

# 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.

BUDGET IN KCHF	
Protection	2,180
Assistance	-
Prevention	457
Cooperation with National Societies	342
General	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,980</b>
<i>Of which: Overheads</i>	<i>182</i>

PERSONNEL	
Mobile staff	1
Resident staff (daily workers not included)	-

## MAIN TARGETS FOR 2014

- ▶ irregular migrants stranded in Greece restore family links through a temporary ICRC office set up in Athens to support the Hellenic Red Cross and other National Societies in the region
- ▶ the authorities and forensic practitioners in the main zones of arrival enhance their capacities and coordination mechanisms to address the issues of missing migrants and of detained and/or unaccompanied minors
- ▶ the detaining authorities take steps to clarify the legal framework applicable to detainees convicted by international tribunals who are serving their sentences in their respective countries
- ▶ partnerships with European National Societies contribute to the capacity building of other National Societies, the response to migration issues, the strengthening of family-links services and IHL promotion
- ▶ governments and National Societies in the region actively support the Health Care in Danger project, including through a regional workshop organized with the Norwegian Red Cross

## CONTEXT

Most of Europe is still in the grips of economic recession, with austerity measures and high unemployment levels sparking unrest and political instability in some countries. Global and regional security is a leading concern, as is migration. Several European countries are involved in international/non-international armed conflicts through political mediation and/or military intervention, mainly as part of multilateral organizations such as the European Union (EU) and NATO. European governments are major providers of development and humanitarian aid.

Asylum and migration policies are a priority in the EU, both for individual States and for EU governing institutions, as Europe continues to attract migrants fleeing violence or seeking better economic prospects. Irregular migrants are particularly vulnerable and face extreme poverty, lack of access to basic services including health care, unlawful administrative detention with risk of ill-treatment, racism,

loss of contact with their families, or disappearance. Many enter southern Europe through Italy, Greece, Malta, Spain or Turkey. To stem the flow, several governments have imposed strict immigration and border controls and employ detention and the forced/voluntary return of irregular migrants, both adults and minors.

Former internees released from the US internment facility at Guantanamo Bay Naval Station in Cuba have been accepted for resettlement by some European countries. Europe also hosts the International Criminal Court (ICC), the Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL), and the Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals (MICT), which took over some functions of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). Remand detainees are held in The Hague, Netherlands, while convicted detainees are serving their sentences in third countries.

## HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

In response to humanitarian concerns surrounding migration, the ICRC, through a temporary office, will provide migrants stranded in Greece with family-links services, while helping the Hellenic Red Cross resume tracing activities for them. It will also help the National Societies in the main zones of arrival strengthen their capacities to respond

to migrants' needs, particularly during the summer, when arrivals of irregular migrants peak. While reminding authorities of the principle of *non-refoulement*, the ICRC will document possible abuses and make representations to the parties concerned, particularly in Greece, Italy, Malta and Spain, with a view to preventing such violations.

The ICRC will pursue operational dialogue with key national authorities. Notably, it will engage with the Greek authorities, aiming to prevent the detention of unaccompanied minors and to improve conditions in detention and reception centres. When necessary, it will provide material assistance to migrants held in such facilities.

To improve the likelihood of identifying the remains of migrants who perish during their journey, the ICRC will encourage the development of national and regional mechanisms to centralize forensic data and enable the exchange of information among practitioners and other relevant stakeholders.

Whenever possible with the relevant National Society, the ICRC will seek to ensure that the humanitarian needs of people formerly held in the Guantanamo Bay internment facility and resettled in Europe are addressed adequately. In parallel, it will share its findings and recommendations with the authorities in host countries and with the former detaining authorities.

As the monitoring body for people held on remand or convicted by the three Europe-based international tribunals, the ICRC will continue to visit people detained in The Hague and in European countries where they are serving their sentences. It will encourage the international tribunals and the authorities concerned to ensure that detention conditions comply with internationally recognized standards, and to harmonize their detention legal frameworks when necessary. The ICRC will pursue discussions with the national

authorities regarding visits to detainees, particularly people held on security-related charges, and, whenever possible, carry out visits according to its standard procedures.

Alongside the National Societies, focusing in priority on Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain and Sweden, the ICRC will seek further support for IHL and for measures to address humanitarian concerns related to migration, international detention and overseas military operations, as well as for the ICRC's mandate and neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action, both from these countries and from the international bodies of which they are members. The ICRC will undertake activities to promote the ratification/implementation of IHL treaties. It will also pursue discussions with the authorities concerned on safeguarding its confidentiality and immunity.

To foster cooperation with and among National Societies, the ICRC will encourage peer-to-peer support through the exchange of expertise, enabling them to build on each other's strengths to identify more cooperation opportunities in areas of operational and institutional interest. It will look to the National Societies for support, notably in strengthening the emergency response capacities of other National Societies in countries affected by violence and in developing a coordinated regionwide approach to addressing migration-related issues – such as the need for family-links services – in line with the Movement's Fundamental Principles.