

# Macedonia

## Habitat for Humanity in Macedonia

Habitat for Humanity Macedonia began work in 2004. From the outset, it piloted several projects. The Home Improvement Fund was named among the three most innovative development projects worldwide by the Global Development Network, a World Bank affiliated institution. Currently, Habitat Macedonia has 9 active projects, which are impacting **community development** through traditional programs for most vulnerable segments of the population; **housing market development** through developing new products, services and channels aimed at collective apartment buildings and housing microfinancing partnerships; and **Housing and Social Development** through mobilizing volunteers, CSOs and others around the cause of affordable housing.

## The housing need in Macedonia

Macedonia has come a long way in its transition from a centrally planned system to a market economy since its independence in 1991. However, the country's integration into the European Union and international structures has been slow and challenging. About 80,000 households still lack long-term housing solutions, and 12 percent of the housing stock is substandard. The average age of buildings in Macedonia is 30 years, and because of poor maintenance, about 100,000 units in collective apartment buildings are in need of immediate EE intervention. Housing conditions are particularly grave for Roma households. About 320,000 people, almost 15 percent of Macedonia's population, live in illegally constructed buildings. The capital city, Skopje, hosts squatter settlements of about 120,000. It has the largest Roma community in Europe, which lives in a ghetto-like environment.

## How Habitat addresses the need in Macedonia

Habitat Macedonia has developed diverse projects to alleviate the housing need. It strove to create various models to reach a greater number of families and improve the aging housing stock, largely through innovative financial mechanisms. In line with its commitment to help vulnerable groups, Habitat Macedonia responded to the current migrant crisis by providing temporary shelter.



## COUNTRY FACTS\*

<b>Capital</b>	Skopje
<b>Population</b>	2.1 million
<b>Urbanization</b>	57.1 percent live in cities
<b>Life expectancy</b>	76.2 years
<b>Unemployment rate</b>	26.1 percent
<b>Population living below poverty line</b>	30.4 percent

\*Sources: CIA World Factbook

## HABITAT FACTS

**When Habitat started in Macedonia**  
2004

**Individuals served in FY16**  
18,580\*

\*includes construction, professional services and market development

**Volunteers hosted in FY16**  
222

**Housing solutions**  
New homes, Energy efficiency, Housing microfinance, Residential building management



## Home improvement fund and Roma housing fund

Habitat Macedonia, in cooperation with a local microfinance partner, set up a Home Improvement Fund offering affordable, short-term home improvement loans. Similar model was applied for the Roma Housing Fund project which is serving the vulnerable Roma communities in five different municipalities on the outskirts of the capital Skopje.

## Residential building management

After the stated controlled mechanisms for maintenance of apartment buildings were abandoned, the decay of homeowners' organizations in Macedonia has not been addressed until recently. Habitat Macedonia developed new service that focuses on improving the management of collective apartment buildings. At least 150,000 housing units in collective apartment buildings need proper management and maintenance, so with this project Habitat Macedonia is improving housing in such buildings.

## Energy efficiency upgrades

In Macedonia, residential energy consumption is high, unaffordable, environmentally degrading and inefficient. Habitat Macedonia provides low-income families with small loans for minor repairs, such as window or door replacements that will maximize energy efficiency of their homes. Even these small repairs can contribute towards better living conditions of these families. 'Green', atmosphere-friendly homes will lower the heating costs of the families and decrease energy loss significantly which will show especially on the health of the family members during the winter.

## House building

Many families in Macedonia live in overcrowded homes together with parents or grandparents and cannot afford new apartments. To address the need, Habitat Macedonia has started construction of an entire housing complex in Veles, an industrial city in the center of the country. Since the groundbreaking in 2008, this project has provided new affordable homes for 36 families in need.

## Meet a Habitat family

Igor and Aleksandra Ilik have three daughters: Jelena, Mihaela and Kristina. Igor works as a driver and Aleksandra works in a private company as a bookkeeper. The family used to live with Igor's parents but moved out and changed location two different times before finding a flat they could afford to rent. They rented it for seven years, living on the ground floor with low ceilings, very little light, and lots of moisture. The flat had old doors and windows, and the old electrical installations did not allow two electronic devices to be used at the same time.

## What you can do

You can help Macdonian families improve their living conditions by taking one or more of the following actions:

### DONATE

USD \$: [habitat.org/donate/macedonia](https://www.habitat.org/donate/macedonia)

### VOLUNTEER

Join one of the scheduled Global Village trips to Macedonia or lead your own. For more information visit: [habitat.org/gv](https://www.habitat.org/gv)

### TITHE

Establish a strong and rewarding tithe partnership to help build houses globally! Quote **813000, MACEDONIA** on your checks sent to: Habitat for Humanity International, Attn: Affiliate Tithe, 121 Habitat St. Americus, GA 31709

To learn more about Habitat projects in Macedonia, please contact us.

Housing loans from banks were neither available nor affordable for the family. They learned about Habitat for Humanity from relatives and decided to apply for a Habitat home. They were full of hope that they would finally get a home of their own and the Habitat home in which they live now is everything they hoped for and so much more. *"To have our own place – that means everything to us. Our Habitat home is finally the healthy and decent place our children deserve...that any child deserves. It fills our hearts with joy to watch them grow up here,"* says Aleksandra.



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