

# EUROPE (regional)

**COVERING:** Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden (with specialized services for other countries)

The ICRC engages in regular dialogue on IHL, its implementation, and issues of humanitarian concern with authorities in Europe; increases awareness of its mandate; and mobilizes political and financial support for its activities. It visits people held by international criminal tribunals based in Europe to check on their treatment and living conditions. It also follows up on people formerly held at the US internment facility at Guantanamo Bay Naval Station in Cuba. The ICRC works closely with the National Societies on their international activities and IHL promotion and, through them, enables vulnerable migrants to restore/maintain contact with their families.

## KEY RESULTS/CONSTRAINTS

In 2014:

- ▶ some 1,900 people, including unaccompanied minors, in 3 detention centres, shared their situations with ICRC delegates as monitoring visits to detained migrants resumed in Greece
- ▶ vulnerable migrants, including survivors of disasters at sea, restored links with their families through Movement efforts in Cyprus, Greece and Malta
- ▶ the authorities concerned tackled issues related to missing migrants through the first national meeting in Greece on identifying disaster victims, organized jointly by the Hellenic Police/INTERPOL/ICRC
- ▶ 36 people held under the jurisdiction of international criminal tribunals in the Netherlands benefited from an ICRC medical visit, which also enhanced dialogue on health issues with the authorities concerned
- ▶ European States, with encouragement from the ICRC, and aided by its expertise, ratified/signed IHL-related treaties – notably the Arms Trade Treaty, which 40 States signed and 34 ratified
- ▶ European National Societies and the ICRC signed/extended agreements, strengthening partnership in IHL promotion, family-links services, capacity building and developing/implementing Movement policies

## YEARLY RESULTS

Level of achievement of ICRC yearly objectives/plans of action

HIGH

## PROTECTION

### CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)

	Total
Red Cross messages (RCMs)	
RCMs collected	12
RCMs distributed	6
Phone calls facilitated between family members	1,891
People located (tracing cases closed positively)	262

### PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)

	Total
ICRC visits	
Detainees visited	1,979
Detainees visited and monitored individually	98
Number of visits carried out	11
Number of places of detention visited	11
Restoring family links	
RCMs distributed	1
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative	46

## EXPENDITURE (in KCHF)

Protection	2,217
Assistance	-
Prevention	489
Cooperation with National Societies	435
General	-
	<b>3,141</b>
<i>of which: Overheads 192</i>	

## IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	<b>105%</b>
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## PERSONNEL

Mobile staff	0
Resident staff (daily workers not included)	8

## CONTEXT

Europe remained a destination for migrants fleeing conflict and violence in Africa and the Middle East; many of them used routes through the Aegean and Mediterranean seas to reach Greece, Italy and Malta. Migrants' vessels were frequently involved in disasters at sea and many lives were lost.

Irregular migrants faced many difficulties when they arrived in Europe, including lack of access to basic services. Among the most vulnerable were unaccompanied minors and people held in reception/detention centres. Families of migrants who had gone missing had no information on their relatives. The lack of national databases and regional information-sharing mechanisms hampered States' ability to manage and identify the remains of migrants who might have died during their journey.

Security remained high on the agenda of European States, particularly in light of reports of people joining fighting groups abroad and subsequently returning to Europe. A number of suspected fighters were arrested and put on trial.

Many countries in the region exercised broad international influence on humanitarian, legal and other issues, as did regional and international organizations based in Europe. Spain was elected as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for a two-year mandate beginning in 2015.

Europe is home to the permanent International Criminal Court (ICC) and the ad hoc International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the Special Tribunal for Lebanon and the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone (RSCSL), all based in The Hague, Netherlands. The UN Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals (MICT) successfully began taking up the ICTY's residual functions.

Some people previously held at the US internment facility at Guantanamo Bay Naval Station in Cuba had resettled in Europe.

## ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

The ICRC worked at several levels to raise the authorities' awareness of the humanitarian objectives of family tracing, particularly for minors; the aim was to help place the problems and vulnerabilities of migrants high on the European agenda. Coordination among Movement partners, through various platforms, aimed to strengthen the humanitarian response to migration-related issues.

In particular, the ICRC strove to bolster the capacities of National Societies along migration routes in providing family-links services and managing information related to missing migrants. Following the disruption of the Hellenic Red Cross's tracing services for migrants, the ICRC, with the National Society's agreement, took over and completed the processing of hundreds of pending tracing cases, and provided family-links services to vulnerable migrants stranded in or passing through Greece.

Together with the pertinent National Society, the ICRC strengthened dialogue with the authorities, particularly in Greece and Malta, to raise awareness among them of the specific needs and vulnerabilities of detained migrants, especially unaccompanied minors. It resumed monitoring visits to detained migrants in Greece, continued to provide family-links services to unaccompanied minors at detention centres and provided ad hoc support, with Movement partners, to improve their conditions.

Bilateral partnerships and formal agreements with European National Societies – particularly in Denmark, Germany, Norway, Spain and Sweden – helped strengthen cooperation, with an emphasis on promoting IHL, enhancing the Movement's response capacities in emergency contexts and addressing various humanitarian issues in different contexts.

The ICRC continued to visit people convicted by the ICTY and serving their sentences in European countries, and people remanded by the ICTY and the ICC in The Hague, Netherlands. It also continued to serve as a key source of reference for international criminal tribunals and penitentiary authorities in Europe, with a view to ensuring that their policies/practices complied with internationally recognized standards and best practices in detention when enforcing sentences in the future. An ad hoc medical visit to The Hague helped enhance dialogue on health issues.

Given the growth in understanding of data protection and confidentiality issues in European States, the ICRC prepared to resume dialogue with them on the possibility of visiting people held on security-related charges.

The ICRC, together with European National Societies, exchanged views regularly with States, regional authorities and international organizations; this helped advance adoption/ratification of IHL-related treaties and domestic IHL implementation. Such exchanges also enabled discussion of IHL-related and humanitarian issues, such as the impact of nuclear weapons, the goals of the Health Care in Danger project, legislation sanctioning IHL violations, the potential implications of EU data protection reforms and the importance of ratifying IHL-related treaties. Many European States signed/ratified the Arms Trade Treaty.

Working with the National Societies and the authorities concerned, the ICRC continued to follow up people previously held at the Guantanamo Bay internment facility, who had resettled in Europe after their release; particular attention was paid to helping them restore/maintain links with their families abroad.

## CIVILIANS

### Vulnerable migrants in Cyprus, Greece and Malta restore family links with Movement support

The ICRC worked to strengthen the capacities of European National Societies, particularly those along migratory routes, to respond to the humanitarian needs of vulnerable migrants. In Greece, it signed a memorandum of understanding with the Hellenic Red Cross to strengthen cooperation in restoring family links.

As part of the effort to help the Greek National Society provide tracing/family-links services to migrants stranded in Greece or passing through, the ICRC temporary presence in Athens finished handling the National Society's backlog of some 580 cases, which had been pending since 2010. This included forensics follow-up for over 16 cases dispersed across the country. People also availed themselves of the services of the antenna, which opened hundreds of new tracing cases on behalf of people searching for information on their missing relatives.

The Malta Red Cross Society, with technical and financial support from the British Red Cross Society and the ICRC, reinforced its family-links phone service in two places of detention for migrants in the archipelago (see *People deprived of their freedom*). It also joined other European Red Cross Societies as part of the Family

Posters' initiative, which helps people find missing relatives through photos published in posters across Europe.

In Italy, the pertinent authorities, the Medico-legal Institute of Milano University, the Italian Red Cross and the ICRC reinforced cooperation to clarify the identities of migrants who perished during their journey; half of the remains recovered from a disaster at sea off Lampedusa in 2013 had been identified by year-end.

### **Authorities discuss issues related to missing migrants**

The ICRC responded to the succession of disasters at sea involving migrants' vessels (see *Context*) by following the authorities' management of human remains. Contacts developed with forensic specialists and coast guard services in the region enabled the ICRC and pertinent National Societies to swiftly gather information about human remains recovered at sea and identification procedures carried out by the authorities, in order to help ensure that their relatives were informed of their fate. For example, the Italian Red Cross drew on ICRC support for opening tracing cases and for training in family-links services, including the drafting of procedures in this connection; the ICRC also helped it to coordinate with other National Societies concerned.

At the first national meeting in Greece on identifying disaster victims, organized jointly by the Hellenic Police/INTERPOL/ICRC, some 150 representatives of agencies involved in searching for, recovering and identifying victims of disasters discussed their experiences and agreed, *inter alia*, on the need to improve coordination, establish standards and guidelines and have victims identified by an expert committee.

The authorities concerned also acquainted themselves with the recommendations – for managing information on missing/deceased migrants – that emerged from a previous conference held in Milan, Italy, and that the ICRC continued to disseminate. At a meeting in France, forensics professionals discussed how to follow up these recommendations.

### **Dialogue with authorities focuses on the needs of unaccompanied minors**

In Greece, ad hoc donations of clothes, recreational/educational/hygiene items and telephone cards helped around 400 unaccompanied minors at eight open accommodation centres and two drop-in centres cope with their situation. Stakeholders, including the Labour Ministry, government agencies and local NGOs, drew on ICRC expertise in protecting children and harmonizing conditions of reception, particularly with regard to unaccompanied minors.

### **Movement partners enhance coordination of response to humanitarian needs of vulnerable migrants**

Coordination with other European National Societies – including through meetings in Luxembourg and Portugal of the Platform for European Red Cross Cooperation on Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrants, and through the Centre for Cooperation in the Mediterranean (see *Tunis*) – dealt with a number of subjects: missing migrants, peer-to-peer support, vulnerable migrants (particularly women and unaccompanied minors), regulations on the transfer of minors, and the use of social media for tracing purposes. In Sofia, Bulgaria, 27 family-links representatives of European National Societies as well as participants from Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States, as well as from the Federation Europe Zone and the International Tracing Service in Bad Arolsen, Germany gathered for the annual family-links

meeting, which focused on new tools and the issue of missing migrants across the Mediterranean Sea.

The ICRC continued to provide technical support for National Societies in their dialogue with State authorities, which aimed to raise awareness of the humanitarian consequences of migration policies and remind the authorities of the National Societies' independent and neutral role. The Malta Red Cross Society drew on technical support for its discussions with the authorities – on its potential involvement in guardianship of unaccompanied minors or in running a detention centre for minors – and for its contribution to the UNHCR-led consultation of all parties in Malta concerned with migrants in detention.

Relations were also fostered with regional stakeholders/actors, including NGOs and European Union institutions, involved in asylum and border management policies.

### **Released Guantanamo Bay internees maintain links with families**

The ICRC continued to follow up people previously held at the Guantanamo Bay internment facility, who had resettled in Europe after their release, as well as two people in Cabo Verde and Ghana. The ICRC organized visits from their families for five resettled internees, including two who had not seen their relatives since their internment. Three ICRC-organized video calls enabled one former internee to maintain contact with relatives in Turkey.

### **PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM**

The ICRC visited 36 people under the jurisdiction of the international tribunals and detained in The Hague, and nine ICTY-convicted persons serving their sentences at prisons in five countries in Europe. Dialogue with the detaining authorities, at the prisons and at national level, focused on broad-based recommendations that would benefit the entire prison population rather than only those people visited by the ICRC.

Meetings with the international tribunals in The Hague, including the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone, focused on enforcement of sentences and related matters. The international tribunals regularly sought the ICRC's expertise to ensure that their policies and practices complied with international standards for detention and best practices. For example, the ICC took into account an ICRC report related to preparations for the start of its enforcement activities; following discussions, it requested further technical advice from the ICRC. An *ad hoc* medical visit to 36 people held under the jurisdiction of the ICC or the ICTY/MICT in The Hague provided opportunities for enhancing dialogue on health issues with both tribunals.

Given the growth in understanding of data protection and confidentiality issues in European States, the ICRC prepared to resume dialogue with them on the possibility of visiting people held on security-related charges.

### **Detained unaccompanied minors in Greece and Malta restore family links through Movement efforts**

Some 1,900 people, including unaccompanied minors in three detention centres, shared their situations with ICRC delegates as monitoring visits to detained migrants in Greece resumed. Dialogue with the detaining authorities on general and individual issues (such as conditions of detention, procedural safeguards and respect for the principle of *non-refoulement*) were deepened.

Detained migrants at the centres stood to benefit from donations of essential items including clothes, shoes and educational and recreational items for minors.

In particular, detained unaccompanied minors, for example in the Amygdaleza centre, restored/maintained contact with their relatives through family-links services provided by ICRC such as 298 distributed phone cards. At the ICRC's urging, the authorities agreed to grant detained unaccompanied minors weekly access to their personal phones, enabling them to contact relatives.

Vulnerable minors and isolated women/mothers at the two detention centres for migrants in Malta, whose phones were confiscated on their arrival in the country, contacted their relatives to inform them of their whereabouts, through phone services run by the Malta Red Cross Society with ICRC support. All 552 migrants at the centres were able, for the first time, to re-establish links with their relatives.

### ACTORS OF INFLUENCE

Key actors in the region continued to show support for IHL and the ICRC. The ICRC, together with European National Societies, regularly engaged national authorities and regional organizations in dialogue, which helped advance adoption/ratification of IHL-related treaties and promoted support for common humanitarian concerns; the ICRC also followed up pledges made at the 31st International Conference, particularly regarding the strengthening of legal protection for victims of armed conflict (see *International law and policy*).

Bilateral dialogue with various national authorities on issues related to IHL implementation and sanctions for violations continued. Austria and Sweden took steps to sanction core international crimes, including through the finalization of reforms to the criminal code and the adoption of domestic legislation, respectively. High-level meetings between the Dutch Defence/Foreign Affairs Ministries and the ICRC provided opportunities for exchanging views on the humanitarian situation in Mali and Syrian Arab Republic, as well as on new weapons technology.

### Arms Trade Treaty signed by 40 States

The Arms Trade Treaty was signed by 40 European States; 34 ratified it (see *International Law and Policy*). At a high-level seminar organized by the French Ministry of Defence, the ICRC reminded

State representatives of the importance of implementing the treaty's provisions. Portugal and Sweden ratified Additional Protocol III.

National IHL committees in Europe, particularly in Germany, Spain and Switzerland, enhanced cooperation in IHL-related issues, with each other as well as with their counterparts in Latin America, through closer links forged by the ICRC.

At various events organized by French officials and Movement partners (see *Paris*), State representatives familiarized themselves with the ICRC's position on the impact, in humanitarian terms, of nuclear weapons. The ICRC also conducted country studies on legislation linked to the Health Care in Danger project, and – along with European National Societies and Médecins Sans Frontières – provided its expertise at three related events.

The ICRC provided expertise, and explained its position on various humanitarian issues, in numerous regional and global fora. Bilateral dialogue with European States and with the Council of Europe (see *Brussels*) focused on legislative reforms concerning data protection. Dialogue with UNESCO focused on the protection of cultural property in times of armed conflict. The ICRC also helped draft a memorandum for the French army on this subject. Dialogue with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe concentrated on these subjects: the implementation of international rules and legal standards including IHL, the possibility of jointly organizing training sessions for judiciary members outside the Balkans, and the situations in Afghanistan, Azerbaijan and Ukraine. ICRC units/delegations took stock of the case law of the European Court of Human Rights, which was made available via bimonthly e-mails and a database.

Engagement with the media helped foster understanding and support among the wider public for humanitarian concerns and ICRC activities.

At the Jean-Pictet moot court competition in Portugal, future decision-makers furthered their understanding of the application of IHL (see *International law and policy*).

### RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

European National Societies and the ICRC continued to strengthen cooperation, drawing on each other's areas of expertise to address humanitarian issues of common concern.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM	OTHER COUNTRIES	AUSTRIA	DENMARK	GREECE	ICC/ICTY/MICT	ITALY	SWEDEN
<b>ICRC visits</b>							
Detainees visited	1	2	3	1,934	36	1	2
<i>of whom minors</i>				208			
Detainees visited and monitored individually	1	2	3	53	36	1	2
<i>of whom boys</i>				208			
Detainees newly registered				53			
Number of visits carried out	1	1	2	2	2	1	2
Number of places of detention visited	1	1	2	2	2	1	2
<b>Restoring family links</b>							
RCMs distributed				1			
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative				45	1		

The Swedish Red Cross and the ICRC focused on the implementation of the Movement and ICRC policies as an important domain of institutional partnership; notably, the Swedish Red Cross contributed to the development of a practical guide on the Safer Access Framework and to the implementation of the ICRC Policy on the provision of support for victims of torture and other forms of ill-treatment, with a cooperation agreement signed on the latter during a jointly-organized event marking the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. The Norwegian Red Cross extended a similar partnership with the ICRC and finalized project agreements related to reducing the human cost of weapons, promoting weapons-related IHL treaties, raising awareness of issues related to gender/sexual violence and fundraising. Both National Societies worked with the ICRC to plan and implement projects in Africa and the Middle East, as well as initiatives related to the Health Care in Danger project. The Norwegian Red Cross co-organized the first international conference in Latin America on the humanitarian consequences of disregarding the legal obligation to respect medical services (see *Colombia*).

The Danish and Spanish National Societies strengthened their partnership with the ICRC in areas of common interest, including IHL, family-links services for vulnerable migrants, humanitarian diplomacy and capacity building for other National Societies. The Danish Red Cross successfully set up a base camp in South Sudan. The Spanish Red Cross signed a letter of intent with the ICRC to enhance cooperation in issues related to violence, migration and IHL promotion.

The German Red Cross and the ICRC discussed strategic areas for partnership and the extension of their partnership agreement.

During a roundtable, the Nordic National Societies and the ICRC discussed ways to strengthen the Movement's humanitarian response worldwide and identified issues to highlight during Movement meetings, including the Council of Delegates and the 32nd International Conference in 2015.

Movement partners met regularly at regional meetings organized by the International Federation and the ICRC, and pooled their efforts to ensure a uniform response to migration-related needs, including support for National Societies along the main migration routes (see *Civilians*). The ICRC mobilized the Swedish, Danish, Dutch and Norwegian National Societies to discuss how to support the Hellenic Red Cross's efforts to strengthen its response to the needs of vulnerable migrants; particular attention was given to the need to assess family-links needs/capacities in Greece.

The Hellenic Red Cross worked on finalizing its draft statutes, with guidance from both the International Federation and the ICRC.

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS: PROTECTION		Total			
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)			UAMs/SCs*	Women	Girls
Red Cross messages (RCMs) <sup>1</sup>					Boys
RCMs collected		12			
RCMs distributed		6			
Phone calls facilitated between family members		1,891			
Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons			Women	Girls	Boys
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered		503	112	117	102
<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>		14			
People located (tracing cases closed positively)		262			
<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>		3			
Tracing cases still being handled at the end of the reporting period (people)		756	147	170	168
<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>		30			
Documents					
Official documents relayed between family members across borders/front lines		47			
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)					
ICRC visits			Women	Minors	
Detainees visited		1,979		208	
			Women	Girls	Boys
Detainees visited and monitored individually		98			208
Detainees newly registered		53			
Number of visits carried out		11			
Number of places of detention visited		11			
Restoring family links					
RCMs distributed		1			
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative		46			

\* Unaccompanied minors/separated children

1. Greece. In other countries, cases of civilians for which family-links activities are deployed are recorded with the National Societies dealing with the cases.