

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 2013:

- ▶ the Italian and Maltese Red Cross Societies strengthened their family-links services for migrants with support from the ICRC, which took over the processing of over 700 pending tracing requests from the Hellenic Red Cross
- ▶ Movement partners, regional forensic technicians and other stakeholders pooled their expertise to effect improvements in restoring family links and in managing information on missing or deceased migrants
- ▶ National Societies and the ICRC enhanced cooperation in promoting IHL and other Movement concerns, particularly in relation to the Health Care in Danger project and sexual violence in armed conflict
- ▶ the ICRC welcomed the signature of the Arms Trade Treaty by 36 European States and its ratification by Iceland, as well as the ratification of the Kampala amendments to the Rome Statute by six States in the region

EXPENDITURE (in KCHF)

Protection	1,503
Assistance	-
Prevention	310
Cooperation with National Societies	440
General	-

2,253

of which: Overheads **138**

IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	88%
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PERSONNEL

Mobile staff	6
Resident staff (daily workers not included)	8

YEARLY RESULT

Level of achievement of ICRC yearly objectives/plans of action

HIGH

PROTECTION	Total
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)	
Red Cross messages (RCMs)	
RCMs distributed	1
Phone calls facilitated between family members	4
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)	
ICRC visits	
Detainees visited	2,784
Detainees visited and monitored individually	26
Number of visits carried out	32
Number of places of detention visited	30
Restoring family links	
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative	4

CONTEXT

Many European countries continued to experience economic recession, with austerity measures and high unemployment rates sparking unrest and political instability in some places. Global and regional security, including issues related to data protection, remained a concern, as did migration-related issues.

Irregular migrants continued to cross the Mediterranean Sea into southern Europe, in higher numbers in the second half of the year. Greece tightened security at its borders with Turkey, which resulted in increased migrant traffic through the Aegean islands, Bulgaria and elsewhere. Economic and security concerns affected many States' absorption capacities; this resulted in stricter immigration rules and the detention and/or forced or voluntary return of migrants, both adults and minors, to their places of origin. The capsizing of migrants' vessels in October off the Italian island of Lampedusa and the coast of Malta, and footage of migrants at a holding centre, revived debates within the European Union (EU) on border management and on the treatment and conditions of detained migrants.

Europe is home to the permanent International Criminal Court (ICC) and the ad hoc International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), both based in The Hague, Netherlands. The UN Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals (MICT) assumed the ICTY's residual functions in July.

ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

To contribute to putting the specific issues and problems faced by vulnerable migrants high on the European agenda, the ICRC advocated at several levels to sensitize the European authorities to the humanitarian objectives of the Movement's family-links activities, particularly for unaccompanied minors. Coordination among Movement partners, through regular discussions and conferences, strengthened the humanitarian response to migration-related issues.

Missions to Greece enabled the ICRC to: collect first-hand information about the situation of migrants in the country, including those in detention; deepen its understanding of the legal frameworks associated with migration; and strengthen its contacts with local and regional authorities and forensic specialists. The ICRC brought the concerns of vulnerable migrants to the authorities' attention – regarding the transfer of minors to suitable holding centres, for example, it also provided material assistance on an ad hoc basis to minors at a detention centre. Following the closure of the Hellenic Red Cross's tracing services for migrants, the ICRC, with the National Society's agreement, took over the processing of hundreds of pending tracing requests as well as new ones.

ICRC delegates were deployed to Italy and Malta following the capsizing of migrants' vessels in the Mediterranean Sea in October, enabling the National Societies concerned to reinforce their tracing services and assist irregular migrants in restoring contact with their relatives.

The ICRC organized or participated in regional conferences and meetings, which helped enhance coordination among Movement partners and other stakeholders responding to the needs of irregular migrants. For example, a regional conference on the management and identification of human remains in Milan, Italy, enabled forensic specialists and other stakeholders to share best practices in managing information related to missing or deceased migrants.

Bilateral partnerships with European National Societies helped strengthen operational and institutional cooperation, with an emphasis on: promoting IHL, including through the "Strengthening IHL" process; addressing humanitarian issues linked to migration; developing and implementing Movement policies; and promoting the goals of the Health Care in Danger project. Notably, the Swedish Red Cross and the ICRC signed a partnership framework agreement during the 2013 Council of Delegates in Sydney, Australia.

Regular exchanges with State and regional authorities, as well as international organizations, and participation in various regional conferences helped advance treaty participation and domestic implementation of IHL, particularly with regard to international crimes. It also enabled discussions on IHL-related issues such as the protection of cultural property during armed conflict, raised awareness of humanitarian issues and gained support for the ICRC's position on data protection reforms.

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. Detaining authorities drew on the ICRC's expertise to ensure compliance with internationally recognized standards of detention and best practices in enforcing sentences. The ICRC also helped facilitate the handover of the ICTY's residual functions to the MICT.

The ICRC continued to follow up people previously held at the US internment facility at the Guantanamo Bay Naval Station in Cuba, who had resettled in Europe after their release. It worked with the authorities and the National Societies concerned to ensure that they adapted well to their new circumstances, maintained contact with their families and received assistance according to their specific needs.

CIVILIANS

Irregular migrants arriving in Europe faced many difficulties, including lack of access to basic services. Among the most vulnerable were minors who had become separated from their families and people held in difficult conditions in reception and detention centres, especially in Greece. Many migrants went missing during their perilous journey. Their families had no information on their fate, and the lack of national databases and regional information-sharing mechanisms hampered States' ability to manage and identify the remains of migrants who may have perished along the way.

Vulnerable migrants' family links and other needs raised with the authorities concerned

Vulnerable migrants in Greece, including those in detention, shared their concerns with the ICRC during missions conducted with the Hellenic Red Cross and other National Societies to better understand their situations. Their family-links and protection needs were brought to the attention of the authorities concerned. Meanwhile, working with specialists enabled the ICRC to get a better grasp of the complexities of migration law in Greece, particularly regarding unaccompanied minors, detention and returns. Dialogue with the authorities at various levels created possibilities for cooperation in placing minors in suitable centres or transferring them elsewhere within the EU. It also enabled the ICRC to explain the strictly humanitarian objectives of the Movement's family-links activities for migrants (see *Brussels*).

Movement efforts enable migrants to restore family contact

Following the October tragedies (see *Context*), the ICRC undertook missions to Italy and Malta to assess family-links/ forensic needs and capacities. Deployment of additional ICRC staff and provision of technical support reinforced the National Societies' capacities to help vulnerable migrants restore contact with their relatives. In Malta, this resulted in: the development of new tracing guidelines and procedures; the creation of a permanent position within the National Society specifically for family-links activities; and the establishment of a phone service that helped detained migrants get in touch with their relatives (see *People deprived of their freedom*). Dialogue was initiated with the Maltese authorities, with a view to securing an ante/post-mortem data sharing between national forensic services and the National Society.

Despite reinforced Movement support, the Hellenic Red Cross was forced to close its tracing services for migrants in April, owing to the economic climate and internal restructuring. It agreed to let the ICRC take over the processing of over 700 pending tracing requests; new requests were submitted by people searching for their relatives, with some cases resolved.

Acting as an advisor, the delegation encouraged the processing of cases between National Societies and ICRC delegations. At technical workshops, the National Societies of France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Spain and Tunisia discussed tracing capacities and tackled pending cases with ICRC delegates from Libya and Tunisia. Several families that had submitted tracing requests were reunited with their relatives, some with travel documents issued by the ICRC delegation in their place of departure. At a meeting in Spain, Movement partners reviewed and closed 80 tracing cases and proposed coordination mechanisms to improve family-links services for migrants.

Regional stakeholders improve coordination on forensic issues

In 2011, a forensic assessment concluded the need to gain keener insight into the management of human remains in Italy, Malta and Spain. In 2013, the University of Milan and the ICRC jointly organized a regional conference on the subject. At the conference, forensic technicians, police services and National Society tracing delegates from southern Europe discussed: best practices in establishing national post-mortem databases; methods of dealing with large volumes of cases of missing or deceased migrants; data-protection/sharing issues; and the need to standardize forensic practices at national and regional levels. The conference also enabled some of the region's forensics institutions and experts to familiarize themselves with the ICRC's advisory and coordination role.

Other meetings enhanced coordination among Movement partners along migration routes: the Platform for European Red Cross Cooperation on Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrants organized a workshop in Hungary, which focused on data management and on helping migrants restore contact with their families. Over 30 National Societies and the International Federation participated in an annual conference in Portugal on restoring family links: discussions centred on missing migrants, forensic issues and the development of Web-based tools for information sharing.

Released Guantanamo Bay internees maintain contact with their families

Eleven former Guantanamo Bay internees resettled across seven European countries discussed their situation with ICRC representatives, who maintained regular contact with them, assisted them in staying in touch with their families, monitored their integration with the help of the National Societies involved, and whenever necessary, made recommendations to the authorities, who provided the necessary assistance.

A former internee resettled in Portugal visited his parents, who, having fled the violence in the Syrian Arab Republic (hereafter Syria), had become refugees in Turkey. Two people resettled in Spain received family visits from their families in the Gaza Strip and Saudi Arabia. One person, resettled in Germany, traveled to Saudi Arabia to see his family. In the case of one person resettled in Hungary, for whom State assistance had ceased, discussions with the Hungarian Red Cross, the authorities concerned and the US State Department contributed to the Hungarian authorities considering his needs, approving a residency permit for his wife and allowing the couple to take free language lessons.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

People deprived of their freedom – including ICTY detainees serving their sentences in seven European countries, remand detainees held at the ICTY UN Detention Unit and the ICC Detention Centre in The Hague, detainees held on security charges in two countries, and migrants detained in Greece (see below) – received visits, conducted in accordance with the ICRC's standard procedures. During these visits, delegates monitored detainees' treatment and living conditions to ensure that they complied with internationally recognized standards; and shared their findings and recommendations confidentially with the authorities.

Dialogue was initiated with the Maltese authorities, with a view to securing their approval for visits to migrants in detention.

Detainees in Austria enjoy regular video calls with relatives

While such recommendations the ICRC made following visits mostly concerned the individual detainees visited, some also had an impact on the wider detainee population. For example, all the detainees in one prison in Austria enjoyed regular interaction with their families thanks to an Internet video-call system installed by the penitentiary authorities at the ICRC's suggestion.

Minors at Greek detention centre for migrants contact families with ICRC help

In Greece, over 2,700 migrants, including 68 minors, held in 20 detention facilities, including police stations and reception centres in Athens and in the main zones of arrival (Evros River and in the Aegean Islands) and departure (Igoumenitsa and Patras), communicated their concerns to the ICRC during group interviews. Discussions with the Greek authorities continued to focus on migrants' treatment and living conditions, respect for the principle of *non-refoulement* and implementation of the country's new asylum system. Minors who had been registered as adults were referred to the appropriate authorities, and, with ICRC help, some restored contact with their families. One detained Afghan minor was reunited with his mother in Belgium following ICRC representations to the Greek Ministry of Public Order and Citizen Protection.

In the Amygdaleza detention centre for minors in Attica, 45 minors restored contact with relatives after the detaining authorities granted them weekly access to their mobile phones, in line with the ICRC's recommendations. Minors at a reception centre in the Aegean Islands contacted their families and eased their situation with the help of telephone cards, educational and recreational materials, and furniture provided by the ICRC.

International tribunals draw on ICRC input for transition to MICT

Dialogue continued with the ICC, the ICTY/MICT, the penitentiary services and Justice Ministries of States where ICTY-convicted people were serving their sentences, with discussions moving forward on humanitarian issues linked to detention, international law and institutional matters.

The ICTY handed over its residual functions to the MICT in July 2013, with the ICRC providing input throughout the process. European States enforcing international sentences drew on the ICRC's expertise to ensure that their policies and practices complied with internationally recognized standards and best practices in detention. The enforcement of sentences in the future was also an important theme of the discussions with the ICC.

AUTHORITIES, ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS, AND CIVIL SOCIETY

European States lead signing of Arms Trade Treaty

Regular discussions with the authorities helped advance treaty participation and the adoption of national implementation measures. National Societies supported this process by promoting the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty in line with the ICRC's position (see *New York*). Following its adoption, 36 European States signed the treaty and encouraged other States to do the same. Iceland became the first European State to ratify the treaty; several EU member States completed domestic processes that would enable them to ratify the treaty upon the Council of Europe's authorization. Spain announced that pending the treaty's entry into force, it would provisionally apply the prohibitions against certain arms transfers and the criteria for assessing arms exports.

Andorra, Estonia, Germany, Luxembourg, Norway and Slovenia ratified the Kampala amendments to the Rome Statute; Liechtenstein ratified the Convention on Cluster Munitions; Lithuania and Portugal ratified the Convention on Enforced Disappearance; and Italy and Portugal ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture. Spain approved the amendment of a law prohibiting cluster munitions. Switzerland adopted a law regulating private security companies.

States and their national IHL committees continued to show support for IHL and the ICRC – for instance, by participating in consultations connected with the “Strengthening IHL” process (see *International law and cooperation*). Dialogue with the Austrian authorities explored the possibility of cooperating to promote IHL in the region and enabled the ICRC to follow up the integration of crimes against humanity and war crimes into the country's criminal code. Dialogue with the Spanish national IHL committee paved the way for further cooperation in promoting IHL, particularly with its counterparts in South America.

European countries remained committed to the incorporation of IHL in military exercises. In response to a request, the ICRC participated in predeployment sessions at the NATO training centres in Norway and Poland, and briefed military officers on its activities in Afghanistan (see *Brussels*).

State and regional authorities draw on ICRC input to address humanitarian concerns

At bilateral meetings and in conferences, the ICRC shared its expertise and exchanged views with State and regional authorities, and international organizations on humanitarian issues of mutual concern. It raised awareness of the consequences of using nuclear and chemical weapons and advocated their prohibition. It took part in discussions on improving protection for cultural property in armed conflicts. In high-level meetings with the authorities in Italy, Germany and Spain, it explored opportunities for further cooperation in promoting IHL; it also enlisted their support for its work for vulnerable migrants and for dealing with the obstacles to the humanitarian response to the Syrian conflict. Such dialogue also enabled the ICRC to explain and garner support for its position on data protection reforms (see *Brussels*).

At the Global Conference on Reclaiming the Protection of Civilians under International Humanitarian Law in Norway, participants considered ICRC input in adopting recommendations for reducing harm to civilians in military operations and for promoting compliance with IHL during armed conflicts. Discussions with the Coalition for the International Criminal Court, the Genocide Network and individual States aimed at advancing the integration of sanctions against international crimes and universal jurisdiction into domestic laws.

An EU/ICRC awareness campaign (see *Brussels*) enabled people in several European cities to learn about the various dangers attending health care delivery in conflicts.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM	AUSTRIA	DENMARK	ESTONIA	FINLAND	GREECE	ICC/ICTY	ITALY	NORWAY	SWEDEN
ICRC visits									
Detainees visited	2	3	2	1	2,758	15	2	1	1
<i>of whom women</i>					27				
<i>of whom minors</i>					68				
Detainees visited and monitored individually	2	3	2	1		15 ¹	2	1	1
Number of visits carried out	1	1	1	1	21	3	2	1	1
Number of places of detention visited	1	1	1	1	20	2	2	1	1
Restoring family links									
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative						4			

1. Including one detainee visited in ICC/ICTY and later in Denmark.

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

Movement cooperation strengthened through joint initiatives

The region's National Societies and the ICRC continued to strengthen cooperation, drawing on each other's fields of expertise to address humanitarian issues of common concern. The Swedish Red Cross and the ICRC signed a partnership framework agreement, with a view to defining partnership objectives in 2014. Similar agreements with the German Red Cross and the Norwegian Red Cross focused, *inter alia*, on operational partnership opportunities, thematic issues and IHL promotion. Meanwhile, the Netherlands Red Cross and the ICRC identified areas for cooperation.

German, Norwegian and Spanish Red Cross representatives participated in expert consultations associated with the Health Care in Danger project. The Norwegian Red Cross finalized a project agreement to promote the goals of the project and, with the support of the Mexican Red Cross and the ICRC, produced a report proposing ways to make the delivery of ambulance and pre-hospital care safer during armed conflict and other emergencies, which it presented at the 2013 Council of Delegates.

Also at the Council of Delegates, the Norwegian and Swedish National Societies, along with other National Societies, co-chaired a workshop in support of an ICRC initiative to strengthen the response to sexual violence in armed conflict and other situations of violence.

Discussions with the Spanish Red Cross focused on expanding cooperation in promoting IHL and in activities supporting violence-affected communities in Latin America. The ICRC also followed up the implementation of a memorandum of understanding with the Nordic National Societies on the promotion of IHL and neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action.

Following a mid-term evaluation of their joint pilot initiative – that provided capacity-building/organizational development support for National Societies working in Guinea, the occupied Palestinian territory and South Sudan – the Danish Red Cross and the ICRC explored the possibility of extending the initiative to other contexts.

Movement partners met regularly and pooled their efforts to ensure a coherent response to migration-related needs; these efforts included supporting National Societies along the main migration routes. The Danish and Swedish National Societies joined the ICRC on a mission to Greece to assess the Hellenic Red Cross's family-links services (see *Civilians*).

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS: PROTECTION		Total		
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)¹				
Red Cross messages (RCMs)			UAMs/SCs*	
RCMs distributed		1		
Phone calls facilitated between family members		4		
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)				
ICRC visits			Women	Minors
Detainees visited		2,784	27	68
Detainees visited and monitored individually ²		26		
Number of visits carried out		32		
Number of places of detention visited		30		
Restoring family links				
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative		4		

* Unaccompanied minors/separated children

1. Nearly all cases of civilians for which family-links activities are deployed are recorded with the National Societies dealing with the cases. Therefore no figures are available for these cases in ICRC databases. Cases from the Hellenic Red Cross handed over to the ICRC had not been recorded in ICRC databases by end-2013 yet.
2. Including one detainee visited in ICC/ICTY and later in Denmark.