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**HUMANITARIAN AID TO THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA:
PROSPECTS AND GUIDELINES**

HUMANITARIAN AID TO THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA: PROSPECTS AND GUIDELINES

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The EU is the main humanitarian aid donor to the former Yugoslavia. With ECU 1 600 million¹ (including ECU 1 070 million in Echo-sponsored projects), the Union will have provided 66% of all international assistance since the start of the crisis.

This unprecedented show of solidarity will have to continue in the coming months and doubtless well beyond next year since neither the general cease-fire nor the subsequent entry into force of the peace agreements now being negotiated will lead to any noticeable drop in humanitarian needs in the short term. In fact, major population movements caused by recent military operations have affected the whole region and could even continue once the peace agreements are in place.

- 1.2 Humanitarian activities in the former Yugoslavia are now on a scale never before seen in Europe. In the four or more years since fighting began, international aid for the millions of refugees and displaced people in the region has virtually become a fact of life for many.

Although the peace process will quickly help solve logistical problems caused by the conflict (the access and safety of humanitarian convoys, misuse of aid, etc), the repatriation and resettlement of this mass of refugees and displaced people will be very gradual, as will their return to normal life.

- 1.3 As a result, humanitarian aid needs to be fine-tuned in order to take the fullest possible account of:

- the pressing needs brought on by the approach of winter and recent population movements and
- changes that a peace agreement will bring.

In the short term, it is important to set out the priorities for current aid operations, especially the need to meet emergency requirements over the winter months. Humanitarian action should be constantly assessed and reviewed so that forms of assistance offering more sustainable results can gradually be brought in.

In order to accommodate new developments and the prospect of a peace accord, there are two clear areas on which such action should focus. The first is the bridge between an emergency situation and rehabilitation/reconstruction. The second is the repatriation and resettlement of refugees and displaced people.

¹ Including bilateral contributions which the Commission knows about.

2. Summary of the current humanitarian situation in the former Yugoslavia

The number of people requiring assistance in the region is now 3 600 000² (for details, see Annex 1). Added to this are a further 850 000 refugees now in other European countries (who will need help with repatriation) and any others who might be displaced as a direct or indirect result of the peace agreements. On the whole, people from the former Yugoslavia will remain very vulnerable even beyond the short term.

Analysis of each republic

2.1 Bosnia-Herzegovina

Despite current peace initiatives and the cease-fire agreements, September and October saw some of the most bloody and bitter fighting of the war, particularly in the north-west (Bihac), north-east (Posavina-Brcko corridor) and centre (Mount Ozren-Doboj).

In human terms, this has led to a constant stream of movement (around 500 000 people) in ever-worsening conditions, with the vulnerable - the elderly, handicapped and young - settling in war-torn towns which were retaken during the latest fighting and/or were situated on the front line. Hundreds of thousands of people have been displaced and/or forcibly removed and remain isolated, without adequate shelter or services and cut off from networks supplying basic provisions.

Such is the hardship endured by Muslim minorities expelled from northern Bosnia and some refugees from Zepa and Srebrenica. Particular concern is mounting for the plight of 170 000 people displaced from around Banja Luka and minority groups forced out of Doboj (northern Bosnia) and now staying in devastated towns retaken during the latest Croat-Bosnian offensives.

Those displaced from either side of the front line are as a rule extremely vulnerable.

Furthermore, despite gradual improvements in Sarajevo and eastern Bosnia (Gorazde), assistance programmes in certain "neglected" sectors have now become a priority. This is particularly true of health care, in view of the spread of epidemics and illness caused by the general deterioration in living conditions over 42 months of fighting.

The number of people now dependent on humanitarian aid in Bosnia-Herzegovina is 2 774 908 (see Annex 2).

2.2 Croatia

At the height of the crisis, the EU was assisting 750 000 refugees and displaced or vulnerable people in Croatia.

² Based on a recent detailed assessment by an Echo fact-finding mission to Croatia, Bosnia and Serbia-Montenegro, and on contacts with the leading relief agencies (mainly the UNHCR and ICRC).

In May this year, this figure fell to 350 000 as many people no longer had refugee status and social cases were not catered for by the international community from January onwards.

Generally speaking, Croatia's humanitarian situation is among the least pressing of all the republics (owing in part to the international aid response). However, a number of specific problems have emerged in recent months:

- aid recipients in Croatia include refugees from Velika Kladusa (followers of Abdic). Since the first week in August, some 22 000 people fleeing the Bihac pocket have been settling in Kupljensko camp outside Bojnic (former northern sector liberated on 3 August by Croats). The valley in which these refugees find themselves is marshy, the camp unhealthy and living conditions dreadful.
- The Croat authorities do not recognize these people as refugees and are blocking relief convoys to the camp, which they regard as illegal. Instead, they are trying to get the refugees to return home quickly;
- concern has arisen over the Croatian government's practice of forced return. Muslim minorities expelled from northern Bosnia, who sought refuge in Croatia, were made to settle in new land retaken during recent military operations;
- the Zagreb government also recently adopted a decree revoking the refugee status of people from the "liberated territories" and the Federation (22 municipalities in Bosnia-Herzegovina). Around 100 000 people are affected. The measure has since been restricted to refugees from Kupres, Jajce and Drvar ("new territories") and land already under the control of the Federation.

2.3 Serbia-Montenegro

The first wave of refugees in 1992 totalled 380 000 people in number, 80% of whom were housed with families. The number of active refugees³ by the start of this year was still 160 000. Since May, major population movements triggered by recent military operations (Krajina, Croat-Bosnian offensive) have led to the arrival of a further 170 000 displaced people (mainly senior citizens, women and children) being officially registered. Many estimates add ten percent to this figure to take account of men who have crossed the border but have not registered for fear of conscription.

Unlike the previous wave of refugees, only 20% of new arrivals are staying with families while the rest are being put up in collective centres. Most of these people are very poor farmers.

The newly displaced groups have not always followed the authorities' guidelines and most have gone to the richest parts of Vojvodina (110 000) and Belgrade (40 000). Over 10 000 are reported to have stayed in Kosovo.

³ An active refugee is one who has an official document proving his or her status and who is in receipt of humanitarian aid.

The total number of people receiving assistance in Serbia-Montenegro is now 354 000 (see Annex 4).

The embargo on Serbia-Montenegro and the red tape surrounding exemptions, have hindered the operations of many relief agencies.

3. Humanitarian aid guidelines

3.1 Short-term priorities/winter programme

Over the next six winter months, the priority will be helping to keep people alive.

The aid programme which the Commission will draw up shortly should cover the most pressing needs identified and hence will have the following priorities:

- continued provision of food aid (direct action programme in Croatia and Serbia-Montenegro, WFP programme in Serbia-Montenegro and Bosnia-Herzegovina) and the supply of dietary supplements for children and vulnerable groups;
- the continuation of vital medical and health programmes, particularly those supporting health facilities in Bosnia-Herzegovina;
- the continuation of psycho-social programmes, mainly through education and social reintegration programmes for those mentally scarred by the war;
- specific clothing programmes for winter;
- fuel programmes;
- provision of the logistical means needed to run the above programmes;
- continued support for basic emergency rehabilitation activities and specific shelter programmes for new refugees and displaced people.

3.2 Medium-term prospects

As a result of the long-drawn-out fighting, which has inflicted considerable material and psychological damage, aid recipients are extremely vulnerable and will remain so for quite some time. Consequently, the transition from dependence on aid to autonomy will require continued outside support as incomes and public resources, especially in Bosnia-Herzegovina, are not even adequate to meet basic needs.

The most tangible sign of the success of the humanitarian aid effort is probably the fact that few people have died for want of basic necessities. This is despite the harshness of the war and the collapse of the supply system and of social services in Bosnia. Certain vital parts of the infrastructure, such as water distribution networks, power stations and other essential services have been destroyed. Poor transport links and problems in channelling the aid have meant that those in need have had to have assistance and care brought to them. Over the past four years, humanitarian aid activities have catered to these needs accordingly.

Breaking this dependence on humanitarian aid will require a prolonged transition phase, which will not, however, be able to rely on existing institutions. This is true for all vital sectors, particularly health care. Quite which structures will have to provide care once the war is over is still largely uncertain and this means that reduced dependence on aid will require measures not only to make the recipient population self-sufficient but also to increase the scope of responsibility of the authorities.

3.3 The bridge between the crisis phase and rehabilitation

Humanitarian aid will gradually shift - inasmuch as it can - to include support programmes designed to wean people off aid and bridge the gap between the emergency phase and the start of rehabilitation and reconstruction. As regards the resettlement of displaced people, more especially, action should be concentrated on making the reintegration process easier, with psycho-social and education programmes, emergency rehabilitation (mainly for water and electricity), assistance for primary health care services. A particular effort should be made to encourage the skilled workforce to return to limit the effects of the brain drain on the resumption of socio-economic activities.

4. Repatriation and resettlement

4.1 Domestic situation

Voluntary repatriation is still the only desirable situation to the problem of refugees and displaced people. It should be planned and organized so as to protect the basic safety and dignity of those returning and should only be considered where there is a genuine chance of resettlement.

As things stand, there is no immediate possibility of an active, smooth repatriation operation. Issues relating to reintegration, the way in which the Geneva Convention should be applied to planned voluntary returns and property rights are all still fraught with uncertainty. For all these questions, which will probably be dealt with in the peace agreements, regular talks with national and local authorities in the republics concerned will be vital.

The repatriation-resettlement issue will also have strong repercussions on the fabric and democratic structures of the republics involved, especially in the run-up to free and representative elections (the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina will prove particularly difficult in this respect⁴).

4.2 Situation in Europe

⁴ In 1991, 17.3% of Bosnians were Catholic Croats, 31.3% Orthodox Serbs and 43.3% Muslims. One of the peculiarities of this ethnic mosaic is that the Muslims generally lived in the most densely populated urban areas and were only in the majority in a third of the country.

Whether a refugee will return home voluntarily depends very much in Bosnia on who controls a particular area.

The figure for the number of refugees outside the former Yugoslavia (based on asylum requests) is very rough. Even today, Bosnian refugees are still being taken in (following a recent UNHCR appeal). The numbers for European countries are as follows:

(TP = temporary protection)

Albania	3-5 000	New Zealand	200 (TP)
Austria	72-80 000	Norway	16-19 300 (TP)
Belgium	5 654 (TP)	Poland	1 000 (TP)
Canada	12 000	Slovakia	2 021 (TP)
Czech Republic	6 730	Spain	1 500 (TP)
Denmark	17 600-20 000	Sweden	48-115 000 (TP)
Finland	2 000	Switzerland	32 528 (TP)
France	29 000 (TP)	Turkey	18-30 000
Germany	350 000 (TP)	United Kingdom	5 990-8 000 (TP)
Hungary	7-35 000 (TP)	FYROM	15 000
Italy	54 600 (TP)	Luxembourg	12 000 (TP)
Netherlands	800-22 000 (TP)	Slovenia	27 000

UNHCR and ICRC estimates put the number of Bosnian refugees in Europe at 879 000.

The gradual and controlled return of these refugees should not be considered until the end of next winter so as not to add repatriation problems to the emergency situation over the next six months.

4.3 *Humanitarian law and humanitarian policy criteria*

In accordance with the principles of independence, impartiality and neutrality laid down in international humanitarian law, the Union's action will not be subject to political conditionality. This does not prevent the EU from setting out specific policy guidelines for the award of funding as is the case for programmes to help with the return and repatriation of refugees. Such programmes should in no way be seen as offering encouragement for the artificial regrouping of local communities along ethnic or religious dividing lines.

Humanitarian aid will focus on meeting the priority needs of vulnerable groups, depending on how vulnerable they are. It will primarily be targeted at the most needy and will not be based on the number of beneficiaries identified but on a precise assessment of the needs of each group in each area.

However, the Union should demand completely unfettered access for humanitarian aid from all parties to the peace agreements.

5. Review of humanitarian aid structures

Whatever political aid coordination machinery is in place, it will still be vital in the years ahead for the UNHCR to remain involved as lead agency on the spot for all matters relating to refugees and displaced people. The ICRC will also play its part in protection.

As for Community aid, a review is needed of the role of the Zagreb-based European Community Task Force (ECTF), set up on the initiative of the Birmingham European Council in 1992 to provide the UNHCR with logistical help. Its original remit to help tackle access problems in Bosnia-Herzegovina should now be reviewed in the light of the changing situation and the level of operating costs it has run up so that its regional intervention structures can be slimmed down.

Echo will have to maintain its presence in the region⁵ to guarantee continued monitoring and evaluation of the programmes financed, and ensure that the Union's efforts retain a high profile.

6. Financial aspects

6.1 The general budget for 1995 included ECU 102.7 million in commitments for Article B7-214 (Humanitarian aid for the countries of Central and Eastern Europe).

On 24 July, the Commission secured an extra ECU 30 million from the emergency aid reserve.

The Commission asked the budgetary authority for a further ECU 100 million in commitment appropriations to meet humanitarian aid needs this coming winter.

6.2 The continuation of the crisis over recent years has enabled some emergency costs to be streamlined as it was possible to plan certain operations in advance. The Community contribution fell from ECU 400 million in 1993 to ECU 266 million last year and should drop again this year to ECU 230 million.⁶

It will only be possible to plan next year's operations accurately once the peace agreements have been signed and begun to be implemented and after trends in the humanitarian aid situation and prospects for action have been assessed.

The general budget has earmarked ECU 112 million under Article B7-214 for next year.

Given the very high number of refugees and displaced people needing help (see Annexes), the Commission currently believes that humanitarian aid requirements next year will probably be at least as high as they have been this year.

⁵ Currently in Croatia (as part of the ECTF), with technical assistance offices in Bosnia and Serbia-Montenegro.

⁶ This figure includes the decision now being adopted for ECU 110 million from the emergency reserve.

Répartition géographique des
Bénéficiaires de l'Aide Humanitaire
en ex-Yougoslavie



12-Oct-95

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République		Région		Bénéficiaires							
				Ancien		Nouveaux		Total		Total	
				C.C.	F.H.	C.C.	F.H.	C.C.	F.H.	Général	
F.R.Y.	Serbie centrale	4,440	52,890	3,150	71,085	7,590	123,975	131,565			
	Vojvodina	1,450	43,360	10,810	109,100	12,260	152,460	164,720			
	Serbie de l'est	4,467	12,590	21,087	1,334	25,554	13,924	39,478			
	Kosovo	270	3,470	6,010		6,280	3,470	9,750			
	Monténégro	1,460	21,920	53	2,141	1,513	24,061	25,574			
	Total:	12,087	134,230	41,110	183,660	53,197	317,890	371,087			
Croatie	Krajina				21,000	0	21,000	21,000			
	Kuplensko			23,000		23,000	0	23,000			
	Zagreb, Istrie, Slavonie	52,523	265,376		6,000	52,523	271,376	323,899			
	Dalmatie	28,000	38,524			28,000	38,524	66,524			
	Total:	80,523	303,900	23,000	27,000	103,523	330,900	434,423			
Bosnie Herzégovine		DP	WA	DP	WA	DP	WA				
	Bihac	45,337	122,437	11,000		56,337	122,437	178,774			
	B-H du sud (Mostar-Neretv)	114,324	190,497			114,324	190,497	304,821			
	Zenica	348,000	263,000	25,000		373,000	263,000	636,000			
	Tuzla	237,000	193,000	34,000	1,000	271,000	194,000	465,000			
	Sarajevo	139,857	300,338	400		140,257	300,338	440,595			
	Bosnie Est (Gorazde inclus)	207,314	181,804			207,314	181,804	389,118			
	Banja Luka	183,000	50,000	80,300	47,300	263,300	97,300	360,600			
Total:	1,274,832	1,301,076	150,700	48,300	1,425,532	1,349,376	2,774,908				
Slovenie		2,000	22,000			2,000	22,000	24,000			
FYROM		1,000	3,000			1,000	3,000	4,000			
TOTAL		1,370,442	1,764,206	214,810	258,960	1,585,252	2,023,166	3,608,418			

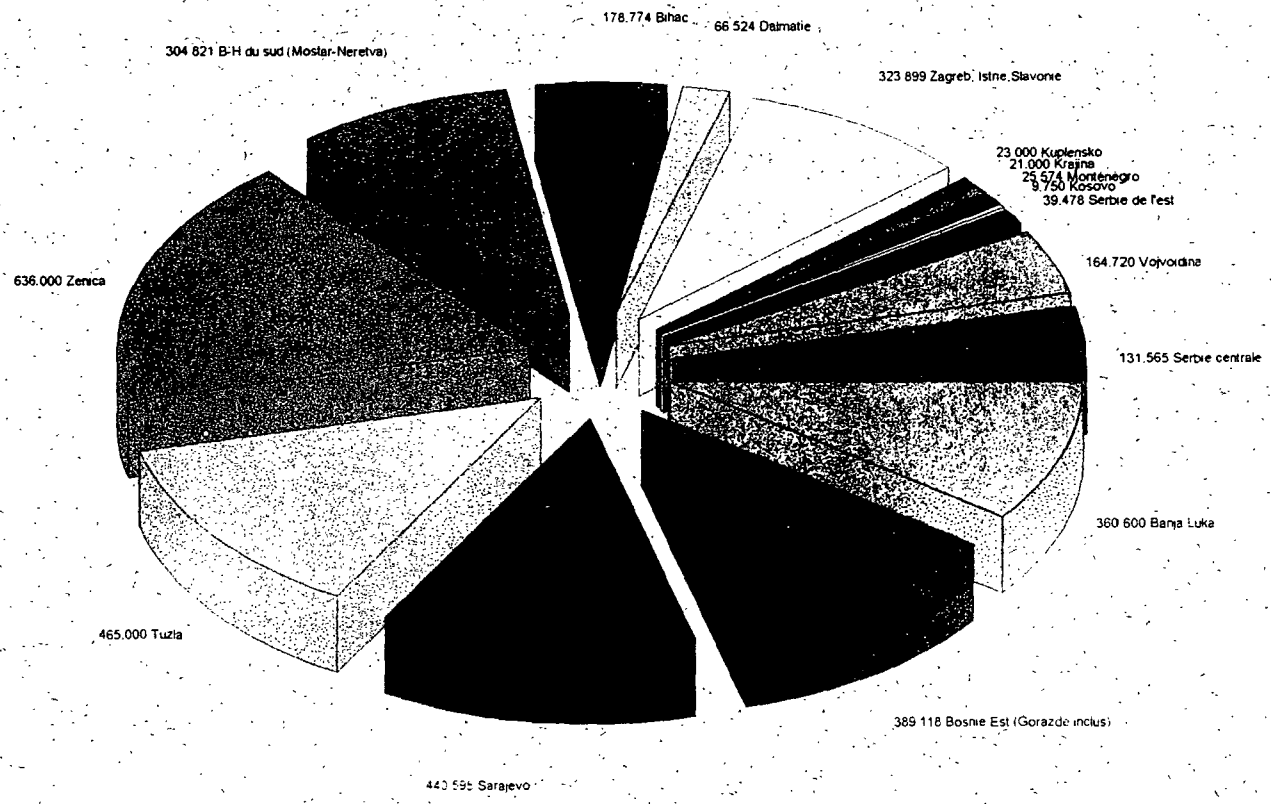
DP: Personnes déplacées

WA: Affectées par la guerre

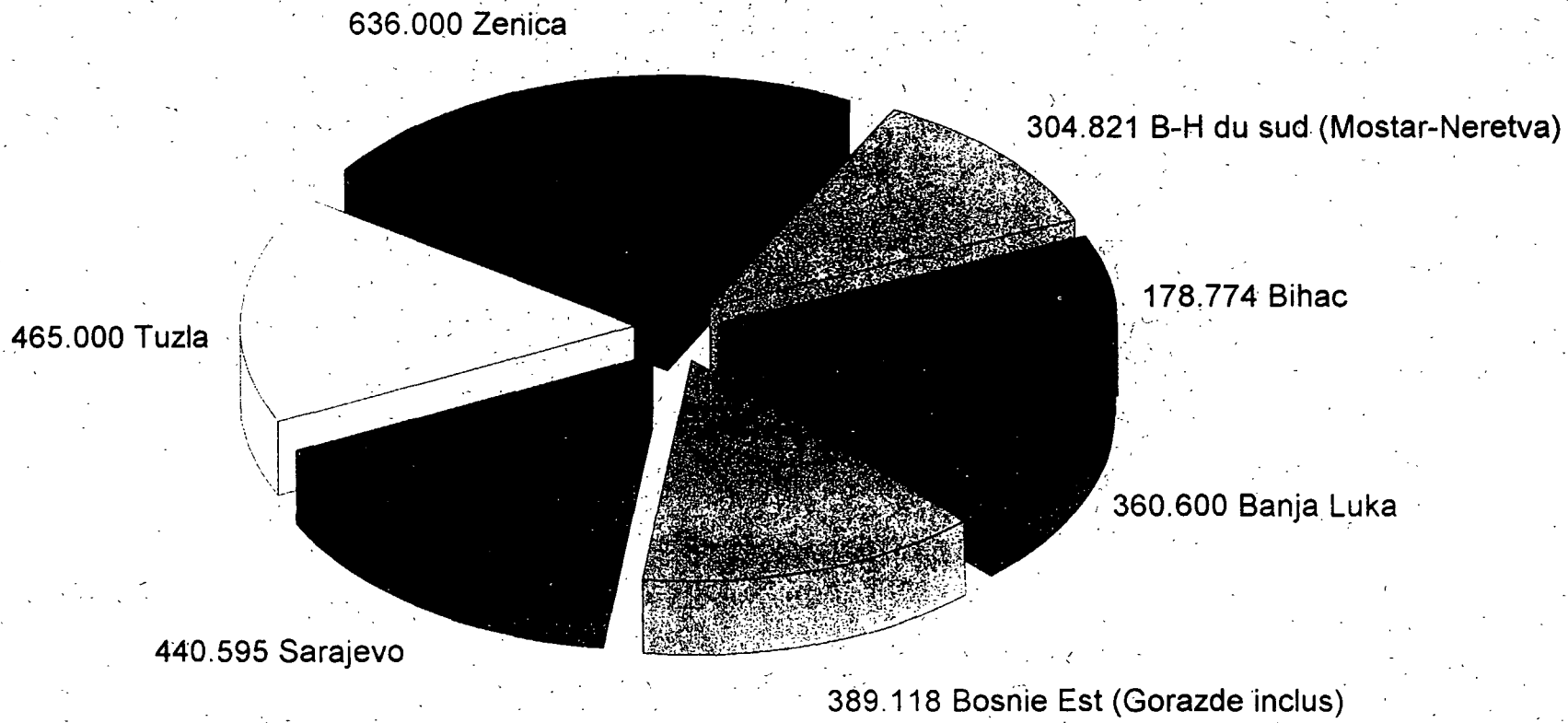
CC: vivant en centres collectifs

FH: vivant dans des familles hôtes

Répartition des Bénéficiaires de l'aide Humanitaire
en ex-YOUGOSLAVIE



Bénéficiaires de l'aide en BOSNIE HERZEGOVINE

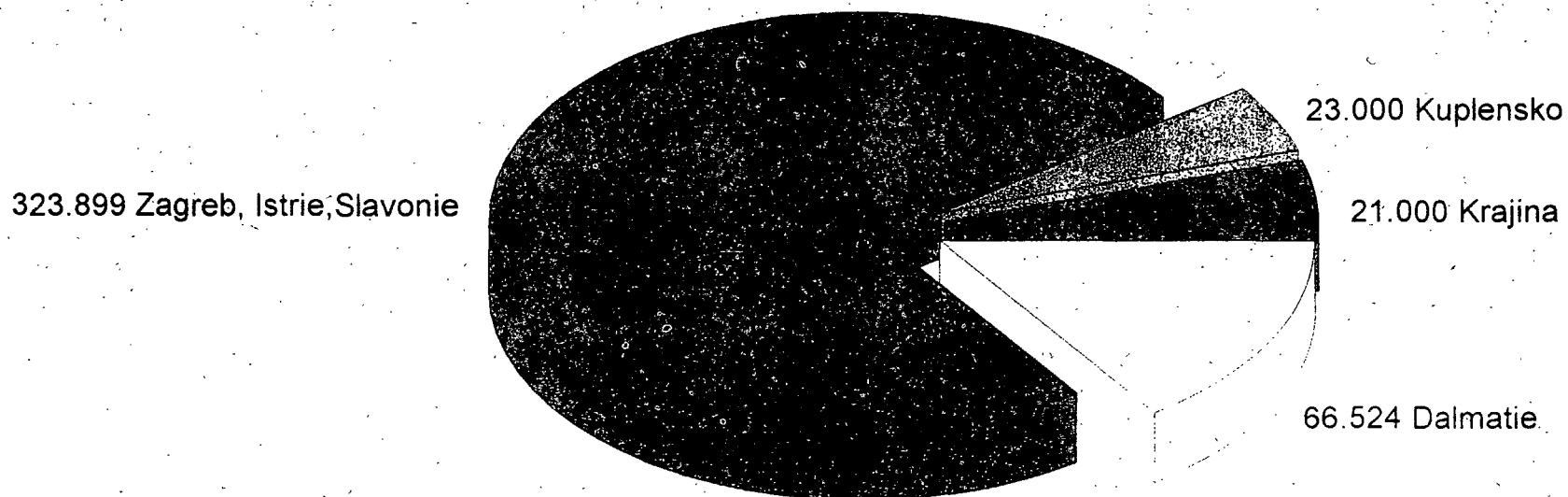


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Déplacés et assistés en Bosnie-Herzégovine

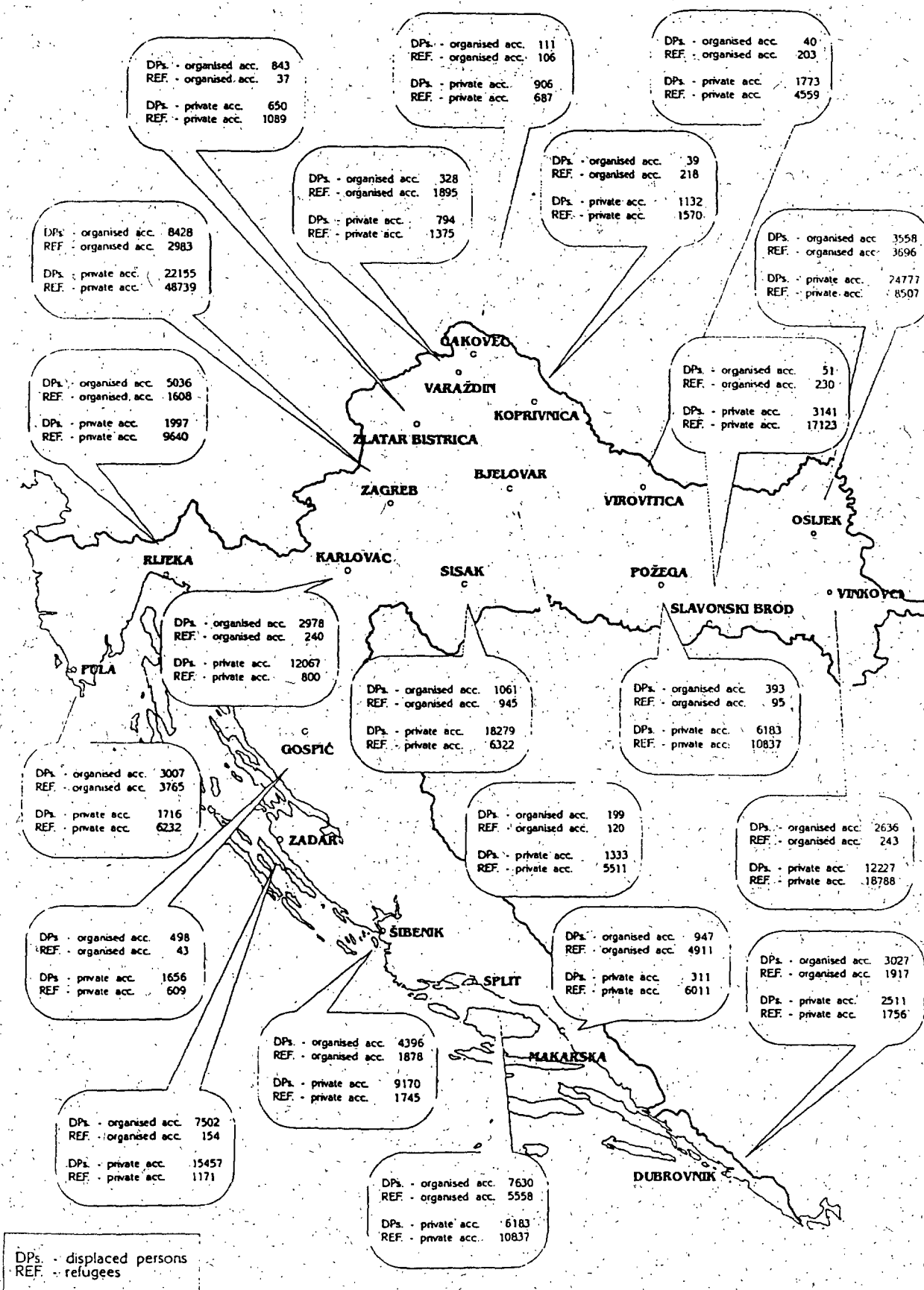


Bénéficiaires de l'aide en CROATIE

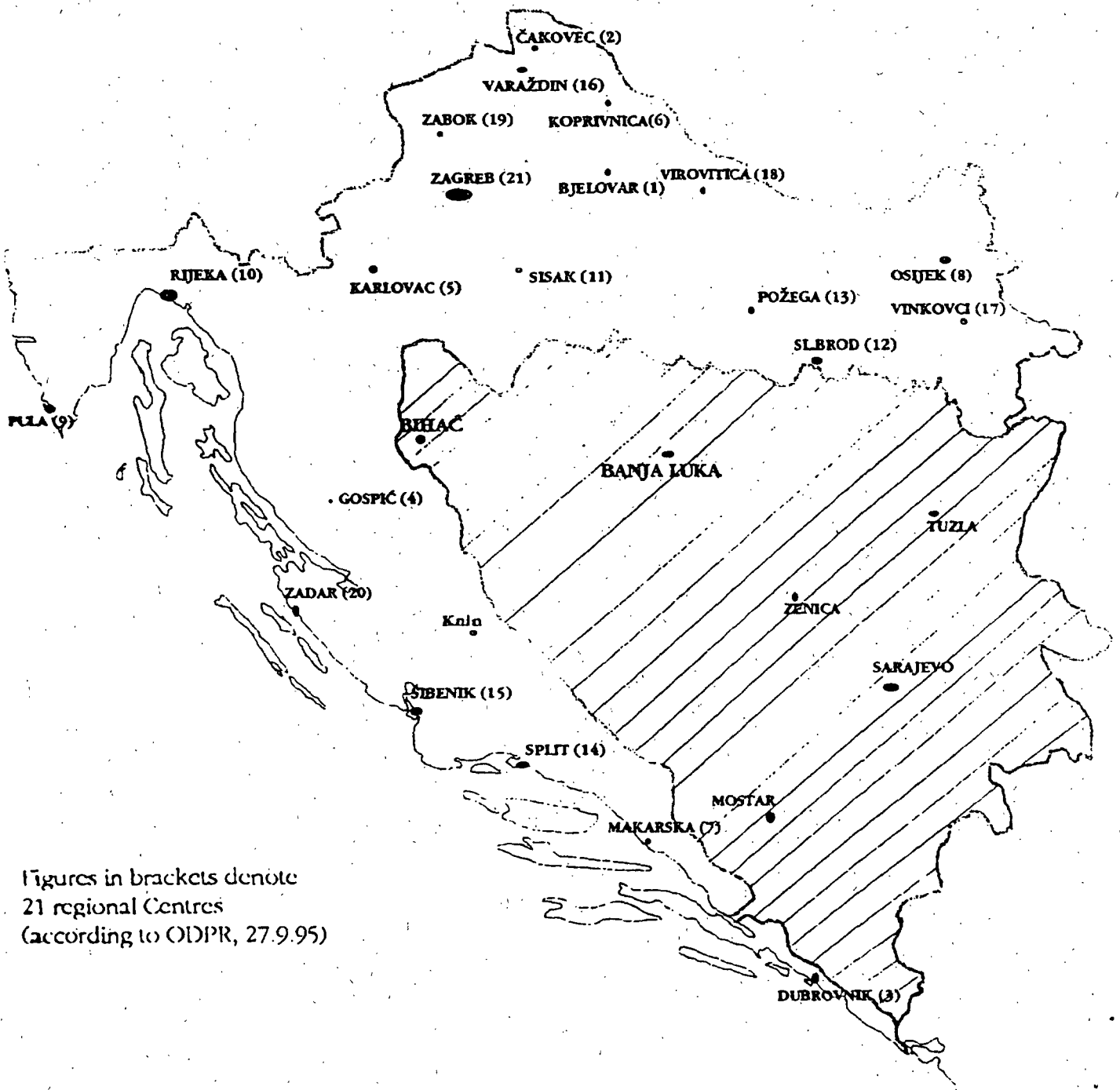


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Réfugiés et déplacés en Croatie

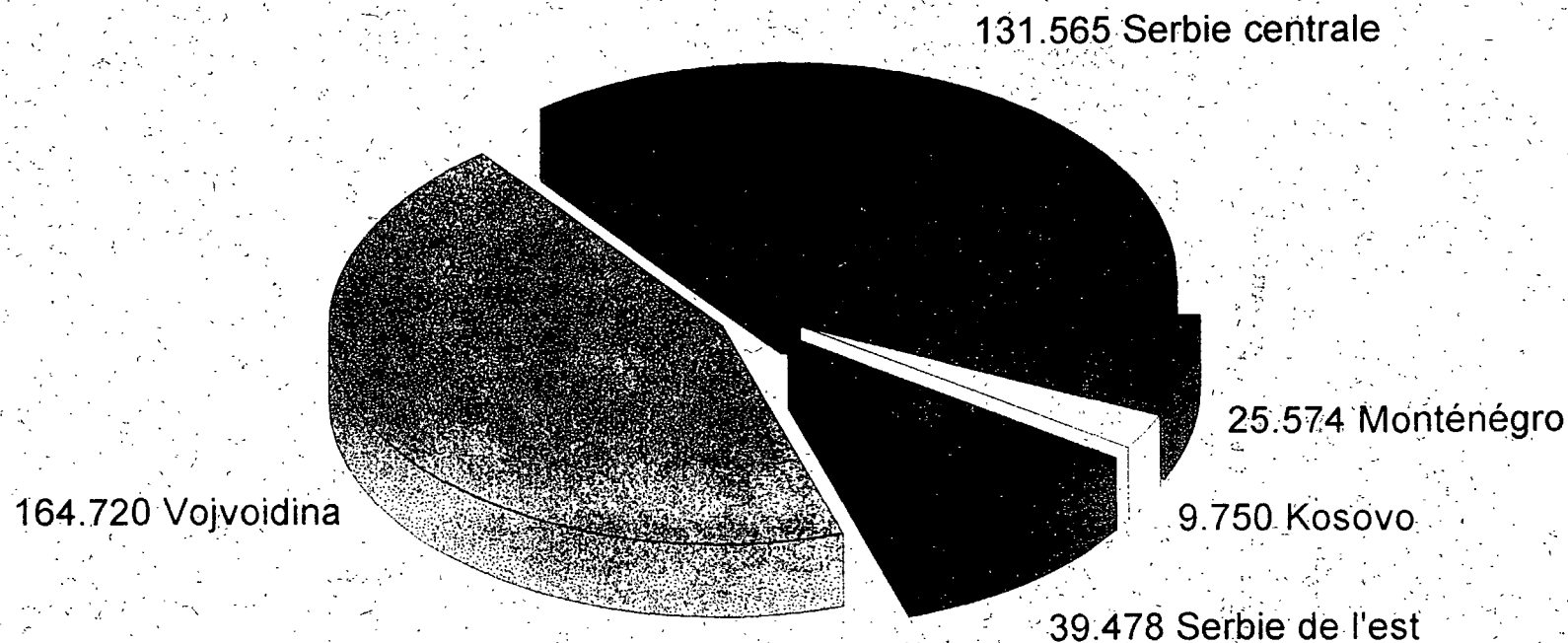


Réfugiés et déplacés en Croatie



Figures in brackets denote
21 regional Centres
(according to ODP, 27.9.95)

Bénéficiaires de l'aide en SERBIE-MONTENEGRO

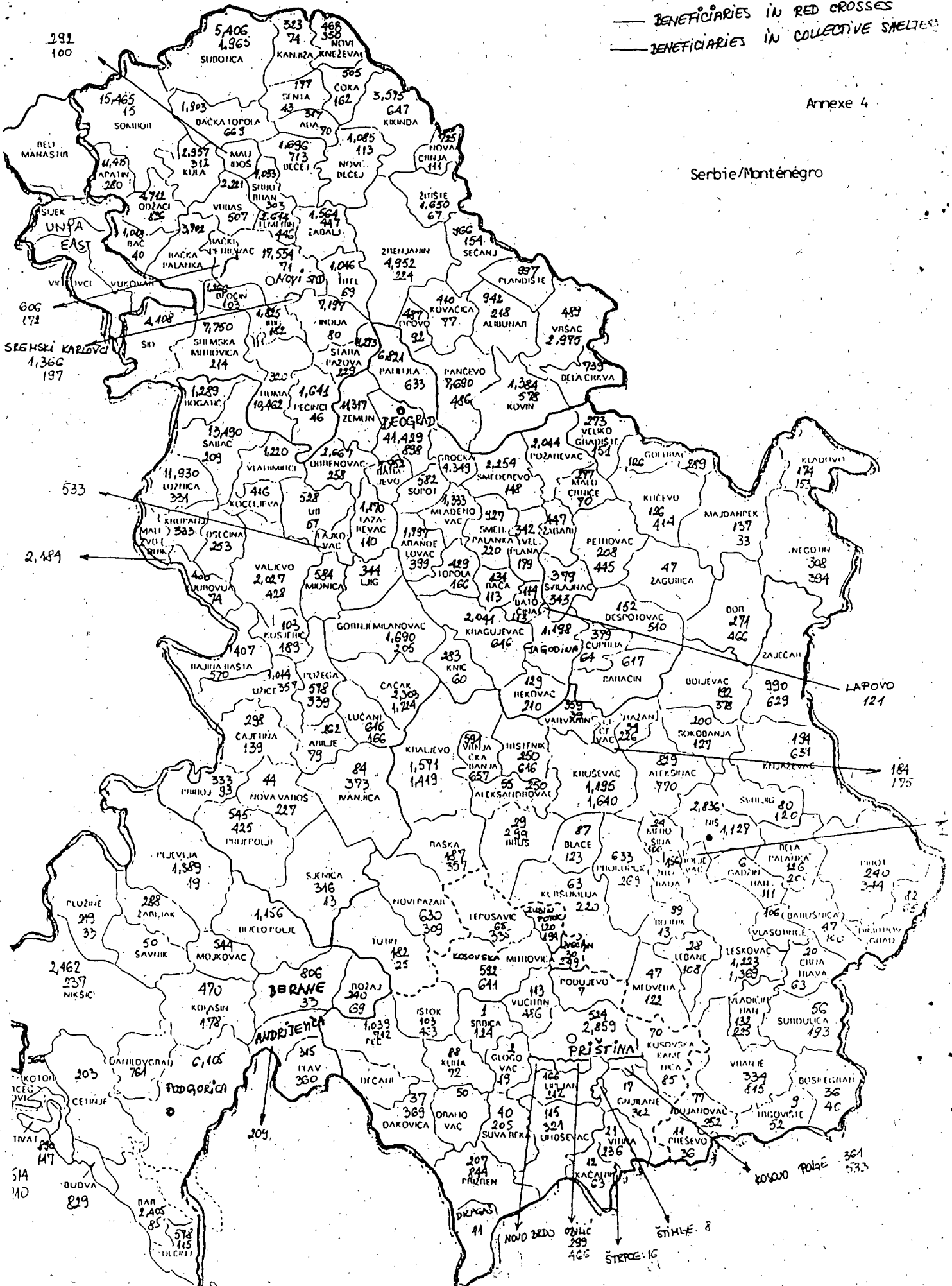


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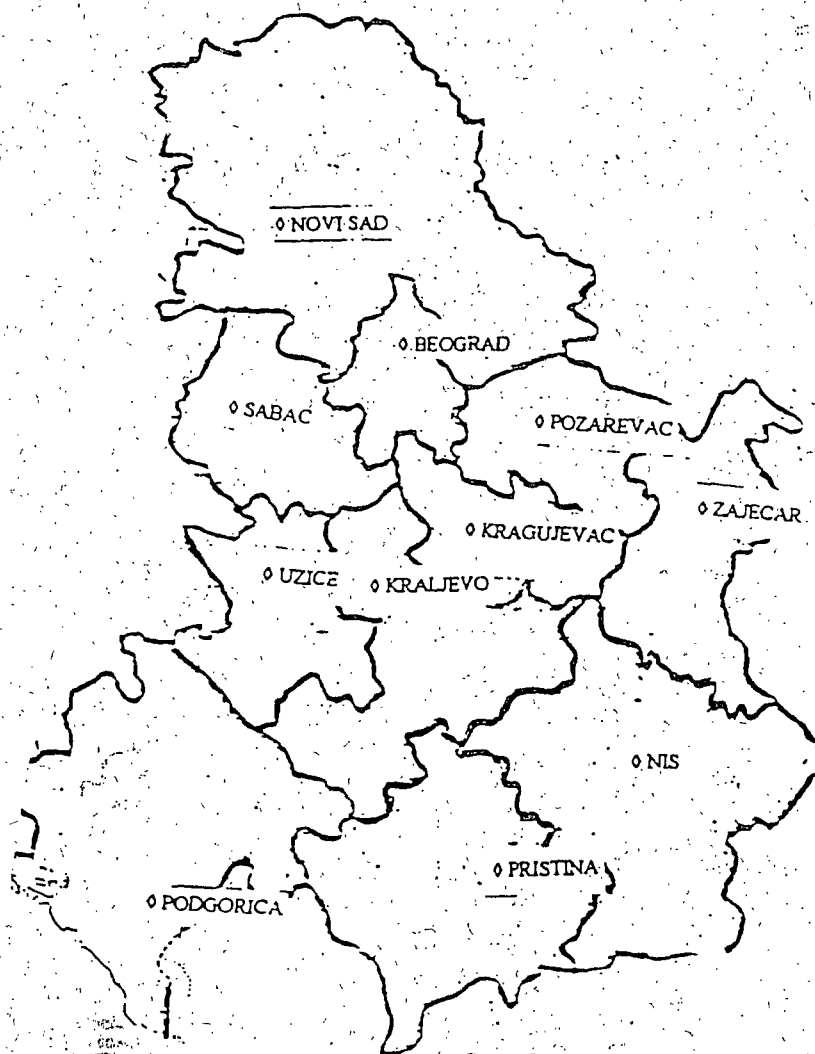
- BENEFICIARIES IN RED CROSSES
- BENEFICIARIES IN COLLECTIVE SHELTERS

Annexe 4

Serbie/Monténégro



Réfugiés et déplacés en Serbie/Monténégro



Old and New Refugee Numbers
by Red Crosses and Collective Shelters

	Old number of RC refugees	New RC arrivals	Sub Total	Old Collective Shelter Nbrs.	New CS arrivals	Sub Total	Grand Total
Nis							
28 opštinas	4207	3273	7480	3168	6044	9212	16692
Kraljevo							
15 opštinas	5750	4374	10124	952	6752	7734	17858
Zajecar							
8 opštinas	869	1597	2466	839	2002	2891	5357
Kosovo							
29 opštinas	2379	1739	4118	273	9475	9748	13866
Uzice							
10 opštinas	2855	772	3627	2066	3612	5678	9305
Vojvodina							
48 opštinas	43366	111128	154494	698	1555	2253	156747
Podgorica							
27 opštinas	21918	2169	24087	1462	146	1608	25695
BG Urban							
16 opštinas	31351	45944	77295	1863	0	1863	79158
BG Rural							
Sabac							
14 opštinas	16273	19319	35592	608	15	623	36215
Kragujevac							
13 opštinas	3268	4640	7908	782	4172	4954	12862
Pozarevac							
11 opštinas	1997	5253	7250	569	2058	2627	9877

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