



COMMISSARIAT FOR  
REFUGEES AND MIGRATION  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

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# SITUATION AND NEEDS OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

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MAY 2018



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## INTRODUCTION

The Commissariat for Refugees and Migration of the Republic of Serbia (hereinafter: the Commissariat) in cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, or independently has conducted several assessments on internally displaced persons (hereinafter: IDPs) from Kosovo and Metohija (KiM) and their needs since 2008. The last/first report on the needs of IDPs in Serbia<sup>1</sup> was published in March 2011 based on analysis of data collected in an IDP survey jointly conducted by the Commissariat, UNHCR and the Joint IDP Profiling Service (JIPS). It aimed at identifying key problems of IDPs in Serbia, vulnerable groups among them and to recommend a course of action for improving their situation. The 2011 Survey indicated that 22.886 IDP households (97.286 persons) out of 210.000 IDPs in Serbia had additional displacement-related needs. The Survey also identified and described main characteristics of IDP households, the situation of IDPs in the labour market, housing and property situation, their financial status, social inclusion, and interest to return.

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<sup>1</sup> UNHCR, JIPS, Commissariat for Refugees of the Republic of Serbia, "Assessment of the Needs of Internally Displaced Persons in Serbia", March 2011 [http://www.unhcr.rs/media/IDP\\_Needs\\_AssessmentENGLISH.pdf](http://www.unhcr.rs/media/IDP_Needs_AssessmentENGLISH.pdf)

The global economic and financial crisis affected the situation in Serbia including of IDPs. At the same time the number of returns to Kosovo and Metohija has declined. This called for a new assessment of the problems and needs of IDPs in the country. Supported by UNHCR, the Commissariat thus prepared this new analysis of data from the Commissariat's database of all internally displaced persons in need.

The aim of the present assessment is to identify the specific needs of IDPs and their scope. Thereby it should inform strategic directions in programming future activities to improve the living conditions of IDPs in Serbia. The present assessment also provides important benchmark data to inform the progress in applicable national and international processes, including the Republic of Serbia's national development strategy, including the Employment and Social Reform Programme 2016-2020, the National Strategy for Resolving the Problems of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons, the so-called Skopje Process, the EU Accession and Agenda 2030<sup>2</sup> processes. Ultimately this study hopes to contribute to ensuring that internally displaced persons will not be left behind but be fully integrated into and fully benefit from the current and future economic, social, political and cultural progress of the Republic of Serbia.

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<sup>2</sup> Within the sub-goal 1.2, Republic of Serbia committed to reduce the number of men, women and children of all ages living in any form of poverty, including IDPs, for at least 50%.



## METHODOLOGY

In the course of 2013, the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration, in cooperation with the local trustees for refugees, established a database of all internally displaced persons in need. The database was developed on the basis of data collected by trustees surveying families in their municipalities in line with UNHCR Vulnerability Criteria (attached hereto). The database includes key information about households and members thereof, social vulnerability and the expressed need for improvement of living conditions. The database is constantly updated. While there were 17,287 IDP households (71,779 persons) in need at the end of 2016, now there are 16,644 IDP households (68,514 persons) in need.

*Since the previous report, housing solution has been secured for 473 households through the programs implemented by the Commissariat and its partners, and 170 households secured housing solutions through their own resources.*

The establishment of this database allows for comparisons with existing records of housing solutions for IDPs and other studies. It also provides insight into the progress made in provision of assistance to the persons in need for improvement of housing conditions while in displacement as well as of the funds ensured from the budget of the Republic of Serbia, local government funds, EU Pre-Accession Assistance and that by other donors.

## BACKGROUND

As a result of the dissolution of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the ensuing conflicts of the 1990s, more than 800,000 refugees from the former Yugoslav republics and more than 200,000 internally displaced persons from Kosovo and Metohija sought refuge in the Republic of Serbia. The 2000 Registration of Internally Displaced Persons in Serbia registered 186,000 persons outside the territory of Kosovo and Metohija. The outflow continued after 1999. The Unilateral Declaration of Independence of Kosovo<sup>3</sup> in February 2008 contributed to increasing the fear and uncertainty of IDPs with respect to resolving their basic livelihood needs. Currently 201,047 internally displaced persons are registered in the Republic of Serbia (2.85% out of the estimated total of 7,040,272 inhabitants in 2018).

The Republic of Serbia set up mechanisms at central and local levels to implement all the types of programmes in support of internally displaced persons in the country. Thanks to the development of local action plans, local governments have been taking part in the response to the needs of internally displaced persons since 2008. Numerous programmes provided for in the strategic frameworks funded by the EU, the UN agencies, the Government of the Republic of Serbia and the governments of foreign countries have been implemented also.

*Local action plans are strategic documents including an overview of the needs on the territories of local governments and the funds required for responding to the housing and other needs of refugees and internally displaced persons.*

Continued political commitment of the Republic of Serbia to ensure adequate living conditions and durable solutions for the internally displaced persons is reflected in adoption of the Law on Migration Management as well as in the revision of the National Strategy for Resolving the Problems of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons 2015-2020, by allocation of significant budget funds for care and improvement of situation of IDPs, fundraising among donors as well as regular putting of the IDP problems high on the political agenda of all relevant fora discussing durable solutions of their problems. The Strategy follows the earlier defined albeit outstanding objectives and measures of the Republic of Serbia.

In 2012, the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration passed a Decision on the Establishment of Incentives to Conduct Measures and Activities required for achievement of the set objectives of migration

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<sup>3</sup> This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence

management in local self-governments. These incentives also include measures and activities required to implement the established plans, the funds required for implementation of the measures and activities in local governments, the criteria for their allocation and participation in the Programme.

The Programme is set annually. The 2018 Decree envisages the total of RSD 268 million to be spent on improvement of the living conditions of IDPs while in displacement. RSD 288 million were planned and spent for the same purpose in 2017.

Local governments with a higher concentration of internally displaced persons on their territories are carefully targeted during the planning and implementation of the budget and donor funds. Budget funds of the Republic of Serbia are earmarked for the economic empowerment of socially vulnerable internally displaced families.

The housing of internally displaced persons while in displacement is improved through:

- provision of construction materials for the completion of construction or rehabilitation of housing owned by IDPs;
- assistance in purchase of village houses with gardens;
- assistance in purchase and construction of prefabricated houses;
- provision of social housing in supportive environment or rented housing units;
- assistance to resolve the problems of IDPs residing in so-called informal collective centres.

With respect to durable solutions (as provided for in the Framework for Durable Solutions for IDPs), both return and integration must be given an opportunity. However, notwithstanding the measures implemented, a small number of internally displaced persons returned to Kosovo and Metohija due to absence of safety and possibilities to exercise the fundamental human rights. Since restitution of housing and land, being the key preconditions for achievement of durable solutions, remains elusive for the vast majority of IDPs, no conditions have practically yet been created for the them to voluntarily decide whether to return or to integrate.

Moreover, closure of all collective centres is planned soonest. Currently there are three collective centres with 72 internally displaced persons in the Republic of Serbia, without Kosovo and Metohija. On the territory of Kosovo and Metohija there are 8 collective centres with 278 IDPs. The planned closure of collective

centres is conducted in line with the first, 2002 National Strategy for Resolving the Problems of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons. A total of 377 collective centres were closed since 2002, and solutions were provided for 9,386 persons accommodated therein.

In addition to securing durable solutions to internally displaced persons, the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration publishes public calls for funding of the programmes of the civil society and associations relevant to the refugees, internally displaced persons and returnees on the basis of readmission agreements several times a year. The programmes selected for funding include: media campaigns to raise awareness of refugees and IDPs aiming at their social integration, information dissipation about the mechanisms to exercise the rights available and reviewing the needs of the beneficiary population.



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## MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF IDP HOUSEHOLDS IN NEED

According to the data collected by the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration, 16,644 internally displaced households (68,514 persons) in need live in Serbia.

Most reside in urban areas in Western Serbia and Šumadija, with the lowest number having settled in Vojvodina as indicated in the Assessment conducted seven years ago. Belgrade and the larger cities are preferred for better employment opportunities, access to health care and education. The remaining IDPs settled in other parts of Serbia most often due to family links and a large number of persons originating from Kosovo and Metohija who had moved to these areas in the past.

The average age of the IDPs in need is 39.14 - somewhat different from the data of the previous Assessment. One potential explanation of that is that larger families were prioritised in assistance, as well as that modern families opt to have fewer children. Most IDPs are aged 19-59 (51.55%), although persons over 60 constitute a large part (23.15%). The number of women and men is approximately the same (49.21% and 50.79% respectively).

The average size of internally displaced households in need is 4.12, and the percentage of households with five or more members is over 28%. Here we take note of the drop in size of average households because it was the families with a higher number of children that were prioritized in past assistance for improvement of the living conditions. Nevertheless, there is still a high percentage of large families in need, which will be discussed in detail later in the document.

The ethnic composition of IDPs in need is relatively homogenous: Serbs comprise 76.7%, and Roma 14.9%. These are followed by Montenegrins, Bosniaks-Muslims, and Gorani in far lower percentages.

Regretfully, the number of IDPs who have not completed primary education remains high (14%). Compared with the results of the 2011 Assessment, a rise in the number of persons with university education is noted. This is evidence of a positive trend in understanding the necessity to continue schooling and acquire an education.

Most IDPs are the active age cohort of 19-59. Almost one third, however, are unemployed. The most common source of income is salary (22.50%), followed by pension and so called "Kosovo allowance for employed persons" (11.55% and 11.35%, respectively). The total monthly income of more than 75% of

households is below EUR 300 (approximately RSD 35,000). The average monthly household income is EUR 169 or EUR 35 per household member (approximately RSD 4,900). These data have not changed significantly since the 2011 Assessment.

With respect to the housing and property situation of IDPs in need, 9.66% of families own their housing, while almost 50% of the total rent or live with relatives and friends. 5,500 families own property not suitable for housing, rent housing or live with relatives and friends. Their problems could be resolved through distribution of construction material packages.

Today, IDPs in need prefer construction material packages (49.79% of the families), village houses (19.54%), rented housing (19.46%) and social housing in supportive environment (SHSE) (10.57%). Less than 1% of them opt for accommodation in social welfare institutions.

Of the total number of households who own housing unsuitable for living, 68% ask for construction materials to complete the construction they initiated or to rehabilitate the unsuitable housing they possess. Of the total number of households, 5.11% live in the spaces not intended for residence. A total of 9.8% do not have a bathroom.

These parameters have not changed significantly, which indicates that the families in need require faster and more efficient assistance in order to achieve minimum conditions for a normal life.

Regretfully, the situation with respect to their property in KiM has not improved since the previous Assessment and thus could not have contributed to their exit from the vicious circle of vulnerability and poverty either by returning to KiM or repossessing their property and selling it. More will be said about that in the following pages. With respect to the physical status of housing, more than one half of the owners (56.55%) stated their housing had been destroyed, while the property of 11.25% IDPs is damaged to such a high level as to render it uninhabitable.

Relative to the earlier research into the number of potential returnees, a significant drop of the willingness of these persons to return to KiM is noted. The main reasons for the limited returns, as stated by the IDPs, are insecurity and limited freedom of movement, uncertain future for their children, livelihood and employment opportunities.

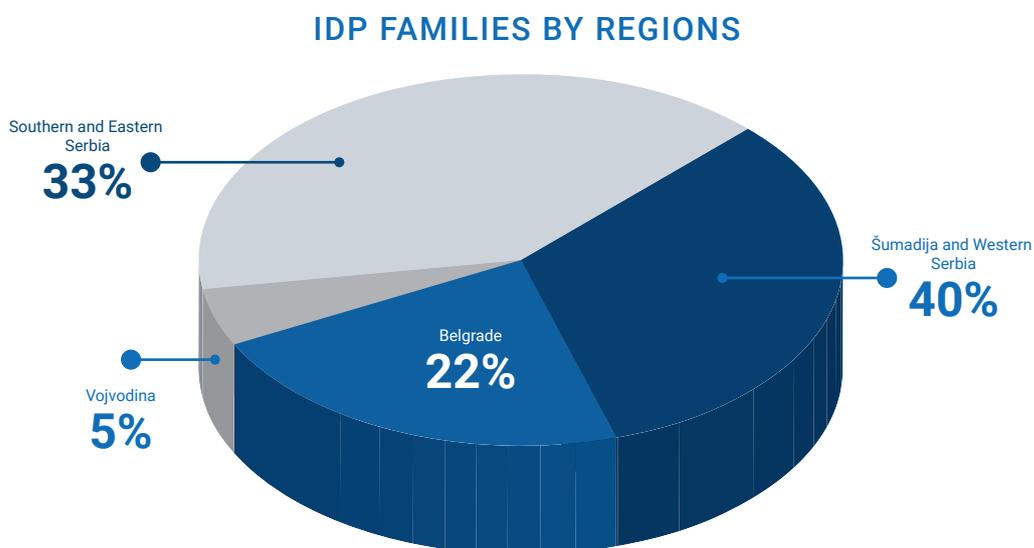
# STATISTICAL INFORMATION

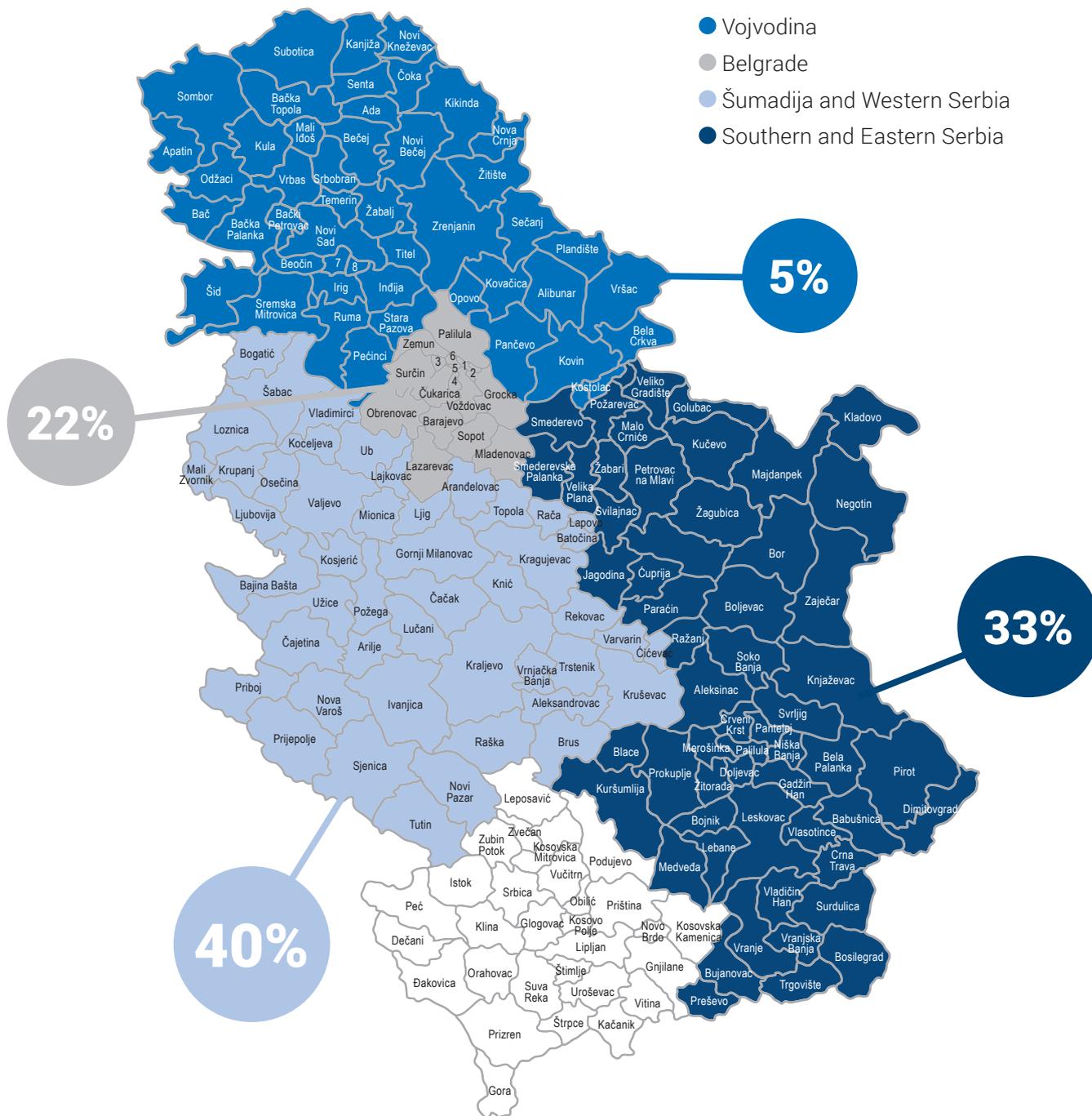
## 1. GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF IDPS IN NEED

Table 1. Geographic distribution of IDPs

REGION	NO. OF IDP FAMILIES	%
Belgrade	3,614	21.71%
Vojvodina	840	5.05%
Šumadija and Western Serbia	6,711	40.32%
Southern and Eastern Serbia	5,479	32.92%
TOTAL	16,644	100.00%

The majority of IDPs from KiM settled in Central and Southern Serbia, with a small number, of Roma mostly, having proceeded to Vojvodina. The average IDP household moved three times after displacement from KiM.





## 2. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

### 2.1. AGE AND GENDER STRUCTURE

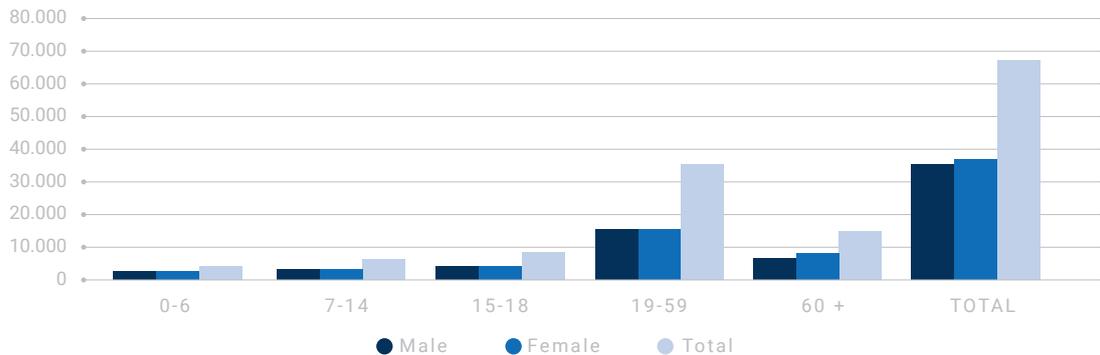
The average age of IDPs in need is 40.44 - somewhat lower than the average of the domicile population (42.9). The majority of IDPs in need are in the age cohort 19-59 (50.98%), although persons over 60 are also numerous (23.06%). The ratio of women and men is approximately the same (49.18% and 50.82% respectively).

Table 2.1 Age and gender structure

AGE	MALE	%	FEMALE	%	TOTAL	%
0-6	1,998	2.92%	1,996	2.91%	3,994	5.83%
7-14	2,765	4.04%	2,814	4.11%	5,579	8.14%
15-18	4,192	6.12%	4,021	5.87%	8,213	11.99%
19-59	17,616	25.71%	17,311	25.27%	34,927	50.98%
60+	7,127	10.40%	8,674	12.66%	15,801	23.06%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>33,698</b>	<b>49.18%</b>	<b>34,816</b>	<b>50.82%</b>	<b>68,514</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

This age structure is the result of a high share of Roma population as well as a higher birth rate among the families from Kosovo and Metohija relative to the Serbian average.

## AGE AND GENDER STRUCTURE



Compared to the 2011 Assessment, the changed average age indicates that the most vulnerable families with many children have been assisted in the meantime and that the number of heads of households over 60 has increased. More than 65% of IDPs in need are at the work age.

The average age of total IDP population is 37.89.

*Serbia is one of the demographically oldest countries in the world. According to statistical data, there are approximately 1.4 million inhabitants over 65, comprising 19.2% of the total population. Ageing of the population is primarily a consequence of the changes in the natural mobility of the population and migrations i.e. decrease of young and working age population as well as increase of dependent population. The assessment indicated that there will be 7.5% of 80+ in Serbia in 25 years.*

## 2.2 SIZE OF HOUSEHOLDS

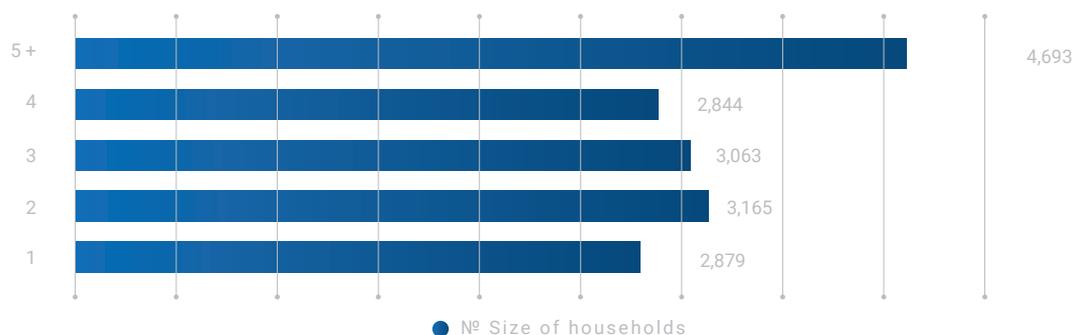
The size of households is one of the key factors in planning housing solutions by improvement of the housing conditions of IDPs in need. The average size of IDP households in need is 4.12 which is somewhat lower than in the last IPDs Needs Assessment.

Table 2.2 Household size

NO. OF HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS	NO. OF HOUSEHOLDS	%
1	2,879	17.30%
2	3,165	19.02%
3	3,063	18.40%
4	2,844	17.09%
5+	4,693	28.20%
TOTAL	16,644	100.00%

The share of single-headed or one-member households is 17%, but the share of households with five or more members exceeds 28%, which calls for special attention in programming of future activities related to improvement of housing conditions. One must take into account the fact that these are the households with many children who traditionally live in multi-generational families.

## SIZE OF HOUSEHOLDS



## 2.3 MARITAL STATUS <sup>4</sup>

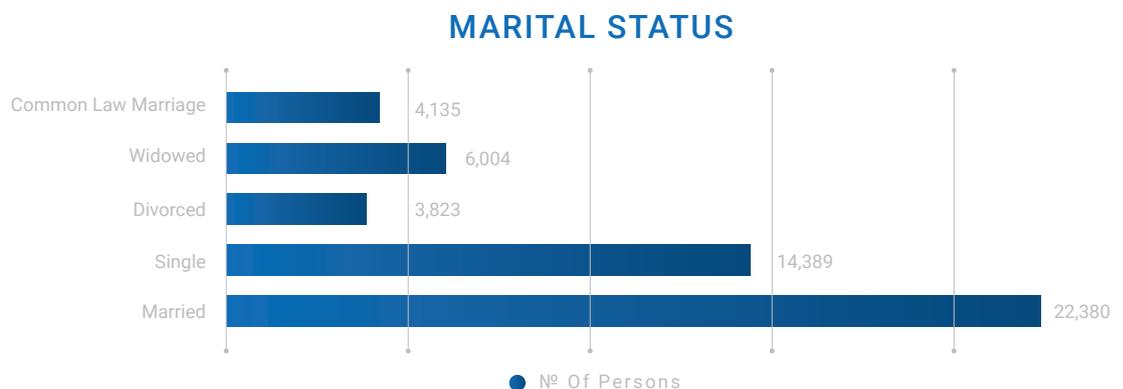
Of the adult internally displaced persons, 44.11% are married, 28.36% are single and 8.15% live in common-law marriages. Some 12% are widowed. Families are prioritized in improvement of the housing conditions of the persons in need. In view of the high number of persons in need, the rulebooks followed by the municipal Beneficiary Selection Committees allow for families with more members and more minor children to be better ranked and thus, to obtain swifter assistance.

Table 2.3 Marital status

MARITAL STATUS	NO. OF PERSONS	%
Married	22,380	44.12%
Single	14,389	28.36%
Divorced	3,823	7.54%
Widowed	6,004	11.83%
Common law marriage	4,135	8.15%
TOTAL	50,731	100.00%

<sup>4</sup> Adults only.

There are 1,183 single parent families (7.11% of the total number of households in need). The number of children in them is 2,359. The share of single-headed elderly households is 7.70 %.



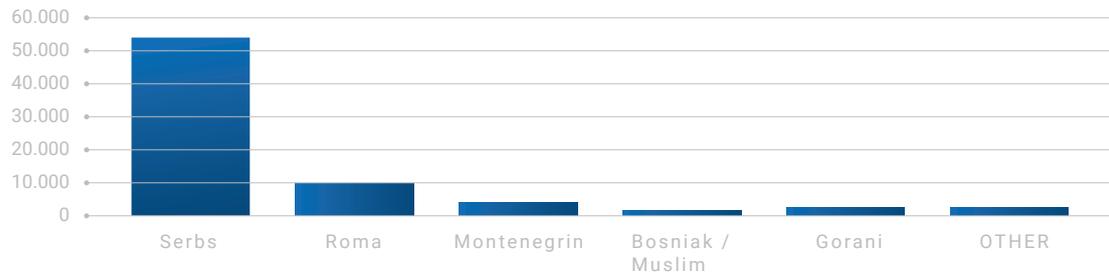
## 2.4 ETHNIC AFFILIATION OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS IN NEED

The ethnic composition of IDPs in need is relatively homogenous as one entity prevails – the Serbs comprise 76.7 %, and Roma comprising 14.9 %. These are followed by Montenegrins, Bosniaks-Muslims, and Gorani in a far lower percentage.

Table 2.4 Ethnic distribution

ETHNIC AFFILIATION	NO. OF PERSONS	%
Serbs	52,526	76.66%
Roma	10,188	14.87%
Montenegrin	1,912	2.79%
Bosniak/Muslim	1,340	1.96%
Gorani	1,056	1.54%
Other	1,492	2.18%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>68,514</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

## ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION



The share of Roma among the IDPs in need is 14.9, i.e., significantly higher than that of Roma in the total population of the Republic of Serbia (2.14%), as well as of the share of Roma in total internally displaced population (10.5%).

*According to the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia, the citizens are not obliged to state their ethnic affiliation (Article 47). The response to the questions about ethnic affiliation for children under 15 is given by parents or guardians.*

## 2.5 EDUCATION

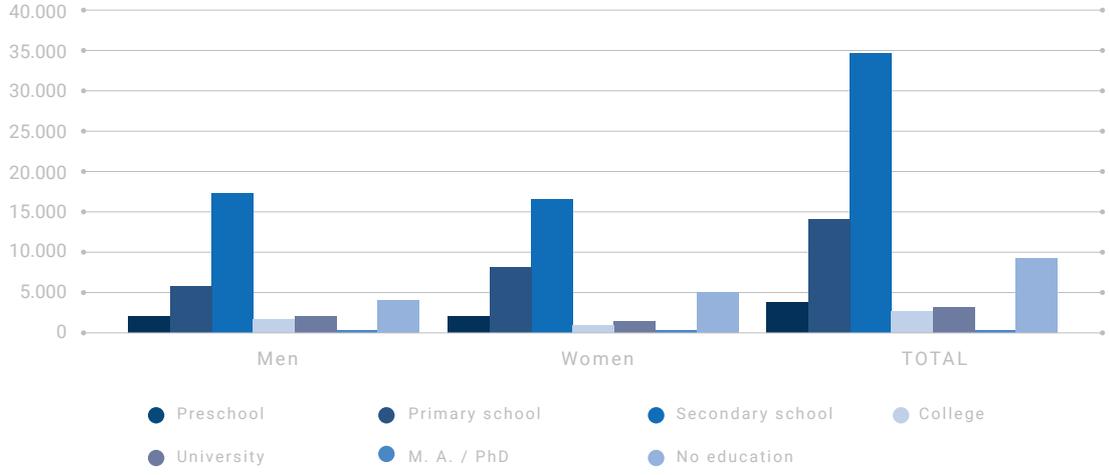
Table 2.5 Education

EDUCATION	MEN	%	WOMEN	%	TOTAL	%
Preschool	1,998	2.92%	1,996	2.91%	3,994	5.83%
Primary school	6,123	8.94%	8,254	12.05%	14,377	20.98%
Secondary school	17,702	25.84%	16,917	24.69%	34,619	50.53%
College	1,742	2.54%	1,007	1.47%	2,749	4.01%
University	1,798	2.62%	1,475	2.15%	3,273	4.78%
M.A./PhD	98	0.14%	38	0.06%	136	0.20%
No education	4,237	6.18%	5,129	7.49%	9,366	13.67%
TOTAL	33,698	49.18%	34,816	50.82%	68,514	100.00%

Over 9,000 IDPs in need have not completed primary education. The share of women among them is higher (55%). Persons who have not completed primary school are mostly the elderly (60+). The data largely correspond to the findings of the previous IDPs Needs Assessments, with a notable decrease in the number

of persons without primary education and increase of the persons with university education. This decrease represents a positive trend which is expected to continue. Contributing to the high number of uneducated persons is a high percentage of Roma population who traditionally attend schools in smaller numbers.

### EDUCATION



## 3. FINANCIAL SITUATION OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

### 3.1 EMPLOYMENT STATUS

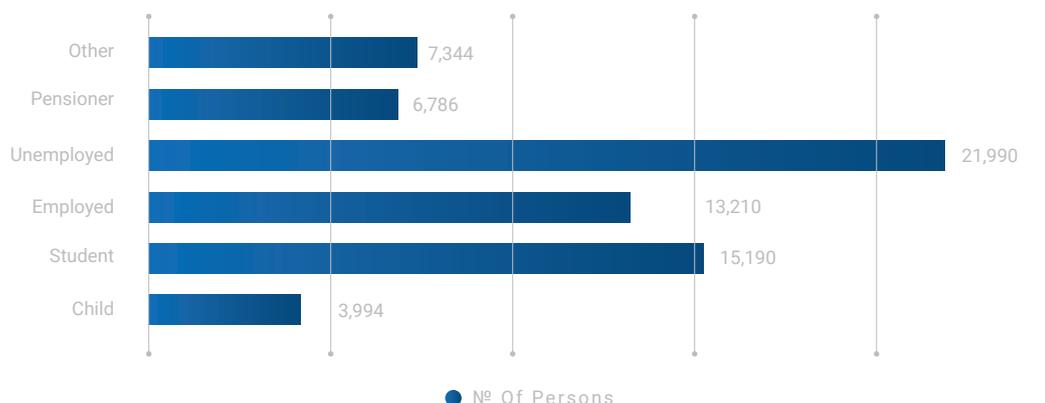
A high unemployment rate is the key indicator of IDP vulnerability. Almost one third of internally displaced persons have no employment at all. Compared to the domicile population with 14.7% unemployment rate (475,600 unemployed persons) at the end of 2017, one may conclude that the situation of IDPs is significantly worse. The share of the unemployed among the IDPs is 32.10%. Employed persons account for less than 20% in the total IDP population in need, while 46.3% in the total population of the Republic of Serbia (persons 15+).

Table 3.1 Employment status

EMPLOYMENT STATUS	NO. OF PERSONS	%
Child	3,994	5.83%
Student	15,190	22.17%
Employed	13,210	19.28%
Unemployed	21,990	32.10%
Pensioner	6,786	9.90%
Other	7,344	10.72%
TOTAL	68,514	100.00%

It is worth noting that women in this population are traditionally housewives and stay at home to take care of households, children and families, as well as that the families in rural areas engage in agriculture and thus generate income. Both categories are registered as unemployed. Moreover, the term "pensions" includes disability pensions as well.

## EMPLOYMENT STATUS



### 3.2 PERSONAL INCOME

The most frequent source of income of IDPs in need is salary (for 13,210 persons), followed by “Kosovo allowance” for persons who lost their jobs due to displacement (6,658 persons) and pensions (6,786 persons). Many of them do not hold permanent jobs but work on temporary jobs in the grey economy - which has not been eliminated regretfully - and are probably registered as “other”.

Table 3.2.1 Sources of income for persons 15+

SOURCE OF INCOME	NO. OF PERSONS	%
Pension	6,786	11.56%
Salary	13,210	22.50%
Kosovo allowance for the unemployed	6,658	11.34%
Other	4,119	7.02%
No income	17,086	29.10%
N/A	10,846	18.48%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>58,705</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

With respect to the families who receive the “Kosovo allowance”, the key assumption is that they do work informally in order to protect their right to the above mentioned allowance.

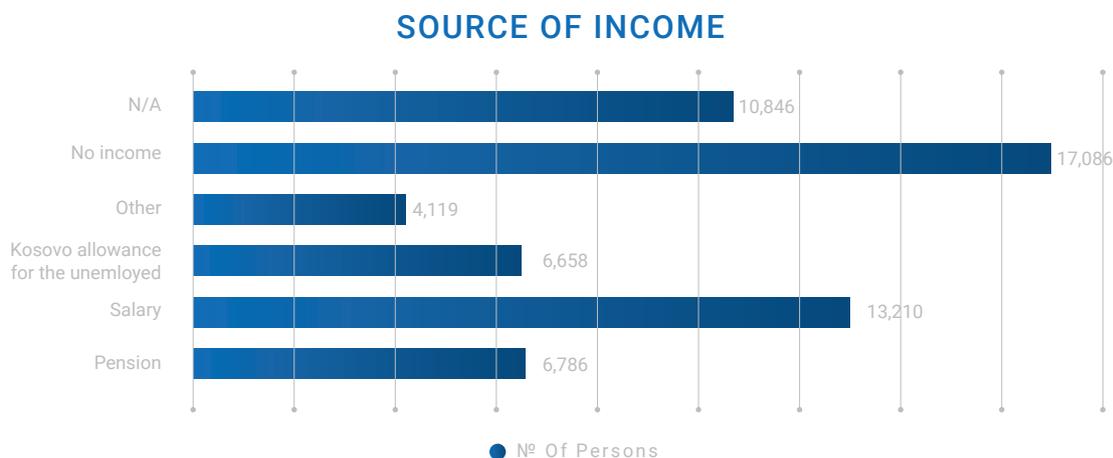


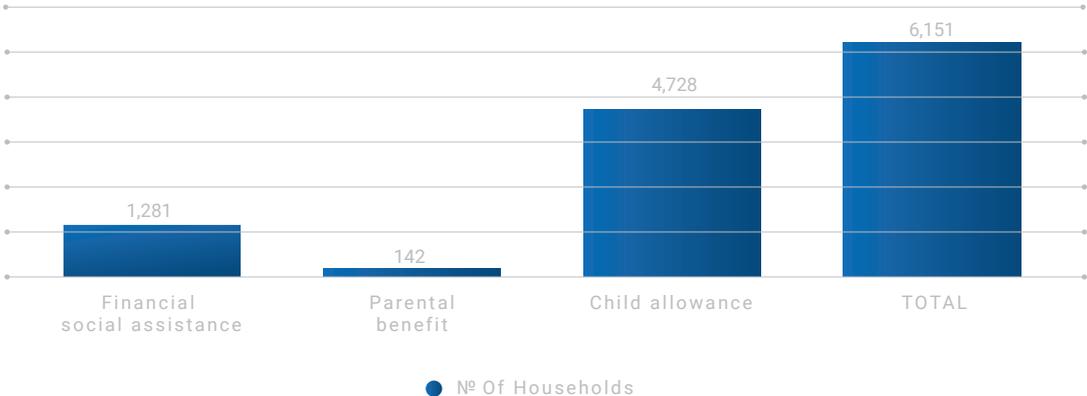
Table 3.2.2 Types of social welfare assistance

TYPES OF SOCIAL WELFARE ASSISTANCE	NO. OF HOUSEHOLDS	%
Financial social assistance	1,281	20.83%
Parental benefit	142	2.31%
Child allowance	4,728	76.87%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,151</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

IDPs, being the citizens of the Republic of Serbia, may access various forms of social welfare assistance provided by the State. The right to assistance was exercised by 37% of the households in need. The 2016 Needs Assessment indicated that 34% of the families exercised this right. The increase in the number of

persons exercising rights to different forms of the social allowance indicated that access to the required documents is facilitated, and that potential users are well-informed about the assistance they are eligible for and the ways to access it. Access to social welfare services is very important for this category of persons. Of the total number of the households – beneficiaries of social allowances - 76.87% receive child allowance.

### TYPES OF SOCIAL WELFARE ASSISTANCE



In order for the families to receive one of the forms of social welfare assistance, they need to fulfil the legally prescribed conditions and obtain a number of necessary documents. The new Law on Permanent and Temporary Residence of Citizens and increased share of entry of new-borns into the birth registries have facilitated issuance of personal documents and thus access to social welfare assistance.

The changes in the legal framework governing issuance of personal documents and residence allowed for facilitated access to personal documents. The Republic of Serbia passed amendments to the Law on Non-Contentious Procedure allowing persons at risk of statelessness to be registered in birth registries and to obtain the necessary certificates in simplified procedures.

Until the adoption of the Law on Legal Aid, the services will be provided through legal aid projects implemented by the civil society organisations. Introduction of the system of free legal aid will ensure a higher level of legal safety and facilitate access to personal documents through procedures set out in the Law on Non-Contentious Procedure intended to eliminate “legally invisible persons” by entry into birth registries and provision of personal documents.

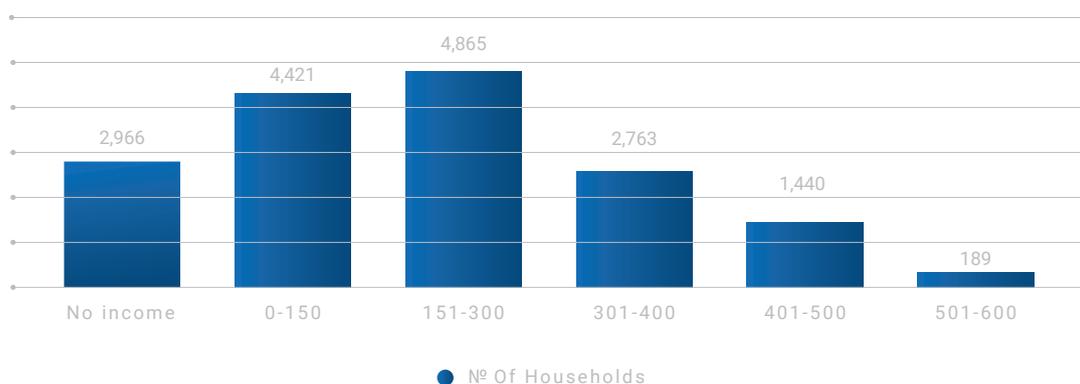
The access to social welfare services is an important indicator of awareness of IDPs about the possibilities offered to them, as well as of the awareness of the social welfare institutions being the instances they can turn to for help.

Table 3.2.3 Monthly household income

MONTHLY INCOME (€)	NO. OF HOUSEHOLDS	%
No income	2,966	17.82%
0 - 150	4,421	26.56%
151 - 300	4,865	29.23%
301 - 400	2,763	16.60%
401 - 500	1,440	8.65%
501 - 600	189	1.14%
TOTAL	16,644	100.00%

Most families who receive more than EUR 500 (1.14%) are multi-generational and large (6 and more members) with two or more members generating some kind of income. However, when the total income is distributed among all the dependants, they remain in the category of households in need because the relative at-risk-of-poverty line in the Republic of Serbia is RSD 14,920 (official data of SORS). These are also the households that do not have a durable housing solution and are unable to solve this problem by themselves.

## MONTHLY INCOME OF HOUSEHOLDS (€)



*The absolute poverty line is the line below which it is not possible to satisfy basic human needs, while the relative poverty line is the inability to reach a minimum accepted standard of living in a particular society.*

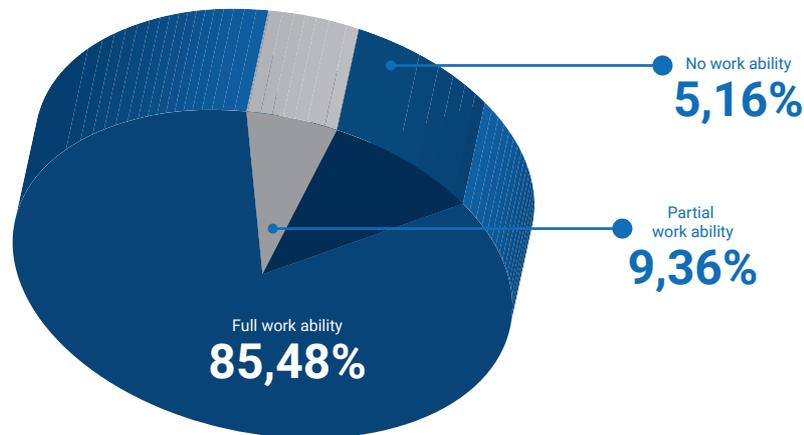
### 3.3 WORK ABILITY (FOR PERSONS OVER 15 AND UNDER 65)<sup>5</sup>

Since the majority of IDPs in need have full work ability, it is important to take adequate measures to increase the level of employment in order for them to become self-sustainable.

Certainly, one must bear in mind the relatively high unemployment rate in Serbia – 14.7% for the total population and just over 15.3% for the work able population (of the age 15-64)

<sup>5</sup> The information about work ability is not documented but assessed based on statements.

## WORK ABILITY



The 2011 Needs Assessment shows the activity rate of the IDPs at the level of the entire sample to be 67.7%, and 70.2% among the IDPs in need. The employment rate among the IDPs in need is 28.5%, and the unemployment rate is 39%, which is less favourable than among the total IDP population and far less favourable than among the domicile population in the Republic of Serbia where the employment rate of inhabitants 15+ is 48.2%, and the unemployment rate is 14.7%.

The projection shows that 6,024 income-generation packages for the unemployed IDPs in need and 4,361 for the employed IDPs in need are required in order to empower them and ensure their self-reliance.

It is worth noting that these packages are intended for agriculture, animal husbandry, fruit growing, wood and metal processing machinery in the rural areas. In urban areas, these packages usually represent assistance for small start-ups (tinsmith workshops, hairdressers and beauty parlours, vehicles for transport of raw materials, etc.).

### 3.4 HOUSING STATUS OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

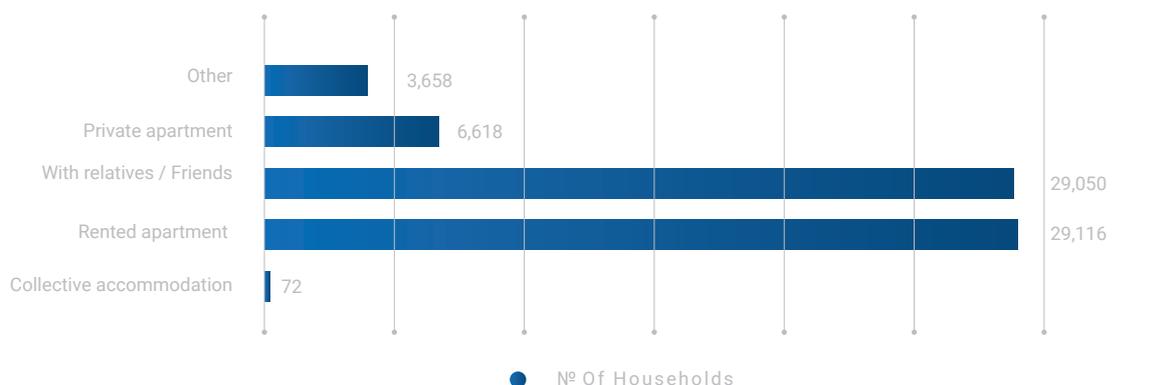
According to the type of current accommodation, the distribution indicates that the majority of IDPs in need live with relatives and friends and in rented housing (almost 85%). Almost 10% of this population owns housing they live in.

Table 3.4 Housing status of internally displaced persons

HOUSEHOLD HOUSING STATUS	NO. OF HOUSEHOLDS	%
Collective accommodation	72	0.11%
Rented apartment	29,116	42.50%
With relatives / friends	29,050	42.40%
Private apartment	6,618	9.66%
Other	3,658	5.34%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>68,514</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

The persons who live with relatives and friends and in rented units (some 5,500 families), and who own uninhabitable real estate, ask for construction material assistance in order to achieve durable housing solution.

#### HOUSING STATUS OF IDPS



According to the database of the needs of IDPs, 40% of the total number of internally displaced households in need is asking for construction material to complete the initiated construction or rehabilitate uninhabitable houses thus making them inhabitable.

A total of 5.11% of IDP households in need reside in spaces not intended for housing.

### 3.5 IDPS IN COLLECTIVE CENTRES

Pursuant to the plan, all the collective centres on the territory of the Republic of Serbia without Kosovo and Metohija should be closed soonest. Currently there are three collective centres hosting 43 refugees and 72 internally displaced persons on the territory of the Republic of Serbia without Kosovo and Metohija. There are eight collective centres hosting 40 refugees and 278 internally displaced persons on the territory of the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija, totalling 433 persons in 11 collective centres.

Table 3.5.1 IDPs in collective centres

DISTRICT	MUNICIPALITY	CENTRE	NO. OF IDPS	NO. OF REFUGEES
South -Banat	Pančevo	CENTAR TO	20	2
Mačva	Šabac	VARNA OOCK	0	41
Pčinja	Bujanovac	SALVATORE	52	0
TOTAL			72	43

Since 2002, 377 collective centres were closed and 9,500 persons accommodated therein were provided a solution.

With a view to economic empowerment of the families, the programmes of improvement of living conditions of IDPs are accompanied by allocation of income-generation funds.

## IDPS IN COLLECTIVE CENTRES

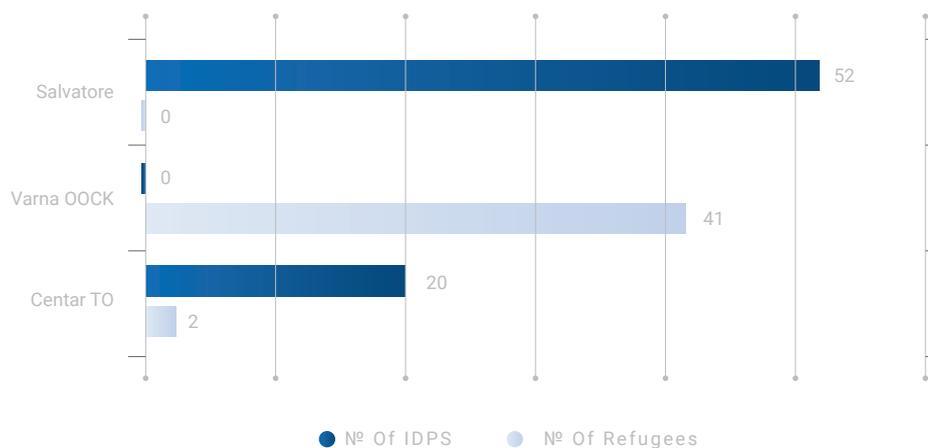
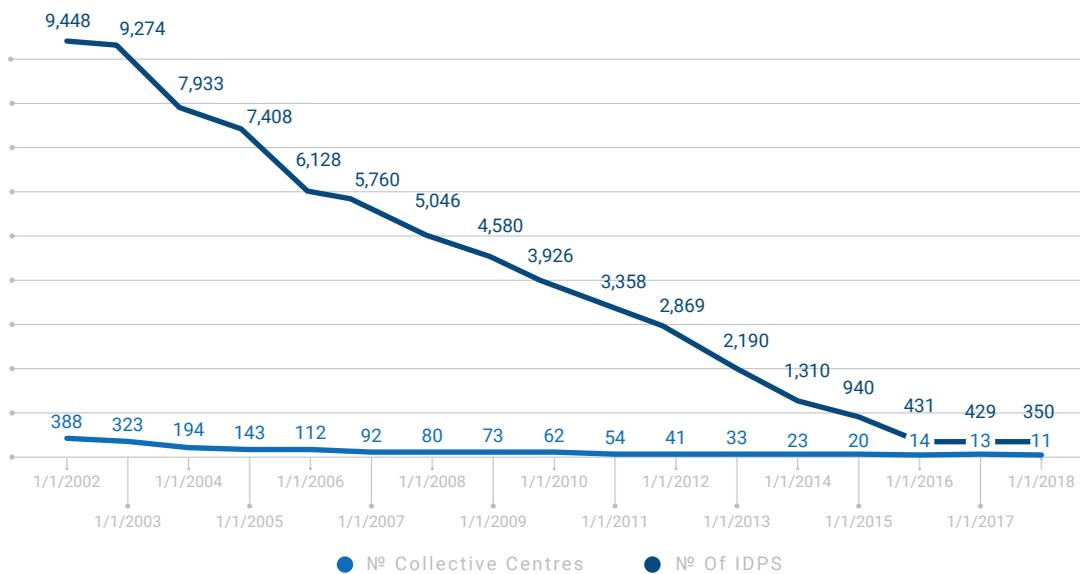


Table 3.5.2 Number of collective centres by year

DATE	NO. OF COLLECTIVE CENTRES	NO. OF IDPS
1/1/2002	388	9,448
1/1/2003	323	9,274
1/1/2004	194	7,933
1/1/2005	143	7,408
1/1/2006	112	6,128
1/1/2007	92	5,760
1/1/2008	80	5,046

1/1/2009	73	4,580
1/1/2010	62	3,926
1/1/2011	54	3,358
1/1/2012	41	2,869
1/1/2013	33	2,190
1/1/2014	23	1,310
1/1/2015	20	940
1/1/2016	14	431
1/1/2017	13	429
1/1/2018	11	350



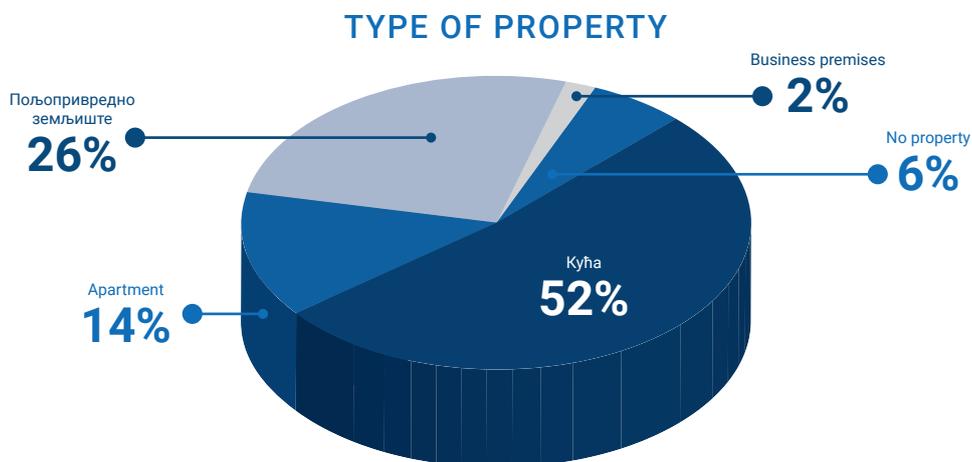
## 4. PROPERTY IN KOSOVO AND METOHIJA

### 4.1 TYPE OF PROPERTY

IDPs in need have more than 22,000 properties in Kosovo and Metohija. Only 1,482 households did not own any property on the territory of KiM. Most of the inhabitants of the rural areas owned houses and adjoining structures as well as hectares of agricultural land. The majority of families from urban areas owned apartments. The number of families who owned business premises that generated income is not negligible.

Table 4.1 Type of property

TYPE OF PROPERTY	HOUSING
House	11,912
Apartment	3,101
Agricultural land	5,858
Business premises	402
No property	1,482
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22,755</b>



## 4.2 STATUS OF PROPERTY

The current status of property and housing owned by IDPs in need in Kosovo and Metohija is extremely unfavourable. The property is either usurped or vacant, mainly destroyed, damaged or looted, and 10% of the owners have no information about the condition thereof.

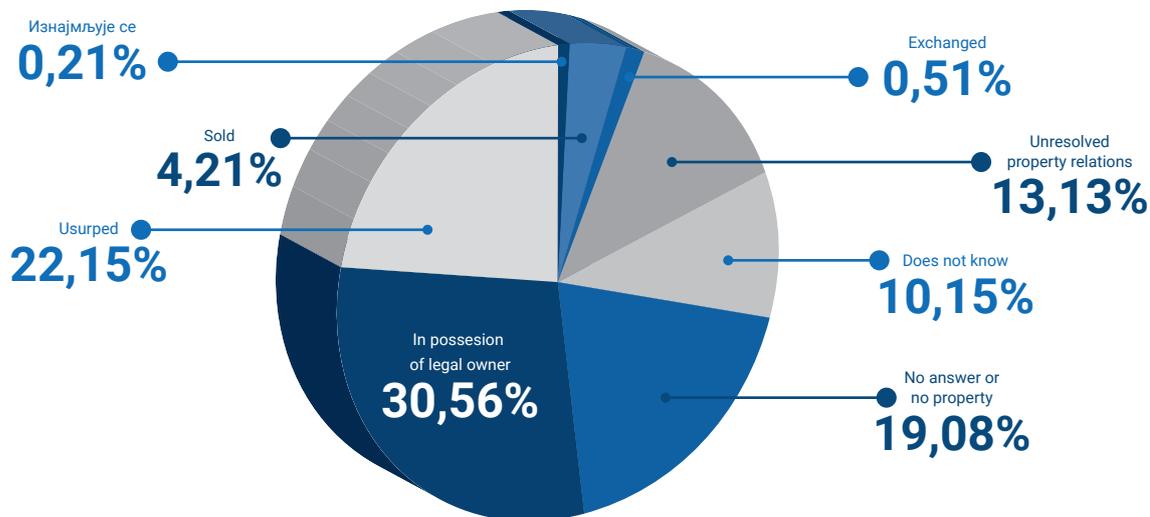
Table 4.2 Property status

CURRENT STATUS OF PROPERTY	HOUSEHOLDS
In possession of legal owner	30.56%
Usurped	22.15%
Exchanged	0.51%
Sold	4.21%
Being rented	0.21%
Unresolved property relations	13.13%
Does not know	10.15%
No answer or no property	19.08%

With respect to the current property status, as many as 22% of households are unable to dispose of it for being usurped, and 30% of the owners are in possession thereof (the owners cannot use it due to security reasons mostly). This refers most often to the repossessed property that was looted again in the meantime.

Regretfully, sustainable return of the families wishing to return has not been ensured still today. Even though all the displaced persons have the right to repossess their property illegally taken away from them or to receive a fair compensation in case repossession is not possible, these persons cannot repossess their property without the adequate international support and protection in the procedures of property restitution.

## CURRENT STATUS OF PROPERTY



The IDPs who lived in state or public ownership apartments face a series of problems. According to the decisions of the Kosovo Property Agency (KPA) or Kosovo Property Comparison and Verification Agency, the majority of them still have the right to use the subject apartments that have been usurped by the illegal owners. Hectares of agricultural land have been usurped and the owners, returnees or the internally displaced cannot use them.

According to the statistical data of the Kosovo Property Agency, 88.4% of the total number of property claims refer to agricultural land. Most of the land is being illegally cultivated by the unauthorised persons and the KPA itself confirms in its reports that it is very difficult to force these persons to pay the rent which would then be sent to the owners.

## 4.3 PHYSICAL STATUS OF PROPERTY

With respect to the physical condition of housing, more than one half of owners (56.55%) stated their houses had been destroyed, while 11.25% of the property suffered high degree damages and is consequently uninhabitable.

Table 4.3. Physical status of property

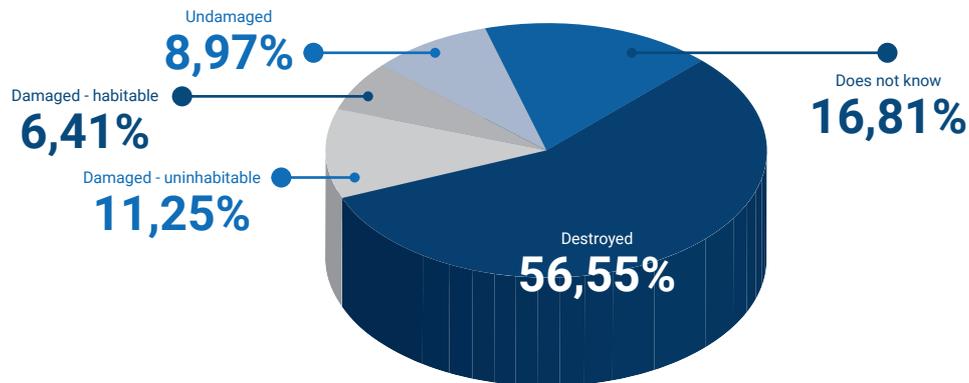
PHYSICAL STATUS OF PROPERTY	HOUSEHOLDS
Destroyed	56.55%
Damaged - uninhabitable	11.25%
Damaged - habitable	6.41%
Undamaged	8.97%
Does not know	16.81%

The courts in Kosovo and Metohija have received more than 19,000 compensation claims. However, the majority of these courts have declined jurisdiction or refused to receive the claims.

The provisional institutions have assumed the responsibility to rehabilitate the damaged houses and compensate for the damaged property after the events of 17 March 2004. Most of the damaged houses were not reconstructed and the expelled persons have not returned. In total, 1,500 claims for the damaged property have been submitted to the courts in Kosovo\* since 17 March 2004.

A significant number of IDPs have sent their claims for compensation of physical damages or illegal use of subject property to the Kosovo Property Agency.

## PHYSICAL STATUS OF PROPERTY



Over the past years, the owners have submitted claims for reconstruction of the damaged property to the provisional institutions in Kosovo and Metohija, international organisations, the Ministry/Office for Kosovo and Metohija, international and national non-governmental organisations as well as to local governments. The majority of these remain unanswered. Many IDPs have problems in submitting the claims due to unresolved property/legal relations.

## 5. RETURN

*Sustainable return is voluntary, safe and dignified return with access to all the acquired rights through respect and consistent implementation of the internationally recognized standards.*

Freedom of choice between return and local integration is the key principle laid out in all the international documents related to the problems of displaced populations. Regretfully, the IDPs from Kosovo and Metohija are unable to make this choice due to the absence of the relevant conditions. Less than 5% of the total IDP population have returned to Kosovo and Metohija, one of the reasons being the fact that the international community has not been able to secure sustainable return of non-Albanian population in line with its obligations.

There are 1,165 or 7% of internally displaced persons in need willing to return. This number was higher in the previous assessment. The duration of displacement contributes to loss of hope and wish to return. The provisional institutions of Kosovo and Metohija allowed the existing segregation to deepen additionally, and thousands of members of minority communities to remain displaced. IDPs living on the territory of Serbia proper have been offered various return programmes for years now, but these are largely unsustainable as most of them leave the reconstructed houses again due to pressures or insecurity.

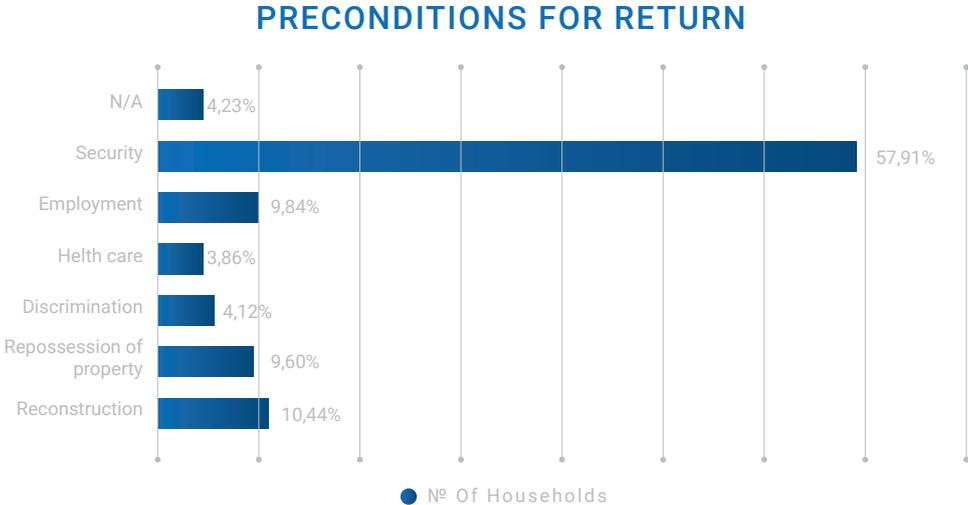
Full and objective information on return, secure freedom of movement, security of person and property; repossession of property by legal owners; reconstruction of damaged and destroyed property or compensation and allow for efficient and simple access to issuance of documentation must be ensured.

According to IDPs, the following preconditions are required in order for them to return to Kosovo and Metohija:

Table 5. Preconditions for return

PRECONDITIONS FOR RETURN	NO. OF HOUSEHOLDS
Reconstruction	10.44%
Repossession of property	9.60%
Discrimination	4.12%
Health care	3.86%
Employment	9.84%
Security	57.91%
N/A	4.23%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

The results clearly prove that security is the key for return into the place of origin, and 58% of the surveyed households believe it not to be in place, which resulted in an extremely low number of returnees throughout all these years. Returnees move within the boundaries of their enclaves or places of residence and consider the urban areas the least safe.



Almost 9% of IDPs in need state repossession of property as the precondition for return. In the meantime, even the property that had been returned to its legal owners who could not use it for security reasons, was looted again.

In all, 10.6% of the families in need state reconstruction as a precondition of return. With respect to the physical condition of houses, more than one half of the owners (56.55%) stated their houses had been destroyed, while 11.25% of the property incurred a high level damages and is uninhabitable.

Almost 10% of the families mention employment opportunities as an important precondition for return, the one which contributes to economic security. One should neither neglect the problems related to discrimination that returnees are exposed to and the lack of access to health care.

In 2007, the UNHCR Regional Representation for South-Eastern Europe in cooperation with relevant authorities and Danish Refugee Council developed the report “Internally Displaced Persons from Kosovo\* in the Region - a re-assessment of interest to return”. The report analyses data collected from studies on assessment of the needs of IDPs from Kosovo and Metohija in Serbia, Montenegro and Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, who submitted application for assistance and return to KiM during the 2009 Registration of Persons Interested in Return. In total, 2,502 family applications (10,074 persons) were registered.

In 2016, 1,294 families (4,152 persons) from Serbia were re-interviewed and 1,223 families (3,974 persons) of them still want to return to their places of previous residence.

The conditions they prioritised:

- 773 families (61%) expressed the need for housing construction;
- 493 families (40%) – employment and access to grants;
- 468 families (38%) – improved level of safety in places of return;
- 249 families (20%) – full freedom of movement;
- 148 families (12%) – resolution of property issues.

Most of the interviewed population expressed their interest in return to places of previous habitual residence - Prizren in the majority of cases. 85% of families stated they have property in Kosovo and Metohija, most of them in places of previous habitual residence; 43% stated their property was destroyed, 28% occupied, 7% damaged and uninhabitable.

Of the total number of people interested in return, Serbs account for 80%, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians 13%, Gorani 4%, and Montenegrins account for 2%.

The report includes a recommendation that local authorities, donors and civil society should give priority to establishment of conditions for sustainable return through property repossession, reconciliation with the host community, access to services, etc.

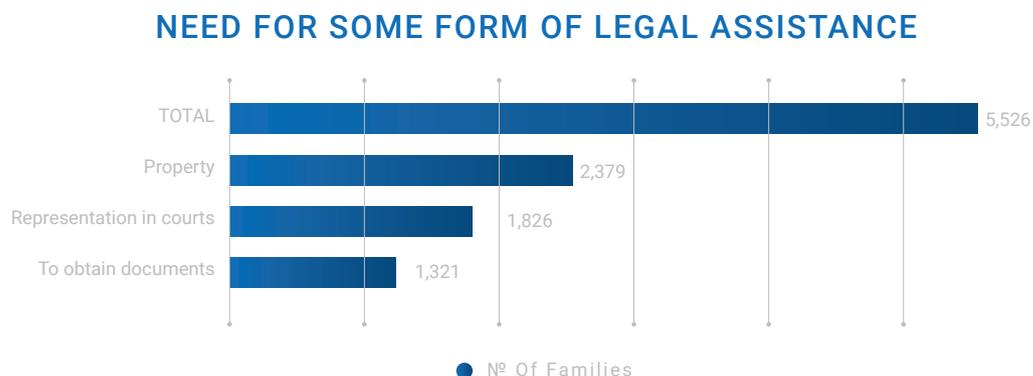
Considering the fact that resistance toward non-Albanian population returning to Kosovo and Metohija exists in 22 locations i.e. 11 municipalities in KiM, additional efforts towards reconciliation, peaceful coexistence and inter-ethnic dialogue are recommended. The report confirms that little has been accomplished in terms of sustainable and safe return to Kosovo and Metohija and that huge problems and challenges still prevail.

## 6. NEED FOR LEGAL ASSISTANCE

Table 6. Need for legal assistance

NEED FOR SOME FORM OF LEGAL ASSISTANCE	NO. OF FAMILIES	%
To obtain documents	1,321	23.91%
Representation in courts	1,826	33.04%
Property	2,379	43.05%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,526</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

When asked whether they need legal assistance to exercise their rights in Kosovo and Metohija, 5,444 IDP families in need (33%) responded positively, and 76% of them stated they needed legal assistance in the form of representation before the courts and resolution of property issues in Kosovo and Metohija.



As of last year, legal aid is provided to IDPs within the EU Delegation-funded project "Promotion and Protection of Property Rights of Internally Displaced Persons, Refugees and Returnees upon Readmission Agreements". The Project represents a continuation of four earlier projects implemented since 2008. The

project objective is based on protection and exercising of basic human rights, in particular property rights of internally displaced persons, through a mechanism of provision of free legal aid. The legal assistance covers provision of legal information, counselling and legal aid i.e. representation of IDPs before relevant authorities, organisations and institutions in Kosovo and Metohija.

## 7. PREFERRED DURABLE SOLUTION

Over the past 18 years, the Republic of Serbia, supported by the international community, implemented massive measures and activities towards reception and care of IDPs from Kosovo and Metohija and ensuring adequate living conditions. Strategic and legal frameworks were developed, as well as the structure and institutions for implementation of the support programmes.

In all, 4,712 different housing solutions were secured:

- 669 village houses were purchased;
- 208 prefabricated houses (the programme started in 2008) were allocated;
- 3,425 construction material packages were distributed;
- 89 housing units were constructed;
- 321 units within the programme of social housing in supportive environment were allocated;
- some 20,000 persons have received a housing solution through the housing programmes.

*Example of a building built through the program of social housing in supportive environment*



*Author: Dejan Milisavljević, SCRM*

The funds for improvement of the housing of IDPs were secured from the budget of the Republic of Serbia, local governments (mostly spent on providing infrastructure), as well as from different European Union-funded programmes, UN agencies and international organisations and foreign governments. Significant funds have been earmarked through the EU Pre-Accession Instrument.

Almost one half of households still need support in the form of construction material packages despite many years of provision thereof.

The reason is to be found in the fact that one of the criteria for receiving this form of assistance is legalised construction, that the land on which the property is built is located in the zone planned for individual housing construction and that the legalisation process has been initiated. After entry into force of the new Law on Planning and Construction and the Law on Legalisation one may realistically expect a significant number of owners of these houses to be eligible for the programmes of construction materials distribution in order to finish the construction they have started.

The need for construction materials was mostly expressed by those residing in Smederevska Palanka, Smederevo, Kraljevo, Kuršumljia, Prokuplje and Kragujevac - 36% of the total number of requirements for this type of assistance. These are mostly the families who started building houses and who need construction material to finish them or who have bought the houses that need to be rehabilitated.

More than 50% of the families who wish to resolve their housing problems by obtaining a housing unit live in Belgrade, followed by Kraljevo and Kragujevac. The families who opt for this kind of accommodation in big urban areas originate mostly from urban areas in Kosovo and Metohija and used to have their own apartments in the places of previous habitual residence. These families opt for a housing solution in cities because of bigger employment opportunities, education of children, etc.

Village houses are a preferred option for families in need living in the area of Novi Sad, Kuršumljia, Prokuplje and Kragujevac (35%), and these are mainly rural population who wish to engage in agricultural production.

Example of houses purchased through the program of purchase of rural houses



Author: Tamara Milanović, trustee for refugees, Novi Sad

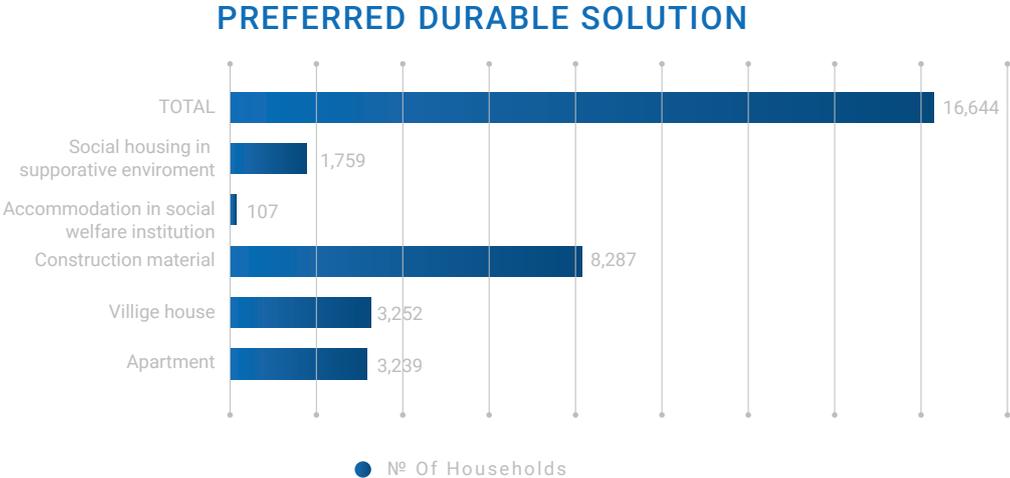
Just below 1% of the households opt for accommodation in social welfare institutions.

Table 7. Preferred durable solution

PREFERRED DURABLE SOLUTION	NO. OF HOUSEHOLDS	%
Apartment	3,239	19.46%
Village house	3,252	19.54%
Construction material	8,287	49.79%
Accommodation in social welfare institution	107	0.64%
Social housing in supportive environment	1,759	10.57%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16,644</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Prefabricated houses, as a form of durable housing solution in the Regional Housing Program aimed at solving the housing needs of the most vulnerable refugees from Croatia and BiH proved to be the most expensive option for beneficiaries because they are required to own a plot intended for individual housing construction, the necessary permits, complete infrastructure, which impose high costs on them.

Consequently, possible housing solutions and the implied costs thereof were presented to the IDPs during the recent update of their needs which resulted in the changes in their preferred solutions relative to the 2017 IDP Needs Assessment.



## 8. ASSESSMENT OF THE NEEDS OF ROMA IDPs IN SERBIA

The displaced persons - members of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities represent a particularly vulnerable category. The internally displaced population includes some 21,000 Roma, accounting for some 10.5% of the entire IDP population. The changes of the legal framework governing issuance of personal documents and residence have allowed for a facilitated access to documentation. The Republic of Serbia adopted the amendments to the Law on Non-Contentious Procedure facilitating registration into birth registries and issuance of the necessary certificates to the persons at risk of statelessness. The introduction of the system of free legal aid will ensure a higher level of legal safety and facilitated access to personal documents through procedures set down in the Law on Non-Contentious Procedure designed to eradicate the phenomenon of “legally invisible persons” by entry into birth registries and securing documentation.

In June 2016, UNHCR published a study “Persons at Risk of Statelessness in Serbia” assessing the progress made in the period 2010-2015. The study showed that the number of legally invisible Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians dropped by over 50% in past four years, meaning that the share of undocumented persons among the Roma population in Serbia has decreased.

The solutions for internally displaced Roma from Kosovo and Metohija, many of whom do not plan to return, are being implemented through programmes for improvement of living conditions of IDPs, including Roma. In all, 8.8% of Roma IDPs expressed their wish to return to Kosovo and Metohija in the 2011 IDP Needs Assessment. This percentage dropped significantly - to 2.4% - during the 2014 Needs Assessment (S. Cvejić, “Assessment of the Needs of Roma IDPs in Serbia”, 2014). The low percentage of persons willing to return is a consequence of their fear from discrimination upon return, security situation and potentially better living conditions in Serbia (S. Cvejić, “Assessment of the Needs of Roma IDPs in Serbia”, 2014).

As mentioned above and evidenced by numerous surveys, Roma IDPs are in a very difficult situation and live in far worse conditions than the majority population, other internally displaced persons, and even worse compared to the domicile Roma in Serbia.

Today, 1,435 internally displaced Roma families in need (10,188 persons) live in Serbia.

The majority of the displaced persons from Kosovo and Metohija settled in Central and Southern Serbia, with a smaller number, mostly Roma, in Vojvodina and Belgrade. Therefore, one may conclude that Roma IDPs tend to follow the territorial distribution of domicile Roma. Interestingly, Roma represent as many as 45.3% of the displaced persons in Vojvodina. This may be explained by higher potential for the typical Roma income-generating activities (agriculture, collection and trade of secondary raw materials, etc.) in the areas such as Novi Sad (where 27.4% of Roma IDPs settled), Belgrade (28.7%) and Zrenjanin (9.1%).



Author: from the Internet

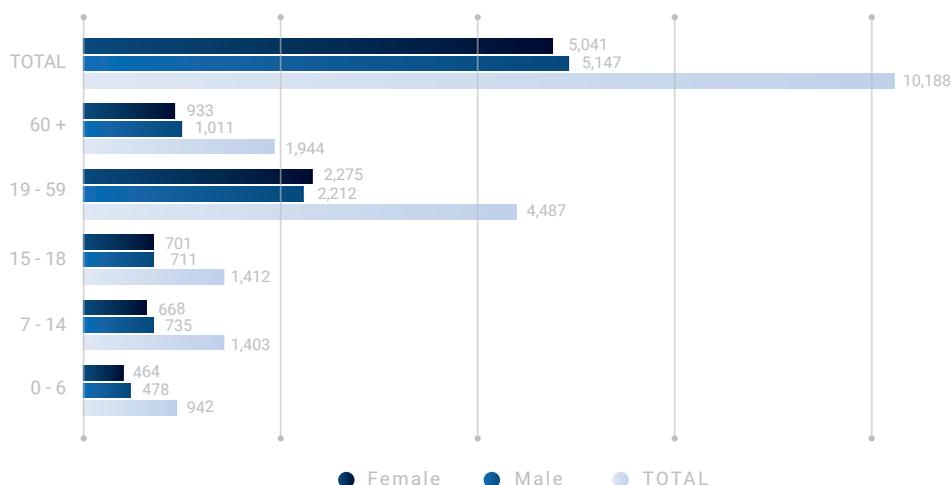
## 8.1 AGE AND GENDER STRUCTURE

Table 8.1 Age and gender structure of Roma IDPs in Serbia

AGE	MALE	%	FEMALE	%	TOTAL	%
0 - 6	478	4.69%	464	4.55%	942	9.25%
7 - 14	735	7.21%	668	6.56%	1,403	13.77%
15 - 18	711	6.98%	701	6.88%	1,412	13.86%
19 - 59	2,212	21.71%	2,275	22.33%	4,487	44.04%
60+	1,011	9.92%	933	9.16%	1,944	19.08%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,147</b>	<b>50.52%</b>	<b>5,041</b>	<b>49.48%</b>	<b>10,188</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

The average age of Roma IDPs in need is 33.37. Roma IDPs households are young. The above table shows that men represent just over 50% of the total number of Roma IDPs in need (50.52%). The biggest number of persons are in the age cohort 19-59, meaning they are at the work age. Notably, the children of Roma IDPs in need aged 0-6 constitute 23.6% of the total IDP population in need. Also, 25.14% of the total internally displaced population are children aged 7-14.

### AGE AND GENDER STRUCTURE



## 8.2 SIZE OF HOUSEHOLDS

The average size of Roma households in need is 7.1 members - considerably higher than the average non-Roma IDP households in need (4.12 members), as compared to the average size of domicile households in the Republic of Serbia which is 2.88 members (according to the 2011 census). Among the internally displaced Roma in need, households with seven and more members are the most numerous, with young members – children – being predominant. There are almost no single-headed households, as the Roma households traditionally live together in multi-generational families.

*Internally displaced Roma family in need*



Author: Ismet Ademovsi, trustee for refugees, Beočin

## 8.3 EDUCATION

*Literacy is the main indicator of a nation's education level.*

The share of illiterate persons in the total Roma population dropped from 19.6% to 15.1% in the period between the two registrations. Notwithstanding this decrease, Roma still remain significantly above the national illiteracy average in the Republic of Serbia - 2%. In terms of the geographic distribution of illiterate persons in Serbia, there are no significant differences, because Roma represent an ethnic community with the largest share of illiterate members.

There are more illiterate women among the Roma. In 2011, illiterate women accounted for 69.0%, while men accounted for 31.0% of the total number of illiterate Roma. There are several factors causing a higher rate of illiteracy among Roma women compared to Roma men, such as awareness of the importance of the education in general as well as the role of women in the family.

A high percentage of Roma certainly contributes to the large number of IDPs without primary education. They are characterised by high illiteracy rates, and the tendency for smaller number of them to attend schools and attain the adequate level of education that would ensure better access to employment opportunities. The percentage of IDP Roma in need without primary school or with no school at all is almost 53.4% as compared to 57% in 2011. Only 32.4% of Roma IDPs completed primary school. These values have a significant impact on the unemployment rate.

Relative to the general population in Serbia, the education level of Roma differs significantly. One in five Roma, compared to one in 37 inhabitants of Serbia older than 14, has no education, while over one third of Roma (34.2% compared to 10.9% of the general population) has not completed primary education. Approximately one third of Roma (33.3% compared to 20.8% for Serbia) has completed primary education, while 11.5% of Roma has completed secondary education (48.9% for Serbia). Significant differences are noted when it comes to the share of Roma and general population of Serbia graduated from colleges and universities (0.7% and 16.2% respectively).

The main objective of the project Tools for Preventing Dropout of Roma Students from the Education System, implemented by the Centre for Social Policy and supported by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, Task Force on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction of the Government

of the Republic of Serbia and Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities funded by the European Union through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights is to decrease dropout and early school leaving of children, particularly Roma children and returnees upon readmission from EU Member States. The project reviewed the existing responses provided by the local institutions to preventing dropout from the education system and developed an advanced community early warning and response system for prevention of dropout.

Although the dropout rate among the entire school-age population in Serbia is not high, there is an evident vulnerability of students from specific groups, particularly those from poor families. Numerous studies show that dropout presents a very serious and negative phenomenon both for the individuals and the society. On the one hand, dropout decreases the individual's potential to enter the labour market and achieve a satisfactory standard of living. On the other, it leads to countless undesirable social outcomes, such as increased criminality rate, higher social transfers and weakening of the nation's health.

Task Force on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction of the Government of the Republic of Serbia stressed that inclusion of Roma into society is not a challenge for one institution but for the entire Government, non-governmental sector, Roma associations and the European partners. Currently, more than 300 Roma men and women are attending faculties, which was not the case in the past. This evidences the progress made in the domain of education of the Roma.

## **8.4 FINANCIAL AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED ROMA**

IDP Roma are the most vulnerable group in the Republic of Serbia. Having low income, these households are extremely poor. The unemployment rate among the internally displaced Roma is high, one of the reasons being the above mentioned low level of education. They mostly work in the informal sector and hold temporary jobs, traditionally engage in collecting scrap and professions not favoured by the domicile population. Only a small percentage of them engages in other professions.

A large proportion of members of IDP Roma families are dependants – a result of a high share of children in the households. Professor Cvejić's 2014 research states the ratio of dependant and able-bodied members in the domicile Roma households to be more favourable. The share of Roma IDP households with three or more dependant members is 36%, compared to 25% among the domicile Roma. The reverse trend is present when speaking about the working age population i.e. 38% of IDP households with more than two working age persons, relative to 43% among domicile Roma population.

Although the labour market status of all Roma is poor, there are differences between internally displaced Roma and domicile Roma i.e. the position of the internally displaced Roma is more disadvantageous.

The unemployment rate is in the realm of 80% relative to the total number of able-bodied persons, and the employment rate is around 10%. This small number of employed internally displaced Roma mostly work in temporary or seasonal jobs in informal sector. Roma IDPs are in less favourable position compared to domicile Roma even in this respect.

It was already mentioned that all the displaced persons, being the citizens of the Republic of Serbia, are entitled to different forms of social welfare assistance. The key sources of income among the IDP Roma in need are various forms of social benefits provided by the State or local governments. The share of IDP Roma households receiving some kind of social welfare assistance is double the share received by non-Roma internally displaced families in need.

The majority of Roma households receive child allowance and cash benefit.

The findings in this respect have not changed significantly since the 2011 Assessment. Social vulnerability of IDP Roma is extremely high as 87% receive less than RSD 20,000/month, and nearly 50% live under the poverty line with less than RSD 10,000/month. Taking into account the above, the average household with 7.1 members and the number of dependants (pre-school and school children and the elderly), we arrive at the high share of households unable to satisfy their basic needs. This results in their inability to invest in improvement of living conditions, failure to pay the accrued utilities and obligations and therefore to poor living conditions.

## 8.5 HOUSING STATUS

The majority of Roma IDP households in need (more than 90%) live in structures lacking elementary conditions for a normal life and functioning. They often lack water connections, bathrooms, or live in structures not intended for housing. These are frequently auxiliary buildings, garages or substandard facilities. They mostly live in the facilities they do not own, and a very small number of them (52 persons) live in the remaining collective centres. Also, a large portion of this population owns illegally-built structures. Therefore, they do not possess the necessary permits and the documentation required to apply for construction material assistance.

As they cannot solve their housing problems by themselves, and as their successful social integration is impossible without assistance and support of the community, housing solutions may be found in programmes of social housing in supportive environment which target the most vulnerable groups in Serbia that the internally displaced Roma in need are among. In the 2014 Assessment (S. Cvejić), the majority of respondents opted for village houses with gardens (45%) and for social housing in supportive environment (40%).

## 9. RECCOMENDATIONS

### RECCOMENDATION NO. 1

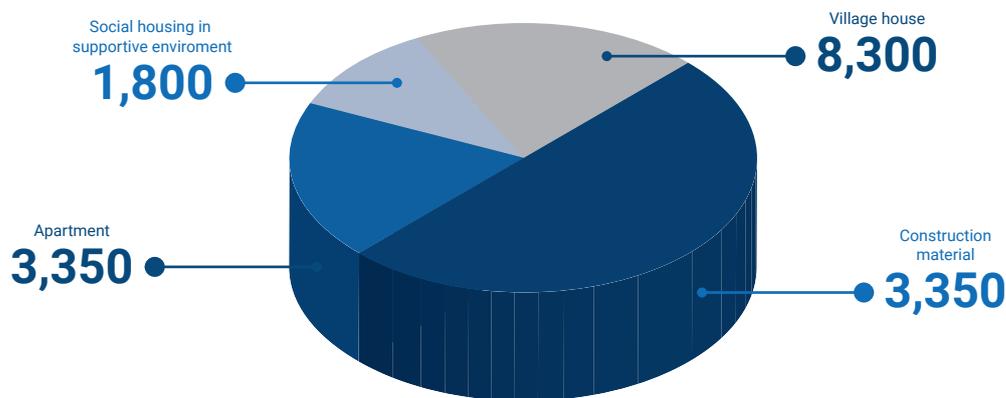
Continue with assistance aimed at solving housing problems of IDPs in need.

- Update local action plans regularly so that they correspond to the situation in the field.
- Allocate assistance to households living in spaces not intended for residence, households with less than 5m<sup>2</sup> per household member and subtenant.
- Continue allocating construction materials to complete initiated construction or rehabilitate uninhabitable houses; secure funds for the construction social housing; secure funds for the construction or purchase of housing units for rent with a possibility of purchase as well as funds for the purchase of village houses with garden.
- Continue endorsing Decisions on Defining Incentives for Implementation of Measures and Activities necessary to achieve defined objectives in the domain of migration management in local government units.
- Develop programmes of durable housing and economic solutions through regional approaches, similar to the programme offered to refugees from former Yugoslavia.

Table 9. Number of needed solutions and funds

TYPE OF SOLUTION	NO. OF NEEDED SOLUTIONS	PRICE BY UNIT (€)	TOTAL (€)
Village house	3,250	11,000	35,750,000
Construction materials	8,300	9,000	74,700,000
Apartment	3,350	38,000	127,300,000
Social housing in supportive environment	1,800	26,500	47,700,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16,700</b>	<b>17,100 (by decree)</b>	<b>285,450,000</b>

## NUMBER OF NEEDED SOLUTIONS



### RECCOMENDATION NO. 2

Provide relevant information to IDPs in need on forms of assistance provided by social welfare institutions (centres for social work).

- Ensure better access to information on options provided by different social welfare programmes. Information should be easily accessible and understandable.

### RECCOMENDATION NO. 3

Empower unemployed IDPs in need through various programmes of economic empowerment, referral to programmes of the National Employment Service and other institutions/organisations as well as programmes implemented by the Commissariat from budget funds.

- Continue with allocation of grants for economic empowerment as this form of support contributes to sustainability. It should be in the form of grants for start-ups.
- Increase access to information by unemployed persons on additional education and retraining programmes, computer trainings, foreign language trainings, etc. offered by the National Employment Service.

## RECCOMENDATION NO. 4

Strengthen activities aimed at providing support to internally displaced persons in property restitution cases in Kosovo and Metohija, taking into account the fact that all the displaced persons have the right to repossession of houses, land and property that was illegally taken away from them or to be fairly compensated in case repossession is not possible.

- Continue with programmes such as “Go and See Visits” to enable IDPs to gain insight into the status of their property in Kosovo and Metohija.
- Strengthen free legal aid programmes offered to IDPs in the procedures of property restitution or compensation of damaged or destroyed property in Kosovo and Metohija.
- Ensure feedback to applicants submitting applications for reconstruction of property and law suits regarding property usurpation.

## RECCOMENDATION NO. 5

Provide additional support to households interested in returning to Kosovo and Metohija through:

- Reconstruction of dwellings for persons interested in return;
- Assistance with employment in order to ensure the sustainable return;
- Access to the acquired rights.

## RECCOMENDATION NO. 6

The internally displaced Roma are the most vulnerable group among the IDP population and should be provided with special support programmes.

- Work with Roma families to enable Roma children to attend school and young Roma to obtain qualifications.
- Empower Roma population economically, in order to reduce the number of families relying on social assistance entirely.
- Map all the locations where Roma IDPs live illegally and without the basic living conditions.
- Coordinate activities of all the stakeholders, including the civil sector engaged in providing solutions.

*The above recommendations focus on improvement of the situation of the most vulnerable categories of the displaced population. The extenuating circumstance is the fact that programmes exist and are currently being implemented, but the resources allocated are not commensurate to the actual needs, so additional sources of funding should be ensured.*

## UNHCR VULNERABILITY CRITERIA

The persons fulfilling one or more below stated vulnerability criteria should be prioritized by the assistance programmes provided they have not benefitted a durable solution thus far:

1. Households whose income is below the poverty line;
2. Households living in undignified conditions (without running water, electricity, sanitary conditions);
3. Mental disability: an adult or a child who is mentally impaired by illness, injury or wounds which hinders the normal day to day activity and needs to be addressed to allow the person to function;
4. Physical disability: an adult or a child who is physically impaired by illness, injury or wounds which hinders the normal day to day activity and needs to be addressed to allow the person to function;
5. Individuals in need of care and treatment of a medical doctor with conditions that may affect the identification of a durable solution;
6. Single parents (one parent with one or more children, all of whom are under the age of 18);
7. Elderly persons (or a couple) who live without family support: male or female, 60 years of age or older, who live in poverty and without family support;
8. Women at risk: women (single mothers, widows, etc.) faced with protection risks particular to their gender, as well as survivors of family violence;
9. Children or adolescents at risk: a child or an adolescent (under the age of 18 living with parent/ caregiver) who is especially at risk (does not attend school, child with special educational needs, child in conflict with the law, minor spouse, etc.);
10. Unaccompanied minors: a child or an adolescent under 18 who is currently not under the care of either parent or other previous legal or customary primary caregiver;
11. Persons not falling into the other categories but who have specific needs within the particular context (e.g. survivors of torture or violence, including family violence and SGBV – whether in the country of origin, during flight or in country of asylum, members of a particular ethnic or religious group, former POWs, etc.).

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