



An internally displaced girl preparing food in a makeshift kitchen in a collective centre in Baku, Azerbaijan. (Photo: Barbara Lalorde, March 2011)

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## Internal displacement in **Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia**

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Up to 2.5 million people were displaced at the end of 2011 in Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia due to conflict, human rights violations or generalised violence. They made up nearly ten per cent of the global internally displaced population.

Most of Europe's IDPs had been living in protracted displacement for 18 years or more by 2011. The majority had been displaced by conflict in the 1990s during the break-up of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, or by conflict between Turkish government forces and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (*Parti Karkerani Kurdistan* or PKK). Turkey had the highest number of IDPs, while Azerbaijan, Cyprus, Georgia and Serbia had the highest percentage relative to their populations.

### New movements in 2011

In the ten years to 2011, the number of IDPs gradually decreased in Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, the Russian Federation and Serbia. The annual falls remained modest as most IDPs who did not return relatively soon after the displacement became trapped in protracted displacement; in Azerbaijan, Cyprus, Georgia, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan their numbers stayed more or less the same.

According to this pattern, the number of IDPs remained the same or decreased slightly in countries throughout the region in 2011. Only in Kyrgyzstan was there a significant

fall, but this reflected the results of a new survey of people displaced by inter-communal violence in mid-2010, most of whom had already returned to their places of origin before the start of 2011.

## Protection concerns

The majority of IDPs in the region were dispersed among relatives or friends, or in housing that they rented, owned or occupied informally. Isolated surveys of IDPs in such situations in Azerbaijan, Turkey, Georgia and the Russian Federation showed that their living spaces tended to be crowded and in poor condition, and their security of tenure limited. The exception was Cyprus, where most IDPs enjoyed adequate housing conditions.

Other IDPs continued to live in gathered settings, including in collective centres in disused public buildings. These centres were never intended for long-term residence, and many were dilapidated, crowded and unhygienic. Georgia and Azerbaijan continued to have the highest number of IDPs in collective centres.

In the Balkans over 10,000 IDPs were still living in collective centres. By 2011, IDPs able to leave these centres had done so, and many of the remaining residents were older people or people with vulnerabilities who were unable to rebuild their lives or livelihoods elsewhere.

IDPs in collective centres, and others occupying other people's housing or land, continued to risk eviction. Some residents of collective centres in the Russian Federation and Georgia were forcibly evicted in 2011.

Many IDPs continued to struggle to access and assert their ownership of the property they had been displaced from. IDPs in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia who had fled from areas to which they could still not return had no access to remedies for their loss of property. In the Russian Federation and Turkey some received compensation, but it was not enough to enable them to recover from the loss.

Significant numbers of IDPs in Azerbaijan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Serbia and the Russian Federation still struggled in 2011 to secure personal documentation. As a result their access to jobs, housing, health care, education, pensions and government assistance was limited.

Across the region, all these challenges meant that IDPs and returned IDPs had few opportunities to become self-sufficient, and many who could access pensions and social benefits continued to depend on them as their main sources of income.

Discrimination faced by displaced members of minorities, and by displaced people who had returned to areas in which they were in a minority, continued to underlie the most stubborn barriers to the resolution of their displacement. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, in Serbia, Croatia, Kosovo, the Russian Federation and Turkey, such discrimination limited their access to housing, jobs, education and health care. Internally displaced Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian (RAE) people were still among the most vulnerable groups in the Balkans in 2011.

In most countries the government had ascribed an official IDP status on which it based access to support. In some countries, IDPs who had not been registered were denied assistance: in Serbia, for example, significant numbers of RAE

people were still unregistered and thus unable to access the support to which they were entitled.

Countries with registration systems took different approaches to the children of IDPs: women in Azerbaijan continued to be unable to pass the status to their children, but in Cyprus a similar discrimination was partially ended in 2011, so that children of internally displaced women with "refugee status" could also access some of the benefits which went with the status. However, they were still not accorded the status or counted as IDPs, unlike the children of men with the status.

While some internally displaced children were effectively excluded from education by prevailing discrimination, others in Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Georgia continued to be educated in segregated schools. Though these may have been originally established to ensure continuity of education in the immediate aftermath of displacement, their continuing separation was increasingly limiting the prospects of students.

There was little notable new information on the breakdown of internally displaced populations by sex: where information was published, women made up about 50 per cent of IDPs. Nor was there new information on the incidence of gender-based violence within internally displaced communities.

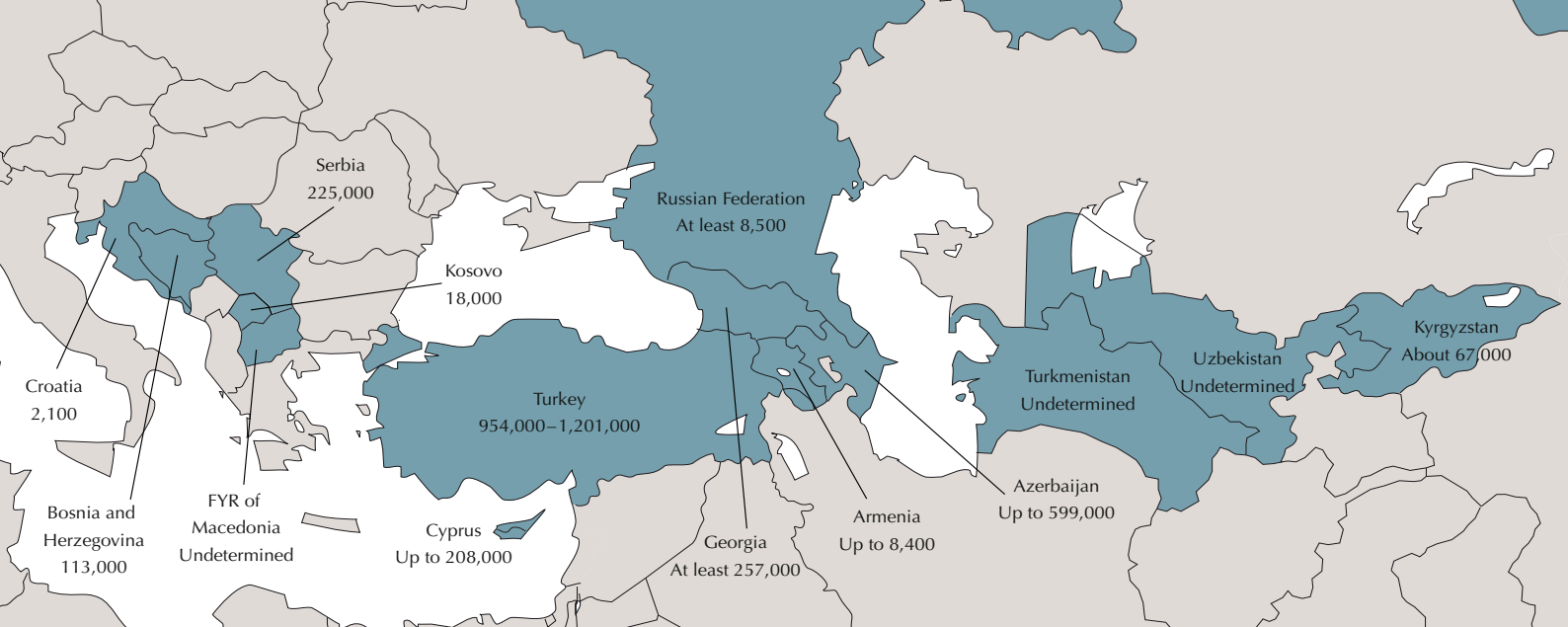
## Prospects for durable solutions

Since the conflicts of the 1990s, the return of IDPs to their places of origin has been consistently promoted. The number of returning IDPs has been monitored in several countries, but not their ongoing situation in their places of origin. Meanwhile there have been no processes to indicate the number of IDPs who have managed to integrate in the place they were displaced to, or to settle sustainably elsewhere.

The sustainability of some returns continued to be in doubt in 2011, with returned members of local minorities facing attacks, discrimination and restrictions on their freedom of movement. Some returned IDPs in Croatia, Kosovo and the Russian Federation struggled to recover possession of their property. Some IDPs' areas of origin were still insecure, due in part to the continuing presence of mines, the lack of local reconciliation and the impunity enjoyed by perpetrators of the original violence. Others could not return because they would not be able to access social services, livelihoods, or pensions and other entitlements.

IDPs' efforts to find a durable solution situation remained blocked in several countries in 2011, particularly if they had fled from inaccessible areas where conflict had still not been resolved. In Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cyprus, Georgia, the Russian Federation and Turkey, some or all IDPs could not return; in Azerbaijan, Cyprus and Georgia, the governments had taken steps to support their local integration or settlement elsewhere, but they still pushed for eventual return by proclaiming an intention to restore the situation which had prevailed before the conflict.

However, support for IDPs who wished to integrate in their area of displacement continued slowly to gain ground, as it became clear that those still displaced were unlikely to return. However, positive steps in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Kosovo, the Russian Federation, Serbia and Turkey were not yet sufficient to resolve their situations fully.



## Responses to internal displacement

Governments throughout the region have made efforts to improve conditions in collective centres, and also to reduce the number of IDPs living in them. In 2011 the governments in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo and Serbia improved the housing conditions of some IDPs living in collective centres by refurbishing spaces or by transferring ownership to residents; and they settled other residents in new housing or gave cash payments in lieu of new housing.

In 2011, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia joined international partners to launch a regional initiative to support the voluntary return and reintegration or local integration of refugees and also IDPs. UNHCR appointed a Personal Envoy for the Resolution of the Protracted Displacement in the Western Balkans to lend support to the initiative.

Throughout the region, the monitoring of the situation of IDPs and returned IDPs remained limited, and the resources allocated inadequate to properly address their situation. Many IDPs across the region did not receive assistance, and there was often limited information on whether they had benefited from any government support. Criticisms of governments' responses to internal displacement during 2011 often centred on their lack of transparency and failure to consult with IDPs.

The EU, CoE and OSCE also continued to support efforts to resolve protracted displacement. The EU encouraged the steps taken by Bosnia and Herzegovina to implement its strategy, particularly in support of IDPs in collective centres, and encouraged Turkey to press on with its national strategy. The EU and CoE's Commissioner for Human Rights commended Serbia's progress but called on the government to better address the needs of vulnerable IDPs including displaced RAE people.

UN human rights mechanisms reviewed the situation of IDPs in several countries. They urged the Russian Federation to address the education needs of internally displaced children and take steps to prevent their military recruitment, and noted the persistent discrimination in Serbia despite government efforts to counter it. They voiced concerns over evictions of IDPs in Georgia and their security of tenure, and the access of IDPs there to public services including education.

As donor attention has shifted to new emergencies elsewhere, and with access still difficult in conflict-affected areas in Azerbaijan, Georgia and the Russian Federation, international humanitarian agencies have gradually left the region. However, with significant numbers of people still marginalised in situations of protracted displacement, governments and donors should invest further in enabling durable solutions so that IDPs can fully participate in their country's development.

| Country                | Number of IDPs (rounded) | Government figures  | UN figures                     | Other figures   | Comments  |
|------------------------|--------------------------|---|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Armenia                | Up to 8,400              |   |                                | 8,399 (NRC, 2004)                                       | No more recent figures available.   |
| Azerbaijan             | Up to 599,000            | 599,192 (December 2011)                                       |                                |   | The figure includes around 200,000 children born to males with IDP status.  |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | 113,000                  |   | 113,000 (UNHCR, December 2011) |   | UNHCR figure based on information from its monitoring and the government's.   |
| Croatia                | 2,100                    |   | 2,059 (UNHCR, December 2011)   |   | UNHCR figure based on information from its monitoring and the government's.   |
| Cyprus                 | Up to 208,000            | 207,994 (Government of the Republic of Cyprus, December 2011) |                                | 0 ("Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus", October 2007) | The figure reported by the Government of the Republic of Cyprus includes those displaced to areas under its control since 1974, and children born to males with IDP status. The "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" considers that displacement ended with the 1975 Vienna III agreement. |



| Country                                   | Number of IDPs (rounded) | Government figures                                      | UN figures                     | Other figures                      | Comments  |
|---|--------------------------|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| Georgia                                   | <b>At least 257,000</b>  | 261,397 (October 2011)                                  | 270,528 (UNHCR, July 2011)     |                                    | Both figures include people displaced in the 1990s and 2008, those who have relocated or returned and their children with IDP status.   |
| Kosovo                                    | <b>18,000</b>            |   | 18,069 (UNHCR, December 2011)  |                                    | Estimate based on UNHCR's informal survey of IDPs in Kosovo undertaken in 2010.   |
| Kyrgyzstan                                | <b>About 67,000</b>      |   | 67,000 (UNHCR, December 2011)  |                                    | The figure includes returned IDPs with outstanding needs related to their displacement.   |
| Russian Federation                        | <b>At least 8,500</b>    | 8,497 (October 2011)                                    |                                | 28,450 (December 2011)             | The government figure includes IDPs from Chechnya or North Ossetia-Alania with forced migrant status living outside these republics but in the North Caucasus Federal District. The other, a compilation of NGO figures, only includes IDPs in Chechnya, Ingushetia and Dagestan. |
| Serbia                                    | <b>225,000</b>           |   | 210,146 (UNHCR, December 2011) |                                    | The Serbian Commissioner for Refugees and UNHCR estimated in 2011 that 97,000 IDPs need assistance to achieve a durable solution. UNHCR references government figures, which exclude at least 15,000 unregistered Roma IDPs.  |
| The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia | <b>Undetermined</b>      | 644 (December 2009)                                     | 0 (UNHCR, January 2012)        |                                    | UNHCR figures for "persons of concern" in FYRoM indicate that there were no IDPs in 2011.   |
| Turkey                                    | <b>954,000–1,201,000</b> | 953,680–1,201,200 (Hacettepe University, December 2006) |                                | Over 1,000,000 (NGOs, August 2005) | The Hacettepe University survey was commissioned by the government. The government has estimated that 150,000 people had returned to their places of origin as of July 2009.  |
| Turkmenistan                              | <b>Undetermined</b>      |   |                                |                                    | No estimates available.   |
| Uzbekistan                                | <b>Undetermined</b>      |   |                                | 3,400 (IOM, May 2005)              | No more recent figures available.   |

## Armenia



### Quick facts

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Number of IDPs                          | Up to 8,400                                   |
| Percentage of total population          | Up to 0.2%                                    |
| Start of current displacement situation | 1988  |
| Peak number of IDPs (Year)              | 72,000 (1992)                                 |
| New displacement                        | 0   |
| Causes of displacement                  | Generalised violence, human rights violations |
| Human development index                 | 86  |

It was unknown how many people remained internally displaced due to armed conflict in Armenia at the end of 2011. Neither IDPs nor returned IDPs were persons of concern to UNHCR during the year. The last study to estimate the number of IDPs was undertaken in 2004. At that time, the Norwegian Refugee Council and Armenia's State Migration Service found some 8,400 people still internally displaced as a result of the 1988-1994 war with Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh. During the war, at least 65,000 people had fled from Artsvashen, an Armenian exclave inside Azerbaijani territory, and from areas bordering Azerbaijan.

Most IDPs returned to their homes following the conflict, but the 2004 survey reported that some still had not returned to border areas because of the insecurity and the poor economic conditions, or to Artsvashen because the area had been taken over by Azerbaijani forces.

These IDPs' prospects of a durable solution remain dim without government and international support and assistance or any resolution to this conflict.

While those who returned to border areas did not have trouble repossessing their homes, there were still no

mechanisms to restore Artsvashen IDPs' housing, land and property or provide them with compensation for damage and destruction. There were no remedies in place for violations of their rights which they had incurred in being displaced.

In 2011, IDPs received no targeted government or international assistance. In March, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination urged the authorities to provide detailed information on their situation, including on their housing. By the end of the year, however, the government had still not secured funds for an IDP survey or a return programme. Nevertheless, it passed a decree at the end of the year to provide cash grants to IDPs from Artsvashen.



# Azerbaijan



## Quick facts

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Number of IDPs                          | Up to 599,000  |
| Percentage of total population          | Up to 6.4%   |
| Start of current displacement situation | 1988   |
| Peak number of IDPs (Year)              | 600,000 (1990)   |
| New displacement                        | 0  |
| Causes of displacement                  | Armed conflict, deliberate policy or practice of arbitrary displacement, generalised violence, human rights violations |
| Human development index                 | 76   |



Armed conflict with Armenia over the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh between 1988 and 1994 caused large numbers of people to flee within Azerbaijan. Located within the internationally recognised borders of Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh's independence claim has not been recognised by any state other than Armenia. Together with seven surrounding districts, the area remains outside the effective control of Azerbaijan. In 2011, the peace process slowed dramatically, while border skirmishes continued.

Almost 600,000 people were still internally displaced in Azerbaijan at the end of 2011. About 50 per cent of them were female and ten per cent were older people. The figure included around 200,000 children born to males with IDP status since they had fled their homes. There was no new displacement during the year, but the return of IDPs remained a distant prospect. IDPs were divided between those who were more or less integrated in their community and planned to stay there, and those more isolated IDPs who continued to pin their hopes on return.

Over their 20 years of displacement, IDPs have achieved various degrees of well-being. A 2011 study showed their differing needs, and indicated that they were more vulnerable than their non-displaced neighbours in some situations, and in some not. For example, some IDPs had better access to social benefits, yet many lived in worse housing conditions. Smaller internally displaced communities in remote villages with no access to land were found to be the most vulnerable, particularly in terms of their housing, and their access to livelihoods and land, health care and personal documentation.

About 50 per cent of IDPs were in 2011 still living in dilapidated and overcrowded collective centres and makeshift accommodation. Others were staying in crowded conditions with relatives, living near the frontline with landmines and enemy fire, or squatting in vacant apartments or houses. Some IDPs, however, had managed to buy and improve their housing, while by the end of 2011, the government had resettled over 100,000 IDPs into new houses or apartments, including around 10,000 during the year. Overall, housing conditions for IDPs were generally worse than the general population, especially in villages and small towns.

Around 115,000 IDPs were living in private apartments or houses owned by others. Despite executive decrees barring their eviction without alternative living arrangements, their

tenure continued to be insecure in 2011, particularly in the main cities of Baku and Sumgait. The European Court of Human Rights ruled in 2007 that the government's decrees in favour of IDPs had violated the property rights of homeowners. In 2011, the national courts ruled in about a dozen decisions that IDPs should be evicted from such dwellings, but the rulings were not enforced and no internally displaced families were evicted during the year.

IDPs were more likely to be poor and unemployed, partly because they lacked relevant skills. Some IDPs, most of them in Baku, had managed to establish livelihoods, but opportunities for IDPs in other towns and cities were limited by the lack of access to farm land and demand for informal labour. As a result, many IDPs continued to rely on benefits in 2011. Few internally displaced women earned an income and many had become more confined to the home since their displacement. As a result, the incidence of poverty remained significantly higher in 2011 among households headed by internally displaced women.

The government has made considerable and increasing efforts to improve the situation of IDPs. It has built housing and infrastructure, and provided cash transfers and subsidies. It continued to pay a monthly food allowance to IDPs in 2011, but the allowance was discontinued for about 70,000 state employees or people with only one internally displaced parent. An improved response would include collecting more accurate data on the vulnerabilities of IDPs, prioritisation of the needs of the most vulnerable among them, and more effective consultation with IDPs, especially on resettlement plans. Finally, the government should muster the will to resolve the conflict and work to ensure that IDPs can enjoy their rights at their preferred residence.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees visited Azerbaijan during the year and, while acknowledging the government's significant achievements, he called for increased assistance to IDPs. However, as the government's capacity to protect IDPs has increased and negotiation on the status of Nagorno-Karabakh has become deadlocked, support for humanitarian interventions has waned. At the same time, development support has picked up, with the World Bank making a \$50 million loan in 2011, which together with a significant government contribution will fund activities to ensure that 185,000 IDPs have better housing and improved self-reliance.

# Bosnia and Herzegovina



The 1992–1995 war in Bosnia and Herzegovina led to the displacement of over a million people and the creation of ethnically homogeneous areas within the newly independent state.

By the end of 2011 an estimated 113,000 people remained internally displaced. The rate of return had continued to slow,

and only about 260 displaced people returned during the year.

Many IDPs continued in 2011 to live in precarious situations, without support or economic opportunities. Many of those who faced the most hardship were older or more vulnerable people who still needed specific assistance to access adequate housing, income, psychiatric and social care and treatment for chronic diseases. Some 8,600 IDPs, including some of the most vulnerable, had lived in some form of collective centre or temporary accommodation for almost 20 years.

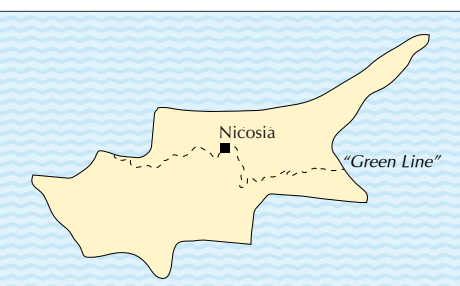
In the past few years the Bosnian government has increased financial support to returns and extended assistance to include income-generating activities and repair of infrastructure as well as housing.

Despite these steps, the government has more to do to create the conditions for sustainable voluntary returns, to facili-

In 1974 groups backed by Greece's military junta ousted the Cypriot leader and Turkey sent troops to the island in response. The overwhelming majority of Greek Cypriots fled to the south, while most Turkish Cypriots fled to the north. The island has since been effectively divided between areas under the control of the government of the Republic of Cyprus (GRC) and the authorities of the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" (TRNC), which is recognised only by Turkey. The conflict is still unresolved and the return of IDPs to their original homes remains largely impossible.

The TRNC maintains that there are no IDPs in areas under its control, and that internal displacement ended with a 1975 agreement resulting in significant population exchange. Meanwhile, the GRC reported at the end of 2011 that around 208,000 people in the area under its control had displaced person status, including over 86,000 people born to people with the status. Discrimination in access to the status partially ended in 2011, as the children of women with displaced person status became eligible for more of the same benefits as children of men with the status.

The Immovable Property Commission (IPC) set up in



## Quick facts

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Number of IDPs                          | 113,000  |
| Percentage of total population          | 2.9%   |
| Start of current displacement situation | 1992   |
| Peak number of IDPs (Year)              | 1,000,000 (1993)   |
| New displacement                        | 0  |
| Causes of displacement                  | Armed conflict, deliberate policy or practice of arbitrary displacement, generalised violence, human rights violations |
| Human development index                 | 68   |

tate local integration and to assist vulnerable IDPs and returned IDPs, of whom most have returned to areas in which they are members of a minority. In 2011 it had yet to implement its 2010 strategy to support IDPs' and returned IDPs' enjoyment of rights and access to durable solutions.

By 2011, only a few international organisations were still working to support IDPs as a group. UNHCR and the Commissioner for Human Rights of the CoE continued to monitor the situation of IDPs, while the EU continued to influence the government's policy development through the process of its candidacy to join the Union.

# Cyprus



## Quick facts

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Number of IDPs                          | Up to 208,000  |
| Percentage of total population          | Up to 22%  |
| Start of current displacement situation | 1974   |
| Peak number of IDPs (Year)              | 210,000 (1975)   |
| New displacement                        | 0  |
| Causes of displacement                  | Armed conflict, deliberate policy or practice of arbitrary displacement, generalised violence, human rights violations |
| Human development index                 | 31   |

TRNC had, by the end of 2011, ruled on over 200 of some 2,800 applications by dispossessed people. Most claimants accepted compensation, of which \$100 million had been paid out since 2006. Towards the end of the year the IPC announced it would extend the application deadline until the end of 2013. While the European Court of Human Rights found the IPC provided an effective remedy, the GRC continued to reject its legitimacy.

In its 2011 report on human rights in Cyprus, OHCHR cited as obstacles to durable solutions for IDPs the limited freedom of movement and choice of residence, and the lack of an agreed mechanism to restore property rights.

# Georgia



## Quick facts

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Number of IDPs                          | At least 257,000  |
| Percentage of total population          | At least 6%   |
| Start of current displacement situation | 1992, 2008 (South Ossetia); 1994, 2008 (Abkhazia)             |
| Peak number of IDPs (Year)              | Undetermined  |
| New displacement                        | 0   |
| Causes of displacement                  | Armed conflict, generalised violence, human rights violations |
| Human development index                 | 74  |



People in Georgia have been displaced by several waves of conflict. Fighting erupted in the early 1990s in the autonomous areas of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, displacing at least 215,000 people within Georgia. Ceasefire agreements were signed by 1994, but hostilities continued sporadically. Conflict broke out again in 2008 between Georgia and the Russian Federation over South Ossetia, and around 157,000 people were internally displaced, the majority of whom were able to return within months. The conflicts were unresolved in 2011; South Ossetia and Abkhazia remained outside the effective control of Georgia and the return of IDPs was largely not feasible.

At the end of 2011, the government had registered, in areas under its control, about 236,000 IDPs displaced since the 1990s, about 17,000 since 2008 and about 3,000 who were displaced in the 1990s and again in 2008. The number of IDPs still displaced since 2008 was higher as some were still not registered as such. Legislative amendments at the end of 2011 narrowed its IDP definition further, to include only those fleeing an area occupied by a foreign state.

There were also an estimated 20,000 IDPs in South Ossetia from both waves of conflict. The number of IDPs in Abkhazia was unknown since their situation was never monitored; however some 50,000 people who fled Abkhazia in the 1990s had returned to their place of origin in Gali district in Abkhazia.

During 2011 the government continued to demonstrate its commitment to durable solutions and implement its strategy for IDPs, with a continued focus on their housing. Around 40 per cent of IDPs were still in collective centres, many of them in former dormitories, kindergartens or schools. The refurbishment of these centres and registration of IDPs' ownership of their assigned spaces in them had significantly slowed, in favour of the closure of other collective centres and temporary shelters and the relocation of their residents in new or refurbished housing.

While the majority of relocated IDPs were satisfied with their new homes, there were shortcomings in the process and outcomes. Some IDPs felt rushed to make a decision with little information or legal assistance. The criteria for selecting families for new housing were unclear, the most vulnerable people were not prioritised and there was no effective mechanism for lodging complaints. The quality of housing offered to IDPs varied: some received new apartments in towns or cities, others got abandoned rural homes. Most relocated IDPs reported

there were few economic opportunities near their new home.

Within this process, more than 1,600 internally displaced families were evicted between June 2010 and August 2011. Depending on their status, some were offered alternative accommodation or cash. Evictions from temporary shelters were not always in line with the legislation and adopted procedures. Many IDPs who had opted for cash were still waiting to receive it at the end of 2011.

Overall, most IDPs continued to endure inadequate living conditions. Most collective centres did not meet minimum shelter standards. Meanwhile, IDPs dispersed in other housing still did not receive housing support. Furthermore, mechanisms to restore IDPs' housing, land and property or provide them with compensation had not been put in place.

Some return areas near the administrative boundary line with South Ossetia remained unsafe, while its near-total closure meant that returned IDPs could not access farmland, water or markets on the other side. In Gali district in Abkhazia, returned IDPs continued to endure terrible housing conditions, insecurity and limited freedom of movement. Without Abkhaz passports they were increasingly unable to access services, and the quality of education and health care remained poor.

The Georgian government has made increasing efforts to improve the situation of IDPs, especially since 2008. The ministry responsible has, however, been left to implement plans with increasingly limited resources and support. An improved response would necessitate more accurate data and prioritisation of the needs of the most vulnerable IDPs, more transparent decisions and greater compliance with adopted standards. Authorities in control of Abkhazia and South Ossetia should also ensure that the rights of IDPs and returned IDPs are protected.

UN agencies, international organisations and NGOs continued to assist IDPs in 2011, though only ICRC had access to South Ossetia while access to Abkhazia was increasingly challenged. UN human rights bodies made numerous recommendations to Georgia, including to compile disaggregated data and improve the integration and access to housing, food and livelihoods of IDPs and in particular internally displaced women. The CoE's Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population also urged the government to improve IDPs housing and livelihoods.

Ultimately, the conflicts must be resolved if IDPs are to achieve durable solutions.





In 1999, over 245,000 Kosovo Serbs and Roma, Ashkali or Egyptian (RAE) people fled into Serbia proper or within Kosovo in fear of reprisals after

NATO air strikes forced the withdrawal of Yugoslav troops. At the end of 2011, there were still 18,000 IDPs in Kosovo. Slightly over half were Kosovo Serbs, around 40 per cent Kosovo Albanians, and six per cent from RAE communities. Most Kosovo Serb IDPs were in northern Kosovo, relying on a parallel system of education, policing and health care supported by Serbia. Other IDPs remained in small areas where their ethnic group was in a majority, but where they had limited freedom of movement and little access to land or livelihoods.

Over 1,000 IDPs were still in collective centres at the end of 2011. Many of them were particularly vulnerable; a high proportion were older people. They were still living in very harsh conditions and received only minimal assistance.

IDPs belonging to RAE communities were the most marginalised. Those without civil documentation could not register as IDPs and so could not access housing assistance and other benefits. In 2011, many were still in informal settlements without electricity, clean water or sewerage.

12 years after their displacement, only a little over 4,000 IDPs had returned to their places of origin from within Kosovo,

Around 300,000 people were displaced in June 2010 by violence in southern Kyrgyzstan between the Kyrgyz majority and the Uzbek minority. In September 2011, humanitarian organisations estimated that there were around 4,000 remaining IDPs and 63,000 returned IDPs with continuing identified needs related to their displacement.

Broader national political developments led to the violence, which involved armed attacks, sexual assaults, kidnapping, arson and looting, notably in the urban centres of Osh and Jalal-Abad. Over 400 people (both Uzbeks and Kyrgyz) were killed, and some 2,000 houses were damaged or destroyed. While both communities suffered significant loss, Uzbeks bore the brunt of the violence, displacement and property damage.

Relations between the Kyrgyz and Uzbek communities were poisoned by the 2010 events and deep rifts remain. Uzbek IDPs reported in

2011 that they were subject to extortion by the police at their homes and businesses and in many community markets, and that they were reluctant to report this to the authorities as it would lead



## Kosovo



### Quick facts

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Number of IDPs                          | 18,000  |
| Percentage of total population          | 0.9%  |
| Start of current displacement situation | 1999  |
| Peak number of IDPs (Year)              | 36,000 (2000)   |
| New displacement                        | 0   |
| Causes of displacement                  | Armed conflict, generalised violence, human rights violations |
| Human development index:                | –   |

and only 18,000 people from elsewhere in the region.

Since Kosovo's declaration of independence in 2008, there has been no new displacement, and although Serbia continues not to recognise the independence, in 2011 an EU-facilitated dialogue between Kosovo authorities and the government of Serbia led to agreements on issues including land records and freedom of movement. Both the Serbian and Kosovo authorities have supported the construction of homes and social housing to facilitate the local integration of IDPs. Nonetheless, the Kosovo institutions have failed to devote the resources needed to enable durable solutions for IDPs, for instance by considerably reducing the budget dedicated to voluntary return.

## Kyrgyzstan



### Quick facts

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Number of IDPs                          | About 67,000                                  |
| Percentage of total population          | About 1.0%                                    |
| Start of current displacement situation | 2010  |
| Peak number of IDPs (Year)              | 300,000 (2010)                                |
| New displacement                        | 0   |
| Causes of displacement                  | Generalised violence, human rights violations |
| Human development index                 | 126   |

to further harassment. They said that the police appeared to be aware of who had received compensation for losses, and tended to focus their extortion efforts on those individuals or areas.

Uzbeks had been increasingly excluded from social and economic affairs, and they avoided public spaces for their own safety. Uzbeks also continued to feel insecure because perpetrators of human rights violations during the 2010 violence were still largely unpunished, and because the vast majority of court cases that had progressed had been against Uzbeks. For their part, many Kyrgyz reportedly feared Uzbek retaliation, and also limited their use of public spaces.

More than two thirds of IDPs had returned to their homes by the end of 2010. Some had received international assistance



and financial compensation from the authorities which helped them take possession of their homes and rebuild them if necessary. However, progress was slow in 2011 and the homes of the vast majority were still damaged or destroyed.

Registration of the homes rebuilt with aid money has been seriously delayed in Osh, raising real concerns for their residents. The government has reportedly planned to demolish areas in the centre of the city as part of a long-term urban plan for Osh. Should this plan be adopted, unregistered property could be more easily demolished or expropriated with residents receiving little or no compensation: Observers suspect that the Uzbek community would be disproportionately affected.

Thousands of businesses were destroyed in the 2010 violence. Most of the shops and cafes destroyed were owned by Uzbeks. With compensation for most of these lost businesses yet to be paid in 2011 and jobs scarce, many who lost their businesses were still unemployed and without alternative sources of income. Others who were rebuilding their homes under self-help assistance schemes could not find time to restart their businesses. Uzbeks have reported that they have been unable to resume trading in the market, because their places have been taken, the police and criminal groups demand bribes, and fights break out between Uzbeks and Kyrgyz. Many get by on remittances and government allowances, but some IDPs struggle to receive allowances since they have been unable to replace lost or destroyed documents.

The government response has been compromised by its lack of funds and limited local capacity, though several

initiatives have benefited IDPs. An improved response would include a comprehensive reparations programme to provide victims, and the IDPs among them, with adequate material compensation for their losses and rehabilitation. The establishment of a truth commission with displacement as part of its mandate to examine the 2010 events and their causes and consequences will be necessary for lasting peace.

More than 70 organisations have provided support to thousands of people affected by the 2010 violence. The international community has coordinated its response using the cluster system. The system remained in place after the most urgent needs of the affected population were attended to, but the clusters held few meetings in 2011. The UN appeal to fund humanitarian activities through to June 2011 received \$66 million, 70 per cent of the amount requested. The shortfall of about \$29 million particularly affected progress in supporting agricultural activities, education, health care, water and sanitation and reconciliation. In late 2011, UNHCR called for continued financial support to address the remaining needs of affected people in southern Kyrgyzstan.

## Russian Federation



### Quick facts

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Number of IDPs                          | At least 8,500   |
| Percentage of total population          | Less than 0.1%   |
| Start of current displacement situation | 1992 (North Ossetia);<br>1994 (Chechnya)   |
| Peak number of IDPs (Year)              | 500,000 (1996)   |
| New displacement                        | 0  |
| Causes of displacement                  | Armed conflict, deliberate policy or practice of arbitrary displacement, generalised violence, human rights violations |
| Human development index                 | 66   |

Armed conflict, human rights violations and generalised violence in the Russian Federation republics of Chechnya and North Ossetia-Alania (NO-A) forced people to flee their homes following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Over 800,000 people were displaced by wars that broke out in Chechnya in 1994 and 1999, while between 32,000 and 64,000 people were displaced during the 1992 conflict in NO-A. Most IDPs from Chechnya were displaced a number of times.

None of the conflicts had been fully resolved by the end of 2011. Government forces continued to perpetrate human rights

violations including arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances, torture and killings as part of their counter-insurgency campaign, and enjoyed impunity for these acts. Over 1,300 people were reported killed or wounded as a result of ongoing violence across the North Caucasus in 2011, and rights defenders and journalists faced harassment and violent attacks.

At the end of 2011, estimates of the number of people still displaced ranged from 8,500 to 28,000. The Federal Migration Service reported that there were around 5,600 people from Chechnya and 2,900 people from NO-A with “forced migrant” status in the North Caucasus. The number of IDPs is higher since “forced migrant” status is only valid for five years, it is difficult to renew and only some IDPs are eligible for it. NGOs estimated that there were still some 18,000 IDPs from Chechnya in Chechnya, Ingushetia and Dagestan, and 10,500 IDPs from NO-A in Ingushetia. There were no estimates of the number of IDPs living in NO-A or outside the North Caucasus.

Only very few IDPs returned to their places of origin during 2011. Around 160 returned to Chechnya and an unknown number to NO-A. According to government sources, over 320,000 people had returned to Chechnya between 2001 and 2009, and



more than 26,000 to North Ossetia by 2010. Some of them had gone back to their former homes, while others had moved into temporary accommodation or housing provided by the government or international organisations, or were living with relatives or acquaintances. Others remained in makeshift accommodation with little means to become self-reliant.

The limited income of most IDPs has forced them to continue to depend on government benefits as their main source of income. NGOs estimated in 2011 that more than 60 per cent of IDPs in Ingushetia and Chechnya who were able to work were unemployed; this rate was higher than the official rate of unemployment in both republics. IDPs reported obstacles to finding work that were linked to their displacement: some were unable to register as temporary residents in the place of refuge, others had missed periods of schooling, while the conflicts had left others with disabilities or needing to care for children and older or sick relatives.

The lives of many IDPs had improved by 2011 as a result of efforts made by the government. However, many still did not fully enjoy their rights after some 20 years in displacement. Government support had not always been sufficient for IDPs to secure adequate housing, and many continued to live in sub-standard and in some cases dangerous conditions. The amount of compensation for destroyed property was insufficient, its delivery and impact limited by corruption, and only those with totally destroyed housing were eligible to apply.

The majority of IDPs no longer enjoyed the “forced migrant” status they needed to access some housing support.

In Chechnya, IDPs could only access housing assistance in the area where they had permanent registration; those in NO-A could not always use housing assistance to buy or build homes at their original place of residence, as return to some villages had been restricted.

The number of evictions of IDPs from temporary hostels in Chechnya increased in 2011. Most IDPs lacked a tenancy contract or residence registration at the hostel, and could therefore not legally contest their eviction. Some were able to find a place to live, but others had nowhere to go and were more vulnerable once evicted. In Ingushetia, the government planned to close temporary settlements by the end of 2011 and subsidise the rent payments of residents in alternative accommodation; however towards the end of the year it did not appear to have a clear plan for this resettlement, raising fears that IDPs would be evicted without alternative accommodation.

UN agencies including UNHCR had left the North Caucasus by the end of 2011, but agencies outside the Russian Federation continued to advocate for IDPs there. During 2011, the UN’s High Commissioner for Human Rights stressed that counter-insurgency measures should be conducted in line with human rights principles, and the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights urged Russia to devote additional resources to social housing for IDPs and ensure the access of internally displaced children to education, to prevent their recruitment into military units.

In 1999, an estimated 245,000 Kosovo Serbs and Roma, Ashkali or Egyptian (RAE) people fled into Serbia proper or within Kosovo. In late 2011, some 225,000 people were still displaced in Serbia: 210,000 registered IDPs, according to the Serbian Commissioner for Refugees, and around 15,000 unregistered RAE people.

A significant number of IDPs still faced hardship: a survey published in 2011 by UNHCR and the Serbian government identified over 40 per cent of them as vulnerable and in need of

assistance. Many continued to endure high levels of poverty, limited livelihood opportunities, and little access to social care or adequate housing. IDPs belonging to RAE communities faced social and economic marginalisation.

In October 2011, some 2,700 IDPs were still living in collective centres, or in informal settlements from which many risked being evicted. IDPs living without personal documents still faced great difficulties in registering as IDPs and so accessing assis-

tance and services. RAE communities were particularly affected by these challenges.

The government has made increasing progress in supporting IDPs in their place of displacement. It has built alternative housing for vulnerable people in collective centres, and supported livelihoods programmes for IDPs. In March 2011, it adopted the three-year National Strategy for Resolving the Situation of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons, but the funding for its implementation was lacking. UNHCR and NGOs have continued to support the government’s response, while European and UN bodies have continued to monitor progress.

## Serbia



### Quick facts

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Number of IDPs                          | 225,000  |
| Percentage of total population          | 3.2%   |
| Start of current displacement situation | 1999   |
| Peak number of IDPs (Year)              | 248,000 (2004)   |
| New displacement                        | 0  |
| Causes of displacement                  | Armed conflict, deliberate policy or practice of arbitrary displacement, generalised violence, human rights violations |
| Human development index                 | 67   |



# Turkey



## Quick facts

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Number of IDPs                          | 954,000–1,201,000  |
| Percentage of total population          | 1.3–1.6%   |
| Start of current displacement situation | 1984   |
| Peak number of IDPs (Year)              | 954,000–1,201,000 (2006)   |
| New displacement                        | Undetermined   |
| Causes of displacement                  | Armed conflict, deliberate policy or practice of arbitrary displacement, generalised violence, human rights violations |
| Human development index                 | 83   |



For the past 28 years, Turkish armed forces supported by local “village guard” militias have fought against the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (*Parti Karkerani Kurdistan* or PKK) in the south-eastern and eastern provinces of Turkey. A state policy of burning down villages to prevent them from being used as PKK bases, as well as indiscriminate attacks against civilians by both parties, led to the displacement of between 950,000 and 1.2 million people during the 1980s and 1990s, the majority of them between 1991 and 1996.

Though security in affected regions has generally improved, violence between the armed forces and the PKK broke out sporadically after 2004. In 2011, such fighting recurred but no further displacement was reported. In addition, cross-border operations against Kurdish targets in Iraq intensified.

The vast majority of people trapped in protracted displacement in 2011 were living on the edges of cities, both within affected provinces in cities such as Batman, Diyarbakir, Hakkari and Van, and elsewhere in cities including Istanbul, Ankara, and Izmir. They had settled among wider poor urban communities, but continued to face discrimination, acute social and economic marginalisation and limited access to housing, education and health care. Problems identified as specifically affecting displaced people included psychological trauma, lack of access to education and high levels of unemployment, particularly among women.

A little over 150,000 people had reportedly returned to their places of origin by 2009. Others were discouraged from returning by the continuing tensions and intermittent violence, the ongoing presence of village guards, and in provinces bordering Syria and Iraq by the million or so landmines deployed. Return areas also lacked livelihood opportunities, social services and basic infrastructure.

South-eastern Turkey is also vulnerable to natural disasters. In October 2011 a major earthquake struck the city of Van, which was a place of refuge for many long-term IDPs as well as a place to which IDPs had returned. It left nearly 30,000 houses destroyed or severely damaged; more than 50,000 people were displaced. The government provided shelter in tent cities, prefabricated housing and public facilities.

The vast majority of IDPs in Turkey are Kurdish, and their displacement and current situation is tied to the lack of recognition of the Kurdish identity. Though the government has

pledged a “democratic opening” to Kurds, human rights associations have condemned the continuing discrimination and the use of existing legislation to stifle freedoms, and the use of mass detentions (as applied in response to demonstrations in 2011). They have called repeatedly for past human rights violations against Kurds to be addressed, and the prevalent impunity of state actors to be ended.

The government has taken significant steps to promote the return of IDPs displaced by the conflict. In 1994, it launched the Return to Village and Rehabilitation Project. From 2007 to 2011, it commissioned a national survey to determine the number and situation of IDPs; it drafted a national IDP strategy; it adopted a law to compensate those whose property had been damaged in the conflict; and it put together a pilot action plan in Van Province, to address rural and urban situations of displacement.

The government was developing similar action plans for 13 other affected provinces in the south-east in 2011. Under the coordination of the Ministry of the Interior, a working group drafted and submitted a national action plan, which the Ministry was still reviewing at the end of the year.

Nevertheless, civil society observers have criticised the slow development of these action plans. They have also voiced concerns over the continuing needs of urban IDPs outside the south-east, which the plans do not address. They have criticised programmes for the lack of support which they offer to returning IDPs, and for their lack of transparency, consistency, consultation and adequate funding. They have also criticised the strategy for failing to acknowledge the Kurdish issue.

Progress for IDPs in Turkey has been influenced by regional and international institutions such as the EU, the European Court of Human Rights and the CoE. These institutions have underlined the need for a comprehensive plan to address the socio-economic problems faced by IDPs, particularly those in urban areas, and to ensure support for those who wish to integrate where they are as well as those who want to return. If IDPs are to find sustainable solutions, the international community should continue to encourage the resolution of the pervasive obstacles and encourage wider efforts at reconciliation.