formal education for Roma and rural IDP children with low educational levels has also been initiated.
- Indifference of parents to education, and high levels of trauma are causing considerable learning difficulties
- Classes of over 50 pupils are no exception and all schools work in two shifts per day
- Some IDP children, especially Roma, miss school due to lack of proper clothing and school materials
- The Government of Montenegro initially refused to extend the benefit of mandatory schooling to Kosovar Albanians

"In Central Serbia/Vojvodina, the school year in 1999 was cut short due to the NATO intervention, which paralysed the school system. Over 200 primary schools were damaged and four completely destroyed, with ensuing loss of furniture and teaching aids. Schools in Central and Southern Serbia were turned into collective centres for displaced persons from Kosovo. Over 20 schools are still occupied by 'old caseload' refugees from Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina who are mostly accommodated in school gyms. Since the culmination of the Kosovo crisis, about 30,000 displaced children have been registered in Serbia and 4,000 in Montenegro (for the school year 1999/2000).

With UNICEF's support, 50 schools in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (excluding Kosovo), which had accommodated IDPs during the summer of 1999, have been repaired or rehabilitated. Catch-up classes are being carried out in schools, collective centres and community rooms for an estimated 20,000 displaced children. Alternative non-formal education for Roma and rural IDP children with low educational levels has also been initiated. However, the integration of Roma IDP children into the school system is constrained by the fact that they often have an insufficient knowledge of the Serbian language and many, from rural areas, are semiliterate. These factors, plus differences in the educational standards due to years of disrupted schooling in Kosovo, indifference of parents to education, and high levels of trauma, are causing considerable learning difficulties. As a result, an estimated 20 percent of the displaced children do not attend classes." (UN OCHA 6 July 2000, pp.58-59)

"The situation of internally displaced children should also be taken into consideration. There are a few in Montenegro and tens of thousands in Serbia (the total number of IDPs and refugees in Serbia is 700 000). They have permanent housing or schooling there. Most of them are also unwilling to go to school because they see no prospects for themselves." (COE, Social Health and Family Affairs Committee 22 March 2000, para. 46)

"IDPs, being citizens of the FRY, have access to education. The educational system is in dire straits, though. Classes of over 50 pupils are no exception, and all schools work in two shifts per day. Access to primary education is guaranteed, but access to secondary and higher education is limited to the availability of places. Some IDP children miss school, due to lack of proper clothing or school materials which have to provide at the parents' cost. Especially Roma children are having difficulty in attending the educational system, due to a variety of factors, including lack of funds to buy the necessary school materials." (UNHCR March 2001, para. 12)

"The Government [of Montenegro] attempts to meet the health and educational needs of children, but insufficient resources impeded this goal. The educational system provides 8 years of mandatory schooling. When IDPs began arriving from Kosovo in 1998, the republic government initially refused to extend this educational benefit to Kosovar Albanians. However, after having consulted with and received promises of assistance from international organizations, the Government announced late in that year that displaced children soon also would be allowed to attend school. Although ethnic Albanian children have access to instruction in their native language, the Government came under criticism for not also developing a curriculum in which ethnic Albanians could learn about their own culture and history. The situation

reportedly remains unchanged. Most Roma child refugees from Kosovo do not receive any education." (U.S. DOS February 2001, sect. 4)

UN Administered Province of Kosovo

Ethnic minority children face very difficult schooling conditions (2000-2001)

- 40 % of the education facilities in the province were severely damaged or completely destroyed after the war in 1999
- According to the Department of Education and Science, the establishment of integrated multi-ethnic classrooms is unrealistic (2001)
- Insecurity and poverty prevent school attendance of Roma, Ashkaelia, and Egyptian (RAE) students throughout Kosovo
- Girls in RAE families are nearly always the first to leave primary school because of economic or familial problems
- Security and freedom of movement concerns still result in restricted access to education for Kosovo Serbs, particularly those living in isolated areas
- The Kosovo Serb community seems reluctant to participate in any move to create a unified education structure

"The educational system in Kosovo, including the official and the parallel structures, was disrupted for the duration of the war and school facilities were severely damaged. According to a UNICEF [survey], 67 percent of Kosovo's 1000 schools were in need of repair, including 45 percent that were either totally destroyed or severely damaged. Through school reconstruction and rehabilitation programmes funded by UN agencies, NGOs and donor governments, the vast majority of children in Kosovo are now back in school." (UN OCHA 6 July 2000, p. 65)

"The education sector as a whole faces a myriad of problems resulting fro m the combined impact of; under-trained and poorly paid personnel using outmoded teaching methods and working in inadequate facilities, adversely affected both by war damage and general deterioration during the prolonged period of under-investment and poor maintenance that preceded the conflict. The challenges in bringing the education system up to speed are numerous but solutions are required quickly, in order to respond to the pressing needs of students from all ethnic backgrounds. Minority students frequently face additional hurdles. The access of minorities to education services in an environment free of recrimination and intimidation remains a major concern. Certain minority children simply remain out of the education system at all levels, whilst others can only access services under difficult conditions, relying on security escorts to reach their class rooms and faced with the consequences of shortages of teachers and textbooks once they get there. The JIAS Department of Education and Sciences (DES) continues to work on the establishment of a unified curriculum for primary education, including clarification of the languages of instruction and appropriate inclusion of minority culture and history. A comprehensive discussion paper on the new Kosovo Curriculum Framework is in the advanced stages of preparation and should be released shortly to facilitate public debate. Whilst key issues remain under discussion the quality of education offered to those children currently in the system suffers significantly. There have however, been a number of positive initiatives, by both UNMIK and NGOs, since the last reporting period , including the implementation of catch-up classes and the use of secure escorts, both of which have improved the access of minority students in particular areas. The greater challenge continues to be the establishment of sustainable mechanisms, which ensure the access and retention of minority children in the school system and creates an educational system, which fully reflects the multi-ethnic ity of Kosovo.

On 5 September, the DES presented its plans for the future of education in Kosovo. The package of reforms, outlined in two draft regulations, is expected to be signed into law before the elections in November. The reforms will begin the process of bringing Kosovo's education system into line with European standards. The DES has reiterated that there is no intention to maintain a parallel education system, but has already stated that, as the establishment of integrated multi-ethnic classrooms is unrealistic at this point in time, a special strategy will be applied to ensure that the right of education is enjoyed by all. Full details of this strategy have yet to be worked out.

Roma, Ashkaelia, and Egyptian (RAE) students throughout Kosovo continue to be particularly affected by problems which prevent their attendance in school. Unlike Kosovo Serb students who are educated in an environment perceived to be their own, RAE students are more likely to be pupils of mixed schools. Since the publication of the last Assessment, there have been reports of intimidation of Roma children travelling to and from school in communities around Prizren, Mitrovice/Mitrovica, Gjilan/Gnjilane, and Prishtine/Pristina. As noted above, the efforts of KFOR and UNMIK have resulted in increased security in some areas, but the perception of insecurity based on real and/or perceived threat continues to negatively impact the attendance of Roma children in particular. As a result, some parents refuse to send their children to school and assert that they cannot do so until there has been a visible improvement in the security situation. In some acute instances parents have unreasonably refused support that would ease their childrens' access to school and in doing so have been a contributing factor to the denial of the basic right to an education. As far as UNHCR and OSCE are aware, applicable law providing sanctions for parents who refuse to send their children to school has not been invoked in such situations. Given the complexities of the current situation it could arguably be counter-productive to use such legislation against parents whose motivations may include genuine and as yet unresolved security concerns. Poverty constitutes an additional obstacle to the attendance of RAE children in school. The current situation has plunged many RAE families close to destitution, having lost their worldly possessions during the conflict and its immediate aftermath and still two years later denied a reasonable chance to regain their losses through employment and full participation in society. There is significant pressure on RAE children to begin to work at a young age both within the home and outside, and this results in very high drop out rates, often noticeably more so for female students who face social pressures to marry at an early age. A recent assessment completed by the OSCE showed that the girls in RAE families are nearly always the first to leave primary school because of economic or familial problems They are the least likely to participate in catch-up classes, and the least likely to return to school after having left for a period of time. This type of gender discrimination further isolates RAE women as it leaves them unprepared to compete professionally. It highlights the need for special measures to be taken to encourage the retention of girls in the school system.
[…]
Security and freedom of movement concerns still result in restricted access to education for **Kosovo Serbs**, particularly those living in isolated areas. A number of Kosovo Serb schools also complain of a shortage of basic school equipment and teaching materials. The recurring problem of inadequate classroom facilities is being addressed gradually, through the combined efforts of the DES and various international organisations and NGOs (in Strpce/Shterpce for example KFOR along with Polish NGOs and IOM assisted in the repair of a school for Serb students). However, the provision of assistance can be problematic. In Lpijan/Lipljan, for example, provisions for the education of Kosovo Serb children have been obstructed by the Kosovo Serb leadership due to a dispute over the proposed location of the school. Schools within the Kosovo Serb community continue to follow the curriculum taught in Serbia proper. Efforts by DES to include Kosovo Serbs in discussions on the development of a unified curriculum have been hampered by the refusal of some Kosovo Serb representatives to participate. A similar reluctance on the part of Kosovo Serbs to participate in DES initiatives was apparent during a recent 3-week training course for Kosovo Serb primary school teachers, where only 10% of the invitees attended the 3-week course. At a local level, however, there are examples of multi-ethnic co-operation, and in Kamenice/Kamenica, for example, Kosovo Serb and Kosovo Albanian children attend school in the same school compound (albeit in separate buildings and shifts). However, as a general observation, the Kosovo Serb community seems reluctant to participate in any move to create a unified education structure, and DES's ongoing curriculum review programme is progressing without any substantive Kosovo Serb input." (UNHCR/OSCE 1 October 2001, paras. 24-28)

ISSUES OF SELF-RELIANCE AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (excluding Kosovo)

Many displaced in Montenegro have become self-reliant despite problems of access to social grants paid in Serbia (2000-2001)

- IDPs have access to employment in the informal sector of the economy, receive assistance from relatives or own assets in Montenegro
- Salaries, and pensions, in so far as these are still being paid to IDPs in Serbia in dinars, are inaccessible to IDPs in Montenegro without travelling to Serbia

"More accurate targeting of IDPs and refugees [by WFP food aid programmes] is justified by the fact that many of them have access to employment in the informal sector of the economy, receive assistance from relatives or own assets in Montenegro. WFP will target food distribution to single parent families, children under 5, IDPs and refugees in collective centrers, the elderly and the disabled." (WFP 2000, paras. 86-87)

"The non-functioning of federal structures in Montenegro, and in particular the fact that the German Mark is the only legal currency in Montenegro and that in consequence there was until recently (March 2001) no inter-republic financial traffic possible, implies additional disadvantage for IDPs. Salaries, and pensions, in so far as these are still being paid to IDPs in Serbia in dinars, are inaccessible to IDPs in Montenegro without travelling to Serbia. Similarly, while the Montenegrin Health Insurance Fund covers primary health care for IDPs, inter-republic payments have stopped, and specialised treatment is no longer available to IDPs, as both the Montenegrin and Serbian Health Insurance Funds refuse to cover such treatment." (UNHCR March 2001, para. 17)

Internally displaced persons face same conditions as the local population (2000)

- Over a million people live below the poverty line, representing one tenth of the total population
- Two thirds of the refugee and displaced persons living in collective centres have no income of any kind
- Regardless of their eventual citizenship and location, the most vulnerable among the displaced will continue to require assistance in order to meet their basic needs
- In the longer term many of these people will probably be transferred to the social welfare system in whichever place they settle permanently

"The country now hosts the highest number of refugees and internally displaced in Europe. The economy is acutely depressed: state welfare provisions are lacking; health institutions arerun-down, unemployment is high and pensions are low. Vulnerability levels are alarming, not only for the displaced, but also for the average citizen, with children and the elderly disproportionately bearing the brunt. A recent vulnerability assessment concluded that over a million people live below the poverty line, representing one tenth of the total population." (IFRC 20 October 2000)

[Survey conducted in 167 municipalities in FRY excluding Kosovo]

"The survey shows unemployment rates increasing in both republics [Serbia and Montenegro]. Officially there are 663,758 unemployed persons in Serbia. The higher share of unemployed in total population is in Bujanovac 62%, Varvarin 60%, Mionica 39.8%, Gadzin Han 35%, Nis 32%, Kragujevac and Kursumlija 28% each. In Montenegro, total number of unemployed is 57.634, with highest share in total population in Podgorica 47%, Herceg Novi 36%, Ulcinj 32,4% and Pluzine 28 %.

Over 90% of the refugee/internally displaced population are temporarily accommodated with relatives, friends, or in rented accommodation. Less than 10% live in collective centres. The survey confirms that the conditions and priority needs of refugee and internally displaced persons are very similar to those of the local population.

The most common problem is lack of income. Though it is difficult to obtain statistically valid data on this subject, particularly regarding activity in the grey economy, it appears that only a very small proportion can rely on regular income sufficient to meet basic needs; for example, two thirds of those living in collective centres have no income of any kind.

The vast majority have great difficulty paying for items such as medicine, electricity and heating fuel. According to the survey, the priority needs for displaced populations are energy including heating (90%), clothing and footwear (70%), food (67%) and medicines and hygiene items (30%). The refugee/internally-displaced populations also use (and place extra burden on) health, education, social welfare and other public service and are therefore affected by conditions in these sectors." (UN OCHA 8 December 2000)

"Durable solutions in the form of return, local integration or (on a very small scale) resettlement will be pursued in the coming year. However, regardless of their eventual citizenship and location, the most vulnerable among the displaced will continue to require assistance in order to meet their basic needs. In the longer term many of these people will probably be transferred to the social welfare system in whichever place they settle permanently. Costs related to urgent needs for refugees and IDPs over the next six months amount to about US$ 50 million, of which about half has been pledged by donors." (UN OCHA 5 December 2000, pp. 13-14)

Parliamentary elections 23 December 2000: participation of the displaced from Kosovo

- The total number of voters included about 150,000 persons registered in Kosovo, some of whom were ethnic-Albanians
- Many entries in the voter lists from Kosovo lack personal ID numbers
- Neither the failure to prepare a national computerised register fully, nor inaccurate registers prevented voters from exercising their right to vote on election day

"The Election Law stipulates that voter lists will be 'extracted from a national computerised voter register, run as an integrated system with a breakdown by municipality'. The Law however fails to specify how this national register is to be created and maintained, and which body or bodies are responsible for this task. At present, voter registers are maintained and updated by the municipal authorities, some manually, others by computer, using different software programs. Given the short timeframe and the current status of the voter registers, it was clearly impossible to implement the legal requirement of having a unique centralised voter register on time for 23 December. As some municipalities provided incomplete information, the REC postponed the announcement of the final number of registered voters until after the legal deadline to ensure that data was as accurate as possible.

On 11 December, the REC approved a total of 6,500,831 voters. This figure included some 150,000 registered in Kosovo, some of whom were ethnic-Albanians. [20] However as one district in Kosovo was

omitted, some Serbs were excluded. On 22 December, the total number of voters was corrected to 6,508,856 to take into account court decisions and the inclusion of some military voters, who are registered in polling stations close to their barracks.

Authorities exhibited a high degree of goodwill and transparency in updating the registers. Although voter lists used in polling stations on election day were in fact drawn from municipal voter register extracts, a serious effort undertaken in good faith was made to comply with the legal requirement and compile a national voter register. [21] However, registers continue to have errors and omissions including some missing personal identity numbers, errors in spelling of names, and some anomalous entries. [22] The REC reported that many entries in the voter lists from Kosovo also lack personal ID numbers. Nevertheless, neither the failure to prepare a national computerised register fully, nor inaccurate registers prevented voters from exercising their right to vote on election day.

Endnote 20: Some 200,000 persons displaced from the conflict in Kosovo into Serbia were entitled to registration as voters at the place of their temporary residence.

Endnote 21: The Belgrade Institute of Informatics and Statistics and a private company from Novi Sad were contracted to computerise the registers kept manually in smaller municipalities. On 26 December, a CD-ROM was presented in the REC as a compilation of all voter register extracts used for the 23 December elections.

Endnote 22: The registers in Bor contained some 2,000 former citizens of Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, mainly Roma, whose citizenship status is unclear. In Sremska Mitrovica, some 30 percent of entries in the registers have incorrect ID numbers." (OSCE ODIHR 20 February 2000, sect. V)

Serbia: Displaced lack access to information on civil and social rights (2000)

- Local and international agencies should ensure that refugees and internally displaced persons are properly informed about their rights and the services available to them

"It was in this crucial area of 'getting the information out' to refugees and IDPs that the mission felt was of most concern. This highly marginalised and vulnerable group is further disadvantaged if they are uncertain of their rights or of the services they could access to help promote them. Indeed, the 'most needy people are the ones which never find out about support,' according to one leading member of the international community. Agencies must work more closely together in co-ordinating information channels to refugees and IDPs, both in order to identify and plug gaps where certain groups may miss out on much of the information flow (such as Roma IDPs) and to ensure that clients know of the full range of services available to them from a range of different service providers.

Since there are multiple service providers active in the field – from governmental, IGO and NGO sectors, local and international – the role of co-ordinating information on all available services and making sure it is presented in a format readily usable by service providers in working with refugees and IDPs would seem most appropriately sited with a national-level co-ordinating body able to key into all the sectors and link with local fora. In Serbia, this type of role would be best fulfilled by the International Council of Voluntary Agencies, which already plays a full role in collating information on IGO and NGO activity, supported by UNHCR." (ICVA/ECRE May 2000, paras. 4.9.3-4.9.4)

Economic crisis in Serbia and Montenegro makes access to income sources for displaced very difficult (2000)

- 63% of the population in Serbia considered to be living in poverty

- Unemployment in Serbia estimated at more than 30 percent and at least twice that percentage among refugees and displaced people
- Pensions paid by the Government to the retirees are late and insufficient to cover living expenses

General situation

"While there is uncertainty regarding the accuracy of statistical data, nearly all reports reiterates the downward trend in the humanitarian situation in the FR Yugoslavia. According to Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU) Quarterly Country Report, the percentage of the population considered to be living in poverty reached 63% in September 1999 alone, with the Belgrade Institute for Market Research, claiming just 5-10% of the population in Serbia can afford anything more than food and the bare necessities, with the rest of the population moving increasingly closer to the threshold, where the struggle for basic survival begins. The EIU report also noted the increasing shortage of goods in state-owned stores, and ever-longer queues for staples, as well as the strengthening of the grey economy. The list, according to EIU, of products in short supply is lengthening, and includes cooking oil, sugar and numerous medicines. The Federation Field Officers reiterated these shortages, while also noting shortages in fresh milk (almost impossible to buy) flour and even bread. According to the same EIU report, given the estimated GDP per head, (whether based on purchasing power parity or a weighted average of the official/unofficial exchange rates) the FR Yugoslavia is now only marginally better off than Albanian, and placed behind all other countries in the region." (IFRC 19 June 2000)

"[C]urrent estimates place unemployment in Serbia at more than 30 percent, and joblessness among refugees and displaced people is likely to be at least twice that percentage. Many factories were damaged or destroyed by NATO bombing, and in many cases were functioning poorly before being knocked out of commission. Agricultural production is also down.

As is true of the population generally - and particularly true of its vulnerable segments, such as the elderly, the infirm, and single women with children - the main problem for refugees and displaced people is the lack of jobs and income. They simply have no earning power. A person who earns the average Serbian income of 80 Deutsche marks (DM)(about $40) per month cannot afford 150 to 250 DM (between $75 and $125) per month for food.
[…]

The Yugoslav government is often late in paying retirees their pensions, stretching out the pay periods, or missing pension checks entirely. […] In actuality, even if retirees did receive their pensions on a regular basis, that would not cover living expenses. Some pensioners have received coupons for firewood, for example, but lack the money to hire someone to transport the wood to their homes.

The government's social welfare system has essentially collapsed, and the rolls of 'social cases' continue to grow. Some 33 percent of the population are reportedly living below the poverty level. The percentage among the uprooted is undoubtedly higher." (USCR April 2000, pp. 3-4)

UN Administered Province of Kosovo

Lack of access to the labour market deters return and prompt departure within minority communities (2001)

- Unemployment rates in minority communities can be nearly 100%
- Continued security concerns, lack of freedom of movement and discrimination are the main obstacles faced by minorities

- The Roma communities face the additional barrier of the lack of formal education and qualifications
- There is a general lack of proactive and effective action to promote minority employment, either in the private or the public sector, aggravated by the absence of effective remedies

"The improvement in the security situation for some minorities allows greater attention to be focused on public employment, a key problem area where there has been little positive progress. While security and freedom of movement concerns continue to limit the employment possibilities of many minority communities, it can no longer be stated that security concerns constitute *the sole reason* for low employment rates of certain minorities. This is manifestly no longer the case, for all locations and all minority groups, so the full explanation must lie elsewhere. As stated in previous assessments, there are no comprehensive figures for unemployment in Kosovo but anecdotal evidence continues to suggest that unemployment amongst minorities remains exceptionally high. In Ferizaj/Urosevac municipality, minority representatives estimate unemployment to be nearly 100%, while in Kamenice/Kamanica it remains above 80%. The reasons why minority unemployment appears to outstrip unemployment in the majority community is due to a combination of factors, including, continued security fears and the lack of freedom of movement as previously mentioned, compounded in turn by high levels of discrimination. Many RAE face the additional barrier of the lack of formal education and qualifications. As minority communities gradually appreciate that the degree of security threat against them has diminished and/or can be overcome with the implementation of special support measures, they have been disappointed to find that employment prospects have not correspondingly improved. Increasingly the lack of employment becomes a major factor of instability within their communities threatening their viability through the combined effect of deterring return and prompting further departures.

There are regrettable few indications of proactive and effective action to promote minority employment, either in the private or the public sector. In the public sector, both UNMIK central authorities and the local municipalities continue to employ some members of minority groups and this is often the only source of income to minority communities. However, UNMIK Municipal Administrators, often find themselves imposing the employment of minorities upon municipalities, in the face of opposition from the municipal assemblies. Under such circumstances the sustainability of employment is questionable. In the private sector, the influence of UNMIK is obviously less strongly felt and although, some efforts have been made to encourage employers to engage minority staff, as occurred in the Bentakos quarry in Viti/Vitina, such efforts are extremely limited in their overall impact.

Discrimination remains prevalent, even in the public sector. In Prizren, for example, of 40 municipal civil servants made redundant in February and March this year, 10 were Muslim Slavs, and 14 were Turks, figures disproportionate to their overall representation within the population. Despite this, most of the affected persons have not been able to take any effective action to address the discrimination, given the lack of effective remedies." (UNHCR/OSCE 1 October 2001, paras. 29-31)

See also "JIAS Employment Survey: Results Report", OSCE Mission in Kosovo, 12 November 2001 [Internet]

Assembly of Kosovo: a breakthrough for the political participation of ethnic minorities? (November 2001)

- Special efforts have been made to encourage the participation of all minorities through support to the registration of voters and minority parties
- 47 percent of the Serbs in Kosovo and 57 percent of the Serb displaced in Serbia voted
- The Kosovo Serb entity Coalition Return has won a total of 22 seats, including the ten seats set aside for Kosovo's Serbian community

"An important event that will shape the future of Kosovo and have far reaching effect for all citizens, not least of which minorities, is the **election for an Assembly of Kosovo** that will take place on 17 November 2001. The Constitutional Framework for Provisional Self-Government in Kosovo (Constitutional Framework) promulgated by the SRSG on 15 May 2001, provides the foundation for a new era of self-governance and self-administration in Kosovo. Regulation 2001/19 of 13 September on the Executive Branch of the Provisional Institutions of Self Government in Kosovo, includes more detailed provisions on the actual structures of government, including a number of annexes which outline the functions of each of the Offices and Ministries that will assume responsibilities for the day to day functioning of government in the future. A major role for the international community as a whole, and particularly for the OSCE, which is charged with organising the elections, is to advocate for an inclusive electoral process. Therefore, special efforts have been made to encourage the participation of all minorities by offering support for the registration of minority voters and of parties representing minorities." (UNHCR/OSCE 1 October 2001, para. 34)

"A key element in the preparations for Kosovo-wide elections continues to be sustained efforts to encourage the participation of all of Kosovo's communities not only in registration but also in the elections themselves and the ensuing institutions of provisional self-government. To support this effort, the institution-building pillar established a special task group with five mobile teams to reach out to Kosovo Serbs and communities of internally displaced persons currently living in and outside Kosovo to inform them of the electoral system and the ethnic representation in the new Assembly, and to lobby for Kosovo Serb political entities and voters to participate in both registration and the elections. The public information effort has been crucial to the outreach to the Kosovo Serb community. With the assistance of the UNMIK Office in Belgrade, communication links with the main media outlets in that city have facilitated radio and television interviews and stories using UNMIK resources to obtain information these media could not otherwise obtain. Early in September, UNMIK also hosted an inaugural visit of 13 senior Belgrade media representatives on a five-day Kosovo familiarization tour in order to increase the level of information in Serbia proper about the situation in Kosovo of internally displaced persons.

To facilitate the registration of Kosovo Serb internally displaced persons in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the institution-building pillar sub-contracted voter registration to the International Organization for Migration in conjunction with the Serbian and Montenegrin Commissariat for Refugees. Although slow to produce results both in and outside Kosovo, a call to register by the President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Vojislav Kostunica, and the Prime Minister of Serbia, Zoran Djindjic, at the end of August 2001 gave a most welcome momentum to the process, triggering an average daily registration of Kosovo Serbs of 3,000 to 4,000. In view of this increase, my Special Representative decided to extend voter registration by two weeks, until 22 September." (UNSC 2 October 2001, paras. 30-31)

Serb participation: of those residing in Kosovo 46 percent voted, among those displaced to Serbia and Montenegro, 57 percent voted. (OSCE Mission 19 November 2001)

"Seven entities were certified to contest the 20 seats set aside for Kosovo's smaller communities in addition to the 100 multi-ethnic seats. The Kosovo Serb entity Coalition Return has won a total of 22 seats, including the ten seats set aside for Kosovo's Serbian community. The Bosniak/Gorani entity, Vatan, has taken four seats, including three set aside seats. The Bosniac Party of Democratic Action of Kosovo (BSDAK) has taken the other seat set-aside for the Bosniak community. The Kosovo Turkish Democratic Party (KDTP) has won a total of three seats, including the two seats set aside for their community. The Ashkali Albanian Democratic Party (PDASHK) has taken two of the four seats reserved for the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. The New Initiative for a Democratic Kosovo (IRDK) – which has also won one of the 100 seats – and the United Roma Party of Kosovo (PREBK) will share the other two." (OSCE 26 November 2001)

See also :

"Head of Mission welcomes certification of Kosovo Serb citizens' initiative", OSCE Mission in Kosovo, 24 September 2001 [Internet]

Insufficient access of minority groups in Kosovo to social welfare (2000-2001)

- The objective of the Kosovo-wide Social Assistance Scheme is to provide financial and food support to the most vulnerable members of society
- Several criteria for eligibility to the scheme unfairly exclude members of minority communities
- Despite the creation of the Social Assistance Scheme, vulnerable minority members will continue to need food assistance from the international community
- Budgetary constraints have resulted in very modest payments, leaving minorities without adequate support and putting pressure on them to leave the province
- Limited freedom of movement has prevented minorities from re-applying regularly to the Social Assistance Scheme and has resulted in their re-registration from the SAS (August 2001)

"The social assistance scheme operated under the auspices of the Department of Health and Social Welfare (DHSW) and implemented at a municipal level by the Centres for Social Work (CSW) is the successor of the Emergency Financial Assistance Scheme. This operated from November 1999 through April 2000. The basic objective of the new social assistance scheme is to provide financial and food support to the most vulnerable members of society. Beneficiaries are grouped according to vulnerability - Category I; those considered unable to work such as the elderly and the disabled; and Category II; those who are able to work but currently without employment. Category I beneficiaries receive a combination of cash payments and food aid while Category II will receive only cash payments. Eligibility is determined on the basis of an assessment of all family members residing in the same household.
[...]
Due to a shortage of resources within the CSW there was a heavy reliance on NGO outreach services to ensure that potential minority beneficiaries were able to receive application forms, complete them and return them to the CSW for assessment. However some minority communities excluded themselves from the scheme as a result of an all-or-nothing approach by community leaders. These rejected the notion of means testing and opted to boycott the scheme unless all members of their community were automatically included. CSW, with the active support of NGOs, have tried to overcome this problem by reaching out to vulnerable applicants who would otherwise have been prevented from applying due to pressures from within their own communities. This has been a delicate exercise so as not to jeopardise the security of individuals. DHSW has expressed satisfaction that the application process has been as fair as possible under the circumstances and report that the number of minority villages, primarily Kosovo Serbs, boycotting the scheme are very few.

Practical difficulties still face minority beneficiaries under Category I; cash payments are made through the Banking and Payments Authority (BPK) and while this is present in almost every municipality, it is not easily accessible to Kosovo Serbs and Roma who can not travel easily. As an alternative minority beneficiaries can also receive payments through the offices of the municipal administration and in some cases, for isolated minority beneficiaries, payments have to be made to the door by UNMIK staff.

Eligibility criteria for Category II beneficiaries have only recently been finalised and it is anticipated that the application process will not commence until November. Category II is of great importance to minority communities, hard hit by the high unemployment rates facing all Kosovars. The fine points of what constitutes being available for work have a direct bearing on minorities. Some minorities, most notably Kosovo Serbs and Roma, face the obstacle of being willing to work but unable to find it because severe restrictions on their freedom of movement limit their mobility to confined geographical areas where they

are unlikely to find much work on offer. Minority groups also face obstacles in terms of language barriers and general discrimination that prevents them competing equitably on the job market. It is a requirement of the eligibility procedure that those capable of work, must register and obtain a certificate from the Office of Employment certifying he/she is available and seeking work (a declaration stamped by UNMIK is an acceptable alternative). As yet Employment Offices have not been established in all municipalities and even where they have, their accessibility to minorities with limited freedom of movement remains questionable. There is an onus on these offices to ensure outreach services to housebound minorities. Exclusion criteria such as the ownership of more than a half hectare of land have now been worked out to the benefit of minorities in rural areas Since this exclusion is overridden if the land is inaccessible due to land mines (a problem still facing the whole population in certain areas) or due to other security concerns (a problem more particularly affecting minorities who have come under attack while trying to work their land or whose land has been usurped by others). In both instances however adequate documentation must be presented by the person alleging lack of access to their land. It remains unclear how a minority member is expected to establish their fear and the risk upon which this is based. An additional exclusion criteria stating that the applicant family must not own a motorised vehicle could be to the detriment of a minority applicant who may own a car or tractor but be unable to use it for security reasons.
[...]
An overarching concern has arisen over budgetary constraints faced by the social assistance scheme. Payments have been pegged at very modest rates both because of budget limitations and in order to maintain coherency with the wage levels within UNMIK. Planning for the scheme was undertaken on the basis of population estimates that have now been augmented to by the arrival of large numbers of returnees. These were not necessarily taken into account in the planning phase. Current payments to 37,000 households contrast with initial planning figures of approximately 20,000. With a maximum budgetary capacity to respond to the needs of between 50 and 60,000 households in total, the unexpectedly high levels of Category I beneficiaries may have serious implications for potential Category II beneficiaries; the category which many minorities could find themselves in. As Category I beneficiaries will always take precedent over Category II, UNMIK has indicated that they may have to be more restrictive with the eligibility criteria for Category II beneficiaries in order to balance the budget, bearing in mind the high number of Category I beneficiaries. This could leave minority populations in difficult circumstances without adequate support, putting further pressures on them to leave the province. The implications of this for the continued sustainability of minority communities have to be fully appreciated and taken on board by UNMIK, the donor states and the international community at large. The further destabilisation of minority communities and the worst case scenario of further departures because of inadequate access to basic assistance is a prospect with serious humanitarian and protection implications. There is an onus on the international community to act to avert this eventuality." (UNHCR/OSCE October 2000, paras. 79-86)

"In some areas of Kosovo minority access to social services, including the [Social Assistance Scheme (SAS)], has improved due to, the combined impact of an increase in resources and specialised staff (including more minority staff) and, the efforts of a number of supporting NGOs. Despite this, full access to services is still not possible for many vulnerable minorities. While the relevant JIAS departments (Health and Social Welfare and Labour and Employment) have taken steps to improve staffing levels and have revised some of the more difficult policy and paperwork requirements to minimise barriers discriminatory towards minority applicants, physical access to the Centres for Social Work (CSW) who implement the SAS, remains difficult. Serious problems have emerged of late as existing SAS recipients are now expected to re-apply in order to maintain their current benefits. For Category I beneficiaries reapplication is required every 6 months and for Category II beneficiaries, every 3 months. Due to lack of capacity the CSW had previously overlooked this requirement but it is now being systematically enforced. In the case of minority beneficiaries it has become obvious that without the heavy involvement of international agencies, they are simply unable to ensure access to complete the re-application procedures. Many of the international NGOs who were pivotal in supporting the CSW at the outset, have since scaled back their involvement and indeed their presence in Kosovo. The net result is that vulnerable minority beneficiaries are being de-registered from the SAS and their benefits are being discontinued while they have very limited or no ability to re-apply or to register for alternative assistance such as WFP food assistance. UNHCR, OSCE and other agencies continue to monitor this situation and intervene to find solutions for the most acute individual

cases. The bigger problem however will not be resolved in this piecemeal manner. To put it bluntly, minority beneficiaries are being punished by the system. Their inability to re-apply, frequently due to security problems that impede their freedom of movement, results in the discontinuation of benefits, sometimes without any prior notification. The institution itself meanwhile, despite the clear obligation to provide equitable services, has failed to take adequate action to meet the specific needs of minority applicants and beneficiaries, preferring instead to shift the responsibility to those least able to overcome the discrimination, the beneficiaries themselves." (UNHCR/OSCE 1 October 2001, para. 23)

Kosovo Serbs remain reluctant to participate in joint political structures (2000-2001)

- The Serb community has finally agreed to join the Joint Interim Administrative Structure (JIAS) as an observer
- Other minority groups are not represented in the JIAS but do participate in the Kosovo Transition Council
- Minorities have also filled positions as co-heads of JIAS Administrative Departments
- The Kosovo Serbs and some sections of the Turkish community boycotted the municipal elections held in October 2000
- As a result, the UN Special Representative appointed representatives of minority communities to elected assemblies in areas where they lived

"Participation in political structures has gained a new relevance in light of the completion of the first province-wide municipal elections [28 October 2000]. The turnout for the elections was exceptionally high and many minority communities actively participated with the notable exceptions of the Kosovo Serbs and some sections of the Turkish community." (UNHCR/OSCE March 2001, Executive Summary)

"UNMIK has made every effort to ensure that all of Kosovo's communities are represented in the new municipal structures. To this end, my Special Representative appointed representatives of minority communities to elected assemblies in areas where they lived. To date, minority appointees have been incorporated into assemblies in approximately two thirds of Kosovo's municipalities. Most of these appointees were drawn from non-Kosovo-Serb minority communities and include Kosovo Turks, Bosniacs, Roma, Ashkalija and Egyptians.

The integration of Kosovo Serb appointees into the 27 elected municipal assemblies has proceeded at a slower pace, owing to demands from Kosovo Serb leaders that they be allowed to set up their own municipal structures separate and apart from the elected assemblies. This issue proved particularly contentious in the municipalities of Mitrovica and Strepce, where Kosovo Serbs have refused to participate in the elected assemblies altogether." (UN SC 15 December 2000, paras. 6-7)

"The municipal structures […] are up and running in most municipalities in Kosovo. However, it is often the case that although the main body of the Assembly does function, other mandatory organs like the Communities Committee and the Mediation Committee are not fully constituted or fully operational. The SRSG has appointed minority assembly members pursuant to his authority under Section 47 of Regulation 2000/45. However, the reality is that not all of the appointed members are actively participating. The full and active engagement of minority representatives in the work of the municipal assemblies is a challenging task. It demands not only the tolerance and acceptance of the majority members and their constituency but also the willingness and acceptance of each minority community. These are key factors, which unfortunately, cannot be taken for granted in the hostile environment of Kosovo. One problem repeatedly highlighted is that the municipal assemblies are used as a political platform with excessive time dedicated to generalised political discussions, at the expense of tackling the local issues that lie squarely within the assembly mandate. Minorities frequently boycott assembly meetings as a mark of protest at the perceived lack of action relevant to their needs and/or as an obstructionist tactic designed to block assembly business.

The negative impact of such irresponsible behaviour by assembly members of all ethnicities, is ultimately borne by the community at large who suffer the consequences of limited achievements in solving pressing problems, such as education, sanitation and road repairs. It is imperative that the representatives of all communities assume their full responsibilities and begin to address the issues affecting their municipalities before the public at large begins to lose faith in the political process." (UNHCR/OSCE 1 October 2001, para. 40)

"There has been some progress with the inclusion of non-Kosovo Albanian communities in the local government. Approximately 90 Kosovo Serbs now participate in the work of 13 municipal assemblies, and representatives of other non-majority communities participate in the assemblies of their respective municipalities. The municipal elections that must take place before the current two-year mandate expires in October will provide municipal leaders with a new political mandate for the exercise of their expanded responsibilities." (UNSC 15 January 2002, para. 13)

Civil registration in Kosovo: efforts made to give access to the registration process to displaced in Serbia (2000)

- Every person 16 years of age and older who is considered to be a habitual resident qualifies for registration
- The right to vote will be granted to persons 18 years and older who are able to prove residence in Kosovo as of 1 January 1998
- Registration sites opened on the northern and south-eastern boundaries with Serbia to allow potential applicants currently residing in Serbia access to the registration process

"A Joint Registration Task Force has been established by the civil administration and the institution-building (OSCE) components to carry out registration. The combined registration process will begin in late March with a number of pilot projects, and will be extended all over Kosovo during April, May and June. Every person 16 years of age and over who is considered to be a habitual resident will qualify for registration. Children under the age of 16 will be registered in July and August. Identity cards will be issued to persons 16 years or older, and the right to vote will be granted to eligible persons 18 years and older. The institution-building component (OSCE) will, upon completion of the civil registry reflecting the population of those aged 16 years and older, focus on producing the consolidated electoral list of those aged 18 years and older.

The term of 'habitual resident' has been carefully chosen by UNMIK to make it clear that matters of citizenship are not being touched. A habitual resident of Kosovo is defined by at least one of the following criteria: (a) having been born in Kosovo; (b) having at least one parent who was born in Kosovo; or (c) having resided for at least five consecutive years in Kosovo and being able to prove it. The choice of these criteria, suggested by UNMIK and now being discussed with local representatives, is meant to be inclusive in that it takes into account various types of population movement within the former Yugoslavia and between that country and other States hosting Yugoslav citizens over longer periods. At the same time, the criteria are meant to be exclusive in that they attempt to prevent recently arrived illegal immigrants from qualifying.

[Applicable registration criteria also include following categories of persons:
- Person who, in the opinion of the Civil Registrar, was forced to leave Kosovo
- Otherwise ineligible dependent children of persons registered, but proved to be in full-time education.]

The right to vote will be limited to those who are able to prove residence in Kosovo as of 1 January 1998, a cut-off date chosen by UNMIK for a number of reasons. Persons who have left Kosovo before that date in order to establish permanent residence elsewhere are not considered to have kept the close links assumed to

be essential for the right to vote in a municipal election. Many forced displacements took place after that date. Initially, Kosovo Albanian and, subsequently, Kosovo Serb residents were compelled to leave their home constituencies in great numbers during the past two years. In both cases, their right to vote should be confirmed by the choice of this date. UNMIK will endeavour to ensure that everyone, including minorities and displaced persons, will be able to register and vote safely.

Some Kosovo Albanian political leaders have questioned the cut-off date, perceiving it as favouring the recent Kosovo Serb refugees and internally displaced persons over the Kosovo Albanian diaspora since 1989. After discussing the criteria qualifying for civil and voter registration, the Interim Administrative Council agreed, on 22 February, to the proposed cut-off date of 1 January 1998.

A preliminary decision has been taken that a voter may exercise a dual option in voting; a voter may vote in either the municipality of his or her residence on 1 January 1998, or in the municipality of current residence. This will allow internally displaced persons to vote in their current residence without facing security problems in their former place of residence." (UNSC 3 March 2000, paras. 130-134)

"Out-of-Kosovo registration began simultaneously with in-province registration by mail in 32 countries and in-person registration in Montenegro, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia; Albania; and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Despite persistent efforts by UNMIK to secure the cooperation of the Yugoslav authorities on the registration of Kosovo internally displaced persons in Serbia proper, there has been no change in their negative position on this issue. Registration sites are being prepared on the northern and south-eastern boundaries with Serbia to allow potential applicants currently residing in Serbia access to the registration process." (UNSC 6 June 2000, para. 112)

See also "UN mission in Kosovo reports successful end of registration process", 19 July 2000 [Internet]

See also OSCE press release "Roughly One Million Register but OSCE Regrets Serb Boycott", 24 July 2000 [Internet]

Access of minorities to public utilities in Kosovo: Need for a fair treatment (2000)

- Despite some deliberate acts of sabotage, minority communities were not disproportionately affected by water and electricity shortages and telephone disconnection
- Over the course of the summer 2000, the provision of basic services has greatly improved and the focus of debate has now shifted to the core question of payment for services received
- A temporary exemption from water and electricity fees was introduced by UNMIK in response to concerns that majority and minority customers alike would be unable to pay their bills
- Feedback from the field indicates that minority communities did have access to the scheme
- There is a need to provide minority communities with access to payphones to ensure that they can communicate with security and emergency services

"In previous reports concerns were raised about the possibility that minority populations were shouldering a disproportionate burden in terms of water shortages, electricity blackouts and telephone disconnection. Complaints to this effect were frequently received from the field but it was often difficult to establish the root cause of the problem. While many minority communities believed that they were being deliberately targeted, they were often just facing the hardships of erratic supplies that affect the entire population. However in some cases this was compounded by deliberate acts of sabotage resulting in temporary disconnection of services. Over the course of the summer the provision of basic services has greatly improved and the focus of debate has now shifted to the core question of payment for services received.

A special project for temporary exemption from water and electricity fees was introduced by Pillar IV (EU/Economic Reconstruction and Development) in response to concerns that majority and minority customers alike would be unable to pay their bills. The exemption scheme covered the period October 1999 through March 2000, with a cut-off point for applications set as June 1. Application forms were issued in both Albanian and Serbian. The CSW were involved in supporting this scheme as application forms were available through the centres and were to be returned to them for final processing and determination by the Public Utilities Department (PUD). There was heavy reliance on NGO support to reach minority applicants, especially Kosovo Serbs and Roma affected by freedom of movement problems and unable to easily access the CSW. By late June, the PUD, reported that some 50,000 applications had been returned for processing. As with applications for social assistance, minority applications were not highlighted as such. However feedback from the field indicates that minority communities did have access to the scheme (although not as extensively as Kosovo Albanians) and some minorities certainly did apply. At the time of writing it is not known exactly how many applications were positively determined and minority applicants (as well as Kosovo Albanian applicants) are still waiting to receive formal notification of whether they have been granted any relief on their outstanding bills. What is clear, however, is that the PUD will not repeat the scheme and bills accrued from April 2000 onwards will have to be paid in full. As we enter another harsh winter, inability to pay bills will be a recurring problem for many Kosovars. This will be a particular problem for minority populations due to restrictions on their freedom of movement, which inhibit their ability to find jobs or, in the event of having disposable income, to be able to safely access payment offices to settle their bills. While it is clear that economic realities and budgetary constraints prevent the PUD from maintaining open ended subsidies it is equally clear that they bear a responsibility to ensure that minority customers are fairly treated. There is still a lot of work to be done to ensure that bills are calculated with reference to actual consumption and are issued in a language understandable to the customer and that flexible payment systems are devised to allow minority customers to pay their bills. These mechanisms should be put in place before proceeding to disconnect services.

Reliable access to telephone services has a particular bearing on the security and well-being of minority populations, especially those living in isolated areas and/or enclave situations. Again budgetary constraints augur against the notion of blanket free access to phone services. However, faced with the prospects of disconnection due to inability to pay, the alternative of providing community payphones merits serious and prompt consideration. Particularly vulnerable communities do need to have a means of communicating with security and emergency services. Such a system would also allow people living in enclaves a means of communicating with family members further afield. It is important that people are able to maintain contacts of this nature if their sense of isolation and abandonment is not to become acute." (UNHCR/OSCE October 2000, paras. 87-89)

Discrimination of minorities on the labour market, including the public sector (2000)

- Massive unemployment remains a crucial problem in Kosovo but particularly affects minority communities
- Minority members are often unable to access their former employment due to security concern
- Minority members are also affected by discrimination, including by public authorities, a situation further aggravated for the Roma communities which lack education
- Illegal dismissals by public agencies have continued during 2000, disproportionately affecting members of the minorities
- The adoption of quotas and flexible working and security arrangements for minorities in the public sector have been recommended by international agencies

"One of the crucial issues to ensure the long-term sustainability of the minority communities in Kosovo is access to employment. Massive unemployment remains a key problem for all communities across Kosovo, but particularly affects minorities, with, for example unemployment amongst Serbs in Vitina/Viti being

estimated at 99%. Minority communities are often unable to access their former employment due to security concerns, particularly when they have very limited freedom of movement, but added to this is the difficulty many have in accessing any employment due to discrimination, including discrimination by public authorities. For the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, lack of education is often another key problem minimising their chances of finding employment. Therefore, the creation of a Kosovo-wide policy on employment by UNMIK is essential. As part of this policy UNMIK should ensure that the existing employment laws are implemented, and that a comprehensive employment code is passed. It is particularly important to ensure that all authorities set a clear example by ensuring fair access to emp loyment in public bodies.

There are examples from the field where security concerns have been addressed by KFOR, allowing minorities secure employment. In Gnjilane/Gjilan, for example, Kosovo Serbs have been re-employed in the Morava and Paralovo quarries as a result of a consistent policy both to recruit minorities and to provide security for them. The last figures obtained by OSCE indicate that over 60 Kosovo Serbs were working in these quarries, and that they were escorted to and from work by KFOR.

Several examples illustrating the need for a clear employment policy to ensure access to public employment were noted in Prizren. During 1999, many Turks, Muslim Slavs and Roma were illegally dismissed from their jobs. At the same time, many Kosovo Albanians were employed in an irregular fashion by self-styled mayors and administrators. Since that time, very few of the cases of illegal dismissal have been remedied, although they have been brought to the attention of UNMIK and the courts. The judges claim they are uncertain how to deal with the cases. This lack of a remedy has further demoralised the minority communities, putting further pressures on them to leave and acting as a brake on returns. IDPs are aware that it would be very difficult for them to regain their former jobs. Indeed, it is clear that rather than receiving support to reintegrate, the few returning IDPs have been discriminated against for having left. For example a Muslim Slav who fled from Prizren to Montenegro in June 1999 after being threatened and beaten by KLA members while working in the hospital has not been able to resume his position despite never having been officially dismissed. Problems of this type have been attended to on a case by case basis by services such as the UNHCR funded Civil Rights Project, implemented by the Norwegian Refugee Council. There has been some success in resolving individual cases but the problem can only be truly tackled on the basis of clear and non-discriminatory employment policies.

Illegal dismissals by public agencies have continued, albeit in lesser numbers than in 1999, with these dismissals disproportionately affecting members of the minorities. For example, on 31 May 2000, 12 employees of the SDK/SHKSH, of which 4 were Turks and one was a Kosovo Serb, were informed that they would not be able to work for BPK, the agency that replaced SDK/SHKSH. The Prizren Director of BPK stated to UNMIK that BPK was not a successor to SDK/SHKSH and therefore has no obligation towards its employees.

Many members of minority communities (as well as Kosovo Albanians) have complained that lack of respect for legally established procedures is not only manifested in illegal dismissals but also in irregular hiring practices, promotions and assignments within public institutions. For example, when a public competition was held for 12 positions in the Prizren Regional Institute for Employment, four long-term employees, of which two were Turks, applied, but were not called for interviews. The four former employees have launched a case in the Municipal Court against the Department of Labour and Employment. Minority members continued to complain that when public agencies such as the Postal Service were being gradually reactivated, they were not being called to resume their former positions. This and other similar experiences demonstrate that public competitions for employment are important for guaranteeing non-discrimination only where they are organised in a transparent manner and where sufficient weight is given to seniority and education. Transparency is not only crucial to guaranteeing the fairness of any selection process, it is also required to guarantee the perception of fairness. At present, minorities have reason to believe they are not competing on a level playing field.

There is a powerful argument for temporary special measures to foster access to training and employment opportunities for minorities, especially the Roma community, the most disadvantaged in these areas. Such measures should include reserving quotas for minority applicants and ensuring flexible working and security arrangements that encourage minorities to accept, and continue in, employment in public bodies. There are examples from the field where such measures have been implemented, albeit in an ad hoc fashion. In Gnjilane/Gjilan, for example, the Municipal Administration has reserved a quota of 20% of positions for Kosovo Serbs in the municipal administration. However, the Municipal Administrator has stated that it has been difficult to find sufficient Kosovo Serb applicants for the jobs, as many qualified individuals have left the province. The same problem has been identified in the other municipalities. The Kosovo Protection Corps has similarly reserved a 10% quota for minority members (some 500 places with the KPC of which only 106 have as yet been filled). There is an urgent need for a Kosovo-wide policy on this issue. If some of the barriers preventing minorities from access employment could be removed by the implementation of special measures, the prospects for identifying and retaining minority staff would improve." (UNHCR/OSCE October 2000, paras. 90-95)

For more information on access of minorities to employment in the public sector in Kosovo, see UNHCR/OSCE Assessment of the Situation of Ethnic Minorities in Kosovo, March 2001, paras. 76-87 [Internet]

DOCUMENTATION NEEDS AND CITIZENSHIP

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (excluding Kosovo)

Serbia: Displaced face difficulties in obtaining personal documentation at their new place of residence (1999-2001)

- The Norwegian Refugee Council reports problems in issuance of documents pertaining to employment or education by Kosovo institutions to IDPs in Serbia
- IDPs, in particular Roma, face problems to obtain documents from municipalities "in exile"
- IDPs not physically present in Kosovo are not eligible to UNMIK identity documents
- Ministries for health and education waived the requirement to show documents to gain access to health care and schools in the course of 1999

"Refusal of Kosovo Institutions to Issue Documents. IDPs frequently needs documents pertaining to employment, education, etc. from Kosovo institutions. NRC's offices in Kosovo, on behalf of IDPs in Serbia, have made a number of requests to various institutions, including the University of Pristina. When presented with requests for the return of individual documents, the Rector has indicated that he will not return documents on an individual basis, but insists on a systematic bilateral solution between Kosovo and Serbia. He indicates he is concerned about the return of documents of Albanian students that are purportedly in the custody of Serbian authorities. Documents need to be made available on an equal basis by Yugoslav, Serbian, and Kosovo institutions.

Documents Problems inside Serbia. When Serbian authorities left Kosovo in June 1999 in advance of NATO, many status and property registry books, as well as court documents were removed from Kovoso. Those records are located in numerous locations in central and south Serbia where these Kosovo municipalities 'in exile' have established themselves. IDPs located in different parts of Serbia are in need of documents, such as birth certificates, citizenship certificates, etc. that can only be issued by these offices. Many Roma in particular face the problem that they were never registered in these records and now need to become registered for the first time in order to obtain the documentation necessary for IDP status and assistance. Clients, in particular Roma, have encountered difficulty obtaining documents from these offices, requests remain unanswered, money in addition to the required tax for the document must be paid, etc. Current procedure requires the applications for document issuance be made to the 'in-exile' maticni ured of permanent residence. This imposes a significant hardship on IDPs.

The procedure should permit application in the maticni ured in the place where IDPs are temporarily accommodated, the application then being transferred ex officio to the relevant office. NRC is pursuing this matter with both local and central authorities. The Ministry of Administration needs to review the conduct of local registry offices to ensure that they are issuing documents in compliance with law and regulations.

Lack of Bilateral Agreements on Document Recognition – Yugoslavia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Failure of governing authorities to reach agreements about recognition of documents impedes refugees and IDPs in the exercise of rights in their place of origin, including re-possession of property, pensions, employment rights, etc. Despite the recent signing of the 'Common Document' between UNMIK and Yugoslavia, there governing authorities have not yet reached an official agreement concerning Yugoslav recognition of UNMIK documents and stamps. This lack recognition hinders residents of Kosovo, including Albanian IDPs from Serbia, in their efforts to obtain documents or conduct other business in Serbia. Croatia also does not recognize UNMIK documents based on Yugoslavia's lack of recognition.

Yugoslavia and Bosnia and Herzegovina also have no agreement regarding mutual recognition of official documents and stamps. The Republika Srpska and the Republic of Croatia have no agreement concerning such recognition.

IDPs in Serbia not Eligible for UNMIK Identity Documents. While it is unclear whether there is any particular desire on the part of IDPs to have UNMIK identity documents, the UNMIK regulation establishing the Kosovo civil registry and providing for the issuance of identity documents limits those eligible to those physically present inside Kosovo." (NRC 10 February 2002)

"The need for documents to gain access to health care was quickly resolved when the Ministry of Health waived the requirement to show such documents. Although the Ministry of Education was slower to respond, it has now [fall 1999] allowed displaced children to register for school without the proper residence documents." (USCR April 2000, p. 10)

Montenegro: New law bars the displaced from citizenship (1999-2001)

- By requiring 10 years continuous residence in Montenegro, new citizenship laws effectively prevents refugees and internally displaced from obtaining Montenegrin citizenship

There have been some specific developments in Montenegro that affect IDPs in a particular manner. A specific aspect of the Montenegrin situation is its separate citizenship legislation. Obtaining Montenegrin citizenship requires a 10-year prior residence. This means that IDPs, given that they are usually citizens of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Republic of Serbia), may not be able to regularise their stay in Montenegro as ordinary citizens even if they so desire." (UNHCR March 2001, para. 16)

"After protracted debate, the assembly of the Republic of Montenegro adopted a law on Montenegrin citizenship. The law gives primacy to internal republic citizenship over federal Yugoslav citizenship. By requiring 10 years' continuous residence in Montenegro, the law effectively prevents refugees and displaced persons from obtaining Montenegrin citizenship and those who do not, even though all have the citizenship of FRY. Thus, it creates conditions for discriminating against those persons who, although permanent residents of Montenegro and Yugoslav citizens, do not have republican citizenship; potential areas of discrimination are tax obligations, right to work in public enterprises and political rights, such as the right to vote for local political bodies." (UN CHR 28 December 1999, sect. III H)

UN Administered Province of Kosovo

Access to civil documents should be made easier for ethnic minorities (2000)

"Even when confined to enclaves, the normal cycle of life events goes on for minorities and needs to be formally documented by the relevant authorities. Birth, marriage and death certificates are required and the service of provision of **civil documents** needs to be sufficiently flexible so that minority populations can avail of them without putting themselves at risk. If such services are centralised in inaccessible locations, minorities will not be able to access them. A more flexible approach, using mobile teams needs to be considered as an alternative means of providing this service." (UNHCR/OSCE June 2000, para. 58)

ISSUES OF FAMILY UNITY, IDENTITY AND CULTURE

UN Administered Province of Kosovo

Missing persons and the detained: towards a solution (2000-2002)

- Since 1999, the vast majority of Kosovo Albanian detainees in Serbia have been released under ICRC auspices
- More than 3,000 persons from Kosovo are missing, including about 600 ethnic Serbs and Roma
- The signature of the Common Document between UNMIK and authorities in Belgrade will ease the solution to the issue of missing persons and detained (November 2001)

"The ICRC has a mandate to visit detainees held in connection with conflicts in the former Yugoslavia. In July 1999, more than 2,000 Kosovo Albanian detainees were transferred from Kosovo to prisons in Serbia. Since then, the ICRC has regularly visited not only those detainees but also persons arrested in relation to the hostilities in southern Serbia. These visits are intended to preserve the physical and moral integrity of detainees and to ensure that they enjoy decent material conditions of detention.
[…]
In cooperation with the authorities, the ICRC makes arrangements for released detainees falling within its mandate to return to their homes and families. Since 1999, the vast majority of ex-detainees, mainly Kosovo Albanians, have been escorted home, leaving fewer than 170 still detained in FRY prisons. (ICRC 8 February 2002)

"[A]ccording to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 3,376 cases of missing persons from Kosovo remain unresolved, of whom approximately 600 are ethnic Serbs and Roma. In order to coordinate the activities of the principal agencies involved in these issues, and to provide greater support to the families, UNMIK established a Bureau for Detainees and Missing Persons in early October. To facilitate the work of the Bureau, two resource centres were opened, one in Pristina and the other in Gracanica. Co-located with these resource centres are representatives from UNMIK police, the institution building pillar's Missing Persons Unit and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). In addition, a mobile team visits the more remote communities, especially the minority communities, who may not have easy access to the resource centres." (UNSC 15 December 2000, para. 41)

Following the signing of the Common Document, important progress was made on the issues of missing persons and the detained. The UNMIK police Missing Persons Unit, which is in the process of establishing a sub-office in Belgrade, was informed in Mid-December that it would be granted full access to post-mortem data collected by the Serbian police and forensic pathologists from various exhumation sites recently uncovered in Serbia. This will clear the way for the identification of hundreds of Kosovo Albanians exhumed from these sites over the past few months. The UNMIK/Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Contact Group on Missing persons made headway in drafting a Protocol on Joint Verification Teams on Hidden Prisons, which will enable UNMIK police and authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to investigate alleged sites. After a review of their cases according to international standards, the remaining Kosovo Albanian detainees in Serbian jails are to be transferred to Kosovo as soon as possible. Representatives of the Department of Justice have visited detention facilities in Serbia where Kosovo regarding the handover of UNMIK of relevant case-file information." (UNSC 15 January 2002, para. 32)

For more information on missing persons in connection with the Kosovo crisis, consult ICRC Family News Network [Internet: http://www.familylinks.icrc.org/]

See also "UNMIK-FRY Closer to Transfer of All Kosovo Albanian Detainees in Serbia to Kosovo", UNMIK press release, 5 February 2002 [Internet: http://www.unmikonline.org/press/2002/pressr/pr685.htm]

For more information on the Common Document, see "Towards self-governance in Kosovo: progressive transfer of responsibilities from UNMIK to the local population (2000-2001)" [Internal link]

Concerns over the safety of Orthodox priests (2001)

- UNMIK deployed extra security measures at Orthodox religious sites

"Religion in Kosovo is often inextricably linked to ethnicity. Most ethnic Albanians are Sunni Muslims, but there is a Catholic minority who live mostly in the Southern and Western parts of the province. Serbs are almost exclusively Serbian Orthodox Christians.

Most ethnic Albanians are not strongly identified with their religion and their animosity against Serbs is essentially on the basis of ethnicity, with the difference in religion a coincidental factor. However, Serbian Orthodox churches hold symbolic significance and over 100 have been destroyed in retaliation for the mosques destroyed by the Serbs. UNMIK have taken steps to ensure that all religious communities could worship safely and deployed extra security at Orthodox religious sites. Nevertheless, there have been concerns for the safety of Orthodox priests and many have been forced to relocate." (UK October 2001, paras. 6.24-6.25)

The problem of minority languages in Kosovo (2000)

- Public usage of Serbo-Croatian can put one's safety at risk
- 1977 Kosovo Language Law guarantees the equality of Albanian and Serbo-Croatian languages, as well as Turkish language in areas populated by Turks
- Inconsistent language usage within the public services throughout the province leads to confusion
- The Turkish minority refused to participate in the registration campaign requiring the use of Turkish on equal footing with Albanian and Serbian in Turkish-populated areas (August 2000)
- UNMIK Regulation 2000/45 on Municipalities grants the right to communicate in their own language to minorities where they form a "substantial part of the population"
- According to instructions to Kosovo administration (July 2000), official documents issued to the public at large must be printed in English, Albanian and Serbian

"The question of use of official languages is one example of the complexity of the task facing the international community in terms of guaranteeing mutual respect for the different languages used by minority groups in Kosovo. Public usage of Serbo-Croatian and to a lesser degree other minority languages continues to be a risky venture. UN security officers still advise incoming international staff not to speak Serbo-Croatian or other Slavic languages on the street for their own safety.

At an official level, the 1977 Kosovo '**Law on the realisation of the equality of languages and alphabets**' (currently considered as applicable, based on UNMIK Regulations No. 1999/24 and 1999/25), guarantees the equality of Albanian and Serbo-Croatian languages, as well as Turkish language in areas populated by Turks. The law provides that official decisions and announcements, education and public signs should be in Albanian and Serbo-Croatian, and in Turkish in areas of Turkish population. In addition, judgements,

decisions, and other written documents of the courts and public prosecutors' offices are to be delivered in the mother tongue of the concerned party. Written requests and complaints to state organs, as well as replies thereto, are to be in the mother tongue of the citizen concerned, be that Albanian, Serbian-Croatian or Turkish.

In practice, however, **language policy is far from uniform**. UNMIK Regulation No. 1999/1 states that all regulations shall be issued in Albanian, Serbian, and English. Within the sphere of education, the policy tends towards the recognition of five languages: Albanian, Serbian, 'Bosniac', Turkish and Roma. The practice within the sphere of public utilities is contradictory: the Post and Telecommunications Section of the Department of Economic Affairs and Natural Resources opts for a trilingual English/Albanian/Serbian system for their official documents, while KEK, the electricity company, favours a separate English/Albanian and English/Serbian billing system. Similar confusion and lack of consistency has cropped up in other areas, with reports received of court documents, including summonses, being issued only in Albanian.

The question of language usage is far from simple. The acceptance of a number of official languages is one tangible means of evidencing the acceptance of the majority population of the rights of minority populations. Moreover, UNMIK has an obligation to endeavour to accept multiple official languages not only under the applicable Kosovo law, but also under the applicable international law. The practicalities of multi-language use, however, are fraught with difficulties. **There is an urgent need for UNMIK to adopt a formal position on the question of official language and to take practical steps to ensure that a standard and workable policy is applied province-wide**. This has cost implications which donors must be made fully aware of and requested to support." (UNHCR/OSCE June 2000, paras. 38-41)

Situation as of March 2001

"The fifth OSCE/UNHCR assessment highlighted problems caused by the lack of uniformity in UNMIK policy on the use of languages. Despite some limited progress in developing and issuing clearer instructions on language use for specific purposes, the lack of a comprehensive policy applied province-wide continues to be detrimental to the needs of non Albanian speaking minorities.

The predominant use of Albanian to the exclusion of other languages, often in contravention of UNMIK instructions that certain public documents must be issued in all three official languages (English, Albanian and Serbian), continues to send a loaded message to minority communities that they had better adapt to the system rather than expect it to be adaptable to their needs. As a result speakers of the lesser-used languages have either opted to keep quiet (quite literally) or alternatively to lobby strenuously for public recognition of their language. This latter approach was clearly evidenced when the majority of the Turkish community refused to participate in the registration, arguing that the applicable law, which they stated requires the use of Turkish on an equal footing with Serbian and Albanian in certain areas populated by Turks, was not being applied. After lengthy negotiation a compromise position was worked out between the Turkish representatives and UNMIK, including for those municipalities where the Turkish community lives, the right to use their own language in relations with municipal authorities, issuing of official documents (birth, death and marriage certificates, etc) in the Turkish language and alphabet, official signs in the Turkish language and alphabet. This compromise is considered by the Turkish political parties as an acceptable interim framework pending a more definitive agreement. In the meantime, comparable progress on the protection of other minority languages has been made by the inclusion in Regulation 2000/45 on Self-Government of Municipalities in Kosovo, of a similar model, granting these rights in areas where an identifiable minority forms a 'substantial part of the population'.

In a welcome, but limited development, the SRSG sent a memorandum on 26 July 2000 to the Co-Heads of the JIAS Departments of Public Utilities, Health and Social Welfare and Justice, stating that official documents (including bills) issued to the public at large must be printed in English, Albanian and Serbian, with all three 'official' languages appearing together on the document. It is clear that the problem of the language used in official documents is not as widespread as previously. However, some problems remain, particularly in Dragas/Gora, with documents being issued only in Albanian or in English and Albanian. The

issuing of the 26 July instruction to other JIAS Departments, a reiteration of this policy for UNMIK, and dissemination of the precise requirements of Regulation 2000/45, would be useful to further clarify UNMIK' position on language policy.

Clear policy on other issues with language implications is also needed. For example, for authorities whose function is to serve the entire community, such as the local police service, current deployment focuses on having police of the same ethnicity as those in the communities they serve - Kosovo Albanians in Kosovo Albanian areas, and so on." (UNHCR/OSCE March 2001, paras. 63-66)

Regulation No. 1999/01, on the authority of the Interim Administration in Kosovo, 23 July 1999 [Internet]

Regulation No. 1999/24, on the law applicable in Kosovo, 12 December 1999 [Internet]

Regulation No. 1999/25, Amending UNMIK regulation No. 1999/1 on the authority of the Interim Administration in Kosovo, 12 December 1999 [Internet]

Regulation No. 2000/45, on Self-Government of Municipalities in Kosovo, 11 August 2000 [Internet]

PROPERTY ISSUES

UN Administered Province of Kosovo

The Housing and Property Directorate and Claims Commission: current mechanisms leave most property claims unresolved (2001-2002)

- HPD and HPCC are mandated to resolve disputes related to residential property resulting from discriminatory legislation in Kosovo since 1989 and the 1999 armed conflict
- HPD collects claims, supervises the enforcement of HPCC's decisions and the inventory of abandoned housings
- Out of the 401 disputes, only eleven decisions have been enforced and 26 illegal occupants moved out voluntarily
- It has been decided to open satellite offices to collect claims in Serbia and Montenegro, but there is no funding for the offices in Montenegro (November 2001)
- OSCE reports that unless a funding gap of approximately US $8 million is filled, the HPD will not be able to function beyond March 2002
- The HPD and the HPCC are not receiving enough support from the other structures within UNMIK
- Lack of clarity and authoritative interpretation of the applicable law leads to the potential violation of property rights

"The HPD and HPCC are an institution established by UNMIK Regulation 1999/23 in November 1999. They are mandated to resolve disputes related to residential property resulting from discriminatory legislation applied in Kosovo since 1989 and the armed conflict which ended in June 1999. The massive displacement during and after the conflict led to widespread abuse of residential housing and property rights. The HPD has a broad mandate which includes collecting claims, enforcement of the HPCC's decisions and executing the inventory of abandoned housing in order to resolve, on an interim basis, housing needs of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees. The United Nations Commission for Human Settlements (UNHCS)-Habitat provides technical assistance in supporting the institution.

In October 2000, as a consequence of concerted action from various entities, including OSCE, the SRSG promulgated Regulation No. 2000/60 on Residential Property Claims and the Rules of Procedure and Evidence of the HPD and HPCC. Chapter 11 Section 1 paragraph (g) of the Constitutional Framework for Provisional Self-Government in Kosovo (UNMIK Regulation 2001/9) grants independence to the HPD and the HPCC from the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (PISG). The Framework refers to the instruments establishing the HPD and HPCC for its powers, obligation and composition. Until UNMIK Regulation 2000/60 was promulgated, neither the HPD nor the HPCC had formal procedures in place, though claims over residential property were accepted in their office in Prishtine/Pristina. Due to the lack of procedure, HPCC could not begin to review and settle disputes over residential property nor could the HPD conduct an inventory of unoccupied housing in order to supervise its use for humanitarian purposes on a temporary basis. Prior to this, UNMIK Regulation 1999/23 had taken away the broad scope of the Regular Courts' jurisdiction and that of the municipalities and instead granted it to the HPD and the HPCC, respectively. Thus, Regulation 2000/60 was vital for the process not only of receiving, but also deciding, claims. Notwithstanding their lack of authority, many municipalities had started to allocate vacant residential property according to unlawful criteria and large numbers of individuals were squatting.

Since OSCE issued its last report on property, UNMIK Regulation 2000/60 was enacted by the SRSG and the HPD made progress on its deployment across Kosovo. Today the HPD has four Regional Offices in Prishtine/Pristina, Gjilan/Gnjilane, Mitrovice/Mitrovica and Peje/Pec, nearly all municipalities have been trained in HPD procedures, 7,956 claims have been collected, 936 properties are under administration and 151 permits have been issued. The HPD has enforced eleven administrative eviction decisions in accordance with its mandate under Section 12 of UNMIK Regulation 2000/60 and 26 illegal occupants moved out voluntarily. The mechanism foreseen in UNMIK Regulations 1999/23 and 2000/60 has settled 401 disputes. A dispute can be settled through mediation, i.e., where both parties agree to a solution proposed by the HPD, or through a final decision of the HPCC. Out of the 401 disputes, 159 have been settled through mediation by the HPD and the HPCC has issued 239 decisions. To date only eleven decisions have been enforced and 26 illegal occupants moved out voluntarily. The HPD is staffed with eighteen internationals and 150 local staff out of which 23 are members of national minorities. An agreement was signed on 1 November 2001 between the FRY, the Government of the Republic of Serbia, the Coordination Center for Kosovo and Metohija and UNCHS-Habitat allowing HPD to collect claims in Serbia proper and Montenegro. Consequently, permanent and satellite offices have been opened to perform that function in Serbia, although there is no funding for the offices in Montenegro.

Claims Filed	Claims Settled	Decisions Issued by HPCC	HPCC Decision Enforced
7,956	401	239	11

Properties under inventory	Properties under administration	Properties allocated	Applications Re
2,267	936	151	Not available

Despite the positive developments, the HPD and the HPCC face a number of obstacles to fulfil their mandates. First, the funding granted to the institution will run out by March 2002. Unless, a funding gap of approximately US $8 million is filled, the HPD will not be able to function properly. In addition, the funds are allocated to certain geographical areas or programmes and not to the overall activities of the institution. Second, the HPD and the HPCC are not receiving enough support from the other structures within UNMIK. The lack of support has adverse effects on the administrative performance of the institution. In addition, UNMIK has not emphasised the importance of the mandate of the HPD in front of the municipalities. For instance, the HPD reported difficulties when requesting authorisation to use premises under UNMIK administration. Third, the lack of administrative support coming from UNCHS-Habitat, pursuant to the letter of agreement dated 14 January 2000, distracts the senior management of the HPD from performing its substantive duties since it has to deal with procurement and logistical issues. Moreover there is a shortage of vehicles, radios and other essential assets, such as office space. According to a representative of the HPD, the institution will not process claims after March 2002 and enforcement will finish by July 2002. The local staff will be reduced by 45 and also some international staff will not have their contracts renewed. Field activity inside Kosovo will be reduced to an absolute minimum. All these circumstances are a major obstacle for the institution's aims and goals as established in its mandate. What is more, it is not acceptable that the institution survives on a non-sustainable day-to-day allocation of resources."
(OSCE January 2002, pp. 16-18)

Other problems reported in "Property Rights in Kosovo", a report of the OSCE mission in Kosovo (January 2002)

"According to the recent report, the resolution of property ownership issues is fundamental to the return process. The denial of property rights impacts particularly on Kosovo's smaller communities as well as on efforts to create sustainable conditions for the return of internally displaced persons and refugees.

Substantial factors still obstruct with the full realization of property rights. Among these are:

Lack of clarity and authoritative interpretation of the applicable law leads to the potential violation of property rights. Comprehensive legal reform is essential to ensure that the law is interpreted according to solid legal principles;
Continued funding for the Housing and Property Directorate (HPD) and the Housing and Property Claims Commission (HPCC). The OSCE recommends that resources be allocated to ensure that these institutions are sustainable and can adequately fulfil their mandate;
Slow decision making process in the HPCC on the resolution of claims and its impact on the return process – 46 years to complete at the current rate. The OSCE suggests that efforts should be made to improve the efficiency and the rate at which claims are settled and decisions carried out.
Delegated authority to municipalities does not include the executive power to allocate property or conduct evictions. Administrative instructions should be issued to clarify HPD's jurisdiction and the responsibilities of municipal authorities in housing matters.
Backlog of property disputes before the regular courts, resulting from both a confusion over jurisdiction between the HPPC and courts and from cases pending before 1999. The judiciary should acknowledge the role of HPD and HPCC in the legal system and guarantee due process to all property claims.
Lack of equal access and treatment of Kosovo's smaller communities to the courts. The OSCE will continue to monitor the judicial system in order to guarantee their property rights and obligations.

Despite the progress achieved the mechanism is far from being fully functional. As a result, property rights are being violated without any effective remedy, leaving most residential property disputes unresolved." (OSCE 13 February 2002)

For more details, see the full text of "Property Rights in Kosovo", OSCE Mission in Kosovo, January 2002 [Internet]

See also "Who owns what? UN tackles Kosovo housing tangle", Christian Science Monitor, 10 January 2002 [Internet]

Minority-owned homes do not benefit from the official UNMIK programme for the reconstruction of homes (2000-2001)

- During 2000, minority communities complained of unfair distribution of reconstruction aid by the municipal housing commissions
- UNMIK Guidelines for Housing Reconstruction set aside 5-10% of reconstruction funds for minority communities but the target was not reached
- 2001 Guidelines did not define any quota but encouraged reconstruction agencies to proactively include minority beneficiaries in their programmes
- Preliminary information for 2001 shows that level of minority beneficiaries remains very low (3-4 percent)
- There continues to be reports of discrimination and intimidation against minority communities regarding reconstruction assistance

"The previous [UNHCR/OSCE] assessment highlighted a number of problems with regard to minority access to the official reconstruction assistance programme. In March 2000, the JIAS Department of Reconstruction established Guidelines for Housing Reconstruction, providing common guidelines for the identification of beneficiaries, for the rehabilitation and reconstruction standards for damaged and destroyed properties as well as for the implementation procedures and for the general co-ordination of activities and actors. In accordance with the guidelines reconstruction assistance throughout 2000 was allotted through the municipal housing commissions who assumed responsibility to approve the identification of beneficiary villages and families. Given that minority participation in such commissions

was minimal this frequently led to allegations of discrimination and unfair distribution of resources. Members of minority communities have complained to the OSCE that they were unaware of the guidelines, of their right to apply for assistance, or, when their application had been rejected, of the reason why. The guidelines explicitly mentioned that 5-10% of committed funds would be set aside for the needs of minority communities, but an end of year review indicated that the actual figure reached was in the region of 2%. As some municipalities did not maintain clear records on the beneficiaries of reconstruction assistance it proved impossible to arrive at a precise figure of exactly how many there were. From the overall assessment of 2% however it is clear that the target figure was not reached." (UNHCR/OSCE March 2001, para. 57)

"With the imminent onset of winter this report effectively co-incides with the imminent conclusion of a second full cycle of reconstruction assistance funded by international donors, such as the European Agency for Reconstruction. At the close of the previous reporting period we had noted an encouraging openness on the part of the Department of Reconstruction to adopt a more flexible approach to the reconstruction needs of minority populations in recognition of the fact that their personal circumstances are frequently radically different from those of the majority community. Revised guidelines covering the 2001 assistance cycle took on board a number of recommendations made by UNHCR in the interests of vulnerable minority applicants, including potential returnees. No percentage quota was established for minority beneficiaries. Rather each agency participating in reconstruction activities was encouraged to take a more open and pro-active approach to the identification and inclusion of minority beneficiaries. Selection of beneficiaries remained a municipal responsibility under the auspices of the Municipal Housing Committees, the composition of which contemplated the participation of UNHCR, OSCE and other interested organisations in an observer capacity. We have been unable to obtain full statistical information on the final breakdown of reconstruction beneficiaries during 2001 in order to assess whether or not minorities fared any better during this cycle. Preliminary, and as yet incomplete, information is disappointing however and indicates only a slight rise in the overall number of minority beneficiaries selected for reconstruction assistance. Of close to 6,500 damaged or destroyed homes selected for allocation of assistance, only 242 (3.72.% of the total) are minority owned. Minority owned can include Kosovo Albanians living in a minority situation. These figures compare with the 2000 breakdown indicating that a total of 2% of overall reconstruction assistance was designated to minority owned homes . In the absence of a systematic review of the treatment afforded minority applicants it is difficult to draw hard and fast conclusions. However, we continue to be concerned about anecdotal information to the effect of discrimination against minority communities in some locations. For example, there have been reports that minority applicants in some places are routinely subject to much more stringent requirements of proof of legal ownership than is the case for Kosovo Albanian applicants. The result is a higher rate of rejection of minority cases. In more extreme cases there have even been reports of intimidation and threats against the staff of agencies who have shown a willingness to take a more proactive approach to providing equitable assistance for minorities." (UNHCR/OSCE October 2001, para. 33)

Minority communities under pressure to sell their properties (2000-2001)

- There are reports of an organised campaign to force minority owners to sell their property in order to weaken residual minority communities ("strategic sales")
- The inducement may be liked to threats or use of violence but may also be the result of purchase offer far above the local market rate
- Reports of coerced sales had been largely confined to urban areas, but have recently expanded to key to key locations in the larger Kosovo Serb villages near Pristina
- New regulation on the registration of property sales in certain areas may have caused an increase in sales among minorities (August 2001)

"What is referred to as 'strategic sales' of minority-owned property can be defined as the practice whereby the minority owners of property, located in strategically important locations within minority areas, are induced to sell their property, as part of what appears to be an organised campaign [10]. The inducement to sell may be linked to threats of, or actual, violence. In other instances, however, the inducement may simply be purchase offers far above the local market rate, but which appear to form part of a broader plan to buy up property in such a way as to weaken residual minority communities. Given the growing reports of such trends in various locations, we have attempted to examine, in as systematic a fashion as possible, the available information on such strategic sales. It should be noted from the outset that the question of sale of minority property, strategic or otherwise is the subject of intense debate. There are some community leaders who see it as an urgent priority to stem all sales as a means of protecting the greater good of the remaining population. On the other hand the sale of individual properties may be seen by the owners as their right and as a means to secure sufficient funds to re-establish themselves and their families in Serbia or elsewhere.

It is very difficult to judge the full extent of the so called 'strategic sales' taking place. First, direct evidence of any organisation behind such purchases is very difficult to obtain. Furthermore, in many cases it is difficult to distinguish between general attacks on minorities, which has the effect of provoking their departure from Kosovo, from specific threats designed to particularly target and drive out members of minorities living in what could be considered as strategic locations. In a number of areas there has even been intimidation of Kosovo Albanians attempting to buy Kosovo Serb property, with sectors of their own community alleging that as the Kosovo Serbs had no right to the property in the first place there is no need for it to be purchased.

However, in several locations evidence does appear to substantiate targeting of certain strategic areas. For example, in one building in Prishtine/Pristina with a concentration of remaining Kosovo Serbs (and extensive KFOR protection), there are persistent attempts by Kosovo Albanians to purchase Serb property within the building. Although Kosovo Albanians have thus far been prevented by KFOR from occupying property in this building several prospective purchasers informed the OSCE that one reason behind their attempts to buy property in the building was to accelerate the departure of the remaining Serbs. These potential purchasers said they believed that once a certain critical mass of Albanians were residing in the building, KFOR would reduce their level of protection.

The bulk of information suggesting targeted purchasing, and coerced sales, of Kosovo Serb property is drawn from the Prishtina/Pristina region. Previous complaints about this phenomenon had been largely confined to the towns, but this period saw the spread of indications of what appeared to be strategic purchasing (for above market prices) of Kosovo Serb properties, to key locations in the larger Kosovo Serb villages near Prishtine/Pristina. In Obiliq/Obilic a declining Kosovo Serb community has witnessed ongoing sales of property which they believe to be deliberately targeted at key locations, (e.g. property in the centre of the community or in other key locations vital to the community's sense of well-being). According to the community the transfer in ownership of such property leads to an increase in insecurity. Systematic purchases of strategically located property has also been observed in the Kosovo Serb areas of Lipjan/Lipljan.

Endnote [10]: What constitutes a strategic location is not always easily defined as it has a lot to do with the perception of the communities themselves. It should be understood to include properties which link or bridge clusters of minority houses to each other or to services such as shops or clinics. The fact that the sale of such a property would have the result of reducing further still the general area inhabited by the minority group obliging them to transit a majority area is a common basis upon which communities classify certain properties as strategic." (UNHCR/OSCE March 2001, paras. 42-44)

"Property sales: The previous Minority Assessment outlined the issue of so called 'strategic sales', referring to the phenomenon whereby residential and/or commercial property in minority communities is systematically purchased in some locations, apparently with a view to undermining the viability of residual populations by provoking the further destabilisation and weakening of communities and, ultimately their

departure. Debate continues over the degree to which such a strategy can be proven to exist continues and the classification of such a tactic as either the cause or the effect of displacement. What is beyond debate however, is that certain minority communities in very vulnerable situations perceive the ongoing sale of properties within their communities as a direct and imminent treat to their survival. Their demands for an effective remedy, supported by Kosovo Serb political leaders, have resulted in the introduction of Regulation No. 2001/17 on the Registration of Contracts for the Sale of Real Property in Specific Geographical Areas of Kosovo, effective as of 22 August 2001. The regulation sets out a mechanism whereby property sales in certain designated areas must be registered with the Municipal Administrator. The Municipal Administrator is empowered to deny registration in instances where there is reason to believe, that the sale is carried out under duress, for an unrealistic price, with questionable funding, or made under dubious circumstances, and that the result of the sale is a change in the ethnic balance of the designated area. The regulation aims to offer effective protection to vulnerable communities whilst at the same time respecting the individual right to sell. Both UNHCR and OSCE have expressed concerns that the regulation may in fact have the opposite effect and push the issue of such sales underground, having little or no effect on improving the stability of the communities it aims to assist. It is too early to assess with any clarity the real impact as the regulation has yet to be tested in practice. However, it is worrying to note that in the lengthy period during which the regulation was under discussion, confusion and deliberate misinformation spread amongst minority communities and appears to have triggered an increase in pre-emptive sales. Owners apparently feared that they might be prohibited from selling and thus be displaced or trapped in Kosovo with no prospects of selling their only substantial asset and obtaining sufficient funds to re-establish their lives in a different location. Unscrupulous elements within their own and within the majority community played upon these fears to encourage precipitated sales." (UNHCR/OSCE October 2001, para. 32)

See the full text of Regulation 2001/17 on the Registration of Contracts for the Sale of Real Property in Specific Geographical Areas of Kosovo [Internet]

Arson, looting and occupation of Serb- and Roma-owned properties (June 1999-2000)

- Orthodox religious sites also targeted
- Arson attacks against minority-owned properties includes grenade attacks and shooting
- A pattern emerged in some areas of arson and demolition of previously abandoned properties to clear the way for construction of new homes

"The extensive destruction of civilian property in Kosovo began with the 1998 spring offensive in the Drenica region, when Serbian security forces deliberately targeted homes, schools, and mosques for destruction. The rampage continued at an accelerated pace following the departure of OSCE verifiers from the province in early 1999. Looting and arson has continued since the withdrawal of Serbian military and police units in early June. However, it is now Serb and Roma homes that are the targets. Orthodox religious sites have also been targeted, with monasteries in Vucitrn and Musutiste destroyed and a church demolished by explosives.
[…]
The takeover of Serb homes by Albanian families, many of whom lost their own homes during the conflict, has also been reported throughout Kosovo. In Prizren, for example, the historically Serb neighborhood of Pantelija is now nearly empty of its previous residents, with many formerly Serb homes currently being occupied by ethnic Albanian returnees.

According to Roma interviewed in Djakovica, about thirty Roma homes in the Brekoc neighborhood were burned within three hours on July 12. Men in KLA uniform told them to leave their homes a few days before the burning took place. Human Rights Watch visited the Roma neighborhood on July 24 and saw the charred remains. Approximately 600 Roma from Brekoc and other areas in Djakovica are currently in a

UNHCR camp in the city guarded by Italian KFOR troops. The Roma are free to leave the camp, but told Human Rights Watch that they fear to do so because of retaliatory attacks by the KLA. 'All of the Rom who worked with the Serbs have left," said one man in the camp.' And we are trapped here even though we did nothing." None of the Roma interviewed wanted their names to be published." (HRW August 1999, "Arson, looting, destruction of property, and takeover of homes")

"In terms of the types of major crimes affecting minority communities during the reporting period, arson was by far the most frequent. Arson attacks committed against minorities were mostly carried out in the Pristina region and to a lesser extent in the Gnjilane region. Serb-owned properties were the hardest hit, representing 46 per cent of victims (83 properties burned out of a total of 179 incidents registered province-wide from 27 February to 20 May). A pattern emerged in some areas of arson and demolition of previously abandoned properties to clear the way for construction of new homes." (UNSC 6 June 2000, para. 40)

"Crime related to property particularly affects minorities. Arson, and the destruction of property, often appears to be directed at ensuring that members of minorities leave, or do not return to, the province. Arsons have taken place across the province, with a series of attacks in Orahovac/Rahovec at the start of June [2000]. Repeated incidents, including grenade attacks and shootings at Kosovo Serb-owned property took place in Kosovo Polje/Fushe Kosove, a Kosovo Serb community often described as "under siege" by its residents and international actors. Other significant events include destruction of churches, which took place in Vitina/Viti on 30 June, and Kosovo Polje/Fushe Kosove on 16 July 2000." (UNHCR/OSCE October 2000, para. 8)

Large-scale destruction and confiscation of Kosovo Albanian property by Serb forces (until June 1999)

- Reports of systematic burning of Albanian-owned houses or villages with predominantly Albanian populations
- Destruction and looting of livestock, barns, tractors and other agricultural equipment
- Confiscation of Albanian properties and possessions by Serb forces
- Destruction of property not solely an act of vandalism but an attempt at wiping out signs of the presence of the Albanian population in Kosovo

Situation prior to the withdrawal of Serb forces from Kosovo on 10 June 1999, as documented through testimonies collected by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights from refugees in Albania and Macedonia

"About half of the refugees interviewed reported large-scale destruction of property at the hands of Serb forces, especially burning of Albanian-owned houses. Towns and cities were not heavily affected by the destruction, although Albanian neighbourhoods were in some instances attacked and houses burned down. More often, premises and properties of intellectuals, political activists and suspected KLA collaborators were preferred targets, as well as houses and apartments which had been rented by officers of the OSCE Kosovo Verification Mission.

Following military offensives, villages with predominantly Albanian populations were systematically burnt down by Serb troops. In many cases interviewees observed from hiding places in the hills Serb troops entering villages and setting houses on fire. Along with houses, barns with hay, remaining tractors and agricultural equipment were burnt as well. Villagers who returned after the withdrawal of Serb forces found livestock killed or disappeared, while corpses were sometimes thrown into wells to contaminate drinking water.

Many Kosovo Albanians had their personal documents torn apart by Serb troops during the eviction, at police checkpoints, at the border or elsewhere in the course of searches by police, army or paramilitary forces. It appears that all of these acts of destruction were aimed at preventing Albanians from returning to and resuming life in their places of residence. The destruction of property was apparently not solely an act of vandalism but an attempt at wiping out signs of the presence of the Albanian population in Kosovo, as well as its national and cultural identity.

The majority of interviewees also reported confiscation of property by Serb forces. Confiscation took place during raids into Albanian homes: Serb troops went from house to house in villages and towns, people present in the houses were searched and deprived of money and other valuables, and cars and tractors were confiscated.

Serb police and paramilitary groups intercepted large groups of IDPs and forced them to surrender money, jewellery, cars, tractors and other valuables at gunpoint. Paramilitary groups occasionally stabbed or shot IDPs who failed to meet their demands and threatened to kill hostages captured on the spot if family members could not pay the demanded amount of money. / IDP convoys targeted by paramilitary groups in Grastica were brutally robbed and many persons allegedly killed or injured because they failed to provide the demanded amount, which in some cases was as high as DM 1,000./

A few cases of extortion of money from Albanians at border crossing points were also reported. Furthermore, IDPs were often ordered to abandon their vehicles before they were allowed across the border. Car documents and license plates were in some cases confiscated. Numerous cars were allegedly stripped and parts transported away in trucks to be sold elsewhere. Personal documents were also confiscated at border crossing points.

Abandoned Albanian houses were systematically and extensively looted for movable property. As the Albanian population fled their villages, Serb infantry systematically loaded goods onto trucks before setting houses on fire. In some instances Roma civilians allegedly assisted Serb forces in transporting confiscated goods." (UN CHR 27 September 2000, paras. 68-74)

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (excluding Kosovo)

Sorting property claims may facilitate resettlement of IDPs in Serbia (2001)

- Many IDPs are attempting to sell their property in Kosovo, both because they need the money to resettle in Serbia and because they have no plans to return to Kosovo, according to Refugees International

"It is not clear how many of the IDPs want to return. A survey by the International Rescue Committee found that 20% of the IDPs own their own houses in Serbia. Many of the IDPs are attempting to sell their property in Kosovo, both because they need the money to resettle in Serbia and because they have no plans to return to Kosovo.

Sorting out property claims so that refugees and IDPs can either reclaim or sell houses and farms is a fundamental first step to resolving the displacement problem for both refugees and IDPs. "If people stand a chance of regaining control of their property, they regain control of their lives. It's their equity," explains an official at the U.S. embassy in Belgrade." (RI 24 August 2001)

See also IRC/ECHO IDP Shelter Assessment Report, January 2001 [Internal link]

PATTERNS OF RETURN AND RESETTLEMENT

Return movements

Return figures for 2001: less than 1,000 Kosovo Serbs or Roma returned to Kosovo, not all permanently (2001)

- The majority of these returnees have gone back to the Osojane valley (Pec region) but there have also been returns of Kosovo Serbs to the villages of Leshtar and Makresh (Gnjilane region)
- A portion of these return movements have been assisted by UNHCR and with security support from KFOR
- There have been reports of returnees in Kosovo going back to Serbia

"These efforts are being undertaken against the background of a slowdown of Kosovo Serb returns during the last year. According to figures provided by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), a total of 2,432 Serbs, out of the 229,900 registered internally displaced persons, returned to Kosovo by 8 December 2001. Two thirds of these returns took place during 2000, while less than 1,000 returned in 2001, not all of whom remained permanently. Two projects of organized returns have resulted over the past four months in the return of about 150 Kosovo Serbs to their original communities in Kosovo. The majority of these returnees have gone back to the Osojane valley (Pec region), where the first phase of an integrated programme to ensure the sustainability of the returns was completed in December. This entailed the rebuilding of 55 houses, the construction of a clinic and a large school, capable of providing instruction to children from the entire valley, and the restoration of public utilities, such as electric power and a bus service. A second phase, comprising a further 50 houses, income generation projects, and possibly other community facilities, will depend on the availability of donor funding. KFOR has provided security around the valley, and no incidents have been reported. There have also been returns of Kosovo Serbs to the villages of Leshtar and Makresh (Gnjilane region), where they live in mixed communities with Kosovo Albanians neighbours." (UNSC 15 January 2002, para. 19)

Detailed figures:

Kosovo Serb Return

Total returns recorded by UNHCR: 606 persons

Almost all returnees had previously been displaced in Serbia, although a small number of persons returned from displacement in Montenegro or Northern Kosovo.

Of the 606 returnees, 177 were assisted to return by UNHCR (organised return). The remaining returnees returned spontaneously (unassisted) to a diverse number of locations throughout Kosovo. Those returnees who were assisted to return as a part of a group returned to the following locations:

Ljestar, Kamenica: 22 persons

Gornji Makres, Gnjilane: 18 persons

Osojane, Istok: 137 persons

RAE return (Roma, Ashkaelia and Egyptian ethnic groups)

Total return recorded by UNHCR: 342 persons

1 Return from displacement outside the province: UNHCR facilitated/assisted voluntary repatriation (volrep) of a total of 286 persons to return to Kosovo from displacement outside the province, of which 253 returned from fYROM, 20 returned from Montenegro; and 13 returned from Bosnia.

2. Return from displacement within Kosovo: UNHCR assisted the return of 56 persons displaced in Plemetina IDP camp in Obilic to their place of origin in Vranjevac, urban Pristina.

It was not possible to sufficiently quantify spontaneous return of RAE, therefore no figures are provided for spontaneous return of RAE. However, it should be noted that the majority of return movements of RAE are from fYROM and Montenegro, and these returns are usually (almost always) organised by UNHCR. (UNOCHA 16 January 2002)

"Fourteen of the 83 Kosovar Serbs who resettled in the Osojane Valley in August have returned to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, citing lack of financial support as the reason." (UNSC 23 October 2001, para. 21))

See also:

AFP, "Two years on, Kosovo Serbs return home", 19 September 2001 [Internet]
Institute for War and Peace Reporting, "Kosovo Serb return in doubt", 7 September 2001 [Internet]
AFP, "Few Serb refugee dare return to Kosovo", 16 November 2001 [Internet]

Return of displaced Roma to their homes of origin: difficult process of reintegration (2000-2001)

- The killing of Ashkaelia heads of family in November 2000, 48 hours after their return, ruined months of confidence-building efforts
- Return process of Ashkaelia displaced to their homes in Vranjevac required a year of careful preparations and contact between the concerned communities

"At field level UNHCR has continued to support the efforts of RAE [Roma, Ashkaelia and Egyptian] communities and individuals to work towards their return. Increased attention has been paid to the importance of go and see visits to Kosovo for the benefit of refugees and IDPs as a means of allowing them to re-establish links with their communities of origin. Activities undertaken thus far have been pitched at a very modest level and have concentrated on those displaced in FYROM and Montenegro. In addition UNHCR and OSCE, have co-operated closely to focus attention on the needs of those RAE displaced within Kosovo and who are seeking support to return to their home communities. The relative success of such measures suffered a huge setback with the murder of four Ashkaelia returnees in Skenderaj/Srbica in November 2000. During the course of 2000 a group of Ashkaelia families, who had been displaced from Skenderaj/Serbica to Fushe Kosove/Kosovo Polje in mid-1999, sought and received support from UNHCR and OSCE to explore the possibilities for return. On their own initiative the families had started a dialogue with their former neighbours centering on their desire to return home and restart their lives. A number of visits took place, and the international community provided concrete commitments on the question of reconstruction assistance and other material aid. This process culminated in a decision by the male heads of family to return to their village in early November, confident that they could start to rebuild their homes and eventually be joined by other family members. The discovery of their bodies less than 48 hours after their return was a harrowing reminder of the dangers implicit for those minorities who seek to exercise their right to return. The shock waves sent out by these murders were felt in communities across Kosovo. Ashkaelia parents in numerous locations withdrew their children from schools fearful for their safety. A cautious confidence born of months of painstaking work was shattered as minority communities grappled to come to terms with the meaning of such an incident. Many read it as a clear and unequivocal warning against return. However in comprehensive discussions following the tragedy, Ashkaelia community representatives reiterated their commitment to continue to work in favour of return despite the dangers and risks involved. The remaining communities of RAE do not, however underestimate the continued threat of

violence and as a result they do not envisage large-scale return under current conditions. They favour a phased and somewhat cautious approach to return and rely on the support of the international community." (UNHCR/OSCE March 2001, para. 21)

"One encouraging sign during the course of the reporting period has been an ongoing project to rebuild a small number of homes in the Vranjevac area of town. Previously inhabited by a large Ashkaelia population, this neighbourhood currently bears the scars of destruction and displacement. Many of the original Ashkaelia residents fled in 1999, fearful for their lives. Those of their properties not destroyed were quickly appropriated by Kosovo Albanians, displaced by the destruction of their own homes in other parts of Kosovo. Despite residual security concerns and ongoing illegal occupation of Ashkaelia homes, the reconstruction stage of this initiative is close to completion. After a year of careful preparations and cautious contacts slowly building up confidence between the respective communities, the Ashkaelia, currently displaced to Plementine/Plementina IDP camp, have been on site on a daily basis throughout the summer, rebuilding their homes with the help of reconstruction NGOs. Completion of the houses will mark the first step in the longer process of re-integration. After more than two years of internal displacement the Ashkaelia are eager to return home but anxious about outstanding problems of security, freedom of movement, access to services and crucially, employment prospects in such a segregated city." (UNHCR/OSCE 1 October 2001, para. 96)

Return of IDPs to Southern Serbia is largely seen as a success (2001)

- Restoration of Serb control in Southern Serbia and the implementation of confidence building measures have made return possible for at least half of the displaced in Kosovo
- Return of displaced to Southern Serbia eased the pressure on minority communities close to IDP concentrations
- A significant proportion of the returnees has come back to Kosovo for the winter

"A second major population movement relevant to the interests of minority communities commenced during the summer with the **return of ethnic Albanian IDPs** to their homes in southern Serbia. Tensions in southern Serbia over the course of the past year had provoked a sizeable outflow of ethnic Albanians, many of whom sought temporary refuge in Kosovo. These were estimated to number just under 20,000 persons as of early June 2001. The smooth relaxation of the Ground Safety Zone which resulted in the return of Yugoslav forces to the 5 km stretch along the boundary line from which they had previously been excluded, paved the way for the initiation of confidence building measures and the possibility of return. Between those who have opted to return on their own initiative and those who have sought UNHCR assistance to do so, it is estimated that the current IDP population in Kosovo, originating from southern Serbia, has dropped by half. This has eased the pressure on a number of minority communities living in close proximity to concentrations of IDPs. In the longer term, it may even open up return possibilities for displaced minorities as the departing Albanian IDPs vacate minority properties that they had illegally occupied during their stay in Kosovo." (UNHCR/OSCE October 2001, para. 18)

"The return of IDPs to the region has been viewed as a success. Through their statements and actions the authorities and UN and other international agencies and the European Community Monitoring Mission (EUMM) encouraged some 5,300 IDPs in Kosovo to return to South Serbia during the summer. However, some returnees complained of a lack of infrastructure, inadequate assistance to repair houses and too little food aid in many villages. A significant proportion – between one third and one-half – have returned to Kosovo for the winter. There is optimism that the bulk of these will return again and be joined by new returnees in the spring, assuming that the other issues identified in this paper are addressed." (UNOCHA 29 January 2002)

As concerns ethnic Albanian IDPs from Southern Serbia in Kosovo, UNHCR estimates that there are about 10,800 of these IDPs in the province. (UNHCR 29 January 2002)

Macedonian refugees may endanger minority return to Kosovo (2001)

"UNMIK is increasingly concerned about the potential impact on inter-ethnic relations of ethnic Albanian refugees from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia taking up residence in Kosovo. It is feared that refugees in the Gnjilane and Prizren regions, where the majority are interspersed among mixed and minority communities, could affect areas being considered for minority returns. The number of displaced persons in these areas is currently inflated by a movement of around 10,000 internally displaced persons from southern Serbia back to Kosovo, owing to concerns for their personal security, especially in remote villages." (UNSC 2 October 2001, para. 12)

Return of Kosovo Albanians to locations where they constitute a numerical minorities (2000-2001)

- Kosovo Albanians who originate from areas predominantly inhabited by Kosovo Serbs will mostly remain displaced within or outside Kosovo
- Reports of harassment of ethnic Albanians in northern Mitrovica

"While Kosovo Albanians have returned to the province in huge numbers, the question of return of Kosovo Albanians to locations where they constitute a numerical minority, such as Mitrovice/Kosovska Mitrovica town and Strpce/Shterpce, still demands special attention. This issue needs to be dealt with as part of a comprehensive approach which recognises return as an integral part of broader efforts to stabilise the various communities within Kosovo, offering each the prospects of peace and prosperity on equitable terms. Until such time, those Kosovo Albanians who originate from areas predominantly inhabited by Kosovo Serbs will mostly remain displaced within or outside Kosovo." (OSCE/UNHCR March 2001, para. 23)

"Within Kosovo, the first returns of ethnic Albanians to northern Mitrovica went ahead in early March as an important component of the mission's strategy to address the division of the city. The circumstances under which these returns took place were difficult. Since then, the situation has calmed down, although there are still reports of harassment of ethnic Albanians in northern Mitrovica. The installation of the footbridge linking the three apartment buildings in northern Mitrovica, where over 250 ethnic Albanians returned, to southern Mitrovica, together with the widening of the confidence zone, are new and positive security measures that are enhancing freedom of movement. Efforts will continue to enable Kosovo Serb internally displaced persons to return, on a voluntary basis, to their apartments in southern Mitrovica." (UNSC 6 June 2000, para. 76)

High level of destruction hampers return of displaced Kosovars to rural areas (2000)

- Over 60% of internally displaced persons in the urban areas have not yet returned to their homes
- Most cannot return as their house is destroyed or because of the presence of land mines or lack of economic incentives in their home area

"During the conflict there were mass displacements of the population in Kosovo both externally (e.g. to Macedonia, Albania, Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina, as well as other western countries) and internally. During the conflict there was also significant destruction and looting of houses, property, livestock,

agricultural machinery and household assets. This placed many people in an extremely insecure situation. Relief operations helped many people return to their villages and cities by September 1999. Programming meeting the shelter needs of refugees, returnees and displaced populations was a major focus of the international aid community in Kosovo and many people were provided with kits to repair their houses for winter. Yet in the meantime many had to live in tents. As the hard winter approached many people, especially from the mountainous regions, left these temporary structures and moved to shelters in the cities for heating and to access to other relief services. Family networks also played a determining role concerning the internal movement of people.

During this period, Pristina became over-crowded because of better access to accommodation, relief assistance and the expectation of better employment and income earning opportunities. Over 60% of internally displaced persons in the urban areas have not yet returned to their homes as they are currently occupying temporary accommodation whilst their own is destroyed and many have found alternative income earning opportunities in the interim.

With the approach of spring some farmers returned to their villages to plant crops from seeds supplied largely by the international aid community. These back and forth movements from villages to cities and from higher to lower elevations during the conflict and in the winter of 1999 have also weakened households' traditional livelihood security, especially of those households with livestock as their main source of livelihood.

Several factors create barriers to clear identification of the population living in poverty. (a) Although 90% of the people who were displaced either externally or internally have returned, there is still considerable internal movement within Kosovo. (b) It is estimated that between one-third to one-half of households receive remittances from abroad with more than 98% of these remittances provinces through informal channels (RIINVEST 1999). (c) the near collapse of statistical services in Kosovo and the non-availability of past documents due to destruction of the archives. (d) A considerable number of internally displaced persons who cannot return or do not want to return to their original areas of residence, either due to presence of land mines or lack of economic incentives. (e) A steadily increasing migration into Kosovo of those residing abroad." (Inter-Agency Sub-Group on Poverty November 2000, pp. 5-6)

Serb organisations sponsor return to Kosovo (April 2000)

- Belgrade-based "Association of Serbs of Kosovo" organised bus convoys escorted by the Serbia Red Cross and KFOR to Pec
- Serb National Council in Kosovo initiates the return of 25,000 Serbian displaced with the support of NATO

"In order to facilitate returns of IDPs to Kosovo, the Belgrade-based "Association of Serbs of Kosovo" organised, on 25 April, a convoy of 2 buses and 4 cars from Serbia, via Montenegro, to Kosovo, carrying 107 IDPs, including seven from temporary accommodation in Podgorica, Andrijevica and Danilovgrad. The convoy was escorted by the Serbian Red Cross to the Rozaje frontier crossing, where it was met by KFOR for onward escort to Pec. The Head of the Rozaje Police reported to UNHCR that in the past two weeks 208 Serb IDP had passed through the frontier checkpoint to Kosovo." (UN OCHA 27 April 2000)

"NATO has confirmed their support for an initiative by the Serb National Council, Kosovo, to return 25,000 Serbian IDPs to their former place of residence, Kosovo. UNHCR noted this initiative at the regular press conference, 13 April, Belgrade, as a positive development and committed its support with the pre-requisite of safe conditions for return." (UN OCHA 13 April 2000)

Reports of persisting opposition to the return of Serbs or Albanians to their area of origin (2000)

- Local Albanians demonstrate to oppose the US-sponsored return of Serb displaced to the village of Osojane
- Kosovo Albanians risk violence and harassment if returned to their former homes in the northern , Serb-controlled, part of Mitrovic a

"Grijilane and the surrounding area in particular have seen a number of attacks on Serbs since the entry of KFOR in June 1999 despite the presence of international forces. In the period 6-11 May 2000 alone an elderly man was found dead, six Serb men were injured in a grenade attack on a Serb-owned shop, and two Serb-owned houses were blown up. The proposed return of a number of ethnic Serb internally displaced persons (IDPs) currently in Serbia to the village of Osojane, initiated by the US and supported by Serb representatives, was met by a hostile demonstration of around 2,000 local Albanians opposing the return of Serbs to the area.
[…]
Many ethnic Albanians remain internally displaced within the province, either because their homes are destroyed or as a part of a general movement towards the larger towns. In the case of Kosovska, Mitrovica, there has been an exchange of populations between the northern and southern parts of the town, with the former now largely Serb and the latter mainly Albanian. Ethnic Albanians whose homes were originally in the northern part of the city risk violence and harassment if returned to their former homes, and attempts by KFOR and UNMIK to return locally displaced ethnic Albanians to their homes there have met with resistance from local Serbs, resulting in violent clashes and the use of tear gas and rubber bullets on the part of KFOR troops. On 18 June the news service of the independent Belgrade Radio B2-92 reported that Serbian inhabitants of Donje and Gornje Vitinje had prevented a group of 20 Albanian families, accompanied by representatives of UNMIK and KFOR, from returning to their homes in the villages." (AI July 2000, p.5)

Reports of some return movements of Kosovo Serbs (2000)

- As many of 2,000 Kosovo Serbs may have returned to their places of origin during 2000, primarily to rural areas, while more displacements within and from Kosovo have been reported
- Those who return are supplied with humanitarian assistance by UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies
- Many of those staying or returning temporarily are simply biding time until they manage to sell their properties and depart permanently
- The security of recent returnees is generally reliant on high levels of military presence

"The Steering Committee of the Joint Committee on Returns for Kosovo Serbs to Kosovo has conducted assessments of potential return locations throughout the province, including Slivovo (Pristina region) and more recently Osojane (Pec region), Grace (Mitrovica region) and Mushnikovo (Prizren region). Despite continuing challenges to the security of minority communities, some small-scale spontaneous returns have taken place, including 35 Kosovo Serb internally displaced persons to Slivovo (Pristina region) and some 100 to the village of Grace in Vucitrn (Mitrovica region). In the wake of those returns, a representative of the Serb National Council of Mitrovica attended a meeting of the Steering Committee on 31 July [2000]. This marked the first time SNC Mitrovica participated in a Kosovo-wide institution. SNC Mitrovica members subsequently became involved in a plan to organize go-and-see visits for Kosovo Serbs to the Osojane valley (Istok municipality, Pec region). On 25 August UNHCR organised a go-and-see visit for 15 displaced Kosovo Serbs to 5 villages in Osojane." (UN SC 18 September 2000, para. 58)

"[A]s they were some small-scale spontaneous returns to a number of existing Kosovo Serb communities around Kosovo, a system was put in place to track the returns so that assistance can be delivered. As many as 2,000 Kosovo Serbs may have returned to their places of origin over the course of 2000. An additional number of displaced persons were displaced again, to other parts of Kosovo. During the last three months, UNHCR, with the support of UNMIK, KFOR and the Steering Committee of the Joint Committee on Returns, organized a number of advance visits for displaced Serbs to various locations in Kosovo, including the Osojane Valley, in Istok municipality, and Klina municipality. In addition, the Steering Committee organized assistance for several returnee locations, including the villages of Grace in Vucitrn municipality and Slivovo in Pristina municipality." (UNSC 15 December 2000, para. 52)

"Just as some minorities are leaving the province, others have been returning, often to the same municipalities, such as Gnijlane. Those who return are supplied with humanitarian assistance by UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies, although security and freedom of movement are their overriding preoccupations." (UNHCR 30 September 2000, p. 3)

"[S]pontaneous returns of Serbs have taken place to a number of locations across the province. These have been small scale. Ongoing movements to and from Serbia make it difficult to quantify spontaneous return as many Kosovo Serbs have availed of opportunities during the summer to visit but without the intention of returning permanently. Many remain unconvinced that the overall situation is conducive for their definitive return at this time. A particular concern leading Serbs not to stay on in Kosovo after the summer has been access to education. Spontaneous returnees have also faced additional problems, particularly relating to property concerns and limited access to reconstruction assistance and essential services. It is notable that small-scale spontaneous returns have occurred in a number of areas, primarily to rural locations. In general, the Kosovo Serb urban communities continue to be in decline. Many of those staying or returning temporarily are simply biding their time until they manage to sell their properties and depart permanently. A push-pull factor is at work - while living conditions of IDPs in Serbia proper continue to be very difficult, returns appear to occur when the security situation in a particular area in Kosovo is seen as having stabilised. A deterioration of security as a result of an incident will generally put a temporary halt on any return. What return has taken place must be seen in context. The security of recent returnees (to locations other Serb dominated areas in northern Kosovo) is generally reliant on high levels of military presence. Equally go and see activities, for Kosovo Serbs have been characterised by high levels of security. Such commitment on the part of the security forces, whilst welcome and necessary, is only sustainable for a limited period of time and in a limited number of places." (UNHCR/OSCE October 20000, para. 120)

For more detailed information on return movements of Kosovo Serbs to Kosovo, see paragraphs 123-145 of UNHCR/OSCE Assessment of the Situation of Ethnic Minorities in Kosovo, October 2000 [Internet]

Return policy

Return policy: cautious approach of the international community (2000-2002)

- UNHCR is tasked with the overall supervision of the safe and voluntary return of all refugees and IDPs to their homes in Kosovo
- The Joint Committee on Returns of Kosovo Serbs (JCR) was established in May 2000 coordinates return policy in consultation with representative of the Kosovo Serb community
- A Framework on Serb Return 2001 (January 2001) defines principles for the return of Kosovo Serbs
- The Principles have been endorsed by the Interim Council Administrative Council for Kosovo in June 2001

- Return policy is primarily based on the creation appropriate conditions for safe and sustainable return, while the aim to facilitate return is part of a more long-term process
- It is acknowledged that conditions will not allow the return of large numbers for the moment, especially in urban areas
- An Action Plan for some ten initial return locations was produced by Local and Regional Working Groups and presented to donors in June 2001
- International agencies also supported Go-and-See visits to Kosovo and information initiatives among IDP communities in Serbia
- Following the signing of the Common Document with authorities in Belgrade (November 2001), the Special Representative established within his own office the Office of Returns and Communities

"Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999) tasks the UN Mission in Kosovo through its international security presence (KFOR) and its civil presence (UNMIK) to establish a secure environment and to enable all refugees and internally displaced persons (IDP) to return, in safety and unimpeded, to their homes. UNHCR is tasked with the overall supervision of the safe and free voluntary return of all refugees and IDPs to their homes in Kosovo.

In May 2000 the SRSG established a the ***Joint Committee on Returns of Kosovo Serbs (JCR)*** consisting of the principals of UNMIK, KFOR, OSCE and UNHCR and the Commissioner of Police and the heads of key units of the UNMIK with the task 'to explore ways and means of the safe and sustainable return of Kosovo Serbs'. The JCR pursues its aim through a Steering Committee under the Chairmanship of UNHCR which again includes besides Serb representatives all members of the JCR to ensure coordination between those who are responsible for security or the provision of various public services.

During the last months of 2000 a small planning group with the help of five Regional Working Groups drafted a comprehensive analysis of the obstacles to return and a broad and balanced concept for ways and means by which the conditions could be changed so that they became more conducive to the return of Kosovo Serbs to their homes. The efforts led to the adoption of a ***Framework on Serb Return 2001*** on 13 January 2001 by the JCR.

The Framework lays out (i) the agreed-upon principles of return for Kosovo Serb IDPs; (ii) the current situation in Kosovo and (iii) analyses as examples 25 potential locations of potential return and identifies (iv) in general and for the concrete locations the measures which would be required to sustain a returns process and contains (v) the agreed on roles and responsibilities of the major actors who would be engaged in the return and reintegration processes.

In early June 2001 the **Principles** of this return concept have been endorsed by the Interim Administrative Council (IAC) for Kosovo which besides international and Serb representatives includes the three main Kosovo Albanian political leaders. The overriding principle guiding the JCR strategy is the fundamental right of all displaced to return to their places of origin in conditions of safety and dignity which ensures also adequate freedom of movement. The return planning which is carried out through Local and Regional Working Groups foresees return to multiple geographic areas in an incremental, low-profile and orderly fashion. Return planning should be undertaken in a transparent fashion. This includes the maximum consultations with the displaced and with local community representatives and the promotion of inter-ethnic dialogue and confidence-building measures whenever possible. Finally return planning is to be undertaken on the basis of comprehensive assessments of individual potential return locations, in order to identify the necessary measures required to create appropriate conditions for safe and sustainable return.

The required **measures for the creation of minimum conditions of return** concern the areas of security, freedom of movement, property, housing, infrastructure, public utilities, health and social services, education, employment and income generation, and humanitarian assistance. Emphasis is also placed on the

importance of tolerance-building and creation of inter-ethnic dialogue on the local community, regional and provincial levels on the issue of Kosovo Serb return and co-existence. The participation of the Serb community in the central and local governing and administrative structures and in the democratic political process in Kosovo has increasingly emerged as an important element for co-existence and the potential improvement of the conditions for sustainable return.

The aim is to facilitate some return as part of a more long term process in a responsible manner without prejudicing the security of the persons concerned and without creating additional tensions in the communities to where return takes place. Return must be voluntary and based on an informed decisions about the conditions prevailing in Kosovo including remaining risks and prevailing substantial shortcomings.

While conditions of minority, including Serb communities in Kosovo are generally difficult, they differ substantially from one location to the other. Therefore, on 11 May 2001 the JCR tasked the Steering Committee to identify those locations within Kosovo as to which the conditions favouring return were relatively more advanced and return was probably possible still in 2001. It was acknowledged that conditions would not allow the return of large numbers at the moment. Conditions facilitated initial returns to rural rather than urban areas. Such progress at a small scale is, however, considered crucial for the mid- and long-term progress on return for the large number of other displaced over time.

With the help of the LWG and RWG, the SC produced an **Action Plan** for some ten initial, most advanced return locations and on 29 June the international donor community was briefed about expected resource requirements by the SRSG and UNHCR to ensure that in case of return appropriate assistance can be made available in support of the re-integration and the stabilisation of the returnee populations in their communities. UNMIK, KFOR, OSCE, UNHCR, UNMIK Police and their regional and local representatives besides representatives of the Serb communities and of the displaced were all part of the preparatory process and will be so for the implementation. Since July 2001 representatives of the FRY Federal Government Committee for Kosovo have been participating in this planning work at all levels side beside with the other members of the JCR and the R/LWG on return. In addition efforts were made together with other UN and NGO partners to improve the information flow on the conditions and activities in the specific locations to the displaced outside Kosovo. A series of Go-and-See visits have been organised to the home communities. On other occasions several representatives of UNMIK, KFOR, UNHCR, OSCE and local Kosovo Serbs went to Serbia and Montenegro and visited IDPs and briefed them and answered questions. The aim is to enable the displaced to take an informed decision about their future. The idea of improving the conditions in the home communities is, to give IDPs a realistic choice, an alternative option to remaining displaced. the final decision about return rests, however, always with the IDPs themselves and for that they need all the information and be fully aware about the prevailing conditions and remaining risks at home." (UNHCR 2001)

See the full text of the Return Principles [Internal link]

"One of the most important concerns of the Kosovo Serb community and a key objective of UNMIK is the creation of conditions for the sustainable return of internally displaced persons and refugees. Following the signing of the Common Document, the Special Representative established within his own office the Office of Returns and Communities, to coordinate UNMIK's work on community issues, maintain close links with all key stakeholders, including the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Serbia, and the donor community, and provide strategic advice to the Special Representative on ways to advance the return and reintegration of displaced persons. Work has begun on a framework for 2002/2003, which will combine economic incentives and other measures in order to offer longer-term prospects to returnees and internally displaced persons. " (UN SC 15 January 2002, para. 18)

Donor support for returns will be sought at a Donor Conference, which is scheduled for April 2002. Most of the funds resulting from the Donor Conference will be used for reconstruction and employment generation. (UN OCHA 31 January 2002)

Return of Roma communities: wide consultations contribute to the search for joint solutions (2000-2001)

- A Declaration and a Platform for Joint Action were adopted in April 2000 by leaders of the Roma communities and Albanian representatives
- A Statement of Principles relating to return of Roma communities were adopted in May 2001 by all relevant actors in the province

"Concurrent to the joint efforts regarding Serb, activities have also been undertaken to address the specific situation of the Roma/Ashkalija/Egyptian (RAE) communities and to explore ways and means for their sustainable return. A series of Humanitarian Round Tables were initiated by UNHCR in early 2000. These meetings brought together RAE representatives and international actors to discuss the humanitarian needs faced by RAE communities. The discussion process resulted in an April, 2000 meeting between RAE leaders and leading Kosovo Albanian political leaders which endorsed two basic working documents: Declaration from Humanitarian Round Table and Platform for Joint Action. The Platform for Joint Action was subsequently endorsed by both the IAC and the Kosovo Transitional Council (KTC) during a special joint session held on the occasion of the visit of Security Council members to Kosovo in late April 2000.

The Platform for Joint Action identifies the major issues facing RAE communities, both those who remain in Kosovo and those who would like to return, and suggests ways to address these. It serves as a frame of reference for numerous activities such as the two consultative sessions between RAE community leaders and JIAS officials (Sept. 2000 and Jan. 2001). They allowed for open discussions and contributed to a constructive search for joint solutions. On 7 May 2001 RAE community leaders, Kosovo Albanian political leaders and international actors, including the Commander of KFOR and the UNMIK Police Commissioner were brought together in a meeting on return, security and reconstruction. This meeting endorsed the Statement of Principles related to return. It also reviewed the progress made vis-a-vis small scale individual and group return during the course of the preceding year. Also RAE return continues to be hampered by outstanding security concerns and humanitarian need." (UNHCR 2001)

See also:

- *Platform For Joint Action - Regarding Kosovar Roma, Ashkalija and Egyptian Communities [Internal link]*
- *Statement Of Principles [Internal link]*
- *Declaration From Humanitarian Round Table 12 April 2000, Pristina [Internal link]*

The position of the ethnic Albanians regarding the return of the Kosovo Serbs (2001)

- UNHCR has embarked on a series of consultations with prominent Kosovo Albanians to present them with the Framework for Return
- The Kosovo Albanians recognised the right to return but they link this right to a number of other issues, such as the return of detainees held in Serbian prisons and the future status of Kosovo
- Kosovo Albanian members of the Interim Administrative Council have acknowledged the need for special measures to protect Serb communities in the province (2001)

"In order to commence the process of broader discussion [regarding the return of Serbs to Kosovo], involving key actors within Kosovo society UNHCR has embarked on a series of consultations with prominent Kosovo Albanians to present them with the Framework [for Return, January 2001] and to solicit

their views and their suggestions on how best to proceed. While the Kosovo Albanians recognised the right to return they link this right to a number of other issues, the most immediate being the return of detainees held in Serbian prisons and the longer term being the future status of Kosovo. There is still much work to be done to ensure that the right to return, voluntarily and in safety and dignity can be fully exercised. The Kosovo Albanian leaders acknowledged the fact that they have an important role to play in fostering conditions that will favour return. It will take concerted efforts on all sides to ensure that the issue of continued displacement and return can be brought forward in a climate of respect and tolerance that takes into consideration the concerns of all affected communities. Success in this regard will hinge not only on the actions of the Kosovo Albanians but also on the willingness of the Kosovo Serb community to co-operate with the administrative structures of the province." (OSCE/UNHCR March 2001, para. 17)

"A sensitive issue broached in the Interim Administrative Council and the Kosovo Transitional Council was the Framework for Return of Kosovo Serbs. Encouraging the acceptance by the Kosovo Albanian leadership of the principle of return is seen as crucial to securing a similar acceptance throughout Kosovo Albanian society as a whole. The stated preference of the Kosovo Albanian members of the Interim Administrative Council was for the return process to start only after the November elections. Notwithstanding their position, those members made a number of public statements acknowledging the role of the Kosovo Serb community in the future of Kosovo, marking a significant departure from the previously sceptical public line held by the main political parties. LDK, PDK and AAK also joined UNMIK in its call for the Kosovo Serb community to register and participate in the November elections, and welcomed the intensification of dialogue between UNMIK and the newly established Federal Republic of Yugoslavia/ Serbia Joint Coordination Committee for Kosovo. However, the Kosovo Albanian members of the Interim Administrative Council disagreed with the promulgation in August 2001 of regulation 2001/17, on the registration of contracts for the sale of real property in specific geographical areas of Kosovo, which is intended to prevent illegitimate transactions of Kosovo Serb real property, because of an avowed fear of a return to artificial measures to privilege the interests of the Kosovo Serb community. Despite this, they did agree that special measures have to be taken to protect the Kosovo Serb community and guarantee its presence in Kosovo." (UNSC 2 October 2001, para. 4)

See also "Return policy: cautious approach of the international community (2000-2002)" [Internal link]

HUMANITARIAN ACCESS

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (excluding Kosovo)

Legislation and administrative practices in Serbia and Montenegro complicate the work of humanitarian agencies (2000)

- NGOs are implicitly allowed to operate in Serbia but still encounter day-to-day difficulties which should be addressed in pending NGO legislation
- NGO legislation in Montenegro has not solved all the practical problems facing humanitarian agencies
- Problems encountered by humanitarian agencies include inconsistent practices for registration and issuance of visas, lengthy procedures for import of humanitarian aid, inefficient banking and financial systems, heavy taxation on local staff's salaries, difficult registration of NGO vehicles

"[…] NGOs, though implicitly 'allowed' to operate in Serbia (some for as long as 10 years), encounter day-to-day operational difficulties, which make their work difficult and sometimes more costly. Some of the major problems facing NGOs in Serbia are listed below, which the international humanitarian community hopes will be addressed favorably in the pending NGO legislation.

Also in Montenegro, though the NGO legislation does exist, it is generally felt that more practical, operational matters, including some listed below, have not been adequately addressed, raising a need for an additional regulation covering them.

a) Registration -- The previous section [See section 2.1 in original document] described the difficulties in registering international NGOs due to the lack of legislation, pointing out that the establishment of simple and efficient registration procedures would create a supportive environment for NGOs. The ambiguity in NGOs' legal status carries risks. For example, their operations may be arbitrarily banned or terminated, without prior notice or explanation. Another important issue related to registration is the level of the registration fee, which, if set too high, could disable many NGOs from operating in FRY.

b) Visa -- Currently, there are no standard procedures for the issuance of visas and temporary residence, applicable to all humanitarian NGO workers. Many foreign NGO staff enter FRY on a short-term (often tourist and single entry) visa. After expiration, this can mostly be converted into a temporary residence permit for 3-6 months, which needs to be renewed regularly. However, their status (i.e., visa and residence permits) is dependant on the discretion of the FRY Government.

c) Import of humanitarian aid -- There is a concern that import procedures are cumbersome and require layers of intermediaries in the process. A guideline on the import of international humanitarian aid (covering food, clothing, hygiene kits, etc.) was issued in December 1999 by the Federal Ministry for Refugees, Displaced Persons and Humanitarian Assistance. Prior agreement of this Ministry must be obtained, based on an application requiring numerous documents, in order to import goods free of import duties. NGOs (unless independently registered) need to go through intermediaries to receive shipments, such as UNHCR (for its implementing partners) and YRC (for other NGOs). In case of medicines and medical supplies, the Federal Ministry for Labor, Health and Social Policy issued a guideline in November 1999. Upon entering the country, medicines are placed under surveillance in specialized customs storage for a considerable length of time, until necessary procedures are completed for quality certificate and

approval for distribution. In addition to being time-consuming, these procedures tend to be subject to frequent revision, making operational planning difficult.

d) Taxation - There are no clear guidelines concerning tax exemption privileges. The Montenegrin Law on NGOs, for example, stipulates that 'the Government shall provide tax and other exemptions and privileges for non-governmental organizations (Article 27),' while providing no further details. In Serbia, though duly-approved humanitarian goods are imported duty-free in principle, the December 1999 guidelines do not specifically mention such privileges.

e) Financial and Banking -- In the environment where sanctions are in place and the banking system is under duress, even a simple transfer of operating funds causes a serious headache for NGOs operating in FRY. The existence of the large disparity between the official and market exchange rates is another difficult factor, which could significantly increase the operating costs of NGOs.

f) Employment of National Staff -- In FRY, employers are required to pay to the Government taxes and other contributions (such as social, retirement, and health benefits). It is estimated that for international NGOs such payments to the Government could amount to as much as 120 percent of the salaries of local employees. This would substantially augment their operating costs and pose a significant financial difficulty to many NGOs.

g) Vehicle - NGOs in FRY, due to ambiguity of their status, are currently not able to register their vehicles on their own. Most of them opted to use UNHCR vehicle registration plates for their vehicles, which UNHCR issues to its partner NGOs, though this has caused difficulties [see also section 2.1 (b) in original document]. Similarly, the procedure for NGOs to import vehicles is also unclear and needs to be regulated in favorable terms." (UN OCHA 20 March 2000)

Humanitarian impact of sanctions and blockades on vulnerable populations in Serbia and Montenegro (2000)

- Concrete humanitarian impact of sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia cannot be measured due to lack of information
- Since the political changes in October 2000, the international community has lifted the oil embargo and the flight ban against FR, which has facilitated humanitarian operations
- Remaining international restrictions on foreign investment will continue to have a negative impact on the economy
- Internal blockade between Montenegro and Serbia hampers humanitarian activities in Montenegro

International sanctions against FRY

"Although the flight ban imposed on Serbia has been lifted for a six-month period, sanctions and international isolation continue, creating further hardship to vulnerable people." (IFRC 19 June 2000)

"On 7 July, OCHA issued the Humanitarian Risk Analysis No. 11, focusing on the sanctions against FRY. It aimed to provide background information on the history of the sanctions against FRY, their enforcement and implementation, and an overview of ongoing debate on sanctions. It concluded that currently the humanitarian community lacks information on concrete, measurable impact of sanctions on the humanitarian situation in FRY, which needs to be carried out to further evaluate additional humanitarian needs and vulnerability." (UN OCHA 7 July 2000)

"In response to leadership changes in FRY in October, the international political community has begun to ease FRY's isolation and constraints on international trade and assistance. The international community has

lifted the oil embargo and flight ban against FRY, and donors are eager to provide the new government with support for stabilisation and development programmes. These changes bring a very welcome improvement to the climate of humanitarian operations in FRY, and are likely to have a positive impact on humanitarian response. However, international restrictions on foreign investment and other related sanctions still in effect have a negative impact on the economy, and may not be lifted in the near term." (UN November 2000, p. 29)

See OCHA Humanitarian Risk Analysis No. 11, 7 July 2000 [Internet]

Trade blockade between Serbia and Montenegro

"The four month internal trade blockade between Serbia and Montenegro, while easing somewhat, still caused problems. An increase in rhetoric between the Yugoslav Army and Montenegrin government was noted, however tension remained low. (IFRC 19 June 2000)

The Government of FRY's cessation of cross border trade to Montenegro has now begun to impact negatively on NGO activities in Montenegro. Agencies working on improving shelter for IDPs and refugees have had to postpone deadlines due to a lack of construction materials and NGOs are increasingly looking for materials and contractors that are exclusively Montenegrins." (UN OCHA 13 April 2000)

"According to statements of senior Montenegrins officials and media reports, the border between Serbia and Montenegro is now completely blocked. In addition to the previously-imposed ban on food products, the Serbian authorities broadened the range of controlled goods and have even prohibited the export of medicines into Montenegro. As for the Montenegrin-produced goods, only aluminium and steel are allowed into Serbia. While the Montenegrin Government describes the blockade as Belgrade's attempt to destabilize Montenegro, the opposition SNP (pro-Belgrade) claims that the blockade was induced by the introduction of the parallel currency in Montenegro." (UN OCHA 9 March 2000)

UN Administered Province of Kosovo

Kosovo: international staff members become the targets of criminal activities (2000-2001)

- International staff members are increasingly the targets of premeditated rather than random criminal activities, in particular theft of cars and other equipment
- Security of UN staff members requires a network of security officers which extends Kosovo wide
- A trend of openly aggressive behaviour towards international law enforcement and security personnel has become common place in 2001

"Trends show that internationals are becoming the targets of premeditated rather than random criminal activities, especially in the Pristina and Peja/Pec Regions. The majority of incidents involving internationals are crimes against property - mainly theft of safes, computer equipment, radios and vehicles. Residences of international staff members are lucrative targets, especially when empty.

Between 4th and 16th November [2000], three vehicles were stolen from NGOs and one from UNHCR, three vehicles belonging to international organisations were broken into and had documents, equipment and a radio stolen, the windscreen of an NGO's vehicle was smashed; Medecins Sans Frontières offices in Pristina were broken into and a safe, a mobile phone, cash and 420 DM in postage stamps stolen, and various items were stolen from the INTERSOS warehouse in Peja/Pec." (UN OCHA 23 November 2000)

"Over the past three months, there has been a shift in criminal patterns in Kosovo, with a disturbing increase in violence against the international community. While the overall level of crime remains uneven (with 89 incidents in March and 114 in April), the number of incidents against the international community has risen and now accounts for 1.5 per cent of major crime statistics. In addition, a trend of openly aggressive behaviour towards law enforcement and security personnel has become more commonplace. This has resulted in assaults and threats against members of the Kosovo Police Service (KPS), UNMIK police and KFOR, including the fatal shooting of a Russian KFOR soldier in the Kamenica area on 11 April." (UNSC 7 June 2001, para. 7)

"There continue to be numerous attacks against members of the international security presence, including the use of automatic weapons by Kosovo Albanians against UNMIK police in the Pek region in August. The Kosovo Police Service has also been the target of attacks: an officer was murdered in the line of duty at the beginning of September in the Kamenica area (Gnjilane region), and another came under fire in his private car on 15 September, again the Gnjilane area. As a result of this rise in violence, UNMIK police have called on community leaders in Kosovo to actively voice their support for the Kosovo Police Service, and to condemn anyone who threatens these police officers." (UNSC 2 October 2001, para. 10)

"In the period covered by the report, KFOR was the target of several grenade attacks and shots fired on its troops in northern Mitrovica." (UNSC 15 January 2002, para. 23)

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (excluding Kosovo)

Yugoslav government plays the central role in coordinating IDP policy (November 2001)

- UN country team will ensure that humanitarian considerations and durable solutions are included in developmental policies

"The overall context of transition to development has involved an expansion in the amount of resources, scope of programmes and number of actors operation in FRY (ex-K). This increases the need for, as well as the challenges to, effective coordination. The FRY Government now plays the central role in co-ordinating the formulation and implementation of policy with regard to refugees, IDPs and other vulnerable groups. In addition to strengthening the Government coordination capacity, the UN country team will advocate with the European Union, Work Bank, and others to ensure that humanitarian considerations and durable solution are included in developmental policies and programmes.

The UN Humanitarian Coordinator Function will be transitioned to a Resident Coordinator. OCHA will continue to support overall coordination of the humanitarian effort, with lead sector agencies guiding sectoral coordination in close co-operation with Government ministries. In south Serbia the UNIASCO will continue to coordinate UN activities." (UN November 2001, pp. 25-26)

UN consolidated appeal for 2002: humanitarian operations complement Government effort towards economic reform and development (November 2001)

- UN strategy will ensure that development policies and programmes meet standards for durable solutions for refugees and IDPs
- Short-term goals includes the assistance and protection to and advocacy on behalf of targeted beneficiaries, including IDPs
- Confidence building measures will also be supported in southern Serbia

"UN humanitarian operations in FRY [excluding Kosovo] in 2002 complement a major Government effort, with significant international donor support, toward economic reform and development. Therefore, advocacy to ensure that development policies and programmes promote durable solutions and develop national capacity to meet the basic needs of the vulnerable will be a significant component of the UN humanitarian strategy, while material assistance programmes will be tightly focused on the essential needs of those who have no other means of basic support.

The goals of the 2002 CAP in FRY (excluding Kosovo) are:

Strategic Goals:

1. Promote the implementation of a national strategy in line with human rights standards toward durable solutions for refugees and IDPs, both for returns to places of origin and for local integration;
2. Advocate and support social ministries with a view to their progressively assuming full responsibility for beneficiaries of the humanitarian caseload;

3. Advocate for a strong development agenda that promotes policies and programmes to strengthen the national capacity to deliver basic services;
4. Ensure human rights policies are incorporated at all levels of Government reform.

Short-term Goals:

· Provide assistance and protection to and advocacy on behalf of targeted beneficiaries (refugees, IDPs and other vulnerable groups), especially during the winter period. *Indicators: Number of beneficiaries actually served and assistance delivered.*

· Encourage and support confidence building measures for post-conflict programmes in southern Serbia, including providing assistance to returnees to the region. *Indicators: tangible changes in relations between government and ethnic Albanian residents, numbers of representatives in local government, implementation of governance and other reforms promised, investments made on behalf of returnees.*

· Provide assistance and protection to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia refugees and develop emergency preparedness response for possible further influx of refugees. *Indicators: assistance actually delivered and number of refugees served, incidences of violation of rights, assessment of level of preparedness.*

· Develop risk analysis and early warning system reporting mechanisms for advocacy. *Indicators: Risks analysis assessments, early warning reports completed, and linkages established with UNDP Early Warning reports and other UN agency assessments.*" (UN November 2001, p. 23)

Number of beneficiaries of ICRC and WFP food aid in Serbia and Montenegro will decrease significantly (2001-2002)

- Programme targeting is being refined by replacing beneficiary classifications with criteria based on households' economic situation
- UNHCR will provide one cooked meal per day to IDPs in collective centres

"Recent studies on poverty trends indicate a slight decrease though the situation of the most vulnerable will be strongly affected by the ability of the Ministry of Social Welfare to raise and apply funding from international donors. As adequate food supplies exist, the primary role of food aid is to assist vulnerable groups through the initial, most acute transitional phase by providing the most basic needs.

Programme targeting is being refined by replacing beneficiary classifications (e.g. refugee, IDP, pensioner) with selection criteria based on households' overall economic situation. In line with the WFP mandate, through consultation with the Government, it has been agreed that food assistance to non-refugee populations (social cases and low-income pensioners) in Serbia and Montenegro will end by the end of June 2002. The social sector may require continued support (beyond June 2002) through bilateral cash donations from longer-term donors.

The number of refugees eligible for food aid will also be reduced to approximately 164,000 of the most vulnerable by mid-2002, with an additional 21,300 refugees receiving support for recovery activities facilitating durable solutions. In addition, UNHCR will provide one cooked meal per day to 39,000 refugees and IDPs living in collective accommodation. ICRC will continue to provide food assistance to vulnerable IDPs from Kosovo (approximately 165,000 persons)." (UN November 2001, p. 23)

Funding requirements (U$) by agency for food

UNHCR	4,711,135
WFP*	7,989,721
TOTAL	12,700,856

* The a/m 7,989,721 US$ for FRY ex-Kosovo will be used to cover the needs of WFP Programme in FRY (ex-Kosovo) during the second half of the year 2002. In order to cover the needs of its operation during the first half of the year 2002 in the Balkans (including FRY ex-Kosovo), WFP is appealing for an additional 29.1 milion US$ (51,000 MTs food) at the regional level. (UN November 2001, p. 26)

Since June 1999, the ICRC and the [Yugoslav Red Cross] have regularly been bringing significant amounts of aid to a large portion of the 228,500 internally displaced people (IDPs) from Kosovo. The aid has included food, hygiene and baby parcels, and other basic necessities. Although the criteria for assistance were streamlined last fall, the programme still covers 70,000 beneficiaries in Serbia - old-age pensioners elegible for social benefits, the disabled, single parent families and low-income families with children under 15 (ICRC 8 February 2002)

"WFP sent an official letter to the Montenegrin Commissioner for Displaced Persons (MCDP) regarding the introduction of new selection criteria for IDPs and refugees as of April 2002, and asking MCDP to inform beneficiaries on this decision. Furthermore, MCDP is expected to continue to update distribution lists, on the basis of the established criteria." (WFP 22 February 2002)

See also UNHCR annual appeal for 2002 [Internet] and IFRC appeal for 2002-2003 [Internet]

Agriculture: FAO will support the economic recovery of southern Serbia during 2002 (November 2001)

- In particular, FAO will help 2,200 returnee, IDPs, host and economically weak families with land access to start income-generating enterprises

"A recent joint FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission indicated a sharp recovery of crop production in 2001, as a result of optimal planting conditions, a mild winter and good rains. Although no shortages of basic food supplies are expected, concern remains over the effects of a weak economy and liberalised prices. A significant number of small-scale farmers in central and southern Serbia suffered from the impact of drought. These food-insecure farmers have lost their livestock and barely have the means to engage in alternative activities. They live at or even below subsistence levels, are unable to trade in a cash economy and enjoy little support from the Government's social welfare services. Southern Serbia is one of the poorest areas of the country. Additionally, many refugee farmers from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia who seek to integrate into FRY are vulnerable to food insecurity. Although some have access to small plots of land, without external support to start viable small-scale agricultural activities they will remain a social burden.

FAO's emergency agricultural assistance programme for FRY aims to promote the integration of refugee farmers, alternative rural enterprises and agricultural activities in the entire country and to support the UNCT confidence building initiatives in southern Serbia. In Serbia, FAO will support: i) the economic recovery of southern Serbia; ii) alternative income-generating activities in central and eastern Serbia and the Sandzak area; and iii) the integration of refugees in Vojvodina and western Serbia. In Montenegro, FAO will assist emerging dynamic rural groups in crop improvement and diversification and will provide emergency support for the mechanisation of seed potato farming units. An estimated 12 200 farm families will be targeted. Assistance will be provided in close collaboration with Government Ministries, WFP, UNHCR, national institutes, NGOs and the local administration." (UN Novemb er p. 24)

"Proposed Activities

A brief description of FAO's proposed activities is as follows.

<u>Support to the economic recovery of southern Serbia</u>

In support of the economic recovery of southern Serbia, FAO will: i) help 2,200 returnee, IDPs, host and economically weak families with land access to start income-generating enterprises and ii) support the participation of 8,200 beneficiary families in community strengthening agricultural activities that aim to ease ethnic tensions and reduce the risk of further conflict.

Support to alternative income-generating activities in central and eastern Serbia and the Sandzak areas of Serbia and Montenegro

FAO will promote alternative sustainable income-generating agricultural activities (e.g. fruit production and processing) among the farm families in central and eastern Serbia and the Sandzak areas of Serbia and Montenegro. About 400 farm families will be targeted. These activities will help to: revive the rural economy in areas of extreme poverty; increase employment opportunities; reduce population drift to urban centres; and increase the self-reliance of rural entrepreneurs." (UN November 2001, p. 57)

Funding requirements (U$) by agency for agriculture

FAO	7,081,082
TOTAL	7,081,082

(UN November 2001, p. 26)

Health: facilitating access to basic health services for vulnerable remains a UN priority for 2002 (November 2001)

- Advocacy will be conducted to ensure that the basic health needs of the most vulnerable, including refugees and IDPs who have no access to public health structure
- UN health assistance programme will provide essential material support and technical assistance to support communicable disease control programmes in emergency situations
- Heating fuel for maternity ward will also be provided during the winter period

"The weak FRY health system, especially in Serbia, has made no obvious progress in the last year. It lacks adequate planning and funding at strategic and operational levels. Regional differences, as well as health inequalities based on ethnicity and socio-economic status, are evident. Facilitating access to quality basic health services for the poor and vulnerable, particularly among refugees and IDPs, remains the priority for 2002.

The strategy for the UN health assistance programme will be to support health authorities to strengthen basic preventive and curative health services, for instance by helping improve the outreach capacity of primary health care system in Southern Serbia and selected poor districts. The programme will also provide essential material support and technical assistance to support essential communicable disease control programmes in emergency situations. Heating fuel for maternity ward will also be provided during the winter period. Advocacy to ensure that the basic health needs of the most vulnerable are met while medical assistance is provided to those refugees and IDPs who have no access to public health structure will be other key priorities." (UN November 2001, p. 24)

Funding requirements (U$) by agency for health

UNHCR	4,711,135
IOM	7,989,721
UNICEF	1,900,000
WHO	1,550,000
TOTAL	5,359,579

(UN November 2001, p. 26)

Family Shelter and Non-Food Items: UN plans assistance to 40,000 vulnerable refugees and IDPs in 2002 (November 2001)

- Support will consist of rehabilitation and maintenance of collective centres and the provision of essential non-food items
- An emergency stock of non-food items will be used to provide initial support to IDPs returning to south Serbia from Kosovo

"An estimated 40,000 vulnerable refugees and IDPs will need basic assistance in the form of temporary accommodation, heating and non-food items. Support will consist of rehabilitation and maintenance of collective centres. Essential non-food items, including stoves, heating fuel and coal, beds, blankets and other household items, will be delivered to the most vulnerable refugees and IDPs.

In addition, self-help assistance in housing construction for approximately 2,500 refugees will be provided for those choosing to permanently settle in FRY [excluding Kosovo].

To ensure adequate preparedness in the event of a large-scale population influx (e.g. from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), an emergency stock of non-food items is also maintained for up to 50,000 persons. This stock is also used to provide initial support to IDPs returning to south Serbia from Kosovo." (UN November 2001, p. 24)

Funding requirements (U$) by agency for family shelters and non-food items

UNHCR	12,188,210
IOM	450,000
TOTAL	12,638,210

(UN November 2001, p. 26)

Education: UN intervention in 2002 includes the provision of basic educational materials to IDPs and refugees (November 2001)

- Special attention will be given to selected districts in Southern Serbia

"The infrastructure of the majority of schools in FRY is poor due to conflict-damages and negligence as well as lack of maintenance. School equipment and furniture are dilapidated. Curricula and teaching methods have been stagnating for more than 10 years. All these problems are compounded and exacerbated in the area of Southern Serbia and in other poor areas of the country.

The main objective is to ensure that the education system remains functional to at least a minimum quality standard. Intervention includes the provision of basic educational material and textbooks to IDPs, refugees and children at social risk as well as assistance to schools mainly in selected districts of Southern Serbia through delivery of teaching aids, basic furniture and equipment. UNICEF will also assist in the emergency rehabilitation of schools in Southern Serbia and other selected districts. Support will be given to NGOs organising catch-up classes for refugee and IDP children (including Roma children) who have problems following the regular school curriculum.

Although, the sector plan within the CAP focuses mainly in the provision of supplies, the emergency programme will be linked to the development efforts underway in the area of teacher training and education policy reform in the whole country." (UN November 2001, pp. 24-25)

Funding requirements (U$) by agency for family shelters and non-food items

UNHCR	171,200
IOM	1,400,000
TOTAL	1,571,200

(UN November 2001, p. 26)

Protection/Human Rights/Rule of Law: UN main objective for 2002 remains the protection of displaced and vulnerable persons (November 2001)

- Other priorities addressed by OHCHR and IOM programmes include advocating and supporting post-conflict programmes in Southern Serbia

"The promotion and protection of the human rights of target populations are crosscutting issues that underlie and inform the policy, planning and implementation of all UN humanitarian action in the FRY. Despite progress, durable solutions are unavailable for the majority of refugees and IDPs, who can face problems with discrimination, access to adequate housing and employment. The prospect of large-scale return of IDPs to a safe and secure home remains remote in 2002. Poor, displaced and refugee women and girls are potential victims of human trafficking.

In Southern Serbia, progress has been slow on FRY commitments to rectify the longstanding political and economic discrimination against the ethnic Albanian population underlying recent conflict in the region.

The main objective is to provide protection to and advocacy on behalf of refugees, IDPs and other vulnerable groups. Other priorities addressed by OHCHR and IOM programmes include advocating and supporting post-conflict programmes in Southern Serbia designed to mitigate human rights problems and prevent the trafficking of women and girls in the region." (UN November 2001, p. 25)

Funding requirements (U$) by agency for protection/human rights/rule of law

UNHCR	6,020,770
IOM	1,500,000
OHCHR	1,599,483
UNICEF	700,000
TOTAL	1,571,200

(UN November 2001, p. 26)

Economic Recovery and Infrastructure: UN agencies will support post conflict recovery in southern Serbia during 2002 (November 2001)

- UNDP will provide capacity building support to a Rapid Employment Programme in the poorest districts of the south
- UNHCR and IOM plan to offer credits and vocational training to the most vulnerable, including IDPs

"FRY's infrastructure has suffered under-invested and delayed maintenance, as well as significant conflict-related damage. Regional differences are evident, with higher poverty rates in southern Serbia and northern Montenegro. The level of looting and destruction of villages in the former Ground Safety Zone along the boundary with Kosovo is high. It will be several years before the economy of this area can recover. Economic decline is prevalent throughout Southern Serbia and coupled with limited job opportunities. There is concern that these factors could give rise to a return to violence by frustrated young people.

Economic recovery and infrastructure development were recommended by the UN Inter-agency Assessment Mission to Southern Serbia undertaken in February 2001 in co-operation with the Government. A post-conflict Recovery Programme will be implemented in six municipalities of Southern Serbia to support community development activities in the most affected areas as well as social cohesion and economic recovery. UNDP will also provide capacity building support to a Rapid Employment Programme in the poorest districts of the south. Targeted municipalities will be those which have been most affected by the conflict, with large numbers of unemployed or underemployed people. Activities within the CAP will focus on short-term efforts for confidence building and further conflict prevention through various projects and activities complementing longer-term programmes.

On the environment aspect, UNEP is currently implementing its high-priority project on 4 identified hot spots. The project will continue to only address war-related and humanitarian problems on the ongoing clean-up operation.

In order for refugees wishing to remain in the country to better access the job market and income-generating activities, UNHCR will offer credits and vocational training to the most vulnerable. IOM plans a similar programme to increase self-support capacity among IDPs, both in their current situation and upon return to Kosovo." (UN November 2001, p. 25)

Funding requirements (U$) by agency for economic recovery and infrastructure

UNHCR	2,398,359
IOM	850,000
UNDP	5,300,000
UNEP	5,000,000
TOTAL	13,548,359

(UN November 2001, p. 26)

UN Coordination and Support Services in 2002: strengthening Government role in coordinating IDP policy (November 2001)

- UN will advocate with the EU, World Bank, and others to ensure that humanitarian considerations and durable solutions are included in developmental policies and programmes

"The overall context of transition to development has involved an expansion in the amount of resources, scope of programmes and number of actors operating in FRY (ex-K). This increases the need for, as well as the challenges to, effective coordination. The FRY Government now plays the central role in co-ordinating the formulation and implementation of policy with regard to refugees, IDPs and other vulnerable groups. In addition to strengthening the Government coordination capacity, the UN country team will advocate with the European Union, World Bank, and others to ensure that humanitarian considerations and durable solutions are included in developmental policies and programmes.

The UN Humanitarian Coordinator function will be transitioned to a Resident Coordinator. OCHA will continue to support overall coordination of the humanitarian effort, with lead sector agencies guiding

sectoral coordination in close co-operation with Government ministries. In south Serbia the UNIASO will continue to coordinate UN activities." (UN November 2001, pp. 25-26)

Funding requirements (U$) by agency for coordination and support services

UNHCR	10,186,645
OCHA	839,835
UNDP	150,000
UNICEF	1,000,000
WHO	910,000
TOTAL	13,086,480

(UN November 2001, p. 26)

2001 UN Consolidated Appeal: low donor response (November 2001)

- With the exception of WFP and OCHA, agencies met with low donor response, resulting in several programmes being cancelled
- Needs were reevaluated in the course of 2001 to include post-conflict interventions in Southern Serbia and the outbreak of conflict in Macedonia

"Funds requested under the revised CA 2001 for the **Federal Republic of Yugoslavia excluding its Kosovo province** totalled US$ 148 million, of which some US$ 83 million (56%) had been received by late October. With the exception of WFP and OCHA, Agencies met with low donor response, restricting the scale and scope of many programmes. For example, some US$ 10 million of agricultural inputs FAO intended to reduce dependency on external food assistance were cancelled during a mid-year review because no funding had been received and the planting season had passed. WHO cancelled an educational programme on patients' rights for health workers. However, Agencies worked together to ensure essential relief assistance to the most vulnerable populations, including during the difficult winter period.

Following a comprehensive assessment undertaken by the UNCT, post-conflict interventions aimed at consolidating peace and reducing tension in Southern Serbia were developed in Spring 2001 and a joint UN Inter-Agency Support Office (UNIASO) established in the area. Agencies have also re-evaluated humanitarian programmes and planning in response to the outbreak of conflict in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and consequent refugee influx into southern Serbia. A task force on refugees has been set up and an emergency preparedness and response plan formulated for up to 60,000 refugees entering this region of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia." (UN November 2001, p. 4)

Response to the crisis in the Presevo Valley (Southern Serbia): UN agencies support local efforts (2001-2002)

- The agreement signed between the Serbian Government and the Albanian armed groups promotes minority rights of the Albanian community
- The UN system opened a joint office in the area to support confidence-building measures
- Ethnic Albanians have complained about the slowness of economic and social investments and expressed resentment over perceived priority given to Serb-populated areas
- International donors have committed some US$ 24 million to projects covering mainly infrastructure, health and shelter in the wider Southern Serbia region in 2001

"In southern Serbia, the Government and ethnic Albanian armed groups negotiated a peace agreement in the Spring, paving the way for return of 5,500 ethnic Albanians to their homes in the Ground Safety Zone on the boundary with Kosovo. The agreement, which was backed by the international community, promotes minority rights through greater political, economic and social participation on the part of the ethnic Albanian population. The region suffers from structural underdevelopment, characterised by poverty and low employment, poor infrastructure, and a weak private sector. The UN system, which has been actively involved in the area throughout 2001, opened a joint office (UNIASO) at mid-year. Together with other members of the international community plus national and municipal authorities, it contributes to a range of confidence building measures. However important political and administrative reforms to improve local governance have not yet been realized, raising concern over a possible return to conflict.

Significant funds have been committed and/or spent by the government and international donors in support of the Plan, although the available information is not detailed enough yet to indicate exactly how much has been disbursed for projects. According to the JCB, some US$13.2 million have been spent in or committed to the three municipalities during 2001. Much or all of these funds have been disbursed through municipal budgets. However, ethnic Albanians in the municipalities have complained about the slowness of economic and social investments and expressed resentment over the perception that a disproportionate amount of the arriving funds have been spent in areas populated by ethnic Serbs. These complaints and resentments grow out of both a lack of transparency in and public information about the process by which funds are committed, allocated and spent, and the lack of ethnic Albanian representation on the municipal councils that discuss spending priorities.

Initial figures gathered from international donors show that some US$ 24 million have been committed to projects covering mainly infrastructure, health and shelter in the wider Southern Serbia region (most apparently in Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja municipalities) in the past year, although the total amounts spent to date cannot yet be confirmed. Most agencies have confirmed the needs of economic and social improvements to be greatest among the ethnic Albanian and Roma communities with the need to achieve some equalization. Special needs also exist to maintain social cohesion and improve contacts between the Serbian, Albanian and Roma communities, particularly through the NGO sector. Within this context work also needs to be sustained with particular target groups such as youth and women. However, the overall needs are huge. Both government and international donors need to sustain and better coordinate their commitments in order to maintain the impact. To overcome public scepticism, it is recommended that a coordinated and transparent mechanism be established through which the true extent of combined financial support can be publicly and regularly disclosed to affected communities and amongst donors." (UN OCHA 29 January 2002)

For more details on the response to the conflict in Southern Serbia, see:

- *Report of the United Nations Inter-Agency Assessment Mission to Southern Serbia (March 2001) [Internet]*
- *UN Interagency progress report and recommendations on the situation in Southern Serbia, FRY, UNOCHA 29 January 2002 [Internet]*
- *Peace in Presevo: Quick Fix or Long-Term Solution, International Crisis Group, 10 August 2001 [Internet]*

See also ICRC activities in the FR of Yugoslavia, Update January 2002 (8 February 2002) [Internet]

Winter humanitarian needs: authorities have no resource to supply heating fuels for social institutions (December 2001)

- Donors and international organizations have agreed to provide fuels to IDP collective centres, vulnerable families and various social institutions

"On 18 October, OCHA organized a follow-up meeting on winter humanitarian needs to provide donors and involved organizations with an update of information on the overall needs for heating fuels to priority institutions and vulnerable population groups. The following conclusions were made:
The financial resources by the government and municipalities are not available or committed to ensure supply of heating fuels for social institutions, hospitals and other health facilities, schools and district heating plants, which also serve many of the above.

Donors and international organizations have made commitments to supply heating fuel to cover the following:
100% of refugee and IDP collective centers (ECHO/UNHCR)
Nearly 100% of social institutions with individual heating systems (reserves from last year, Canadian CIDA and UNHCR/ECHO for those with refugees).
Small amount of total fuel needed for some hospitals with maternity wards (UNICEF).
-German Red Cross is considering provision of some fuels for high priority humanitarian needs.
To date there are no additional commitments made for fuel assistance to hospitals, other health institutions, schools or prisons, with the exception of UNICEF assistance for stoves and wood for rural schools in the former GSZ in southern Serbia.
OCHA is ready to provide information on the humanitarian aspects of fuel provision during the winter; IMG would be able to provide monitoring mechanism if more substantial international assistance is provided for fuels." (UNOCHA 26 October 2001)

"UNHCR with ECHO funding support will provide heating fuels to refugee and IDP Collective Centres and to social institutions housing refugees.

ECHO, through its implementing partners ACTED, PREMIERE URGENCE and CORDAID, will provide 3 meters of firewood for each of the 21,065 vulnerable families of IDPs, refugees and local population in Southern and Central Serbia for this winter. The criteria for selection of the beneficiaries gives priority to: single parents, single women, disabled/chronically ill, large families with no income (three or more children under 15), elderly over 65 and foster families.

Cordaid have also received funding from the Dutch Government to deliver firewood to 26,000 families (including refugees, IDPs and local population) in Vojvodina and Belgrade area.

Oxfam announced a programme distributing coal to vulnerable refugees and IDPs in private accommodation (total 4,500 households).

UNICEF has received CIDA funding to distribute 700 stoves to primary schools in Southern Serbia.

During the winter German Red Cross will distribute coal for heating social care institutions, schools and kindergartens in;
-Belgrade (2,570 MT of coal for 8,384 beneficiaries),
Kragujevac (1,337 MT of coal for 3,742 beneficiaries),
Kraljevo (582 MT of coal for 2,313 beneficiaries) and
Nis (702 MT of coal for 725 beneficiaries).
The gap in heating fuel for hospitals and health centers (raised in previous sitreps) has been met to date, though UNICED has appealed for funds for maternity wards through the UN CAP." (UNOCHA 4 December 2001)

ICRC assistance to IDPs from Kosovo (2001-2002)

- Aid includes food, hygiene, baby parcel and other basic necessities to a large portion of the IDPs in Serbia

- Criteria for assistance have been streamlined in the fall of 2001 but still covers 70,000 beneficiaries in Serbia
- ICRC has also developed income-generating projects in the agricultural sector to move away from direct assistance
- A agreement has been concluded with the Ministry of Health on a three-year integrated basic health services pilot project in Kraljevo municipality, with particular focus on IDP's basic health needs

Assisting the displaced

"Since June 1999, the ICRC and the YRC have regularly been bringing significant amounts of aid to a large portion of the 228,500 internally displaced people (IDPs) from Kosovo. The aid has included food, hygiene and baby parcels, and other basic necessities. Although the criteria for assistance were streamlined last fall, the programme still covers 70,000 beneficiaries in Serbia – old-age pensioners eligible for social benefits, the disabled, single parent families and low-income families with children under 15.

Community-based projects
Projects designed to encourage social interaction between IDPs and the resident population have been implemented to avoid situations where IDPs feel isolated or left on the sidelines of society. Planned activities will be carried out through the existing YRC network of youth and old-people's clubs and community centers. It is hoped that they will be extended to areas with high concentrations of IDPs.

Income-generating projects
In a move away from mere aid handouts, which can create dependency, other forms of support have been developed to enhance coping mechanisms that promote self-sustainability and encourage beneficiaries to become actively involved in improving their own circumstances. Pilot projects have been set up in the agricultural sector (farming/livestock/fisheries) and in small-scale agro industries (e.g. workshops for farm machinery). IDPs with agricultural backgrounds who have access to arable land but no means of starting an income-generating activity are encouraged to take part in these projects to stimulate their own food production and boost household income. All these projects are supported by the local Red Cross and the Serbian Ministry of Agriculture.

Basic health services pilot project in Kraljevo

Last year, agreement was reached with the Ministry of Health on a three-year integrated basic health services pilot project designed to meet primary health-care needs in Kraljevo municipality. The project focuses on meeting the IDP's basic health needs through the existing health system by means of an integrated and non-discriminatory approach.

Kraljevo municipality has the country's highest number of IDPs (25,700), refugees, and social cases (6,269) relative to its population of 150,000 in which almost one in every four is vulnerable. The project, which is designed in a way that will benefit the entire resident population, is going to support:

a. Improvement of local capacity to manage health programmes.

b. Development of a sustainable primary health-care system based on cost-effective treatment and priority public health programmes specifically emphasizing the needs of IDPs and vulnerable groups.

c. Reduction of the burden of disease and disability among target beneficiaries and the rest of the resident population.

Local ownership and the active participation of key members of the local community will also be fostered through a process that involves a steering group, peer-group work, workshops, study tours, surveys, an

Internet-based peer network and the development of a social marketing and communication component." (ICRC 8 February 2002)

Women's organizations provide significant assistance to displaced in Serbia (2001)

- Women's organizations, such as Women in Black, were originally formed to oppose the mobilization for war
- Mandates are diverse, with programmes ranging from social and political activism, research, advocacy, humanitarian assistance, education and health services
- Many groups serve refugees and IDPs as well as the larger population, often with international financial support

"Numerous independent women's and feminist groups provide assistance to refugee and internally displaced populations. At the outbreak of conflict in Croatia and Bosnia, women formed organizations to oppose the mobilization for war. One of the most inspirational is **Women in Black,** an anti-war group, whose members have demonstrated every week in Belgrade's Republic Square for most of the past decade against war and violence. They also distribute relief supplies to refugees, work with women refugees and hold classes to educate people about how to combat racism and violence. The group, which was nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize in 2000, describes its mission as 'to transform women's powerlessness and despair into a feminist women's movement of resistance to nationalism, militarism and sexism.'

Yugoslav-based women's groups are diverse in their mandates, with programs ranging from activism on behalf of women's political, legal and social rights, to research and advocacy, humanitarian assistance, education and health services. Many groups serve refugees and IDPs as well as the larger population. Some of the major women's organizations assisting refugee and IDP women are:

° **The Autonomous Women's Center Against Sexual Violenc**e, Belgrade: Started in 1990 with the SOS Hotline (see below) to provide a safe environment for women survivors of all forms of sexual violence. It started providing support and counseling to women rape victims fleeing from Croatia and Bosnia in 1992 and continues to provide psychotherapy to those from that exodus who still need it today. It holds workshops for women on overcoming trauma, as well as workshops on human rights for Roma women. It does outreach to Roma settlements, as the Roma women find it hard to get to them in Belgrade. It has provided care and counseling to both Roma and Serbian IDPs from Kosovo who have been victims of rape used as a weapon of war.

° **The Association for Women's Initiatives (AWIN):** An umbrella NGO established in December 1998. Its core activity is feminist activism, forming new women's initiatives and networking. It provides small grants to rural women's groups trying to start income generating projects. It gives free computer and English language courses for women to help them get employment. AWIN has capacity building workshops for smaller groups of women. Because Serbia is a major country of transition for trafficking of women from East Europe and the countries that comprised the Soviet Union on their way to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Montenegro, for the use of troops stationed there, AWIN has launched ASTRA (Anti-Sex Trafficking Action) to educate Serbian communities about the trafficking of women and girls and to help prevent trafficking. Serbia is a major transit point for the trafficking of women for sexual purposes from Eastern Europe and the countries that comprised the Soviet Union to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Montenegro. AWIN will collect data and make contacts with social work centers, health care providers and the police. AWIN holds anti-trafficking education campaigns in schools and community centers.

° **Group 484:** A women's NGO founded in 1995 by beloved peace activist, choreographer, artist and refugee Jelena Santic, who died tragically last year. Santic's original vision was to organize the 484

families who had arrived with the 1995 exodus of 250,000 refugees from Knin and Eastern Slavonia, to unite and work together to advocate for their own needs. Since its founding, Group 484 has expanded its scope of work and currently has 200 female refugee activists. Its mission is "to help people in need, to spread the culture of peace, dialogue, agreement, cooperation and nonviolent conflict resolution as the basis for the development of civil society." Its motto is that life is in your own hands. Its main work is to promote self organization and advocacy among refugees and IDPs. They stimulate social activism by educating refugees in human rights and children's rights through interactive workshops and classes. Group 484 gives help and support to refugees wanting to return to their homes in Bosnia and Croatia. It also provides humanitarian aid, psychosocial programs and legal advice to IDPs and refugees in private accommodations and collective centers.

° **Lastavica Women's Safe House:** A safe house for 115 women and children since the early 1990s. It helps the victims of domestic violence resolve psychological issues and adjust their legal status and undertakes legal advocacy. The Lastavica (Serbo-Croatian for swallow) initiative of refugee women's houses was started in Surcin, a town outside of Belgrade. The Autonomous Women's Center and Oxfam-UK established the first collective house for refugee women in 1996. Originally, there were ten women living together in a small brick house. A second house was opened in Pancevo in 1997. The majority of refugee women supported in these houses are from Krajina and are either single or without support from their families. They organize themselves and share duties, which include cooking, gardening and raising chickens. The houses also serve as open centers for all refugee women in the area to visit and take classes. Educational and other activities benefit more than 100 refugees every month. Skills development is offered through computer, English language and catering courses. Training is also offered in hairdressing, sewing and weaving. Legal support is organized once a week to help refugees with issues regarding refugee status, obtaining documents and claiming property. Some women leave the house when they obtain skills and find employment or marry. The vacancies are filled by other refugee and internally displaced women. Many of the women find work through the Lastavica catering business, which produces food that is popular with local people and expatriates living in the area.

° **The SOS Hotline for Women and Children Victims of Violence:** SOS Hotline is an NGO that has been assisting women and children victims of violence since 1991. One SOS worker described the program: "Since the beginning of the Balkan wars, family violence has escalated. We have to deal with all kinds of situations, including women who are trafficked, as well as incest cases. Some of the cases are refugees and IDPs, as well as local women. SOS has had to keep in touch with social welfare institutions that are, themselves, in bad shape. Some of their staff come to work with us because people really want to help, but the state institutions delay assistance because of procedures."

° **Hi Neighbor:** The founder of Hi Neighbor is the energetic and highly motivated Vesna Ognjenovic, a university professor who left her teaching position in 1991 to start psychosocial outreach support to refugee women and children living in collective centers. By 2000, Hi Neighbor had 120 part-time professionals providing psychosocial support to refugees and IDPs in 25 Serbian municipalities.

Hi Neighbor, an implementing partner of UNHCR, has separate programs for preschool children, school children and adolescents with the main goal of cultural and social integration in local communities through activities that promote the development of age-appropriate developmental skills, including social competence and cognition, literacy and numeracy through process-oriented programs. Hi Neighbor also has programs for adults and elderly and, as with their child programs, they promote self-reliance. Activities for adults include projects promoting traditional handicrafts which also provide modest incomes for the participants.

Hi Neighbor Helps Provide a Living

At a shop in Belgrade, traditional clothes and other handicrafts sell at a brisk pace. The shop's merchandise is produced by refugee women, who are using their sewing and embroidery skills to make high-quality materials. Some have learned weaving in recent years or months, as part of the Hi Neighbor training program. More than 240 refugee women earn some income from this work.

These organizations are just some of the dozens of impressive local women's organizations formed in Serbia to address the unique needs and crises generated by the past decade of conflict and political repression. The majority of these organizations receive international monetary support, which has allowed them to provide not only aid but a breath of humanity and civil society into a country ravaged by totalitarian nationalism. To maintain their valuable work, these organizations will continue to need international funds until their work can be integrated into the emerging social infrastructure. Continued funding will ensure that their voices and actions promoting civil society will not be silenced or stopped." (Women's Commission September 2001, pp. 11-13)

More information on above mentioned organizations can be found on the web:
Women in Black: http://www.igc.org/balkans/wib/index.html [Internet]
Group 484: http://www.xs4all.nl/~freeserb/ngo/e-g484.html [Internet]
Lastavica Women's Safe House: http://www.womenngo.org.yu/sajt/english/sajt/women_groups_directories/lastavica/index.htm [Internet]

Action by Churches Together: appeal to fill the gaps in food delivery (2002)

- Projects include support to small-scale farming and gardening among displaced communities
- Distribution of food and non-food items are also planned in response to WFP and ICRC aid reduction

"Recognizing the continuing grave situation in the region, ACT members have planned their response to meet the most urgent need of the long-affected population. Based on recommendations made by an evaluation team that visited Yugoslavia last year, ACT members will strive to fill the gaps in food delivery, particularly during the winter months.

ACT members Church World Service (CWS), Hungarian Interchurch Aid (HIA), the International Orthodox Church Charities (IOCC), Lutheran World Federation/Ecumenical Humanitarian Organization (LWF/EHO), Philanthropy and the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) wish to respond to the on-going crisis in Yugoslavia in the following manner:

- Distribution of food and non-food items
- Food security
- Agriculture for food" (ACT 10 January 2002)

"According to the new 2001 food assistance criteria by ICRC, *only* single-parent families, handicapped, elderly pensioners eligible for social benefits, and low-income families with children under 15 qualify for food parcels. WFP has been phasing down its aid since July 2001 by limiting the number of beneficiaries. This important and valuable assistance is needed but leaves many other vulnerable people beyond the reach of this support.

Children are a particularly impoverished sector of society, often living in appalling conditions. Thousands of children suffer, having no means of their own they depend on the meagre incomes of their families and virtually starve.

Limited resources and reduced assistance have left many refugees, IDPs and others in need without any support at all. There is currently no mechanism for sustainable food assistance. The majority of refugees and IDPs can produce food themselves once assisted with the basic inputs. Experience shows that even in the most appalling living conditions, people rely on small-scale farming as part of their survival strategy. Small agricultural inputs of seeds and fertilisers will reduce dependence on humanitarian relief, help people regain confidence, and begin the transition towards self-reliance." (ACT 10 January 2002)

	LWF/EHO	IOCC	CWS	Philanthropy	HIA	ROC	TOTAL
Total Appeal Target	1,072,622	905,136	100,000	756,681	593,462	362,380	3,790,281

Overview of ACT members' proposals:

Lutheran Workd Federation Department for World Service (LWF/WS)
Ecumenical Humanitarian Organization (EHO): Soup kitchens, vegetable seed parcels, humanitarian pharmacy/mobile medical team, replacement milk formula for Babies without access to natural mother's milk, incontinence pads for elderly
Aid will be given based upon greatest need to the following vulnerable groups:
♣ elderly people with low pensions or lacking other support;
♣ families with children and income of less than 90 DEM per month (half the national average income);
♣ invalid and mentally disabled (including support to local associations assisting these groups);
♣ Roma communities;
♣ refugees from Croatia and Bosnia & Herzegovina (including host families);
♣ displaced persons from Kosovo (including host families);
♣ unemployed persons (particularly youth)

Church World Service and Witness (CWS) – Balkans program
The CWS emergency relief program for Serbia will focus on:
♣ Providing vulnerable children with high-energy food parcels, distributing them among children in collection centers, orphanages, hospitals and the poorest families.
♣ Promoting self-sufficiency of vulnerable refugees, IDPs and the most vulnerable families by supplying them with inputs for gardening and small-scale farming.

International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC)
- Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: Serbia Program
- Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: Montenegro Program

IOCC: Serbia and Montenegro Combined Goals:
♣ Provide and distribute food and non-food life sustaining humanitarian assistance to refugees, displaced persons, and social vulnerable cases in collective centres, private accommodations and social institutions.
♣ Provide technical, material and other assistance necessary to accomplish rehabilitation and/or repair of the most devastated and needy collective centres which house refugees and displaced persons. **(Serbia only)**
♣ Provide of self-sufficiency and food security for extremely vulnerable beneficiaries through agriculture production in an effort to reduce dependency on humanitarian aid

Philanthropy – SOC (PH) (The Official Humanitarian Organization of the Serbian Orthodox Church)
Provision of expert technical and material assistance for projects of mobile health care in the municipalities of Belgrade. The programs would be extensive and would focus on the most vulnerable population such as elderly, physically disabled and developmentally impaired among refugees, IDPs and local population, living in private accommodation or in collective centres.
Targeted at least 200 most vulnerable beneficiaries.
♣ Distribution of food parcels to IDPs and refugees in collective centres and private accommodation in Vojvodina and the Serbia proper through the network of the regional offices.
Targeted 13,200 vulnerable beneficiaries.
♣ Provision of hygiene parcels to IDPs and refugees in collective centres and private accommodation in Vojvodina and the Serbia proper through the network of the regional offices.
Targeted 13,200 beneficiaries.

♣ To strengthen and further develop the institutional and implementation capacity of Philanthropy, in order to continue to effectively address the human needs of refugees, displaced persons and vulnerable/economically disadvantaged persons.

Hungarian Interchurch Aid (HIA)

Goals and Objectives

♣ To provide food and non-food items to 4,500 families on a quarterly basis,
♣ To provide one hot meal daily six days a week for 1,500 beneficiaries in three soup kitchens,
♣ To provide school meals for 600 pupils in the secondary school in Tutin to combat malnutrition and assure their full participation in the lessons,
♣ To operate a dairy farm in Novi Pazar to distribute milk and provide meat for the soup kitchens,
♣ To produce barley for fodder for the cows in the dairy farm,
♣ To produce beans for supplying the soup kitchens,
♣ To produce potatoes for distribution among the beneficiaries and for supplying the soup kitchens,
♣ To produce rye for exchange for other raw materials in the soup kitchens,
♣ To distribute family seed parcels, fertiliser and tools for plots region wide,
♣ To continue Merhamet's capacity building.

Type of Targeted Beneficiaries

♣ Refugees from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and FYROM,
♣ IDPs from Kosovo,
♣ Inner Serbia IDPs,
♣ Local social cases: pensioners, orphans, disabled, extended families.

The Russian Orthodox Church (ROC)

Objectives

♣ to provide relief food for IDPs from Kosovo in Serbia,
♣ to support reconciliation efforts of the Serbian Orthodox Church,
♣ to develop capacity building of SOCs organizations, dealing with IDPs from Kosovo in Serbia.
(ACT 10 January 2002)

Food aid to the internally displaced persons in Serbia and Montenegro provided by ICRC, WFP and UNHCR (2000-2001)

- ICRC continues to assist the IDPs in Serbia, by providing them with food parcels and hygiene kits
- IDPs in Montenegro are assisted by WFP which will phase down its aid from July 2001 by assisting primarily IDPs in collective centres
- Additional assistance to the IDPs in collective centres in both republics will be provided by UNHCR during 2001

General

"In Serbia, from January to June 2001, WFP will continue to assist the same caseload of refugees and social cases as in 2000, by July 2001, WFP plans to gradually phase down food aid and whenever possible move from free distribution to self reliance enhancing schemes to assist the most vulnerable refugees and social cases. In Montenegro, targeted distributions to IDPs and more accurate targeting of refugees is justified by the fact that many of them have access to employment in the informal sector of the economy, receive assistance from relatives or own assets. WFP will target food distributions to single parent families, children under-five, IDPs and refugees in collective centres, the elderly and the disabled. WFP's beneficiaries at the beginning of 2001 will number around 768,000. This figure will be gradually scaled down to 500,000 by the last quarter of 2001.

In addition, ICRC will continue supporting the most vulnerable IDPs in Serbia (ICRC is also assisting some 70,000 additional cases). Further assessments of the food aid needs in Serbia will continue to be conducted through the FAO/WFP Food security Surveillance Unit, WFP VAM, other regular surveys done by WFP in Serbia (Survey on Pensioner's Food Security in Serbia) and assessments to be carried out by WFP's Regional Office for the Balkans.

WFP will take part in all the regular coordination activities chaired by the Humanitarian Coordinator in Belgrade. From its side, WFP will continue coordinating food assistance to Serbia including assessments.

Indicators:
1. number of refugees, IDPs and social cases receiving food aid, broken down by gender and by targeting category.
2. Value of minimum basic food and non-food basket versus incomes (pension, casual labour) and income/dependants ratio."
(UN November 2000, pp. 122-123)

"WFP is assisting the IDP/refugee population in preparation for this year's distribution programme in Montenegro. According to WFP the expected caseload by April 2001 is approximately 15,000 IDPs and less than 10,000 refugees. The programme figures for December 2000 were 29,357 IDPs and 11,247 refugees." (UN OCHA 11 January 2001)

ICRC in Serbia
"Since June 1999, the ICRC and the Yugoslav Red Cross have been providing monthly food parcels (10 kg of wheat flour and 10 kg of other basic food items per person) to people displaced from Kosovo.

In October 2000, 3,666 metric tonnes of food - an increase of nearly 300 tonnes over the previous month - were distributed to about 185,000 displaced persons. Family hygiene parcels were provided for 35,204 displaced families; other kinds of assistance, delivered on request, included baby parcels, kitchen sets, jerrycans, mattresses, blankets and second-hand clothes.

Major contributors to the programme have been the Finnish Red Cross, which donated 87,000 food parcels, and the French Red Cross, which gave 28,000 parcels containing both food and hygiene kits." (ICRC 15 November 2000)

UNHCR
"UNHCR's objectives under this sector for 2001 are to ensure that 35,000 vulnerable refugees and up to 15,000 IDPs in collective accommodation in both republics are to be provided with at least one cooked meal per day, as well as additional fresh food parcels during the winter. Through implementing partners, beneficiaries will receive 300-400 gr. of fresh food per day, i.e. eggs, canned meat, milk powder, jam and fresh fruits and vegetables according to seasonal availability. Furthermore, vegetable greenhouse and poultry projects will be expanded wherever feasible. The inhabitants of the collective centres use a portion of the produce for consumption, while the other part is used for sale and restocking of seeds and chicken." (UN November 2000, p. 53)

UN Consolidated Appeal for 2001: Funding requirements for Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (excluding Kosovo): Food and agriculture (US$)

UNHCR	8,520,668
WFP	67,000,000
FAO	20,486,500

For more detailed information on WFP programmes, see EMOP 6136.02 - Emergency Food Assistance in the Balkan Region [Internet]

For more information on the level of donors' support to the UN Consolidated Appeal for 2001, see the UN Financial Tracking Database for Complex Emergencies [Internet]

Funding shortfalls forced many agencies to scale down their planned operations during 2000

- Political constraints also dictated against any organised returns of non-ethnic Albanians to Kosovo
- Little donor support was provided for capacity-building or development initiatives
- The number of vulnerable individuals reliant on international protection and relief increased as a result of the deteriorating economy
- Following the 24 September elections, agencies were able to link their humanitarian programmes with the international support to FRY's infrastructure and institutions

"In the FRY, excluding Kosovo, funding shortfalls forced many agencies to scale down their planned operations. Others compensated by drawing on alternative sources, such as carry-over funds. WHO and UNICEF were relatively unaffected, while UNHCR, WFP, OHCHR, IOM, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and UNDP had to reduce or postpone some programmes. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Food and Agriculture Oganization (FAO) were unable to implement their year 2000 CA programmes.

Political constraints also limited to some extent the impact of the humanitarian operation. International isolation and strained relations with neighbouring territories worked against achieving durable solutions and economic recovery. Repatriation of refugees continued but remained closely linked to the political and economic situation in Croatia and BiH. As a result, the numbers repatriating only increased significantly in the second half of 2000. Continuing security concerns in Kosovo dictated against any organised returns of the non-ethnic Albanians displaced in Serbia and Montenegro in year 2000, thus priority was given to "Go and See Visits" and to sharing with these IDPs reliable information about the situation in Kosovo. Elsewhere in the FRY, little donor support was provided for capacity-building or development initiatives, and late funding inhibited programme flexibility overall. Meanwhile, the state of the economy and social services continued to deteriorate, increasing the numbers of vulnerable individuals reliant on international protection and relief, and restricting progress in the integration of the largest refugee population in Europe.

Despite these severe constraints, many key goals for the humanitarian programme were achieved: humanitarian needs were monitored and advocacy with donors was reasonably successful; assistance was delivered to the most vulnerable; the basic essential public services and utilities were maintained; and durable solutions were developed to the extent possible.

Following the 24 September elections, Agencies had a new opportunity to link their humanitarian programmes with much-needed international assistance supporting recovery and development of FRY's fragile infrastructure and institutions. The experience of UN Agencies working in FRY under the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) is proving of considerable value for regional, bilateral, and international initiatives in these areas." (UN November 2000, para. 6-7)

For more information on the level of donors' support to the UN Consolidated Appeal for 2000, consult the UN Financial Tracking Database for Complex Emergencies [Internet]

For more detailed information on funding shortfalls, see UN OCHA Briefing Note: Update on the humanitarian situation in FRY (excl. Kosovo) 24 October 2000 [Internet]

See also UNHCR Press release, "UNHCR appeals for urgent aid to Yugoslavia", Belgrade, 26 October 2000 [Internet]

Aid agencies should coordinate to ensure that displaced in Serbia are informed about their rights, and the services available to them (2000)

- Refugees and displaced persons ignore the range of rights and services available to them, which contributes to marginalise them further

"It was in this crucial area of 'getting the information out' to refugees and IDPs that the [ECRE/ICVA] mission felt was of most concern. This highly marginalised and vulnerable group is further disadvantaged if they are uncertain of their rights or of the services they could access to help promote them. Indeed, the 'most needy people are the ones which never find out about support,' according to one leading member of the international community. Agencies must work more closely together in co-ordinating information channels to refugees and IDPs, both in order to identify and plug gaps where certain groups may miss out on much of the information flow (such as Roma IDPs) and to ensure that clients know of the full range of services available to them from a range of different service providers.

Since there are multiple service providers active in the field – from governmental, IGO and NGO sectors, local and international – the role of co-ordinating information on all available services and making sure it is presented in a format readily usable by service providers in working with refugees and IDPs would seem most appropriately sited with a national-level co-ordinating body able to key into all the sectors and link with local fora. In Serbia, this type of role would be best fulfilled by the International Council of Voluntary Agencies, which already plays a full role in collating information on IGO and NGO activity, supported by UNHCR." (ECRE/ICVA May 2000, paras. 4.9.3-4.9.4)

Host families in Montenegro are generally willing to host displaced people over a prolonged period of time (2000)

- European Union provides assistance for some 20,000 host families of internally displaced from Kosovo

"In Montenegro, the Danish Refugee Council completed a Host Family Survey with 423 families hosting IDPs in 17 villages in 4 northern municipalities (Berane, Andrijevica, Plav and Rozaje). Main objectives of the survey were to provide information on the current situation of host families, and to create a basis for planning further assistance programs. Majority of the surveyed host families saw assistance programs oriented towards increasing their household income as the best solution to problems they experience due to hosting IDPs. On the other hand, host families showed a lack of interest for the implementation of community-based projects. As for the existing relationship between host families and IDP population, the survey indicated that it was a stable one, and host families were generally willing to keep hosting IDPs over a prolonged period of time. However, this could rather be attributed to the cultural value of the hosts, than the fact that their relationship with IDPs is problem-free." (UN OCHA 14 July 2000)

"In Montenegro, the EU has been providing, through the Montenegrin Commissioner for Displaced Persons, assistance for some 20,000 host families (as of March /April 1999) of Kosovo IDPs at the rate of DEM 3 per person per day. The funds allocated for 1999 was sufficient to cover such assistance until July 1999. The EU is also providing support to the health authorities to help cover the increased health costs due

to the presence of IDP populations. It is estimated that the Montenegrin Government is incurring extra expenditures in health, education, etc., of about DEM 2 million per month." (UN OCHA 3 March 2000)

Growing tension between local population and the internally displaced population in Serbia (2000)

"According to UNHCR, there are reports of a growing tension between local population and IDPs in Kragujevac and Kraljevo areas in Serbia. There appears to be dissatisfaction among the local population who perceive the amount of assistance IDPs receive as more than that provided to local social cases." (UN OCHA 1 June 2000)

Local NGOs in Serbia and Montenegro need international support (2000)

- Modest NGO presence in Serbia compared to Montenegro and Kosovo
- International organisations should contribute more to the capacity building of local NGOs
- There is a need for a stronger coordination between local NGOs in the area of fundraising, strategic planning and information management
- Roma NGOs must be supported in developing their own capacities and drawn into the local and national NGO fora

"There are currently 49 international NGOs in Serbia, of which 36 are operational - a very modest size of the NGO community in comparison with the significance of existing humanitarian needs. On the other hand, there are some 60 NGOs in Montenegro, and the number of NGOs in Kosovo has reached as many as 269. There is a more significant role NGOs can play in Serbia - larger and more populous than other areas of FRY, given that the level of suffering among the vulnerable groups is comparable or in some cases even worse. However, in order for this to be realized, the Government of FRY/Serbia needs to take steps to create a more favorable operating environment for NGOs." (UN OCHA 20 March 2000)

"It was also apparent to the [ECRE/ICVA] team that there is further potential for inter-agency co-ordination below the [humanitarian coordination superstructure under the oversight of the Humanitarian Coordinator and the OCHA]. Local NGOs need to be drawn more fully into the process, alongside IGOs and international NGOs as full partners. Local NGOs can be both efficient and sensitive providers, and it is important to build their capacity both operationally and in their ability to partake in advocacy and policy-making networks. Local NGOs, after all, represent the future of civil society in Serbia and will be vital long after the international community disengages. The present funding situation for local NGOs in Serbia is extremely precarious, and their capacity to reach into donor channels needs to be increased. International bodies must engage more fully with local NGOs as supporters, mentors and partners, rather than draining the best-qualified local staff into their own operations.

But local NGOs themselves need to recognise the need to better co-ordinate their activities. Too often, too many local groups duplicate services or chase the same funding sources. Many of the most active and committed are too dependent on one or two staff. Local NGO fora in the regions of Serbia need to be supported and encouraged, bringing together both national and international NGO involvement in a specific area, and allowing strategic planning and information exchange. Again, ICVA is already developing work in this area and should be supported in its expansion where needed.

[…][T]he Roma seem the most marginalised group in terms of NGO liaison and co-ordination, although ICVA is making progress in establishing pro-active links. There are several active Roma NGOs across the country; these must be supported in developing their own capacities and drawn into the local and national

NGO fora. International organisations must be more pro-active and consistent in reaching out to Roma NGOs and supporting their development and mainstreaming." (ECVE/ICRA May 2000, paras. 4.9.54.9.7)

See also "Legislation and administative practices in Serbia and Montenegro complicate the work of humanitarian agencies (2000)" [Internal link]

UN Administered Province of Kosovo

Gradual transfer of humanitarian coordination role to local actors (2000-2001)

- Up to June 2000, the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs headed UNMIK's Humanitarian Pillar in charge of humanitarian assistance to the displaced
- In June 2000, the Humanitarian Pillar was phased out and replaced by a Humanitarian Coordinator provided by UNHCR, until September 2001
- In 2002, UNHCR remains the lead agency for emergency preparedness and contingency planning, in support to the new Ministry of Public Services

"Up to June 2000, the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs (DSRSG-HA), heading UNMIK's Humanitarian Pillar (Pillar One), was responsible for coordinating humanitarian activities to facilitate the re-integration of refugees, to ensure basic living conditions for all persons in need, including IDPs, and to provide humanitarian protection and relief to threatened minority populations. An OCHA Unit supported the Office of the DSRSG-HA, and UNHCR was the lead agency under the Pillar. Under this overall coordination structure, various coordination mechanisms had been established both at the capital and field level. A Humanitarian Community Information Centre had also been set up to facilitate information sharing.

The Humanitarian Pillar was phased-out at the end of June 2000, and replaced by a Humanitarian Coordinator (HC), provided by UNHCR. Several coordination mechanisms that were under the auspices of Pillar One are being redefined or transferred to other UNMIK Pillars. An UNMIK Inter-Agency Coordination Meeting has been established. This new structure includes both humanitarian and development agenda items and will serve as a forum for the UN Agencies, NGO community and Red Cross missions to work more closely with the other Pillars of UNMIK and the SRSG's office. The Donor Meeting has been changed to include the DSRSG of Pillar Four as co-chair and increasingly focuses on reconstruction issues. The Humanitarian Community Information Centre will continue to facilitate information sharing in support of ongoing humanitarian efforts, as well as reconstruction and development efforts.

In addition, the UNDP Representative in Kosovo has been named the UN Development Coordinator in order to facilitate rehabilitation and development activities that will further contribute to sustainable reintegration." (UN OCHA 6 July 2000, pp. 62-63)

"Until the function ended on 30 September, the Humanitarian Coordinator, supported by OCHA, was responsible for coordinating humanitarian and emergency response in Kosovo. This was done through regular inter-agency meetings that included the wider international and local communities, collaborative planning and exchanges of information. With support from OCHA, UNHCR, with its refugee mandate is responsible for leading inter-agency emergency preparedness and contingency planning and ensuring an appropriate response to refugee influx. In 2002 UNHCR will continue in this role to ensure preparedness is maintained. The new Ministry of Public Services will have responsibility for civil security and emergency preparedness. WHO will continue to coordinate the health sector. On 1 January 2002, the Humanitarian

Community Information Centre will move from OCHA trusteeship to the umbrella of the Office of the United Nations Development Coordinator, a reflection of the shift to a predominantly development-oriented programme environment. A reduced OCHA presence will remain in the province till the end of 2002 to support inter-agency coordination and monitor any other residual or emerging humanitarian needs." (UN November 2001, p. 31)

Funding requirements (US$) by agency for coordination and support services

Agency	Coordination and Support Services
UNHCR	1,800,736
OCHA	342,236
UNICEF	925,000
TOTAL	3,067,972

(UN November 2001, p. 32)

See also UNMIK Presentation [Internet]

Efforts to improve security of minorities: selected examples of initiatives (2001)

- Improvement in security can be attributed to combined work of KFOR troops, UNMIK civilian police and the developing local Kosovo Police Service (KPS)
- The creation of "confidence areas" in Mitrovica under KFOR control aims to secure minority or mixed areas and gradually improve the overall security environment
- The development of escorted bus services and train routes has improved the freedom of movements of many minority communities, despite persisting attacks
- KFOR have gradually reduced their escorts in the Pristina region while talks were initiated at a municipal level to establish local escort arrangements
- UNMIK and KFOR have continued their efforts to eliminate the number of unauthorized weapons in Kosovo

"Policing in Kosovo is being undertaken by a combination of KFOR troops, UNMIK civilian police and local Kosovo Police Service (KPS) officers. There are approximately 40,000 KFOR personnel in the province. UNMIK police are nearly up to strength with 4,446 of the 4,700 complement now in place and have assumed full responsibility for criminal investigations throughout the province, though they still rely upon KFOR support. To date there have been 4,302 graduates of the academy training for KPS, with continuing efforts being made to increase the level representation from ethnic minority communities (currently 15%),
[…]
UNHCR note that a general improvement can be discerned in the number of serious security incidents and attribute this in large part to the growing effectiveness of the police and judicial system. In particular, decisive action has been taken to curb abuses of power by certain elements within the KPC/TMK, demonstrating that criminal behaviour will not be tolerated and that none can act with impunity." (UK October 2001, paras. 4.1-4.3)

"The idea of the **Confidence Area** grew from numerous discussions and proposals during the course of early 2000, to which many organisations made suggestions and contributions. The objective of UNMIK and KFOR was to develop a response which would improve the overall security environment in Mitrovice/Mitrovica in the short term and would in itself prove a positive factor for longer term sustainable improvement. The initial idea was to create an area through the centre of town, to which access is controlled by KFOR. The area is viewed by KFOR as a buffer zone between communities. This should not

be confused with the concept of a 'no-man's land', as mixed communities do live within the area. The international community has attempted to reinforce the security related efforts of the police and KFOR by promoting and supporting the area, through long term economic development plans and fostering the concept of improved freedom of movement. Some localised improvements in freedom of movement can be detected where the Confidence Area has been successfully implemented, but these tend to remain limited and subject to the vagaries of the security situation, which continues to fluctuate. Any benefits to be derived from longer term economic developments will take time to materialise and under current conditions the prolonged division of the town and recurrent violent conflict continues to be a major deterrent to serious investment. The Confidence Area has yet to be fully consolidated as a continuous geographic band through the center of town. Kosovo Serbs do not use the area as a means to access the south, where their security would be seriously at risk irrespective of the existence of the Area. In the north, the Area has been used to secure minority or mixed areas, and to control the access and activities of self proclaimed Kosovo Serb security structures. In essence, KFOR maintains very tight limitations thereby curtailing any illusions on the part of either Kosovo Serb or Kosovo Albanian elements to gain strategic control of the sensitive buffer zone between the two communities. The presence of large numbers of patrolling soldiers has been effectively in bringing relative calm to the area even allowing for some limited returns to these mixed areas. Sporadic outbreaks of violence and anonymous attacks against all sides do however still occur." (UNHCR/OSCE 1 October 2001, para. 9)

"The reporting period has seen some important developments vis-a-vis the provision of special transport arrangements. Escorted bus services, previously operated under the auspices of UNHCR, are managed by UNMIK, JIAS Department of Transport and Infrastructure, as of 1 July 2001. Operational aspects remain unchanged and the buses still run under armed escort provided by KFOR. It is hoped however, that the transition to UNMIK management will prove to be the first step towards the longer-term objective of mainstreaming minority transport services in the general Kosovo network. Some encouragement can be drawn from the fact that a limited number of additional services have been instituted on routes beyond those originally developed by UNHCR. Some even operate with the involvement of local staff and the resources of local companies. The crucial train service linking areas in central Kosovo with Zvecan continues to be a lifeline for many isolated Kosovo Serbs. Increased co-ordination between bus and train routes has improved the ability of many communities to take full advantage of the combined benefits of these transport services. The recent inclusion of Lipjan/Lipljan in the rail network is another small boost to alleviate the sense of isolation of minority communities. It has to be noted, however, that all transport mechanisms availed of by minority communities continued to be subject to attacks of varying degrees of seriousness, ranging from threatening gestures, to stoning and even shooting. Kosovo Albanians transiting areas predominantly inhabited by Kosovo Serbs have been subjected to the same violent treatment on a number of occasions." (UNHCR/OSCE October 2001, para. 12)

"Another pressing security issue that affects minorities throughout the **Prishtine/Pristina region** is the provision of security escorts. Limited freedom of movement has led to a high demand for escorts. On 10 May 2001, Swedish KFOR called for a rationalisation of the escorts, with an increased role for UNMIK Police. UNMIK Police continue to limit police escorts to health care emergencies only. A Prishtine/Pristina regional Freedom of Movement Working Group was convened on 9 June 2001 and produced a draft document on escorts that was forwarded to the Principal Deputy SRSG. Whilst a response to this is awaited, KFOR have gradually reduced their escorts and, in the absence of a regional policy for escorts, UNMIK and KFOR initiated talks at a municipal level to establish local escort arrangements in Prishtine/Pristina rural south. Differences of opinion persist as to which organisation should take the final decision on individual escort requests. On the other hand, freedom of movement has been improved by the establishment of a commercial bus service connecting Gracanica/Ulpijana to Fushe Kosove/Kosovo Polje, which further enables persons to access the train to the municipalities in northern Kosovo and from there avail of transport connection opportunities to Serbia proper. This bus was first discussed between KFOR and the JIAS Department of Transport and Infrastructure (DOTI) in April 2001 with the close involvement of UNHCR. However discussions over whether KFOR should provide permanent escorts to the bus delayed implementation of the project." (UNHCR/OSCE 1 October 2001, para. 56)

"The number of incidents involving the use of weapons remains alarming, and a number of Kosovo Serbs and Roma in particular have been hospitalized with injuries caused by hand-grenade attacks. UNMIK and KFOR have continued their efforts to eliminate the number of unauthorized weapons in Kosovo. KFOR has continued a Kosovo-wide operation to seize weapons and seek out those believed to be members of armed groups. Since 31 May 2001, KFOR reports that nearly 1,000 individuals have been detained and processed. Over 1,000 individuals have been detained and processed. over 1,100 rifles and pistols, close to 1,700 grenades, nearly 1,100 anti-tank weapons and about 170,000 rounds of ammunition have been seized throughout Kosovo. Following the imposition in June 2001 of a robust package of legislation to combat violence, to date 30 people are in detention under the provisions of regulation 2001/7, on the authorization of possession of weapons in Kosovo." (UNSC 2 October 2001, para. 8)

For other initiatives taken by the international community regarding the security of minorities in Kosovo, consult also the website of the OSCE mission in Kosovo (institution- and democracy-building and human rights) [Internet]

UNMIK and EU lead reconstruction efforts (2000-2001)

- Emergency reconstruction needs of Kosovo have been largely met, with 40,000 housing units reconstructed in 2000, half of them with international assistance
- Nearly half of all families whose houses had been damaged or destroyed are now in decent accommodation in 2001 (October 2001)
- 2001 reconstruction figures show that 7,878 houses are under construction or completed Kosovo

"UNMIK believe that the emergency reconstruction needs of Kosovo have now largely been met, with the emphasis shifting to economic sustainability and capacity building. Reliance on donor support has decreased as regulated and revenue generating commercial economy has begun to take root. The capital budget for 2001 still anticipates donor contributions of DM 1.346 billion, principally from the EU and US. However, UNMIK expects to raise about 70% of the total consolidated budget via revenue collection. During the period August 20-27 alone, UNMIK collected DM14 million at its collection point.

[…]

An estimated 83,000 residential units were in need of essential repairs or reconstruction at the beginning of 2000. With donor support, UNMIK met its target of reconstructing 20,000 housing units in 2000. A similar number were rebuilt by members of the local population themselves. Nearly half of all families whose houses had been damaged or destroyed are now in decent accommodation. UNMIK provides temporary community shelters for those with no alternative accommodation." (UK October 2001, paras. 5.3-5.6)

"On November 21, the Central Housing Committee meeting was held with the Donor Community. To date, 7,878 houses are under construction or completed Kosovo wide (4,441 are under construction and 3,437 are completed),

92% of the houses committed are under construction/completed and 86% of the beneficiaries are approved compared to the commitments.

Figures are encouraging with regard to the donor housing reconstruction assistance and is more important compared to the expectations of the Housing Directorate for the 2001 programme" (UNMIK EU Pillar 27 November 2001)

For more information on reconstruction efforts in Kosovo, see the website of the European Union in Kosovo [Internet: http://www.euinkosovo.org/]

UN 2002 consolidated appeal: more focused humanitarian assistance (November 2001)

- UN and other organisations are increasingly focusing on long-term sustainable development projects
- 2002 humanitarian assistance will continue to be provided to address the residual humanitarian needs, including among minority returnees and communities

"The UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) continues to form the Government of the province. However, in May 2001, the SRSG signed the Regulation on a Constitutional Framework for Provisional Self-government laying the basis for self-government after elections to be held on 17th November. With certain exceptions, such as fiscal powers and justice, power will be transferred from the internationals to Kosovars, although the SRSG will remain in place.

While in general the situation in Kosovo has stabilised, tension and inter-ethnic violence continue. Due to the security situation, minority communities have limited freedom of movement, and consequently restricted access to basic services or markets, resulting in very few economic opportunities. Many are bowing to pressure to sell their homes and leave the province. Others, in remote areas, are becoming increasingly isolated. Yet, in August 2001, the first organised Serb returns to Kosovo took place, co-ordinated by UNHCR under the auspices of the Joint Committee for Return. It is anticipated that these limited returns will continue and increase during 2002.

The position of women has seen little change in 2001 and they continue to be largely excluded from positions of power, decision-making and economic opportunities. Although some advances have been made in the formulation of legislation on domestic violence and the trafficking of women, the need for greatly increased awareness of human rights in general, and women's rights in particular, remains.

The conflict in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia resulted in the arrival of over 81,000 mainly ethnic Albanian refugees in Kosovo, most of whom were accommodated with host families. The UN agencies and international and local organisations provided the refugees with humanitarian assistance as needed and helped UNMIK to integrate them into local services. Since peace talks began in July, refugees have been returning to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, but it is anticipated that up to 20,000 will remain in the province into 2002 for reasons of security and/or the destruction of their homes and infrastructure.

While there has been an overall improvement in the humanitarian situation in Kosovo, unemployment remains high. Official statistics put the figure at 53% for women and 48% for men in the province as a whole: higher among minority populations. Poor infrastructure, high crime and lack of respect for the rule of law, coupled with the volatility of the region in general, means that high unemployment and related pressure for labour migration are likely to continue. Additionally, much of Kosovo's economy is geared towards and dependent on the presence of the international community and is therefore unsustainable. Consequently the UN and other organisations, such as IOM, are increasingly focusing on long-term sustainable projects to develop Kosovo's institutions and economy. However, there are still residual humanitarian needs, particularly related to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia refugees and host families, minority returnees and isolated minority communities. The Agencies, through the CAP 2002, will implement strictly focused projects to provide humanitarian assistance to these extremely vulnerable groups in 2002, in addition to their developmental activities." (UN November 2001, p. 27)

Food and agriculture in 2002: UNHCR, and FAO provide support to minority returnees and communities (November 2001)

- Eligibility criteria for the social welfare system do not necessarily take into consideration the specific situation of minority communities
- A limited number of minorities, including returnees who have no access to fresh food because of insecurity, will also continue to receive fresh food from UNHCR in 2002
- FAO's emergency agricultural assistance programme for Kosovo aims to support the integration of minority returnees and to support families hosting refugees

"Food
As a result of the successful transition from WFP food aid to the Department of Health and Social Welfare (DHSW) cash-based Social Assistance Scheme, most food-insecure families that have access to the scheme and meet the criteria now receive DHSW financial assistance. For those families that do not meet the criteria but who are nevertheless food insecure, WFP and UNHCR, in cooperation with DHSW, have established a food safety net.

The eligibility criteria for the social welfare system are very strict and do not necessarily take into consideration the specific situation of minority communities. While the overall security for minority communities in Kosovo has stabilised, their freedom of movement is often restricted and their coping mechanisms are limited. As a result, while not qualifying for Social Assistance, they need continued food assistance. To address these gaps in the Social Assistance Scheme, the food safety net programme will continue to be required to supply bulk food to target vulnerable minority and refugee families through the winter of 2002. Additionally, a limited number of ethnic minorities, including returnees who have no access to fresh food due to the prevailing security situation, will continue to receive fresh food from UNHCR in 2002 to ensure that their minimum nutritional needs are met.

Agriculture
The overall performance of the agricultural sector during the 2000/2001 season is returning to pre-war production levels, but is still well below production levels prior to the imposition of sanctions. The recovery of the sector is hampered by the limited ability of the agro-industry to absorb production surplus and its weak marketing capacities. The lack of credit, coupled with poor roads, telecommunications, energy supply and irrigation facilities further constrain Kosovo's agricultural sector. Moreover, the prolonged presence of refugees from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia threatens the fragile household economy of host families. With increasing pressure on shared resources, the capacity of these families to purchase essential food and agricultural inputs is likely to be affected. Kosovo also needs to cope with the massive return of minorities following the end of the crisis in 1999. These returnees, who face the huge task of rebuilding their houses and agricultural stocks, have limited access to employment and markets.

FAO's emergency agricultural assistance programme for Kosovo aims to support the integration of minority returnees and to alleviate the economic burden faced by families hosting refugees. These objectives will be achieved by providing returnee and host farm families with the means to resume food production during the autumn and spring planting seasons. Support will take the form of essential agricultural inputs, repair and replacement of farm implements and equipment as well as training in farming practices. About 13,000 vulnerable farm families will be targeted. Additionally, FAO will collaborate with WFP and UNHCR to establish a Minorities Food Security Surveillance Unit in order to monitor, document and analyse the food security and coping mechanisms of minority households in highly vulnerable isolated enclaves." (UN November 2001, p. 29)

Funding requirements (US$) by agency for food and agriculture

Agency	Food	Agriculture
UNHCR	624,947	

FAO		2,418,003
TOTAL	624,947	2,418,003

(UN November 2001, p. 32)

Health, water and sanitation in 2002: UN plans measures to improve access to essential services in areas of return (November 2001)

- In 2002, WHO will support and co-ordinate Kosovo's healthcare system and its local structures in their work with and for refugees and minority returnees
- UNICEF will implement a project for young refugee and minority children and pregnant women, while IOM will offer psycho-social services to refugees and returnees.
- Small-scale repairs and interventions on water and sanitation systems will be carried out to support return

"Health

Although it has improved over the last two years despite a significant shortfall in funding in 2001, the health infrastructure remains fragile and unable to cope with the increased demands posed by the presence of high-risk groups such as returnees, IDPs and refugees. In addition, communicable diseases, especially tuberculosis, pose a serious threat to vulnerable refugees and returnees, living in overcrowded conditions with poor access to health care. Therefore initial rapid health assessment, emergency public health advice and interventions and assured access to services are all necessary for minority returnees, refugees and IDPs. Psycho-social services are also required to assist the refugees and returnees to cope with the changes that have occurred in their lives and with their new, often insecure, living conditions. In 2002, WHO will support and co-ordinate Kosovo's healthcare system and its local structures in their work with and for refugees and minority returnees. UNICEF will implement a project for young refugee and minority children and pregnant women, while IOM will offer psycho-social services to refugees and returnees.

Water and Sanitation

A high percentage of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia refugees is hosted by local communities already encountering chronic water shortages and delivery problems. The results of an assessment in summer 2001 by the Institute of Public Health, UNICEF and WHO of the impact of refugees on the already strained water/sanitation system of local communities hosting refugees highlighted the difficult water supply situation in 19 villages in the four municipalities (Kacanik, Viti, Ferizaj and Dragash). Ten of these villages have already benefited from projects to improve this situation. However, further support may be needed should refugees remain longer in those communities. In such an event, the responsible local institutions will require assistance to meet the minimum requirements and standards. Additionally, water and sanitation services in many minority return communities have been damaged and/or disrupted over a long period of time. Where such services are lacking, small-scale repairs and interventions will be carried out to support return, thereby allowing time for the re-establishment of the necessary minimum public water and sanitation services." (UN November 2001, p. 29-30)

Funding requirements (US$) by agency for health, water and sanitation

Agency	Health	Water and Sanitation
UNHCR		175,000
IOM	365,000	
UNICEF	1,200,000	
WHO	750,000	250,000
TOTAL	2,315,000	425,000

(UN November 2001, p. 32)

Family Shelter and Non-Food Items: UNHCR plans for 2002 (November 2001)

- Basic shelter materials and a limited supply of rigid shelters will be provided to vulnerable minority returnees to facilitate return and integration process
- UNHCR will also provide and co-ordinate distribution of basic non-food and household items for vulnerable minority returnees and refugees

"Many homes of ethnic minorities have been partially or totally destroyed. While reconstruction will be undertaken by other actors to facilitate return for families with slightly damaged houses, basic shelter materials will be provided. For those, whose houses have been destroyed, temporary shelter will be provided to minority returnees, while their houses are being reconstructed.

To date, emergency shelter requirements for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia refugee caseload have been met almost exclusively through host family accommodation. To support and stabilise the host family system and mitigate costs incurred by host families, UNHCR is providing a small monthly stipend to host families meeting set criteria and assisting refurbishment of rooms to accommodate refugees.

During the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia influx a number of refugees arrived on foot with few possessions. UNHCR, in collaboration with several local and international organisations helped co-ordinate emergency, non-food and household item distributions. To ensure it has the capacity to respond rapidly to future emergency situations, UNHCR will maintain a stockpile of non-food and domestic items, foster the supply chain and maintain a logistics network to ensure a cost-effective operation." (UN November 2001, p. 30)

"Basic shelter materials and a limited supply of rigid shelters will be procured and distributed to vulnerable minority returnees to facilitate return and integration process. Shelter materials will also be provided to a limited number of host families to rehabilitate one dry room in order to improve refugee living conditions and ensure that extra space is available in the event of future influxes.

UNHCR will retain a non-food item (NFI) contingency stock for a minimum of 30,000 beneficiaries and a regional stock for 50,000. Blankets, mattresses, jerry cans, hygiene kits, kitchen sets, women's sanitary supplies and other items will be centrally warehoused.

The objectives of the project are to:
· provide basic shelter assistance for ethnic minority returnees to facilitate return and integration;
· provide emergency shelter assistance for refugees, provide and co-ordinate distribution of basic non-food and household items for vulnerable minority returnees and refugees.

The project will target minority returnees and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonian refugees. Implementing partners will include NGOs, local government structures and local communities. " (UN November 2001, pp. 49-50)

Funding requirements (US$) by agency for family shelter and non-food items

Agency	Family shelter and non-food items
UNHCR	2,167,308
TOTAL	2,167,308

(UN November 2001, p. 32)

UNICEF plans to address gaps in the education sector in 2002 (November 2001)

- Emergency measures will be implemented to ensure the right of returnee and minority children to continue their primary and secondary education

"Education and Water and Sanitation in Schools
The precarious security situation in Kosovo has precluded the development of a unified education system in which all Kosovar children regardless of ethnicity can receive a quality education. As a result, emergency measures are required to ensure the right of returnee children to continue their primary and secondary education. As the lead agency for education, UNICEF will support refugee, IDP and minority children through:

· Rehabilitation of classrooms and upgrading of school water and sanitation facilities;
· Targeted provision of school furniture, education materials and textbooks;
· Peace and tolerance training in schools to reduce inter-ethnic tension when refugee families return to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia;
· Support to confidence building measures through dialogue with community representatives and school administrators and ensuring secure transport for returnee children who share school facilities with neighbouring communities." (UN November 2001, p. 89)

Funding requirements (US$) by agency for education

Agency	Education
UNICEF	2,400,000
TOTAL	2,400,000

(UN November 2001, p. 32)

Protection/Human Rights/Rule of Law: UN agencies will give special attention to returnees and minorities in 2002 (November 2001)

- UNHCR plans to continue its support to legal aid centres and extensive outreach programme
- OHCHR will continue advocating with UN administration to ensure that returns occur in line with human rights standards
- Some local human rights organisations have widened the scope of activity and have started to reach out non-Albanian communities
- UNICEF, in collaboration with other international and local agencies, will monitor the availability of social services to returnee community

"International human rights norms provide the standards for UN humanitarian assistance policy and programmes for refugees and minority populations seeking return and reintegration in Kosovo. With the establishment of functioning local administrative structures, it became apparent that minorities have difficulties accessing local administrative services and structures and obtaining their rights, for example, to reclaim their property, on an equal basis with other residents in Kosovo. Their limited freedom of movement, due to the prevailing security situation, often does not allow them to approach the service providers. In general, policies and/or their implementation do not always respect the principle of equal and non-discriminatory treatment for all. While some improvements have been made, there is a continued need for legal aid and information centres with a focus on minority communities, both returnee and residual. UNHCR will continue to support these centres and an extensive outreach programme, ensuring access of minority communities to these services. OHCHR will continue advocating with UNMIK to ensure that returns occur only under conditions where human rights are guaranteed and that all basic government

services are provided to minority communities, particularly those targeted for returns, in a non-discriminatory manner.

Local Human Rights NGOs remain mainly ethnic Albanian and do not necessarily address the human rights situation of non-Albanian communities in Kosovo. However, some have widened the scope of their activities and have started to reach out to minority communities. These encouraging practices facilitate greatly inter-ethnic dialogue and reconciliation, essential for a safe and sustainable return of all communities to Kosovo.

Trafficking of women is increasing in Kosovo. Targeting vulnerable young women refugees and minority returnees, IOM will organise public awareness campaigns on the dangers of trafficking of women." (UN November 2001, pp. 30-31)

UNICEF:
"Child Protection
The availability of social services, particularly child protection services, is another key problem in returnee communities. The security situation means that the provision of flexible outreach services by Centres for Social Welfare will be central to ensure access to social services - which have so far been provided almost exclusively by NGOs. UNICEF, in collaboration with UNHCR, local communities, government bodies, municipal staff and Centres for Social Welfare will monitor the situation of families in these communities and provide information on the types of services that can be provided by Centres for Social Welfare. Efforts to ensure non-discriminatory access to social services will be made, including the recruitment of non-ethnic Albanian staff." (UN November 2001, p. 89)

Funding requirements (US$) by agency for protection, human rights ad rule of law

Agency	Protection/Human rights/Rule of law
UNHCR	2,400,000
IOM	530,000
OHCHR	871,680
UNICEF	400,000
TOTAL	2,400,000

(UN November 2001, p. 32)

Economic Recovery and Infrastructure: support to return movements in the framework of the UN consolidated appeal for 2002 (November 2001)

- UNDP will provide short-term direct economic support to returnees and surrounding communities through an immediate impact public works employment programme
- IOM will implement a project to eliminate infra-structural obstacles to the initial return of minorities

"Following 25 months of international relief efforts in the wake of two years of conflict in Kosovo, the economic situation remains bleak. The still ambiguous political status of the province continues to hamper macro-economic development and revitalisation of the private sector, while the local economy remains stunted. The high level of industrial dilapidation is being addressed, yet many commercial enterprises remain in ruins or seriously damaged. Many that are still intact are idle due to a lack of raw materials and adequate supplies. Consequently, unemployment remains at more than 50%. Of particular concern are the employment prospects of minority communities, which remain, isolated and often excluded from participating in the local economy due to security concerns. Continued widespread unemployment coupled with high levels of poverty and human suffering caused by the present situation represent a serious threat to

peace and future stability in the region. To promote minority returns and reintegration, UNDP will provide short-term direct economic support to returnees and surrounding communities through an immediate impact public works employment programme. IOM will implement a project to eliminate infra-structural obstacles to the initial return of minorities." (UN November 2001, p. 31)

"UNDP aims to provide temporary direct economic assistance to returnees through short-term employment on public works projects. By employing vulnerable individuals on labour-intensive rehabilitation projects and providing a weekly salary, local economic development will be stimulated and communities will benefit from a direct injection of capital. Local contractors and suppliers will also be utilised thereby increasing the economic impact of the intervention

UNDP
"Economic Recovery and Infrastructure – US$ 800,000
Villages slated to receive returnees by UNHCR will be supported by small public works projects to rehabilitate damaged infrastructure and the environment, and encourage the resumption of longer-term economic activities. These sub-projects will provide employment to returnees for a period of 4-8 weeks in targeted villages, giving direct income to the most vulnerable unskilled labourers. Neighbouring ethnic Albanian villages will be targeted for project implementation to reduce inter-ethnic tension and competition for resources.

To facilitate achievement of the goal of promoting increased minority return and reintegration, UNDP's objective is to provide short-term employment to returnees, boost local economic development, rehabilitate common infrastructure and environment and ease inter-ethnic tension.

Beneficiaries will be the areas of minority return and neighbouring Albanian communities.

Funding requirement for FRY (Kosovo) is US$ 800,000. " (UN November 2001, p. 77)

Funding requirements (US$) by agency for economic recovery and infrastructure

Agency	Economic recovery and infrastructure
IOM	800,000
UNDP	800,000
TOTAL	1,600,000

(UN November 2001, p. 32)

Mine Action: new response system to the residual threat in 2002 (November 2001)

- UNMIK Mine Action Programme is scheduled to complete clearance of all known minefields and bomb-affected areas before the end of 2001

"Funding permitting, the UNMIK Mine Action Programme is scheduled to complete clearance of all known minefields and the vast majority of NATO cluster bomb-affected areas and pass responsibility for the long-term residual threat to UNMIK Department for Civil Security and Emergency Preparedness (DCSEP) [From the end of the year the DCSEP will become part of the new Ministry of Public Services.] on 15 December 2001. The situation in Kosovo will then be comparable to European countries that have experienced war in the 20th century. Seven Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) teams are currently being trained within the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC), which comes under the DCSEP, for future ordnance disposal. An EOD management capability is being created within the DCSEP to oversee the implementation of the response system that will be established. The DCSEP will also be responsible for a long-term public information campaign on the residual threat. The Department for Public Services will

assume responsibility for archiving clearance records to ensure that information regarding the work undertaken, as well as the impact on future land management matters, will be readily available. The Department for Health and Social Welfare will be responsible for mine victim assistance. The cost of implementing the above activities will be met through the Kosovo Consolidated Budget. Given the funding necessary to complete the above, UNMAS will withdraw from Kosovo at the end of 2001. " (UN November 2001, pp. 31-32)

See also: "UN set to transfer demining activities to Kosovo authorities", UN News Service 14 December 2001 [Internet]

Multi-Sector support to newly returned minorities in the framework of the UN consolidated appeal for 2002 (November 2001)

- UNHCR, in coordination with other local and international actors, will provide small-scale project funding targeting minority returnees

"Throughout 2001, UNHCR, UNMIK, UN agencies and many other organisations, as well as local authorities, participated in regional and municipal Working Groups on Return. The goal of this process was to work towards creating social, humanitarian and political conditions for ethnic minority groups to return to their homes in Kosovo. This process will continue in 2002.

Newly returned minorities will require multi-sector support and access to services. As the role and responsibilities of municipal officials and local structures expand and their capacities increase, UNHCR will continue to transfer activities to local or municipal structures. Examples of successful transfers to date are the UNHCR Minority Bus Shuttle programme and management of minority IDP Temporary Collective Shelters. UNHCR plans to transfer to municipal authorities the remaining TCS and Temporary Camps by mid 2002. Monitoring of minority communities and communities at risk will be an important part of continued activities throughout 2002 to help identify immediate assistance needs, monitor new arrivals and help ensure access to public and community services." (UN November 2001, p. 32)

"Multi-Sector Support - US$ 2,023,209
UNHCR, in coordination with other local and international actors, will provide small-scale project funding targeting minority returnees, thereby meeting their immediate needs upon return and facilitating their re-integration.

To mitigate the cost of hosting additional household members and ensure that it remains a viable option for future refugee influx, a host family financial stipend/support programme, begun in 2001, will continue in 2002.

The objectives of the project are to:
· facilitate safe return / durable solutions for minority returnees and refugees;
· provide monitoring and protection to returnees, other local residents-at-risk and refugees;
· provide appropriate multi-sector emergency support for vulnerable refugees and returnees.

Target beneficiaries are vulnerable refugees and minority returnees. Implementing partners are NGOs. " (UN November 2001, p. 50)

Funding requirements (US$) by agency for multi-sector activities

Agency	Multi Sector
UNHCR	2,023,209
TOTAL	2,023,209

(UN November 2001, p. 32)

Humanitarian response: growing involvement of development actors and administrative structures (2000)

- Large scale relief programmes started to wind down from early 2000
- Humanitarian Affairs Pillar of UNMIK ceased to exist as a formal component of the UNMIK structure end of June 2000
- Food assistance, financial assistance to the most vulnerable, the provision of emergency shelter is now primarily provided by the Joint Administrative Structure
- A UN Humanitarian Co-ordinator provided by UNHCR coordinates the remaining humanitarian activities, in particular of the provision of assistance and protection to the non-Albanian communities
- Assistance is also provided by UNHCR to families hosting displaced persons from southern Serbia

"Once winter [1999-2000] was over, and the emergency relief needs of Kosovo's population were successfully met, large-scale relief programmes started to wind down. The range of activities covered by the humanitarian assistance programme was initially very broad, due to the lack of alternative service providers. In addition to normal humanitarian relief activities, activities such as feeding hospital patients, provision of oxygen to hospitals and chlorine gas for water purification, as well as urban garbage removal were also included in humanitarian programs. These activities clearly could not be sustained indefinitely by humanitarian actors. In the spring of 2000, humanitarian agencies began focussing their efforts on assisting UNMIK in the identification of alternative service providers, as part of the transition from emergency relief to longer-term rehabilitation and development.

In addition to the hand-over of certain activities from humanitarian actors to the UNMIK interim administration and to development partners, the transition also involves efforts to build the capacity of national protection mechanisms.

As part of this transition, the Humanitarian Affairs Pillar of UNMIK ceased to exist as a formal component of the UNMIK structure at the end of June. Since then, a UN Humanitarian Co-ordinator provided by UNHCR has been co-ordinating the remaining humanitarian activities and continuing to facilitate the transition to reconstruction and development in co-operation with UNMIK and the Joint Interim Administrative Structure (JIAS). The Humanitarian Coordinator/UNHCR Special Envoy, and his Deputy/Head of the OCHA Office, with the full cooperation of other agencies and NGOs in Kosovo, began a process of "humanitarian accounting" in late July. This process is designed to review humanitarian activities to ensure both that there is coherence in the continued humanitarian action, and in the mechanisms for handing over activities in a responsible manner.

The formation of the JIAS in December 1999, along with the increasing activity of a number of development agencies with programs for the year 2000, resulted in the establishment of longer term service providers for the population of Kosovo. Responsibility for humanitarian activities such as those listed at paragraph 5 of this note has been taken over by the appropriate sections of the JIAS, along with activities in the social welfare area. Food assistance will now primarily be provided through the social welfare system, along with financial assistance for the most vulnerable. Longer-term housing reconstruction programs are now been coordinated or implemented by the reconstruction pillar of UNMIK, the JIAS and development actors in Kosovo. The provision of emergency shelter through temporary community shelters and food beneficiary identification have also been taken over by JIAS departments. Humanitarian agencies will continue to complement UNMIK, the JIAS and development actors by providing humanitarian support and

assistance in capacity-building as needed in this process. Wherever possible, UNHCR and other humanitarian actors have assisted the transition process with the secondment or loan of staff.

The provision of services to non-Albanian communities remains difficult because of the poor security situation, and continues to require the ongoing support of humanitarian agencies. Food and other basic assistance continues to be provided to minority enclaves by international humanitarian agencies. UNHCR also supports the operation of eight protected freedom of movement bus lines to give isolated non-Albanian communities access to health care, food markets, and other basic services. It is hoped that this service can be handed over to UNMIK and the Department of Transportation of the JIAS by the end of the year. (Regrettably, a project to provide satellite phone access to such communities had to be discontinued at the end of June due to budgetary constraints.) Longer-term strategies to allow all non-Albanian communities to be incorporated into the social welfare, health and education systems still need to be strengthened. An UNMIK Working Group on some of these issues has been established, with creative strategies needed in the current environment of ongoing ethnic violence.

Humanitarian assistance will also continue to be provided by UNHCR to other categories of persons with special needs, including through the continuation of community-service activities and programmes such as the Kosovo Women's Initiative (KWI). Funded by the US Government, KWI has aided well-established local women's NGOs as well as encouraged new initiatives by providing funds and technical support for counselling and health services, as well as income-generation projects and vocational training. Activities to empower women in non-Albanian communities are also being carried out under the KWI. Ongoing assistance is also provided to families hosting displaced persons from southern Serbia. The situation in southern Serbia remains volatile. Some 15,000 ethnic Albanians from the area have registered for humanitarian assistance in Kosovo since June 1999.

Despite the enormous logistical and supply difficulties which characterized the winter relief effort, in many ways the humanitarian program in Kosovo has been easier than rebuilding the infrastructure, as well as the institutions of Kosovo, which is a much longer-term and more difficult undertaking. Ongoing donor support for this transition process will be needed for some time to come." (HIWG 1 September 2000, paras. 5-11)

2001 UN consolidated appeal: only 35 percent of the amount requested had been received by October 2001 (November 2001)

- The low level of funding may be explained by the assumption that no additional resources are needed if the UN acts as the government of the province
- Much has however been accomplished, in particular in the education sector with a 97% primary school enrollment rate reported for the 2000-2001 school year
- The health sector has been particularly affected by the lack of funding, with projects targeting minorities, returnees and displaced being cancelled
- Child protection projects have received less than 20% of the necessary funds

"In the original Appeal for 2001 for **Kosovo,** the UN Agencies requested a total of US$ 119 million: less than 50% of the amount requested for 2000. In July the Appeal was revised to include immediate programming and emergency preparedness needs related to the influx of refugees from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Of the revised total of US$ 134 million requested, only US$ 46 million (35%) had been received by October. One reason for the low funding level may be the assumption that no additional resources are needed if the UN –through the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK)- acts as the government of the province.

With the limited funds that were received, much has been accomplished. The first organised returns of ethnic Serbs to Kosovo took place in August 2001; following an extensive school reconstruction

programme and distribution of educational materials, a 97% primary school enrolment rate was reported for the 2000/01 school year; and maternal and infant mortality are falling. Agricultural production continues to improve; the transition from food aid to social welfare support is nearing completion; a food safety net for up to 100,000 (reduced to 70,000 by the end of 2001) vulnerable people not eligible for UNMIK assistance was established; and transfer of responsibility for the residual mine/unexploded ordnance (UXO) threat to UNMIK is on schedule (subject to availability of funds).

However, almost all Agencies have had to reduce, cancel or postpone projects as programmes are adjusted according to the availability of funding. Goals and/or objectives were amended or have been only partially or not achieved. Although Kosovo has some of the worst health indicators in Europe, the health sector has been particularly affected by lack of funding: WHO has received less than 5% of the US$ 15 million requested. In health and in other sectors, projects to improve conditions for minorities, returnees and displaced persons, youth, women (including assistance to victims of domestic and sexual violence) and the environment, were either cancelled or reduced. Child protection projects have received less than 20% of the necessary funds. Capacity building of local government structures and local institutions has been reduced, which has implications for the political transition process." (UN November 2001, pp. 4-5)

From direct food aid to cash assistance scheme (2001)

- WFP is supporting the transition from food aid to the implementation of UNMIK's social assistance scheme
- As long as food security amongst the minority populations is not sustainable, UNHCR will continue implement the secondary distribution of WFP food commodities to this population

"The UNMIK through its Department of Health and Social Welfare (DHSW) is establishing a permanent social assistance scheme, which, through its network of Centres for Social Work (CSW) provides cash assistance to essentially the same vulnerable groups covered by food aid. Between January and April 2001, WFP, DHSW, international NGOs and Local Distribution Partners (LDPs) will collaborate to support the transition from food aid to full implementation of the social assistance scheme of the DHSW. Expected benefits are: accuracy of targeting the most vulnerable, a rational and responsible phase-out for food aid, support to consolidating the CSW role in Kosovo.

Food and Agriculture
Through the first quarter of 2001 it is planned that, of a current total of 300,000 food aid beneficiaries in Kosovo, 150,000 will be integrated within the SAS and 50,000 will cease to need food aid as a result of economic improvements. The remaining 100,000 beneficiaries, of which it is estimated that 35,000 belong to minority groups, will continue to receive assistance from WFP.

WFP and international NGOs will continue to support local NGOs in re-orienting their efforts to support this caseload and avoid duplication with the social assistance beneficiaries.

Indicators:
1. number of beneficiaries moving from food aid to cash social assistance, broken down by minority, majority, gender;
2. number of beneficiaries remaining on food aid only, broken down by minority, majority, gender.
(UN November 2000, p. 123)

UNHCR
As long as food security amongst the minority populations is not sustainable to a basic minimum standard, UNHCR will continue to fund, implement and monitor the secondary distribution of WFP food commodities to this population. UNHCR will also provide fresh food items to the most vulnerable isolated

minorities who have not access to the food, whether it is due to lack of access to market and/or land." (UN November 2000, p. 56)

UN Consolidated Appeal for 2001: Funding Requirements for Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Kosovo): Food and agriculture (US$)

UNHCR	3,250,132
WFP	16,000,000
Total	16,000,000

(UN November 2000)

For more information on the level of donors' support to the UN Consolidated Appeal for 2001, see the UN Financial Tracking Database for Complex Emergencies [Internet]

For more details on WFP planned activities in Kosovo, see EMOP 6136.02 - Emergency Food Assistance in the Balkan Region, 2000 [Internet]

For more details on the Social Assistance Scheme, see paragraphs 78 to 86 of UNHCR/OSCE Assessment of the Situation of Ethnic Minorities in Kosovo, October 2000 [Internet]

Protection needs of ethnic minorities: approach of the international community (2000)

- UNHCR continues to provide assistance and protection to minority enclaves until this service can be handed over to Kosovo administrative structures
- UNMIK's inter-agency Ad-Hoc Task Force on Minorities continues to address the need for international action on behalf of non-Albanian populations
- The Task Force concentrate its efforts on the physical protection and freedom of movement of non-Albanian communities, including through longer-term confidence-building measures
- OSCE and UNHCR produce comprehensive Assessments of the Situation of Ethnic Minorities in Kosovo, recommending in particular concerted action to rebuild rule of law
- UNHCR is carrying out confidence-building projects aimed at creating an environment more conducive to the return of non-Albanian groups

"The provision of services to non-Albanian communities remains difficult because of the poor security situation, and continues to require the ongoing support of humanitarian agencies. Food and other basic assistance continues to be provided to minority enclaves by international humanitarian agencies. UNHCR also supports the operation of eight protected freedom of movement bus lines to give isolated non-Albanian communities access to health care, food markets, and other basic services. It is hoped that this service can be handed over to UNMIK and the Department of Transportation of the JIAS by the end of the year. (Regrettably, a project to provide satellite phone access to such communities had to be discontinued at the end of June due to budgetary constraints.) Longer-term strategies to allow all non-Albanian communities to be incorporated into the social welfare, health and education systems still need to be strengthened. An UNMIK Working Group on some of these issues has been established, with creative strategies needed in the current environment of ongoing ethnic violence." (HIWG 1 September 2000, para. 9)

"An even greater challenge in Kosovo is to re-establish the essential components of civil society and the rule of law. This goes far beyond the scope of emergency relief activities, but is crucial for Kosovo's transition to peace and for creating conditions for sustainable return. The litmus test for the re-

establishment of the rule of law and respect for human rights in Kosovo is the non-discriminatory treatment of the non-Albanian population, at a time when the majority of humanitarian activities are shifting from supporting the reintegration of Kosovo Albanians to protection of the non-Albanian communities and those who remain vulnerable among the population as a whole.

Lack of security and freedom of movement remain the fundamental problems affecting non-Albanian communities in Kosovo. Criminal activity against these communities remains disproportionately high, which has not been helped by the continued limited number of international UNMIK police, and an inadequate judicial system. Ethnic Serbs and Roma in particular continue to face widespread harassment, attack, murder, and forcible eviction across Kosovo. The resulting lack of freedom of movement means that many non-Albanian communities are unable to access basic public services such as health care and education, as well as food markets. A registration conducted by UNHCR and government authorities in Serbia and Montenegro completed during the autumn found that as a result of these factors, some 210,000 Serbs, Roma and other non-Albanians had left Kosovo and registered for humanitarian assistance in these republics of The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) by May 2000.

Events in February 2000 dramatically illustrated the general violence and attacks against minority communities which occur each week across Kosovo, whether ethnically or criminally provoked. On 2 February, a UNHCR bus facilitating freedom of movement for ethnic Serbs living in an isolated enclave near Mitrovica was attacked with rocket-propelled grenades, killing two and seriously injuring eight elderly passengers. This triggered a wave of retaliatory attacks on ethnic Albanians living in Serb-controlled northern urban Mitrovica. The violence left eight dead, and prompted an exodus of some 1,700 ethnic Albanians and other minorities from their homes. Sporadic violence in the city continued between February and June, until violent riots broke out again on 21 June, in which UN humanitarian staff and property were also attacked. As a result, UNHCR suspended all humanitarian activities in northern Mitrovica on 23 June, and conditioned the resumption of humanitarian operations on more effective security measures in northern Mitrovica. Following guarantees to this effect, operations recommenced on 28 June. These events brought into sharp focus the serious challenges in the protection of minority communities, as well as the issue of the safety and security of humanitarian activities, and the question as to the threshold of risk which humanitarian organisations are prepared to accept in
Kosovo.

UNMIK's inter-agency Ad-Hoc Task Force on Minorities continues to address the need for international action on behalf of non-Albanian populations. Since the phasing out of the humanitarian pillar at the end of June, the Task Force has continued to be jointly chaired by UNHCR and OSCE. The work of the Task Force has concentrated on enhancing the physical protection and freedom of movement of non-Albanian communities, as well as engaging in longer-term confidence-building measures.

Together with the OSCE, UNHCR has produced five comprehensive Assessments of the Situation of Ethnic Minorities in Kosovo. The reports provide detailed analysis of the difficulties confronting such communities, and list specific recommendations as to how these could be remedied. One of the main recommendations has been the need for concerted action to rebuild the rule of law and curb the culture of impunity which exists in Kosovo regarding ethnic attacks.

UNHCR supports a network of legal advice and information centres throughout Kosovo. While the services offered by these centres are open to all residents of Kosovo, mobile teams also carry out visits to minority communities. Property-related queries have been predominant in the concerns of non-Albanians. The centres have also devoted significant time to obtaining personal documentation for members of non-Albanian communities unable to have direct access to such services due to freedom of movement and security concerns.

Other protection activities carried out include: relocation of individuals-at-risk to secure locations within Kosovo; the exceptional relocation of individuals to Serbia for family reunification; follow up in cases of individual return to Kosovo, including voluntary and forced return movement; and promotion of

resettlement for a limited number of urgent cases, such as mixed-marriage families unable to find a durable solution within Kosovo or elsewhere in FRY.

In addition, UNHCR is carrying out confidence-building projects aimed at creating an environment more conducive to the return of non-Albanian groups. Since February, UNHCR has held a series of Humanitarian Round Table discussions on the situation of Roma, Ashkaelia and Egyptian populations, which led to the adoption by Kosovo Albanian and Roma leaders of a joint declaration condemning violence and supporting inter-ethnic tolerance and the principle of return of displaced Roma populations. The Round Table also led to the adoption of a Platform for Joint Action to address the problems of Roma communities, which has been endorsed by the leadership of both sides, and aims to provide the basis for the return of those who are displaced. To aid the implementation of the Platform for Joint Action, UNHCR has organised a visit of Kosovo Albanian political leaders to Roma communities, to demonstrate that their commitment extends to action at the community level.

UNHCR is also actively pursuing 'go-and-see' visits within the framework of the Platform for Joint Action, which allow displaced Roma to make informed decisions about their return. To date, several go and see visits have been facilitated from Montenegro and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Small-scale return has been facilitated for some 65 individuals from The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, in view of the ongoing threats and restrictions on freedom of movement of many Roma communities in Kosovo, these returns still remain limited." (HIWG 1 September 2000, paras. 12-20)

For more information on reforms undertaken by the UN Mission in Kosovo, in particular regarding the police or the judicial system, consult the latest reports of the UN Secretary-General on the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo to the UN Security Council [13 March 2001], [15 December 2000] [Internet] or the latest UNHCR/OSCE Assessment of the Situation of Ethnic Minorities [March 2001], [October 2000] [Internet]

The Minorities Alliance Working Group: an alliance of international NGOs for protection issues in Kosovo (2000-2001)

- The MAWG issued a statement against ethnic violence which was signed by 84 international NGOs
- International consultant identified ways of providing assistance that ease rather than exacerbate intercommunal tensions
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"The Minority Alliance Working Group (MAWG) was formed by international NGOs in September 2000 in response to the level of ethnically motivated violence and intolerance in Kosovo.

In September, members of the MAWG issued a "Statement Against Ethnic Violence" that was signed by 84 international NGOs and broadly disseminated throughout the province. This was followed up in October/November 2000, by a MAWG supported assessment by Mr. Greg Hansen, experienced in the "Do No Harm"/Local Capacities for Peace methodology, to review conditions in Kosovo as they relate to minority and ethnic issues.

Through a broad consultative process, Mr. Hansen identified a number of concerns related to inter-communal relations and how these interact with aid programming and with the work of UNMIK, KFOR and donors. He also developed a training and programming framework to provoke discussion and to help identify ways of providing assistance that ease rather than exacerbate - as can inadvertantly happen - intercommunal tensions.

In February 2001, as a follow-up to this initial assessment, the MAWG will support a series of next steps that will combine training, diagnostic and prescriptive activities in a highly consultative and participatory process. Obstacles that impede the international community in its efforts to promote and facilitate improved intercommunal relations in Kosovo will be defined and removed." (UNOCHA 30 January 2001)

See the report prepared by Greg Hansen for the Minorities Alliance Working Group 360-Degree Do No Harm Assessment -- Phase 1, 20 November 2000 [Internet]

Role of the international police and armed forces: ambiguous results (2000)

- Deployment of UNMIK Police and KFOR forces remains the main factor of security for minority communities
- Lack of sufficient security personnel continues to affect many minority communities around Kosovo
- Military solutions to intercommunal tensions tend to be biased toward separation of populations, which results in further ghettoisation of minorities

"The visible presence of UNMIK Police and of KFOR remains the single clearest indication to the minority communities that the international community intends to protect them. The number of UNMIK Police, present in Kosovo stood at 4,155, as of 2 October 2000. This represents the highest level achieved in the mission thus far but still falls short of the 4,700 initially pledged. Some 3,209 of these international offices are deployed, whilst 820 are assigned to special units and 26 are in training pending full deployment.

The increased deployment is to be welcomed, and can have notable effects both in reducing the number of incidents and improving minorities' perception of their security. For example, in Stimlje/Shtime, an increase in the deployment of UNMIK Police and KFOR at the end of July contributed to a reduction in the number of attacks on minority homes (Serb, Ashkali and Roma). Unfortunately, even with increased deployment, it was not possible to stem these attacks completely and long term security in Stimlje/Shtime remains a problem. The area is still severely under-policed with a substation of only 3 UNMIK Police officers (and 25 KPS Cadets) for a population of 18,000. The lack of sufficient security personnel continues to affect many minority communities around Kosovo, with the police and KFOR simply unable to respond to the demands placed on them by the communities." (UNHCR/OSCE October 2000, paras. 15-16)

For more details on security measures taken to ensure the protection of minority groups in Kosovo, see paragraphs 19 to 29 of UNHCR/OSCE Assessment of the Situation of Ethnic Minorities in Kosovo (October 2000) [Internet]

"There is a cause for immediate concern regarding unnecessary parallel structures being provided by KFOR where there have been questionable grounds for separating people from difference communities in a wholesale fashion. Military solutions to intercommunal tensions tend to be biased toward separation of populations, and some manifestations to this have impacts that last for years. Notwithstanding KFOR's tremendous capacity to undertake good works and their need to win over hearts and minds, civil affairs functions should be subjected to competent civilian review and approval. KFOR's ad hoc humanitarian activity should be banned outright throughout the Brigade unless it can be demonstrated that KFOR activity is not pre-empting the constructive intercommunal contact upon which an eventual reconciliation of communities in Kosovo will rest.

While eminently justifiable on the grounds of ensuring short-term security, some KFOR activity nonetheless merits scrutiny on the grounds that it is effecting long-term ghettoization of minorities, or is interfering with the natural tendencies of people in post-conflict environments to begin, at some point, to

interact constructively. While in no way diminishing the importance to peacekeeping of keeping hostile populations apart when circumstances are explosive, keeping them apart unnecessarily is counterproductive and unsustainable, especially when the inevitable occurs and troop commitments to KFOR begin to shrink. Two examples merit review in the short term:

- KFOR's administration of rigid pass controls over movement across the river in Mitrovica appears not to be governed by established protocols or regulations that could be subjected to periodic review or appeal. Rather, rigid pass control measures have evidently been passed on from commander to commander and unit to unit, and accepted as a given. A written request for more information on pass controls, and the conditions under which they could be relaxed, was submitted to KFOR through G-9 (MNB-N). As of some weeks later, the only reply yet received explained that such details are classified.

- The point here is not to suggest that controls should be relaxed under present security conditions. However, the lack of a periodic review process that would examine the rigidity of movement control in light of changes in the security environment is likely to result in entrenchment of a militarised bisection of Mitrovica and its population, and overly strict constraints on freedom of movement. There is a concomitant danger that by keeping populations artificially apart they will remain hostile to one – another, in the fashion of people on opposite sides of the UN Buffer Zone in Cyprus, or on either side of the Inguri River in Georgia. In such cases, all or most constructive interaction is ruled out.

- Road construction meant to enable ethnic Serbs to bypass neighbouring communities while enroute to other enclaves address a short-term security concern but, because roads cannot simply be rolled up and taken away, these will have the long-term impact of providing people with a means to avoid one-another for years to come. Likely side-effects include further ghettoization of minority economies and social ties. The practice should be stopped pending review." (Hansen 20 November 2000, pp. 11-12)

Pernicious effects of international aid granted to the Serb communities (2000)

- Disproportionate and highly visible aid granted by international donors to minority communities exacerbate inter-ethnic tensions
- In a context of decreasing financial aid for Kosovo in 2001, the excessive channeling of aid to minority groups may result in deteriorating security conditions for them

"When 'humanitarian' aid programmes are ill-conceived, they help increase inter-ethnic tensions. Some governments finance one-off high-profile projects to show that they support a certain community but the aid is so badly apportioned (excessively favouring a particular community and without a thought for the other) that it arouses jealousy and hatred. Let us go back to the example of the building which houses almost all the Serbs still living in Pristina. For these 330 in the enclave, the English government is financing the construction of a community centre, a mini-supermarket, the renovation of the building's surroundings, the purchase of a generator and, soon, a minibus to transport the Serbs to the nearest big enclave (Gracanica) [11]. The problem is that this building is situated right in the middle of a very poor Albanian working class district largely inhabited by rural families who have taken refuge in Pristina since they lost everything during the war. Albanian families for whom the British government apparently refused to finance the same sort of 'humanitarian' aid. Albanian families, then, who find themselves stacking cardboard boxes to ensure a semblance of warmth for the winter, hoping for a miracle to get the money needed to pay for a consultation with the doctor, looking jealously and with a lack of understanding at the abundance of financial and human resources mobilised for those who, in their eyes, were the cause (be it indirect, or even passive) of their present poverty. The road is short from jealousy to violence. [12] With its programme of building housing for the Serbian community in Vushtri, the French government's action is identical, and is having exactly the same sort of pernicious effect in its area.

Of course, the construction of a multi-ethnic Kosovo is only possible if the Serbs agree to remain in the Albanian sector. Of course, living conditions are so trying that material incentives are indispensable to convince them to wait yet a little longer. Yet a little more sensitivity in the allocation of aid is necessary if we want to avoid the pernicious effect (the rise of jealousy and hatred) preventing attainment of the desired aim - to allow the Serbs to return and remain in the Albanian zone. Whilst the volume of financial aid for Kosovo is going to be drastically reduced for the year 2001 and governments assert that they want to reserve their assistance for the most vulnerable, particular attention must be paid to this element. Apparently, the 'minorities' should be the main beneficiaries of foreign humanitarian aid next year. If the programmes are developed on a schema identical to the one used at present, these minorities run the risk of seeing their security conditions deteriorate as their living conditions improve.

In these conditions of precarious security, this search for 'integration' at any price encourages the minorities to remain in hostile territory, right in the middle of a population most of which hate them, and so condemn them to live in inhuman conditions, deprived of their fundamental rights, living targets at the mercy of the extremists. Time still has to do its work.

Endnote 11: It should be noted, as a matter of interest, that the English KFOR is a major actor in the programme and that its action to maintain the Serbian community within the Pristina zone of responsibility has the particularly badly chosen name of "Trojan Horse"

Endnote 12: It should be remembered that this building was recently the target of a rocket attack - even if the guilty person(s) has (have) not yet been arrested, there is not doubt that hatred and jealously were largely responsible. Would the extremists have attacked this building so furiously if favouritism toward the Serbian community in Pristina had been less glaring?"
(MDM 20 December 2000, Sect. III "The limits of international aid")

See also "360-Degree Do No Harm Assessment -- Phase 1", page 3 to 7, a report to the Minorities Alliance Working Group in Kosovo, by Greg Hansen, 20 November 2000 [Internet]

Shelter winterisation: humanitarian needs in Kosovo have been met (winter 2000-2001)

- More than 2,000 shelters have been built for vulnerable families, including minorities communities
- 2,000 spaces in temporary community shelters have also be maintained by UNMIK

"In mid-November, the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator for Kosovo released the results of a risk analysis survey, which revealed that firewood and coal for up to 42,000 families, and emergency shelter provisions for up to 5,000 vulnerable families, might be needed in the event of a worst case scenario over the winter. With this in mind, emergency shelter programmes, providing warm, dry rooms and basic shelter materials, have been funded by the United States of America Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) for 2,600 families and the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO) for 770 families. Over 300 rigid shelters (a form of prefabricated housing), inter alia, for vulnerable female-headed households and some minority communities, were also funded by UNHCR, the United States Government's Kosovo Women's Initiative, the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the UNMIK Trust Fund. In addition, UNMIK has maintained some 2,000 spaces in temporary community shelters. These arrangements, combined with a relatively mild Balkans winter, have met humanitarian needs in Kosovo over the winter." (UNSC 13 March 2001, para. 14)

Strong NGO presence in Kosovo (2000)

"At present, more than 200 non-governmental organizations are registered in Kosovo. Similar to political party service centres, NGO resource centres give logistical support and offer training opportunities to these organizations. Out of 10 projected centres, 4 have already been opened." (UNSC 6 June 2000, para. 106)

Regulation 1999/22 on the Registration and Operation of Non-Governmental Organizations in Kosovo [Internet]

See also InterAction "Humanitarian Response to Kosovo" [Internet]

See also the websiste of the Humanitarian Community Information Centre in Kosovo [Internet. http://www.reliefweb.int/hcic/]

General

Federal Government opens dialogue with UN mission in Kosovo (2001-2002)

- New head of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Government Committee on Kosovo stated his willingness to cooperate with UN authorities in Kosovo
- Preparations for the establishment of an UNMIK office in Belgrade near completion
- Issues such as the participation of the Serb minority in Kosovo's administration, the Presevo Valley, the return of the Serb displaced and the fate of missing persons remain to be addressed

"The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Government has appointed Mr. Momlico Trajkovic as the new head of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Government Committee on Kosovo. In his meeting with my Special Representative, Mr. Trajkovic has stated his willingness to cooperate with UNMIK and KFOR in key areas such as civil registration, the return of Kosovo Serb internally displaced persons, and advocating Kosovo Serb registration and participation in future elections. This signifies a readiness on the part of the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to engage UNMIK in a constructive relationship within the broader framework of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999). The establishment of an UNMIK office in Belgrade, for which preparations are nearing completion, will facilitate resolution of key issues affecting the Mission's activities in Kosovo. Issues such as Kosovo Serb participation in the public administration process, Kosovo Serbs and the consequences of problems in the Presevo Valley have provided challenges, as well as opportunities, for improving dialogue with Belgrade in the interests of both the Mission and the communities of Kosovo." (UN SC 13 March 2001, para. 59)

"A key provision of the Common Document is the establishment of a High-ranking Working Group as the official forum for dialogue and cooperation between UNMIK and the provisional institutions of self-government on the one hand, and the Yugoslav authorities on the other. Although the initial reactions of the Kosovo Albanians leaders were critical, it is hoped that the Working Group will in time contribute to a process of normalization and promote direct dialogue between the democratically elected leaders in Pristina and Belgrade. (UNSC 15 January 2002, para. 17)

Acting SRSG Charles Brayshaw chaired the second session of the High Level Working Group, which met yesterday in Belgrade to begin its substantive work as outlined by the Common Document of 5 November, 2001.

Mr. Brayshaw described the meeting as positive and constructive in terms of laying out the priorities for the work ahead on issues of mutual concern identified by the Common Document, which was signed by former SRSG Hans Haekkerup and FRY/Serbia Coordination Center President Nebojsa Covic.

Most of those priorities were on yesterday's agenda, including how to improve cooperation on establishing the fate of the missing from all communities; resolving issues of detainees; promoting returns of displaced persons to Kosovo; and improving freedom of movement by road and railway.

UNMIK introduced three proposed protocols -on the exchange of forensics expertise in work on the missing; on joint verification of allegations on hidden prisons; and on the cross-boundary returns of remains. The protocols should be taken up at the next meeting to be held in Pristina in approximately one month.

The Working Group also agreed to establish sub-groups on returns, the judiciary and police cooperation.

Contrary to reports on the meeting in the Belgrade press, the issue of Serbian Ministry of Interior participation in the organization or work of the Kosovo Police Service was not discussed and no such involvement would be acceptable to UNMIK, Mr. Brayshaw said.

Mr. Brayshaw introduced the meeting by reviewing the progress toward the establishment of Provisional Institutions of Self-Government . He noted the tragic loss of Kosovo Assembly member Ismael Hajdaraj, who was murdered on 17 January near Peja/Pec, and affirmed UNMIK's commitment to identify and bring to justice the perpetrators." (UNMIK 22 January 2002)

See also "Top UN official in Kosovo and Yugoslav President agree on further cooperation", UN press release, 5 April 2001 [Internet]

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAH	Action Against Hunger
AAR	Association for Aid and Relief
ACT	Action by Churches Together
ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
ARC	American Refugee Committee
CC	Collective Centre
COOPI	Cooperazione Internazionale
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DEM	German Mark
DPKO	Department of Peace-Keeping Operations
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
DSRSG HA	Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs
ECHO	European Community Humanitarian Office
ECRE	European Council on Refugees and Exiles
EIU	Economist Intelligence Unit
EMOP	Emergency Operation
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FFH	Food for the Hungry
FO	Field Office
FRY	Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
FYROM	Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator
HEP	Humanitarian Evacuation Programme
IAC	Interim Administrative Council
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICVA	International Council of Voluntary Agencies
IDP	Internally displaced person
IGO	Inter-Governmental Organisations
IMC	International Medical Corps
IMG	International Management Group
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IRC	International Rescue Committee
JCR	Joint Committee on Return
JIAS	Joint Interim Administrative Structure
KFOR	Kosovo Force
KLA/UCK	Kosovo Liberation Army
KPC	Kosovo Protection Corps
KPS	Kosovo Police Service

KTC	Kosovo Transitional Council
KVM	Kosovo Verification Mission
LDK	Democratic League of Kosovo
MACC	Mine Action Coordination Centre
MCDP	Commissioner for Displaced Persons in Montenegro
MCI	Mercy Corps International
MHIF	Montenegrin Health Insurance Fund
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPA	Norwegian People's Aid
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODHIR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PPDK	Party for Democratic Progress of Kosovo
RC	Resident Coordinator
SC	Save the Children
SDR	Swiss Disaster Relief
SFRY	Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
SNC	Serb National Council
SO	Sub-Office
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary General
SWC	Social Welfare Centres
TCS	Temporary Community Shelter
UCPMB	Liberation Army of Presevo,Medvedja and Bujanovac
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNMIK	United Nations Mission in Kosovo
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
USCR	U.S. Committee for Refugees
USD	US Dollar
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation
WVI	World Vision International
YRC	Yugoslav Red Cross

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