

# COVID-19 OPERATION

## REGIONAL MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF RED CROSS AND  
RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES  
Regional Office for Europe

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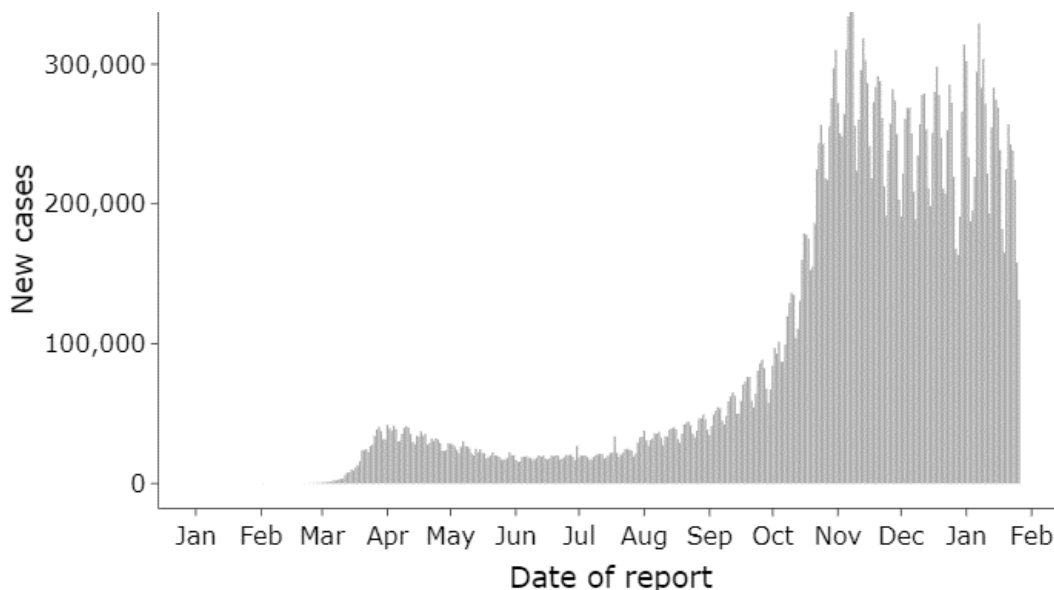












# Epidemiological overview

In the reporting period, the epidemiological situation in Europe remained alarming, although the region saw a slight but steady decline of weekly new cases for four weeks in a row in the month of January. The situation varies greatly from country to country and some countries in the region are reporting accelerated increasing of new cases. The number of new deaths on the contrary showed a slight increase for a three consecutive weeks

before showing a slight decrease towards the end of the month. A concerning trend of case incidence and deaths rising in older age groups was observed. Although the Europe region reported a continued decrease of new weekly cases, it still accounts for the second greatest proportion of new weekly cases worldwide, while death rates have continued to increase and accounted for approximately half of newly reported global deaths.

Development of daily new COVID-19 cases in Europe region



Country (top 10 - overall cases)	Cases - cumulative total	Deaths - cumulative total	Cases - last seven days	
<b>Regional overview</b>	<b>36,726,706</b>	<b>814,876</b>	<b>941,772</b>	
 Russian Federation	4,086,090	80,520	102,893	↑
 The United Kingdom	4,038,082	117,166	92,398	↑
 France	3,406,616	81,393	128,115	→
 Spain	3,041,454	64,217	39,827	↑
 Italy	2,721,879	93,577	85,141	→
 Turkey	2,586,183	27,471	54,727	↓
 Germany	2,338,987	27,471	50,442	↑
 Poland	1,591,497	40,832	38,811	→
 Ukraine	1,273,475	24,392	26,485	↑
 Czechia	1,090,860	18,250	53,455	→

Data source: WHO 16/02/2021. Symbols indicating changes in COVID-19 situation are based on 14-days incidence rates. More information [here](#).

Cover picture credits: Spanish Red Cross, January 2021. Spanish Red Cross teams are assisting people affected by the extreme winter weather and storm Filomena.

# IFRC Highlights

- 32 National Societies in the Europe Region received funding support from the global COVID-19 Emergency Appeal since the beginning of 2020. There is an ongoing operational engagement with these NSs with total allocations of CHF 47.4 million (excl. DG SANTE).
- Conversations with NSs through Country/Country Cluster Offices on several new funding possibilities are ongoing, while at the same time consultations are being held to adjust allocated funding to be more relevant in light of the changing (immunization) context.
- These also include a review of the feasibility of the implementation timeframes and whether extensions are needed. Across the Europe region, 51% of the current income timeframe will end by the end of April 2021, leaving 19 recipient NSs with approx. CHF 21 million for the remainder of 2021.

***“The funding gap for the Europe region stands at CHF 22.5 million.”***

- Since December 2020, 7 EU member state National Societies obtained funding from DG SANTE through the IFRC for CHF 38.7 million to increase their mobile testing capacities. Participating NSs are: Austria, Germany, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal and Spain. Implementation of the initiative started with a foreseen implementation end date of July 2021.
- The latest (revised) regional Emergency Plan of Action (EPoA) published on 13 July 2020, reflects the COVID-19 operation for the Europe region in the three Federation-wide operational priorities of Sustaining Health & WASH; Addressing Socio-economic Impact; and NS Strengthening. On 2 February 2021, an [Immunization Annex](#) to the COVID-19 Emergency Appeal was launched. This annex highlights the pressing need of supporting COVID-19 vaccine roll-out globally. It is foreseen that by early March 2021, a revised global Emergency Appeal will be published, and subsequently the Europe Region EPoA will be updated to reflect new operational plans and funding ask.
- In the Europe region, there are currently 3 NSs on the ‘new’ WWPP (Working With Project Partners) cash transfer modality. This means that in partnership with the NSs, various departments of the IFRC have reviewed the internal regulations of the NSs and concluded that risk management of procedures is in line with overall donor compliance regulations. Therefore, the IFRC is able to transfer pre-paid donor funding to these NSs and the donor compliance risk is managed by the NS on behalf of the IFRC. For 2021, the Regional Office for Europe foresees to increase the number of NSs on WWPP cash modality to 10 in total.

## New study finds coronavirus has left older people poorer, sicker and more alone

The COVID-19 pandemic is having catastrophic health, social and financial impacts on older people in Europe's South Caucasus region, according to a new study lead by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

The study, which was carried out in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, shows that the consequences of COVID-19 are being borne disproportionately by poor and older people who have become poorer, sicker and more isolated.

The research involved 2,200 older people, as well as health care workers and Red Cross and Red Crescent volunteer aged care workers.

Olga Dzhumaeva , the head of the IFRC's Country Cluster delegation for South Caucuses, said older people make up a growing proportion of society in all three countries, and were already facing diverse and complex challenges before the onset of COVID-19.

“In all three countries, access to appropriate care among older people was found to be deficient. The report highlights dramatic consequences of the pandemic for the older including increased loneliness, isolation, poverty and decreasing access to health services.”



Picture 1: Georgia Red Cross Society

*The dramatic consequences of the pandemic for older people include increased loneliness, isolation, poverty and decreasing access to health services.*



*Picture 2: Magen David Adom in Israel, January 2021*

## Israel becomes world's first country to vaccinate all nursing home residents

Magen David Adom, Israel's emergency medical and blood-service organization, reported on 7 January 2021 that it had completed the first round of vaccinations in all of the country's nursing home and elder-care facilities, making Israel the first country in the world to provide phase 1 vaccinations to all its nursing home patients. The second round of vaccinations is underway, during which residents and employees will receive the second and final dose.

The coronavirus vaccination drive for nursing home and extended-care facility patients began 22 December and finished just over a fortnight later, vaccinating the nation's 150,000 nursing home residents.

# National Society Highlights

For full details of the field report submissions, please click on the link contained in the name of the National Society, which will take you to the IFRC GO country emergency page. To access the National Society webpage, please click on the link contained in each logo. Submissions that contain updates since last report are indicated with an asterisk.

## [Albanian Red Cross\\*](#)



During January 2021, ARC has provided immediate in-kind (food) aid to 1,000 most affected families (5,000 persons) with the support of IFRC. In addition, home care is provided to 250 older people who have been visited by multifunction mobile teams providing health check-ups, PSS and food packages.

Az the same time, ARC started the preparations for household selection and registration, targeting for winterization, unconditional cash and voucher assistance to address basic needs of 2,000 families/households (HHs), which is planned to start next month. ARC mobile volunteer teams are identifying HHs through a face-to-face interview/ assessment process by Kobo system, visiting affected HHs. 30,000 leaflets of describing details of CVA were distributed among HHs for better understanding about the CVA programme. More than 80 volunteers and 40 staff from 38 ARC local branches are trained on Kobo system and CVA fundamental procedures, and on the needs assessment (door to door) process as well. ARC is sharing updated information on a daily basis on its social media platforms such as how to keep safe in public areas, how people can protect themselves; key messages about stigma around COVID-19, perceptions of the disease, and animation posts with mental health advices and other relevant topics. Some 30,000 leaflets with essential information about COVID-19 and other additional information such as: taking care during the COVID-19 pandemic; caring for vulnerable groups and caring for volunteers have been distributed overall in the country. To support the population to address inquiries and to provide essential information and practical advices related to COVID-19 and to provide PSS as well, a hotline is established and is functional to the public.

## [Andorran Red Cross\\*](#)



During the month of January 2021, staff and volunteers of the Andorran Red Cross implemented the following activities: Red Cross personnel running Stop-labs has so far conducted 67,997 tests including TMA and antigen tests at the request of the Government. Andorran Red Cross has 20 volunteers at the food bank helping over 580 people, and around 120 were involved in collecting food and other necessities for the food bank (*botiga solidaria*). As day care centres are closed, 17 volunteers are providing care for older people at home. The RC transferred 173 COVID-19 positive people to hospitals, and reinforced health centres with 5 RC health workers. The COVID-19 awareness-raising campaigns and trainings continue.

## [Armenian Red Cross Society\\*](#)



The ARCS hotline in Yerevan and the regions continues to function with the provision of information about COVID-19 transmission and safety, risk communication messages on the rules of hygiene, etc. During the reporting period, 1,412 individuals were provided with information and support, as well as referrals through the hotline. The bulk of the calls were documented as requests, i.e. for food & non-food support, cash and shelter, technical questions and psychological support. Furthermore, the ARCS is systematically collecting and analysing data gathered through the hotline services and its daily activities in the communities. This data pool is used strategically to adjust the response as the situation evolves in parallel with vaccination developments and people's expectations, attitudes, and perceptions.

## Austrian Red Cross\*



AUSTRIAN RED CROSS

Since the start of the outbreak in the country, a total of 111,338 transportations of infectious people and 521,807 COVID-19 helpline calls were handled by the Austrian Red Cross. 1,652,647 regular COVID-19 tests were performed by RC staff and 121 mobile teams are still actively conducting tests on a daily basis. 58 drive-in and 139 fixed testing stations, as well as 14 quarantine accommodations remain open and operational. Besides other COVID-19 bilateral and multilateral deployments, the Austrian Red Cross has 3 people currently deployed to the IFRC Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia in response to the viral disease (two Cash and Voucher Assistance delegates and one for Partnership and Resource Development).

## Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan\*



During the reporting period, AzRC continued its efforts through its regional centres and local branches in Baku and Sumgayit cities towards risk communication, community engagement and accountability (RC/CEA), and public awareness-raising about COVID-19 safety measures. In January 2021, 12,100 people were reached directly and 60,500 people indirectly through risk communication and health and hygiene promotion. The AzRC hotline in Baku and regions continues to function and provides information on COVID-19, risk communication messages on the rules of hygiene, COVID-19 safety, etc. Lately, the majority of incoming calls have been categorized as inquiries regarding the government restrictions and the lockdown; requesting support (food/non-food assistance or other social assistance) by the people living in the regions; as well as looking for missing people in the NK conflict. During the reporting period, AzRC hotline responded to 1,470 calls (559 men and 911 women), of which 225 were from Baku and Sumgayit cities and 1,245 from the regions. The project jointly implemented with UNICEF on the PROACT Training Initiative has started. The NS is involved in supporting the logistics/administrative part and works on the awareness-raising among communities with particular focus on risk communication. NS is currently working on risk communication plan. The Report of the Impact Study of COVID-19 on Older People and Caregivers report has been finalised and will be shared with partners shortly. The NS is currently working on the preparation of video-interviews with the assessment respondents, which will be also shared with the partners and stakeholders.

## Belarus Red Cross



The number of COVID-19 cases among the population of Belarus continues to be high. All health facilities have switched to work in the context of assisting COVID-19 – most of the planned activities have been cancelled. In this regard, the number of requests to BRCS to assist citizens in issuing prescriptions does not decrease: about 600 volunteers provided 7,012 services to vulnerable citizens, including level 1 contacts. This includes issuing prescriptions and medicines, delivering food and basic necessities, paying for utilities, etc. Since 1 April 2020, 1,812 volunteers have been involved, 78,980 services have been provided to more than 50,000 vulnerable citizens. As for the work of the hotline 201, the volunteer initiative "support call" continues to operate at the regional level. Since the launch of this initiative in June 2020, more than 11,000 calls have been made.

## The Red Cross Society of Bosnia and Herzegovina



Throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, Red Cross organizations continue to provide support to isolated citizens by providing psychosocial support (179), medicine purchase (195), grocery store shopping (125), distribution of hot meals (9,411), hygiene parcels (556), food parcels (1,727), masks (1,539), gloves (511) and disinfection (220). The Red Cross disinfected dozens of public spaces and provided support in human resources to local authorities and to civil protection. In addition to regular activities, such as delivering food to isolated citizens, disinfecting public areas and distributing disinfectants, capacities are focused on helping

the health system and citizens to combat the pandemic. On 1 December 2020, the Red Cross branch in Brcko District signed a cooperation agreement with the local health centre with the aim of providing assistance to the affected population, as well as of supporting the health system. The Red Cross provided the Brcko health centre with a team of volunteers and an ambulance for the daily transport of suspected cases and patients with COVID-19 infection in this area. Together with the Red Cross staff, the team also includes a health worker from the centre. This team performed 245 transports in December. In addition, in cooperation with the PHI and the Department of Public Safety, heated tents were set up in the yard of the health centre with food and drinks for the citizens waiting in front of the COVID-19 ambulance. Besides Brcko, the Red Cross in the municipality of Kalinovik provides support to the local health centre in the transportation of potentially infected persons. In December, they had 37 such transports.

### British Red Cross\*



Throughout the United Kingdom, the British Red Cross has maintained its core COVID-19 interventions to provide support to isolated and vulnerable individuals and communities. Renewed national lockdowns increased demand for our services, with 2,547 instances of 'at-home' practical support (including food and medicine deliveries), 942 COVID-19 patient support journeys and 487 refugee accommodation actions achieved throughout January. Our emotional and practical support line assisted 2,129 people, primarily in signposting to access food delivery or cash-based assistance through our Hardship Fund, targeted at those with no recourse to public funds. These activities feature alongside critical business-as-usual activity, with our Winter Pressures scheme freeing capacity of the National Health Service staff through hospital discharge support (2,049 people) and facilitating patient transport (1,968 journeys). However, the primary focus currently is supporting the UK-wide vaccination effort, with over ten million people in the UK having now received at least one dose of the vaccine. We assisted 20,085 people in January with emotional and practical support at five key government vaccination sites (more forthcoming), with 206 volunteers and 108 staff deployed. Working alongside other voluntary sector organisations, particularly St John Ambulance, British Red Cross has launched a volunteer training programme to allow administering of the vaccine to vulnerable groups. Significant 'myth-busting' information social-media campaigns are operating in tandem to challenge misinformation and reduce vaccine hesitancy amongst the most vulnerable communities.

### Bulgarian Red Cross\*



The activities of the Bulgarian RC in response to COVID-19 continue in the following priority areas: logistics and dispatch of PPE as well as medical equipment to hospitals; food support for various vulnerable groups; public activities related to hygiene promotion and prevention; PSS and emotional support through local hotlines managed by the RC branches, national PSS chat served by psychologists, hotline for refugees and migrants, and information and prevention activities on social media. Parts of Bulgarian RC operations are supported by USAID within the global effort of the IFRC to combat the pandemic. As such, the NS already distributed hygiene kits to 99% of the targeted 30,000 people, and activity kits for 1,654 children. Hygiene promotion activities have expanded in Roma communities with over 430 hygiene promotion sessions. In total, the support of the Bulgarian RC to the population reaches over 416,000 people who received material, emotional support or participated in public events, and another 498,000 people who were reached through social and traditional media. The current phase of the response is focused on the promotion of vaccination and reducing uncertainty and fear, including targeting myths and false information.

### Croatian Red Cross\*



The Croatian Red Cross continues to monitor the epidemiologic situation related to COVID-19 to ensure risk reduction and hygiene measures. Croatian Red Cross teams also help hundreds of people affected by the strong earthquake measuring 6.2 on the Richter scale, which hit Petrinja town on 29 December 2020. More than 150 trained Red Cross personnel are helping every day to meet people's basic needs (distribute food, water, blankets, clothes, collect requests for payment) and observe COVID-19 protective measures during the emergency operation. The Call Center (0800 11 88) operates on a daily basis and the psychosocial support phone line

is working to alleviate people's anxiety due to the COVID-19 situation, but also due to new earthquake shocks occurring. Despite the overall situation, the interventions of the Croatian Red Cross continue to fill the gaps in all 21 counties. Home care services are provided for 20,000 vulnerable persons by the assistance of 5,100 personnel (3,500 volunteers and 1,600 staff). COVID-19 risk reduction measures are also maintained at the two Reception Centers for Asylum Seekers in Zagreb city and Kutina town. A mass promotion campaign with a handwashing guide leaflet/ poster is advertised in a large number of places across the country.



### Cyprus Red Cross Society

CRCS created information leaflets on COVID-19 in four languages, English, Greek, Turkish, and Arabic, which were distributed nationwide for dissemination, as well as to all the facilities that the CRCS staff and volunteers visit e.g. Migrants Centres (Kofinou Centre for the Reception and Accommodation of Asylum Seekers, Kokkinotrimithia First Reception Centre for Asylum Seekers) and to various stakeholders. To cater for the needs of the most vulnerable, CRCS has been operating the "Emergency Service for the Support of Older People and Vulnerable Groups". The Service provides food supplies and other necessities such as pharmaceuticals or other kinds of assistance (provision of oxygen/respirators, items for persons with disabilities, transport to medical/ paramedical institutions for emergency treatment or therapy, payments of utility bills, transport to the bank, etc). Applicants may call the dedicated hotline (22504419) located in the Headquarters. The Emergency Service hotline has been operating daily, including public holidays. The CRCS, through the Service and through its units has provided free food supplies and other necessities, to more than 12,000 persons. Additionally, after constantly evaluating the emergency needs of the most vulnerable of our society, CRCS has established the new psychosocial support (PSS) service "Let's Talk". This emergency service is currently available for the older people in self-isolation. The CRCS will soon extend the service in order to reach the general population. Through this dedicated telephone line, the staff and volunteers of CRCS trained in PSS and Psychological First Aid (PFA) offer their services daily, to help people who suffer stress, loneliness and feelings of depression, or simply, general concerns on the pandemic. In the Kokkinotrimithia First Reception Centre, migrants receive leaflets on COVID-19, on the Services, and on health and hygiene promotion, with three brochures available in English, French, Turkish, Arabic, Urdu, Farsi and Kurdish. CRCS activities in the Centre of Kofinou (psychosocial support and recreational activities) have been postponed due to the new security measures of the Government. However, humanitarian needs continue to be catered upon request (i.e. medicines and kits for pregnant women and new-born children).

### Czech Red Cross\*



The Czech Red Cross (CRC) started its ["Vaccination against COVID 19: Important – Czech Red Cross Is Helping" program](#), promoting vaccination and encouraging people to get vaccinated. CRC is currently involved in the vaccination of older people in senior facilities, running mobile vaccination units in Prague and Olomouc. At headquarters level, CRC conducts educative campaigns on COVID-19 on its websites and social media. It works in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and the Integrated Rescue System. It provides counselling services and cooperates with private sector partners as well such as in the ["We Will Manage It" program](#) on health and hygiene promotion and mental health issues. As part of [the "I Help to Care" project](#), CRC in cooperation with the Ministry of Health organizes courses for voluntary auxiliary medical staff in Prague and Brno since 5 October 2020. The trainings are held in a hospital environment, familiarizing the applicants with the running of medical facilities, caring for sick people and medical ethics. The voluntary auxiliary medical staff is also planned to support field hospitals in Brno. In cooperation with the Czech army, CRC started providing courses for 500 soldiers, so-called non-medical staff members, to be trained on the basics of caring for sick people. They will be deployed to civil medical and social facilities to support professional medical staff. The courses are held by the CRC local branch of Olomuk and by the Prague branch directly in a field hospital. Families in the country are facing problems relating to the online education of their children because of a lack of technical equipment. In the ["Give a Notebook" program](#), donors can support schools with electronic equipment. CRC is also organizing plasma donation for treatment of those infected with COVID-19. CRC local branches coordinate volunteers to provide aid for the

most vulnerable such as older people, children and those living with disability. They help with shopping for basic food items, drugstore goods and medicines, and provide transport services including medical transportation. The CRC local branches work together with the local authorities (many of them being part of local Crisis Teams), organizing blood donations, operating hotlines, providing psychosocial support services, producing and distributing masks and other protective equipment and emergency tents, assisting parents with children's education in home schooling, and are supporting hospitals and other social and medical facilities such as asylums and homes for older people. Between 18 and 24 January 2021, the CRC had 143 staff, 122 members and 70 volunteers. 9 local branches were involved in vaccination support activities, while 225 local branch facilities in COVID-19 testing. Hotlines received 360 calls and provided 267 consultations.

### Danish Red Cross



DRC HQ has set up two call centres, where the NS on behalf of the Danish authorities hosts a COVID-19 call centre for three weeks. In the second call centre DRC has established a network linking those in need of support services (shopping/walking the dog) with volunteers to support them. More than 10,000 persons have volunteered. DRC is also supporting in running a shelter for the homeless and undocumented migrants, who have symptoms of COVID-19. A phone service platform has been set up so that volunteers can chat with people who are alone.

### Estonian Red Cross\*



In cooperation with local municipalities, 14 volunteers of the Narva and Pärnumaa branches are providing food aid and medicines for 30 people living alone. The Paldiski Branch is involved in their local municipality's crisis committee and ready to respond according to the need. The Tartumaa Branch is ready to expand online trainings on viruses for school students all over the country.

### Finnish Red Cross



The Finnish Red Cross Society remains on standby to support the government as new needs arise as well as continues to support the most vulnerable people. This assistance includes food aid, friend-service activities, the possibility to reopen a helpline, as well as youth chat/phone- services. These are essentially all the same activities that have been carried out in the first phase. The main form of assistance has been food aid. Friend-service and errand-assistance are clearly the next largest forms of assistance. Two groups emerge in need of assistance: above all, the older population and, on the other hand, families with children. According to the reporting RC branches, 69% of those assisted are over 70 years old (only 27% reported the age) and 69 % where women (only 15% reported the gender). The most common request for support from the authorities was related to errand-assistance and COVID-19 hot line service. To date, Finnish Red Cross has reached 62,105 people through its COVID-19 response operation.

### French Red Cross\*



Since the beginning of January, the vaccination campaign has been gaining momentum in the country. As part of a dedicated national strategy, the French Red Cross is contributing facilitating and accelerating the vaccination of the population, with particular attention to vulnerable and isolated people. Drawing on its medical, logistical and technical expertise, its extensive territorial coverage, and experience in large-scale vaccination campaigns, the French Red Cross has set up a national strategy and sent a practical guide to the regional health agencies (ARS). The guide sets out three main areas of action: the opening of vaccination centres in the form of small, lightweight, mobile structures which can be set up quickly (in gymnasiums, tents, etc.); the provision of vehicles to rapidly process deliveries of vaccine batches, various materials or personal protective equipment (PPE); the deployment of mobile vaccination units for the most vulnerable and isolated people. In addition, the French Red Cross is also able to carry out

vaccinations within its own health facilities. As of 22 January, more than 600 patients and 400 staff were vaccinated in our facilities. Mobilised differently from one territory to another, the French Red Cross is developing its systems and constantly adapting to the needs and demands of ARS. New actions, in particular mobile systems to reach out to the population, especially the most vulnerable or isolated people, are thus proposed. Finally, anticipating an acceleration of the vaccination campaign and an increase in requests in the field, the association is calling on its teams to mobilise the general public. The government has set up the LAC (Anti-COVID-19) provision. Within this framework, anti-COVID-19 mediators have been created. The aim is to increase the number of people able to support screening centres and carry out mass screening. These mediators can participate in Red Cross schemes. They are trained by the government. Training began in mid-January. These people can take part in the sampling, analysis, recording and communication of antigenic test results, as well as deliver personalised awareness messages on barrier gestures, what to do according to the test results, and information on possible health and social support. In this context, the French Red Cross has been called upon in 40 territories and will be recruiting employees to participate in this action.

### Georgia Red Cross Society\*



During January, 1,650 volunteers were involved in different activities to respond to the needs emerging due to the pandemic. The GRCS MHPSS Coordination Platform continues its work sharing information about existing MHPSS services. The campaign "We help with your help" in Batumi in January 2021, gave supermarket customers the opportunity to donate products for individuals most at risk of COVID-19. During the reporting period, 49 food and 17 hygiene parcels were distributed to socially vulnerable older people living in isolation and to mothers with many children. The awareness-raising activities on COVID-19 safety measures and Personal Protection Equipment continued. In cooperation with UNICEF, CENN and other civil society stakeholders, a Knowledge, Attitude and Practice survey, combined with a Water and Sanitation survey in schools of Georgia was conducted. The survey targeted schoolchildren, their parents, and teachers to develop more comprehensive risk communication strategies. Because of the state restrictions, the study in the targeted schools was conducted remotely. The findings of the survey will inform GRCS programming to ensure the adequate support package is provided to targeted schools, essential for a safe educational environment. GRCS continued to support people seeking information related to COVID-19, country regulations, available social benefits, referral to state and non-state services, provision of Psychological First Aid (PFA), further psychological support and recommendations on home-based care through its hotline. To date, 7 staff members and 10 MHPSS volunteers are involved in the hotline operation in Tbilisi and Batumi branches. During the reporting period, the hotline responded to 1,130 call. The callers mainly have been asking for food & hygiene parcels (93%), technical questions on COVID-19, information/referral to state or non-state services (2%), and psychological support (5%). Psychological Support (online individual sessions and online mindfulness group sessions) for staff and volunteers responding to the COVID-19 crisis was ongoing. Besides, GRCS psychologists provide online psychological consultations to the general population, among them to patients, their family members and medical personnel from self-isolation and quarantine zones, referred from the GRCS hotline. NS provided 1,202 food and hygiene parcels to the most vulnerable households in 4 municipalities. Up to 125 volunteers participated in the distribution. 684 mobile phones with topped up sim cards were delivered to the socially unprotected older people living alone in 10 municipalities of Georgia.

### German Red Cross



Since 10 March 2020, a specific COVID-19 task force was set up with employees of the German RC headquarters. Furthermore, the German RC maintains a liaison office at the Joint Medical Service of the German Bundeswehr and the Ministry of Health, so that effective communication is guaranteed. The main functions of the task force are the following: Coordination of the German RC headquarters and branches responses and assistance in collaboration with public authorities. Conducting operations of the German RC which are commissioned by the Federal Government (e.g. taking care of returnees -care services, MHPSS, medical check-ups during quarantine in a military

barrack or other buildings- patient transport of six Italian (region Bergamo) COVID-19 and two French (region Grand Est) COVID-19 patients for further intensive medical treatment in six hospitals run by the German RC. Provision of situation reports and updates. Central procurement and distribution of PPE and disinfectants. On 17 March 2020, the pandemic was internally classified as a “state of crisis” according to Art. 5.2 of the German Crisis Management Regulation and this is still in force. A detailed and comprehensive Pandemic Preparedness Plan was implemented for the German RC headquarters, which was developed in cooperation with the Robert-Koch-Institute (Germany’s leading governmental institution for public health). The National Society has communicated about COVID-19 via social media and through press releases. So far 13 million Euros has been raised via a Corona-emergency assistance fund. COVID-19 responses on a regional/Länder and local level: The 19 regional branches and the Federal Nursing Association of the German Red Cross and its more than 500 local branches conduct a wide spectrum of COVID-19 activities, such as opening of emergency operation centres, operating quarantine facilities, psychosocial support, support in outpatient clinics, conducting COVID-19 pre-tests, support services for people in home quarantine, infectious disease transports, hotline services, care for homeless people and stranded travellers, emergency day care services in kindergartens and schools.

### Hellenic Red Cross



In the context of HRC’s response to the multiple challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the following activities were carried out by the HRC health teams during November 2020: Temperature checks (COVID-19 screening) of people assisted and employees of various municipalities throughout the country; of visitors and employees at the entry points of archaeological sites in Attica and the surrounding region (Acropolis, Olympia, Epidaurus), at Athens courthouses (Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, Court of First Instance, Magistrates’ Court); and at detention centres in Athens and the region, in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice. Contact tracing was conducted for people who tested positive for COVID-19, together with the provision of home isolation and quarantine instructions for people with or likely to have COVID-19. Their health status was monitored for 14 days in collaboration with National Public Health Organization (EODY). People with symptoms of COVID-19 were referred to PHC Public Facilities, following a clinical examination by the general practitioner of the HRC Mobile Health Teams. HRC interpreters and volunteers were trained on personal protection measures and on the proper use of personal protective equipment. Additional trainings were implemented for students of primary and secondary education on personal protection and prevention measures (hand hygiene, proper use of mask, social distancing), for people assisted at the Multifunctional Homeless Centre of Athens municipality, and for refugees and migrants residing in accommodation centres where the HRC operates. HRC health teams also actively participated in the street work activities organized in Attica, by conducting temperature checks and providing protection masks and antiseptics to homeless and citizens passing by. Finally, people supported by the HRC Health Sector services were supplied with basic necessities and hygiene items. They were also assisted in various daily household tasks, and were accompanied to hospitals, clinics and diagnostic laboratories when needed. Concerning mental health & psychosocial support services, it should be mentioned that during November 2020, the total number of people who were reached with MHPSS services in the context of the COVID-19 response was 908, out of which 343 were men, 383 were women, 169 were boys and 13 girls. Additionally, a total number of 710 individual and group PSS sessions were implemented, and 353 calls were received by the PSS hotline.

### Hungarian Red Cross



Supporting families, the older people and those unable to provide for themselves with hot food, non-perishable food, hygiene products and replacement of medicines is a core area of focus in the Hungarian RC response operation. Existing food distribution programs e.g. Meals for Kids and Budapest Catering Program are ongoing. In addition, packages of non-perishable food and hygiene products are distributed to respond to the growing needs as a result of unemployment and its social consequences. Structure of social programs has also been re-designed and adapted to the current situation. Since schools are closed instead of school distribution programs more community distributions are organised. Donation

collection points are set up to receive donations in kind in a contactless manner in order to reduce the risk of the transmission of infection. New hygiene and social distancing rules and lockdown measures have been introduced in social welfare institutions and shelters. New regional warehouses were rented to store the aid items and the Budapest Sports Arena was granted for free to the HRC to be used as a warehouse facility. PSS is available through the HRC Info Centre on the info line and similar services are also organised at the branches. The Info Centre disseminates COVID 19 information, organizes and coordinates volunteers. Online and offline information materials are available, info leaflets are distributed with the food and hygiene packages. Activities in support of the ambulance service include the transport of test samples to the laboratories, transporting the health care personnel and volunteers taking samples, providing food for paramedics during their shift breaks, and the assistance in entry temperature checks at border crossing points. Hungarian RC vehicles and drivers are at the disposal of the ambulance service. The Hungarian RC is involved in operator and dispatcher services to facilitate the coordination in terms of logistics. Hungarian RC teams support the Red Zones of hospitals.

### Icelandic Red Cross\*



The Icelandic Red Cross is working accordingly to the activated business continuity plan. The NS is actively involved in the National Crisis Coordination and local Crisis Command Centre. The Red Cross Helpline 1717 serves as an auxiliary health hotline and as an MHPSS hotline as well. The NS operates an isolation centre in one location (Reykjavik).

### Irish Red Cross Society\*



Throughout this reporting period (1 – 31 January 2021), ambulance and patient transfer services continued to be provided across the Irish Red Cross (IRC) branch network. IRC volunteers continue to provide essential aid, delivering food, medication, and heating supplies. During this month, the IRC also distributed across its network of community partners nearly 8,500 pieces of personal care and household cleaning essentials. The IRC provided online training in PFA to 22 volunteers so as to equip them with the necessary skills to help people who are struggling with anxiety and other issues as a result of the pandemic.

### Italian Red Cross\*



In January 2021, the ItRC continued to assist institutions with testing activities, which remain a priority even amidst the vaccination campaign. Thousands of tests were performed at drive-throughs by ItRC staff members and volunteers. Regional and local Red Cross branches continued to carry out screening operations among the population, and also supported the first phases of the vaccination campaign on the territory. In January 2021, the National Response Centre managed a total of 6,098 requests for services, including many requests for information. To this end, the ItRC continued to share relevant information on the health emergency on all main traditional and digital media: in January only, the ItRC shared 74 pieces of COVID-19 related content. As per mental health and psychosocial services, the ItRC offered more than 2,200 psychosocial services, including 433 services of psychological first aid (PFA) for volunteers, 279 PFA for ItRC staff and 746 services of PFA for the population. The ItRC also provided medical assistance and psychological support to 929 migrants on vessels, and also assisted 142 migrants hosted in Lecce and Settimo Torinese quarantine centres. The ItRC also managed 183 COVID-19-related tracing requests, as part of its 'Restoring Family Links' (RFL) service. In addition, ItRC operators were welcome aboard the Open Arms vessel in order to perform rapid testing on migrants. In January only, the ItRC carried out about 73,130 ambulance services, and also managed to deliver, among others, 7,224 food parcels, 2,990 medicines, 1,547 groceries, and 215 vouchers, in order to support vulnerable people. The ItRC also collaborated with Caritas to open a social and health-care centre for homeless

people in Rome, where ten-day pre-reception with a parallel health screening in isolation will be performed in order to guarantee a subsequent safe entry into community structures.

### Kazakh Red Crescent\*



Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, RC of Kazakhstan has coordinated its efforts with the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, local authorities - Akimats, Emergency Committee and Emergency Departments, WHO, USAID, UNHCR, NGOs and civil society organizations. The RC of Kazakhstan immediately began to mobilize volunteers to support activities' implementation across the country. RCSK developed a guidance for staff and volunteers' safety during COVID-19 and conducted a briefing with each volunteer on protective measures; all volunteers were provided with protective equipment. Kazakhstan Red Crescent has been implementing activities through 18 branches, mobilizing more than 70 staff and 3,814 volunteers were trained. To date 16,876 vulnerable families received parcels consisting of essential food and non-food (hygiene) items. Kazakhstan RC also continues its efforts in risk communication and in managing community feedback through social media, through electronic mailings and putting up leaflets in various organizations. While Kazakhstan Red Crescent has ramped up its institutional preparedness with the establishment of the emergency logistics warehouse, plans are underway for health education and promotion via social media like Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. 1,091,874 IEC materials for COVID-19 information, tutorials for the proper wearing of masks, handwashing, and etiquettes of coughing and sneezing have also been disseminated. To date, 7,843,535 people were informed about protective measures of COVID-19.

### Red Crescent Society of Kyrgyzstan\*



The Red Crescent Society of Kyrgyzstan (RCSK) continues supporting the experts in reacting to the pandemic and helping vulnerable groups with a view to forestalling and mitigating the adverse effects caused by COVID-19. All activities are coordinated with health authorities, government agencies and partners.

### Latvian Red Cross



Latvian Red Cross (LRC) has worked without a stop, especially in providing services that cannot be done remotely, such as providing home care, running social centres, shelters for homeless people, crisis centre, accommodation centre for people in crisis (24/7) and day centres (also remotely). The National Society is also distributing food packages (through the 'FEAD' program), as well as buying and delivering food and medicine to isolated people by volunteers and providing meals in night shelters and social apartments with a support of donations (catering companies) and volunteers. Latvian Red Cross continuously works with refugees and asylum seekers. The Secretariat of the NS has continued work non-stop. First Aid trainings had to be stopped for the whole period of state of emergency but started again since 23 May with certain restrictions. First aid provision at public events has stopped at least until Autumn. LRC maintains regular communication with governmental institutions and municipalities to work together with local branches to provide support to people in need.

## Lithuanian Red Cross Society



The NS manages a hotline for people in self-isolation and quarantine, mainly older people, providing psychosocial support, information and guidance. The reserve of the volunteers was established in the three biggest cities of the country. Together with the existing NS volunteers the task of the reserve is to provide vulnerable people with essential products and support their needs on a regular basis. The NS is focusing on supporting older people. The “Good neighbours help network” around Lithuania matches community volunteers with persons in quarantine or those at high risk and provides them with practical assistance – a food package, medicine, hygiene items, anything a person needs to survive.

## Luxembourg Red Cross



LRC has a Business Continuity Plan in place for the critical activities. Additionally, the NS created a coordination cell to answer the questions regarding precautions, etc. This cell is likely to also coordinate human resources if those become limited (an important part of their health-personal comes from the countries around Luxembourg). For the Health Department services (including home-care services, Rehabilitation Centre, Home for older people, Blood-Transfusion centre) there is work on preparedness and managing the stocks. Discussions with the Ministry of Health are ongoing evaluating the situation and human resources mobilization capacities.

## Malta Red Cross Society



The Malta Red Cross is working in coordination with the government in responding to COVID-19 amongst the migrant community. Activities include the following. Migrant Isolation Unit: Part of the Hal Far Tent Village (HTV) has been isolated to segregate those migrants who had been in direct contact with others who have tested positive for COVID-19. The Red Cross provides the medical assistance to those residing at the centre, including the daily monitoring of parameters, whilst taking all precautions recommended. The National Society is also managing a clinic at another reception centre to care for migrants who have tested positive for the virus, with 44 migrants receiving care up to 27 April. In direct contact with the Public Health Department, Malta Red Cross is also in charge of the swabbing procedure for the migrant community. Up until 27 April the Malta Red Cross have done 513 swabs in HTV. This is by far the largest sample of random swabbing that has been conducted on the Maltese islands since the beginning of the spread of COVID-19. These tests have yielded results as they managed to identify a cluster of positive cases. In the coming days more swabbing will be carried out in other migrant centres.

## Magen David Adom in Israel\*



Due to the high number of new cases and new severe cases, MDA is requested by the Israeli Ministry of Health to continue its activity in the sampling project. MDA operates mobile drive-through complexes in different cities on the demand of the MoH, mainly in the most vulnerable communities. . So far, 4,107,269 samples for COVID-19 were taken by MDA. Since 3 May 2020, the responsibility for home sampling is of the HMOs. Over the last week, MDA has taken a daily average of 10,080 samples. MDA teams are treating and transporting patients that are under home quarantine and suffer a situation that requires medical assistance, or exacerbation of their condition, or become symptomatic and test positive for COVID-19. MDA is also transporting the patients who tested positive to the hospitals, and those who are discharged from the hospital to the quarantine hotel. MDA is responsible for the vaccination drive in long-term care facilities by the request of the MoH. MDA teams have been trained to carry out the task, vaccinating all the residents and employees of these facilities (more than 140,000 people) with the first dose and

second doses. MDA staff and volunteers are also vaccinating in large workplaces and remote locations. In a unique operation, MDA teams vaccinated hikers in the "Southern Red" festival, using the designated mobile vaccination caravan. In places with low vaccination rates, MDA teams vaccinate the most vulnerable communities, bringing the vaccination sites closer to them. MDA conducts webinars, virtual meetings and discussions regarding the COVID-19 vaccines and vaccine safety. MDA also issued several publications and explanatory videos in Hebrew and Arabic. Some of the activities aim at the general public, and others focus on the most vulnerable communities. MDA is performing a COVID-19 vaccination campaign for its staff and volunteers. MDA has several members (staff and volunteers) under home quarantine. MDA is in constant contact with them to support their needs. MDA's blood services collect plasma from patients who recovered from COVID-19 and have antibodies, and provide it to hospitals to treat severe patients. More than 18,735 plasma units have been collected up to date, and 2,893 patients were treated this way so far. MDA's volunteers transport the donors from their houses to the blood center for the donation if needed. MDA's website has a dedicated section, with all the relevant information and instructions in several languages, available [here](#).

### Red Cross Society of the Republic of Moldova



The Moldovan Red Cross Society has been involved in combating the pandemic situation since the confirmation of the first case in the Republic in March. Throughout 2020, the Moldovan Red Cross Society has undertaken various activities and measures to combat and prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus. In November-December, the NS, with financial support from the IFRC, distributed food parcels, masks, disinfectant, and information flyers on measures of protection and prevention of COVID-19. Moldova Red Cross distributed 3,280 food parcels to vulnerable groups severely affected by the pandemic, from which benefited more than 13,000 people; procured 6,650 masks; purchased and distributed 2,500 litres of disinfectant; edited and distributed 558,000 information flyers about protection and hygiene measures; and prepared and equipped volunteers participating in the distribution, with 9,790 masks of protection. In the distribution activity were involved the Red Cross volunteers from 15 national Red Cross branches, as well as the local authorities such as the General Directorate of Education, Youth and Sports; General Directorate of Social Assistance and Health; Chisinau Urban Bus Park; Electric Transport Department - Trolleybuses Chisinau; Chisinau Municipal Training Centre for Children and Adolescents, COVID-19 Centre in Chisinau, and others. There were informative seminars organized for and by volunteers with the support and assistance of medial workers and social assistants. Moreover, the Red Cross volunteers continued the activities supported by the Twinning partnership with Norwegian Red Cross and were implied in promotion of blood donation, with more accent to plasma donation for severely infected COVID-19 patients. Several Red Cross branches continued (some started) to be involved in offering psychological support to people of risk with grave COVID-19 infection. The branches implied in the twinning also organized round tables and other activities with Red Cross volunteers, identifying new issues, upcoming difficulties and possible solutions for the crisis situation in the country, provoked by COVID-19 and severe drought.

### Red Cross of Monaco



As a response to the situation: The Government of Monaco, supported by the Monaco Red Cross, operated a COVID-19 call centre with medical and psychosocial specific support helplines. Since 8 September, 1 volunteer from the Monaco Red Cross is supporting the team Monday to Friday 2-6PM. The Monaco Red Cross is active in preventing transmission and stigma through communication activities: postings on social media, campaigns with Canva with support from the IFRC, local campaigns, ambassadors, videos, etc. Through the Monaco Government's Home Monitoring Centre, the Monaco Red Cross has been providing home visits to confirmed COVID-19 cases and untested symptomatic cases providing medical and psychosocial support. 4 volunteers are carrying out this activity on a daily basis. 279 home visits were provided from 24 March to 31 December 2020. The NS is delivering food and non-food items (i.e. pharmaceutical products) and other services (26,406 deliveries until 31 August). Since October 2020, around one delivery per day (by a team of 2 volunteers) is currently provided by the Monaco Red Cross. The Monaco

Red Cross took part in the National COVID-19 serological testing campaign led by the Monaco Government, that took place from 19 May to 14 July (37,172 tests and 137 people trained at serological testing). The Monaco Red Cross also tested 597 isolated people at home in May and June 2020. The Monaco Red Cross buys and distributes PPE to the Princess Grace Hospital Centre, medical establishments, laboratories, general practitioners, pharmacies, ambulance drivers, fire brigades, general public, etc. The Monaco Red Cross also distributed 12,571 masks at the Monaco train station at the end of the lockdown, and still sells masks to the general public. Since the beginning of the crisis, including during the lockdown, the social service of the Monaco Red Cross remained open, supporting hundreds of people socially affected by the COVID-19 crisis, helping them to afford rental fees, electricity, food and clothes. Also, the Monaco Red Cross provided educational support to children affected by the crisis, distant activities with residents of retirement homes, dog walking, and psychosocial support to isolated people through home visits and a special psychological support line during the lockdown (209 calls, 24 volunteers including 8 psychologists). In total, from 6 March to 31 August, 137 volunteers (and 165 registered reservists) have been involved, representing 2,826 days of volunteering.

### Red Cross of Montenegro\*



The Red Cross of Montenegro continued with the distribution of relief items to socially vulnerable people in the country. For the period from 19 March until 31 January 2021, the Red Cross distributed 81,193 humanitarian parcels (food, hygiene and baby parcels) across the country and directly reached 60,046 households. In this period, volunteers spent 21,344 hours responding to COVID-19. Professional home helpers and volunteers continued with their visits to older people (1,500 persons continuously reached). Psychosocial support was provided continuously to people who needed this type of assistance covering 5,690 persons.

### The Netherlands Red Cross



Netherlands Red Cross (NLRC) volunteers in the worst hit areas support clinics with non-medical tasks and provide transport to hospitals. Most vulnerable are assisted with food parcels and vouchers; the programme is extended in scope and time. Volunteers and paid staff support the Ministry of Health with contact tracing and testing. NLRC is preparing for upscaling of activities, including mass vaccination, in light of the increased needs. Support to homeless shelters has been reactivated - winter shelters have been extended until April. NLRC is preparing to support mass vaccination campaign with trained volunteers and staff. Special focus goes to undocumented migrants, homeless people and seasonal migrant workers.

### Norwegian Red Cross\*



Vaccination against COVID-19 is ongoing in Norway, and a little over 100,000 people have received the first dose. Local branches of the Norwegian Red Cross are prepared to assist the government with the vaccination, as well as with other tasks such as testing, transportation and various administrative tasks. To date, about ¼ of the local branches are reportedly in dialogue with the government to discuss how the Red Cross can assist with the vaccination. However, as Norway has yet to receive a substantial amount of vaccine doses, there are still only a few local branches that are de facto assisting the municipalities with the ongoing vaccination. The Norwegian government's priority is to ensure that children and youth are still able to be physically present at school, and that children and youth under the age of 20 should still be able to participate in after school activities and recreational activities. The aim is to ensure that the measures that are put in place will not affect children and youth more than what is deemed absolutely necessary to control the spread of the virus. This means that the Norwegian Red Cross is still able to maintain a lot of activities for children and youth below the age of 20 in most parts of the country. Currently, a lot of work is being done in the organisation to ensure that children and youth will have the opportunity to partake in various activities over the course of the summer. For the Norwegian Red Cross, most events, conferences, training and courses have been postponed or

carried out digitally during the month of January, with some exceptions, including training and courses for the Search and Rescue Corps.

### Polish Red Cross\*



On 31 December 2020, the Polish Red Cross ended its psychological support line, which was operational during two periods in which the epidemiological situation as well as related restrictions could be associated with particular anxiety and difficulties in the psychological sphere (27 March-30 June and 29 September- 31 December 2020). The onset of the pandemic was particularly difficult for many people due to the sudden emergency and the unexpected changes in the everyday and professional lives, the need to adapt lifestyle to the new situation, confusion related to new regulations and restrictions, and fear of an unknown disease. During the first period, the line operated 7 days a week from 10am to 10pm, and 181 calls from 126 women and 55 men were answered. The help was used by both young and older people who needed support due to very different difficulties: anxiety, depression, interpersonal conflicts, loneliness, economic problems, domestic violence, and many others. In the second period the line was available 5 days a week (Monday to Friday) from 4pm to 8pm and 92 phone calls from 55 women and 37 men were received. Although many people have already got used to the new situation and the introduced restrictions and knew more and more about COVID-19, a great need for psychological support was still observed. During this period, much more calls were received from people who had COVID-19, who were in quarantine, or who had relatives suffering from the virus. Still the most frequently reported difficulties were anxiety symptoms, panic attacks, anxiety for the health of oneself or loved ones, frustration and depressed mood. The assistance offered on the hotline was provided by volunteer psychologists. During the project, Polish Red Cross was supported by a total of 18 psychologists who decided to devote their free time to selflessly help to others. Before Christmas, Polish Red Cross, together with Circle K, distributed 1,000 packages of food products for older people all over Poland. Since the beginning of the pandemic, the Circle K network has already funded 6,200 packages of food products from its stations, which have been distributed to the most urgent cases. The parcels were delivered by employees and volunteers of the Polish Red Cross. In addition, Circle K donated fuel vouchers, thanks to which the rescuers and home-carers of the Polish Red Cross were able to help their beneficiaries. Christmas aid was also prepared for migrants and refugees living in Poland in different shelters and centers. Thanks to collaboration with a Multicultural Center in Warsaw, Polish Red Cross distributed packages with hygiene and personal protection equipment as well as educational equipment for children of this group of beneficiaries.

### Portugese Red Cross



The Portuguese Red Cross continues to respond to COVID-19 needs as the pandemic evolves into a second wave. It tested 83,940 people for COVID-19 both with PCR and rapid tests, and traced contacts for 370 persons. It transported 597 COVID-19 patients, and it provided psychosocial support to 2,122 people. 52,274 people received food aid and 23,704 people received non-food items. 1,262 homeless people received shelter, and 211,534 people have been reached with risk communication. The Portuguese RC trained 900 staff and volunteers in COVID-19 surveillance, and 1,081 also received training in community engagement.

### Red Cross of the Republic of North Macedonia\*



Activities of the National Society during the past month are: 1. Mobile teams for procurement and distribution of food, hygiene, medicines, etc.; 2. Distribution of humanitarian food and hygiene parcels from donations and own stocks for vulnerable groups; 3. Preparation and conducting blood donation actions; 4. Distribution of protective masks and other protective materials; 5. Distribution of clothing and footwear from donations and own stocks; 6. Psychosocial support SOS line; 7. Older people support teams; 8. Distribution of parcels with disinfection materials; 9. Distribution of meals for the homeless and other vulnerable groups 10. Provision of chronic therapy in cooperation with the Ministry of Health; 11. Delivery of oncology therapy through the Oncology Clinic; 12. Distribution of flyers for protection against COVID-19; 13.

Resource mobilization and donor contact; 14. Online meetings between the volunteers from the Youth Club; 15. Monitoring of thermal cameras at airports; 16. Support of migration camps/support for migrants; 17. Setting up tents in front of hospitals and emergency services according to the Action plan of the Crisis management Centre and the government; 18. COVID-19 contact tracing to assist the Public Health Centres according to the Action plan of the Crisis management centre and the government 19. Hygiene promotion campaign with videos and posters according to the Action plan of the Crisis management centre and the Government; 20. 24/7 active EOC for planning, analysis and coordination. Key data until 11 February 2021: 7,372 persons from vulnerable groups assisted with PSS; 8,483 people from vulnerable groups assisted with delivery service for food, hygiene, medicines; 29,128 food parcels distributed monthly; 29,811 hygiene parcels distributed monthly; 12,727 disinfection kits distributed; 2,989 baby parcels distributed; 3,026 protective masks distributed; 205,705 protective gloves distributed, 12,969 medical check-ups provided; 32,472 portions of hot meals distributed for vulnerable groups and 3,794 people supported with chronic therapy. To perform 500 – 600 staff and volunteers were mobilized on a daily basis.

### Romanian Red Cross\*

The Romanian Red Cross has been an active responder to the COVID-19 crisis throughout the entire country. The IEC caravan was implemented in 41 counties in Romania by 41 RC branches, with 290 communities reached by 332 volunteers in January 2021. Information sessions were organized in risk areas such as in rural and Roma communities, isolated population groups, migrants, as well as at public places such as train and bus stations, open markets and during door to door visits, reaching 51,689 people directly. Online IEC sessions were held for 9,284 pupils aged 6-18 on topics such as general COVID-19 information, hygiene rules, mental health, stress management and efforts against stigmatization of those infected with COVID-19. The visits in the communities revealed a general need for information on vaccines and vaccination, and a special [website](#) on COVID-19 was launched by the Romanian Red Cross. Online posts reached 53,704 persons and had 2,701 interactions. Some of the branches continued to combine the information campaign with the Food Bank program. Protection materials and disinfectants were distributed to vaccination centres at all counties' level, and vaccination materials from IFRC, WHO, Ministry of Health Romania were translated and distributed to volunteers. Preliminary talks were held with two university professors and doctors to invite them to film interviews on vaccination against COVID-19, to be published online.



### The Russian Red Cross Society

Almost all the National Society's branches have been mobilized. More than 4,000 Russian Red Cross volunteers and staff are providing critical support to communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. Red Cross teams are distributing masks to public transport staff, providing food and water to some hospitals: more than 2,000,000 masks distributed, and 12,000 masks produced by local Red Cross branches, humanitarian aid in the amount of more than CHF 300,000 (food and hygiene kits, vitamins and cream from Bayer, clothing) was transferred to health facilities. The Russian Red Cross focuses its efforts on helping those most vulnerable, including migrants and those experiencing homelessness. Teams are distributing food and hygiene items to older people, those living with chronic diseases such as HIV and tuberculosis, people with disabilities and other vulnerable households. More than 20,000 vulnerable migrants have been supported with more than 5 tonnes of food and hygiene kits. The National Society also runs a phone line where older people can request assistance in food delivery and rubbish collection. More than 18,000 appeals were received by the Russian red cross hotlines. Food, hygiene items and medicine delivered to more than 50,000 people. More than 1,000 people are under the permanent patronage of the Russian red cross (nursing service). The Russian Red Cross is conducting information and awareness-raising activities in media, public areas, via social networks, telephone hotlines. Red Cross teams are organizing COVID-19 information sessions in public areas such as shopping centres and universities. The National Society also provides reliable information on how to protect oneself from COVID-



19, how to cope with isolation and how to manage stress. More than 7,000 vulnerable people have been supported through Red Cross operated telephone hotline, including psychosocial support.

### Red Cross of San Marino

The Red Cross of San Marino is responding to COVID-19 emergency through the provision of clinical and paramedical services in the hospital of San Marino as well as emergency social services for quarantined individuals. Regarding clinical and paramedical services at the hospital of San Marino, 20 services are performed monthly with shifts of 6 hours. During these services, the volunteer staff of the San Marino Red Cross carries out patient assistance activities. In addition, the Red Cross of San Marino, in collaboration with the hospital, carries out both emergency and non-emergency patient transport services for patients with COVID-19. The number of these services is 40 per month. For quarantined people, the San Marino Red Cross carries out home care services and transport of COVID-19 patients to health facilities for medical visits. The number of these services is 20 per month. The number of active volunteers in both services is 25.

### The Red Cross of Serbia



Црвени крст Србије  
Red Cross of Serbia

During December 2020, the Red Cross of Serbia engaged 105 local RC branches and implemented the following activities:

- needs assessment was conducted in 79 municipalities. **(1) Sustaining Health and WASH:**
- 51 local RC branches organized info-centres to provide the information to citizens and to receive requests for support (5,736 people helped). 10 volunteers and Red Cross staff are engaged daily in 2 shifts in the call centre to provide information to patients and relatives, in December, over 15,000 calls took place.
- 62 local RC branches organized PSS for citizens, volunteers, and RC personnel through local info centres (7,352 people supported during the month).
- 77 local RC branches are implementing risk communication and community engagement activities– providing health and disease prevention advice and helping people transport purchased items (29,201 people reached).
- 76 local Red Cross branches delivered more than 19,700 IEC materials. 1,760 posters were placed in communities
- 24 local RC branches are supporting healthcare system and institutions with 36 tents and 4 containers for triage of patients, examinations, and support in data processing of tested persons- supporting over 31,558 people in the past 5 months
- 12 local RC branches distributing disinfection liquid to citizens (4,288 people supported).
- During 2020, 161 local RC branches organized around 2,400 blood drives collecting over 80,000 blood units.
- The publication "Mental health of informal caregivers" was developed using results of a research project by the National Society (NS)
- More than one hundred prose and poetry works were received during a writing contest organized by the NS in cooperation with Commissioner for Protection of Equality and UNFPA. Selected 39 works are to be printed in a book available on this [website](#).
- 170 older persons were coached in IT skills in 5 Red Cross of Serbia branches, using tablet computers and step-by-step [guides](#)
- 250 older persons across 5 Red Cross of Serbia branches were supported in forming telephone circles for mutual help with this initiative, older persons could ask for information or support each other, and if one of them failed to answer the call, the circle would be broken, and then intervention would be mounted.
- The NS organized a research study measuring the presence of depressive symptoms of older persons across five communities. Findings show women participants being more prone to depression. Participants who are not old-age pensioners are more prone to depression, i.e. pensioners with disabilities show a higher tendency to depression, also participants whose income comes from a family pension. People whose children do not live in their household showed a lower tendency to depression.

**(2) Livelihoods, cash support, and food aid (December 2020):**

- During December 2020, 53 local Red Cross branches formed and engaged RC field mobile volunteer teams in local municipalities to provide support and care to people in need in municipalities (5,944 working orders completed);
- 32 local RC branches supported their local self-governments with the packaging of food and hygiene parcels (5,147 parcels packed);
- 59 local RC branches were distributing food and hygiene parcels (8,275 parcels, reached 19,161 persons);
- 42 local RC branches implemented cash assistance activities in order to support 3,000 households with children. In 12 municipalities, 762 people were supported with cash assistance.

**(3) National Society Strengthening (December 2020):**

- The NS continued the ICT Capacity Strengthening project. All users were moved to the Microsoft Office 365 package (donated by Microsoft). Training for all users has been designed and implemented in all the branches. Creation of a

SharePoint corporate portal is ongoing, online training for use of SharePoint for all branches will be necessary. • In cooperation with the Psychosocial Innovation Centre, the NS organized PSS and burnout prevention support sessions for 82 staff and • In December, the NS distributed PPE to 182 local Red Cross branches (62,184 masks; 27,900 pairs of gloves, 429 litres of Disinfectant liquid); • Sets of equipment for 6 REOCs (Regional Emergency Operation Centre) were procured for: 2 provincial (coordination) level organizations, the Red Cross of Belgrade, and for 3 city Red Cross branches. In total, during December 2020, the RC of Serbia reached more than 40,611 people. There were 10,643 volunteer engagements, 30,368 volunteers and 39,897 RC staff working hours dedicated, and 50,501 kilometres traveled.

### Slovak Red Cross



The Slovak Red Cross staff, members and volunteers of the HQ and all 35 regional branches have carried out COVID-19 activities on the national territory since 16 March 2020, when a state of emergency in the Slovak Republic was declared. Until September and during the first wave of the virus spread, the NS focused its capabilities and means on support for vulnerable people (older people, disabled), people in need (homeless) and those in quarantine. The support included purchasing, distribution and/or delivery of basic goods (food, foodstuff, toiletries, personal hygiene items, disinfection), face masks (compulsory to wear) production and/or distribution, social taxi, assistance in telecommunication technology devices handling, etc. In most of the services provided by both NS staff and volunteers, there was a psychosocial element included (an assistance for vulnerable people to cope with isolation, stress and fear). Several regional branches used or provided Red Cross shelters for triage medical sites in hospital entrances as well as for check-in procedures in crisis quarantine centres. Some branches were conducting hot food distribution and other auxiliary support for many testing teams. They also provided germicidal lamps to some testing units. In April, the first Slovak Red Cross regional branch was charged to directly (with its own team) participate in COVID-19 testing by performing swabs from throat and nose (PCR). Shortly after, the second mobile unit for testing was established and these two units constantly perform about 250 PCR tests a day in an average. In accordance with the IFRC practices and recommendations, the Slovak Red Cross translated the IFRC COVID-19 visuals and different inspiring PSP materials from sister NSs. In a second wave of the virus spread, COVID-19 antigen tests conducting represents a dominant engagement for the Slovak Red Cross. Our members and volunteers within their various activities participated and/or supported nationwide COVID-19 antigen testing carried out in Slovakia at the end of October and early November 2020. Since 9 November and under the agreement with the Slovak Government, the Slovak Red Cross established and fully runs 15 mobile units for testing 6 days/week as a public service for citizens. Until 31 December 2020, these mobile units for testing carried out 122,902 antigen tests within a period of 41 days. They diagnosed 9,548 COVID-19 positive cases which represented 7,76% of the total number (the proportion during early November nationwide testing was less than 1%). The highest public demand for testing was recorded just before the Christmas season and at the end of last year (through the periods from 21 to 23 December and from 28 to 31 December 2020).

### Slovenian Red Cross\*



Currently the SRC FA team members support the medical staff of the 2 main medical centres in Slovenia - the University Medical Centre in Ljubljana, the University Medical Centre in Maribor and 5 hospitals admitting COVID-19 patients. Discussions on SRC providing support to medical staff of other hospitals and medical institutions is underway. SRC provides support to medical staff performing rapid antigen tests by securing respect of protective measures (such as physical distance) among persons waiting to take the test. Psychological aid for FA volunteers and staff supporting medical institutions are ongoing. Provision of support by SRC FA and other team members to residents and staff of residential homes for older people continues. SRC, as a member of the National Operational Group for Providing Psychological Aid during the pandemic, is gathering information and reporting on observations/ experience of 21 NGOs and other organizations on mental health of vulnerable groups, and is proposing measures to be taken by the decision makers. Acceptance of SRC protocols on protecting family links and

providing necessary RFL services for locations accommodating vulnerable persons is underway. SRC continues to provide support to persons in quarantine, by providing PSS; delivery of medicine, food and hygiene items for those with no social network/support mechanism in Slovenia; procuring these items for those with low financial means). SRC provides home delivery of food parcels, medicine, hygiene kits and hot meals to vulnerable persons (older persons, persons with chronic illness, etc.) Collaboration between Slovenian, Croatian and Italian Red Cross is ongoing, providing crucial goods (such as medication) for citizens staying across the border. SRC provides phone lines for PSS, COVID-19 information and support requests from the public. It assists public and private institutions by taking body temperature and scanning for signs of infection of the visitors. SRC provides FA to the homeless, and clothing and footwear for migrants. Awareness-raising on COVID-19 prevention and response measures is ongoing. Face masks are distributed, blood-drives are organized, learning aid is provided for students remaining at home and child care is offered for individual families. SRC continues to partake coordination meetings organized by UNHCR for securing provision of needed support to persons with granted international protection status and to asylum seekers.

### Spanish Red Cross



The Spanish Red Cross supports health, social and emergency services in all regions, mobilizing 63,759 volunteers, reaching 2,822,156 people of which 1,590,085 are women, 1,231,455 are men and 616 non-binary or without data. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak, the Spanish Red Cross provided relief services to a total of 588,506 people through different services such as shelter and provision of essential supplies, articles to people quarantined in special circumstances, support to emergency testing, etc. Regarding Health, 1,145,725 people were reached mainly through risk communication and promotion of preventive measures as well as psychosocial support. Spanish Red Cross has been participating actively in the flu vaccination campaign, both within the general population and also in direct contact with people with risk factors amongst users. Collaboration started with the Ministry of Health and the regional health departments to assess the National Society's role in the COVID-19 vaccination campaign. Spanish Red Cross action is also focused on the socioeconomic impact of the pandemic. Through its support to social inclusion, the Spanish Red Cross reached 861,792 people, of which 271,692 received food and non-food essential items, with 808,683 responses as the prolonged nature of the crisis requires support over time. It also provided cash assistance to vulnerable and at-risk populations (119,496 people with 221,764 responses) and accompaniment and aid on essential procedures, including support to access the minimum subsistence income. The Spanish Red Cross assisted over 92,011 people through employment guidance, helping unemployed people and those who recently lost their jobs survive this unprecedented economic crisis. The Spanish Red Cross education program focused its effort on support, follow-up and providing goods, reaching more than 501,015 people. An updated overview of SpRC's COVID-19 operations is available [here](#).

### Swedish Red Cross\*



The Swedish Red Cross domestic response includes nationwide operations targeting all municipalities, based on needs and requests. Local branches had COVID-19-related activities in approx. 200 municipalities, and 403 branches reported new or adapted activities. More than 6,000 people offered to become new volunteers. Branches reported in total 410,000 occasions of assistance to people. Local language training, support of older people and youth activities are examples of activities adapted during the crisis. The national hotline for psychosocial support was closed end of September, however 80 branches have redirected their services to older people and risk groups. They offer regular calls to break isolation and offer psychosocial support. Web-based psychosocial information and support is also offered. So far 167,000 unique views were registered on this website. Local operations on distribution of food and medication are ongoing adapted to local needs. The psychosocial support at emergency hospitals offered outside the entrances moved back into entrance areas. The volunteer groups are preparing to assist with the vaccination programme. Other regular services such as advisory service for asylum seekers and refugees, detention and prison activities were adapted to sustain volunteer groups and reach out to those assisted. Digitalized alternatives were developed. SRC has continues its activities in socioeconomically disadvantaged areas, reaching approx. 19,000 people so

far, with information and outdoor activities for families and children. Mobile meeting spots are well frequented and provide a safe and open space for conversations and health promoting activities. Family kits were distributed to 5,000 people with health information and creative products for recreation. The health clinic for undocumented migrants and asylum seekers continues to receive visitors and reaching out to regions to promote vaccination as well. SRC arranged a high-level seminar with local engagement from volunteers and people assisted, sharing knowledge and experiences on vulnerable groups in crisis, discussing challenges and solutions. SRC will also launch a report early 2021 on the same subject. The digitalization of volunteers' trainings and activities contributed to major steps in the overall digital development of the organization. As the outbreak evolves, the Swedish Red Cross will adapt and adjust its strategy accordingly.

### Swiss Red Cross\*



The Swiss Red Cross re-engaged in the running of a drive-through test center in the city of Bern, coordinating 71 volunteers, delivering approx. 15,000 COVID19-tests in more than 4,000 voluntary work hours. The test center opened a test line for bicycle riders as well. Swiss Red Cross provided a total of 11.5 million CHF as financial support for 14,000 individuals in need, collected through private company and individual donations. Funds were earmarked for outstanding rental payments, obligatory health insurance payments and personal living expenses and supported those most affected by the economic slow-down and the increasing rate of unemployment. Additionally, food vouchers for CHF 1 million were handed out. 60,000 Swiss families in need were supported with food/ basic hygiene parcels, collected through the annual campaign "Twice Christmas". Immense solidarity manifested itself in the winter of 2020/21 in which the Swiss population donated 49,000 self-packed parcels, 8,000 pre-packaged parcels and 5,800 online packages. The total value amounts to CHF 781,000 which was matched with an additional CHF 400,000 contribution by a Swiss supermarket chain and partner of the Swiss RC; The online packages translate into food/ hygiene parcels for families and individuals in need in Armenia, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Kyrgyzstan, and Moldova. Continued online counseling services are offered for victims of war and torture in order to avoid post-traumatic stress through therapy gaps and isolation; and extended online and telephone counseling services are provided for undocumented migrants about COVID-19 information, access to testing and treatment as well as information on vaccination. Support is offered to the Swiss government for the national vaccine roll-out, explicitly advocating for a privileged vaccination access for front liners, volunteers and family caregivers. Internationally, the Swiss RC continues to support 20 partner HNS through COVID-19 adapted programming. In closest collaboration with HNS and national governments, the Swiss RC carefully adapts its COVID-19 support to the local situation in order to adequately meet with the globally differing stages of the pandemic.

### Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan



Tajikistan continues facing a shortage in laboratory reagents and consumables, pulse oximeters, oxygen masks with reservoir and tubes (for adult, child and infant), nasal oxygen cannula (for adult, child and infant), essential medicines and equipment. COVID-19 and migration: the border closure due to COVID-19 pandemic is exacerbating not only the livelihood and wellbeing of migrant workers and families, but also the economic development of host countries that have relied on labour migration. To reduce the economic impacts, the Ministry of Construction Industry, Housing and Utilities of the Russian Federation have proposed the government in December to simplify the entry requirements for labour migrants from Central Asia. Following Russia, Kazakhstan also acknowledged a shortage of migrant workers, especially in construction. From June 2020, IOM Tajikistan has assisted more than 3,000 vulnerable Tajik migrants stranded at Zhibek-Zholy on the Kazakhstan Uzbekistan border to safely return home. The assisted migrants were mostly labour migrants, but also included students, children, pregnant women, and elderlies. Recognizing the efforts and outcomes, IOM has awarded the Tajikistan operation a Certificate of Appreciation for Outstanding Contribution to Resettlement and Movement Management during the COVID-19 Lockdown. NS activities:

- Continuing activities to train rural and urban populations on infection control measures, providing support for representatives of vulnerable groups.
-

All monitoring visits from both headquarters and district staff have been completed. • A lessons learned event was held on 25 December, with the participation of regional project staff, representatives of the COVID-19 headquarters • Within the framework of the project, 270,000 information leaflets and posters were printed and distributed to communities in various project districts and articles were published in local newspapers (a total of eight), which provided visibility and promoted the activities of project volunteers. • During the project implementation period, information sessions on COVID-19 were conducted among 810,493 people in urban and rural populations and for 511,959 schoolchildren. The total coverage of six months of activities is 1,322,452 people.

### Turkish Red Crescent Society\*

TRC continues to provide protective equipment support to its staff working in the field at hospitals, observation points and food banks. Until now, TRC distributed a total of 9.413.223 PPEs. In the Community Centres, masks and visors by 3D printer have been produced in accordance with the standards of MoH. TRC teams produced 2,941,298 masks and 3,934 visors totally. Between 1-31 January 2021, in cooperation with the Public Health Directorate and UNICEF, the TRC Child Program distributed 800 hygiene kits. Additionally, Community Centres reached 76,157 individuals through its different activities. Thanks to the cooperation between the Public Health and PSH Directorate and UNICEF, totally 18,149 hygiene kits have been distributed to locals and migrants. The Kızılaykart program distributed 353 hygiene kits to individuals. During the reporting month (1-31 January), TRC collected 1,340 units of blood donation at its 38 plasma receiving stations, and 4,892 units benefited from immune plasma provided by TRC. Owing to these donations, during the reporting month TRC produced 3,557 units of immune plasma components and sent them to 285 hospitals. In January, TRC's child programs paid visits to 140 homes to confirm the wellbeing of children at home. In this scope, TRC teams delivered 118 training sets for 410 children in 8 activity areas through 25 youth staff including the UNICEF training activities. Between 1-31 January 2021, the activities including hygiene, cognitive and individual development games against COVID-19 have been shared via social media tools (Twitter, Instagram). In this regard, TRC teams reached 15,389 individuals through 24 activities/ games by mobilizing 5 staff. During the reporting month, 219 TV and 493 radio public service announcements including about plasma donation and COVID-19 awareness have been released. The total number is 16,112 during the pandemic. Additionally, 11,863 news items have been released about TRC on TV, printed media and social media and the total number is 223,712 during the pandemic. A total of 281,156 individuals visited TRC's website in the reporting month. Finally, a total of 440,285 posters have been distributed regarding health and psychosocial activities.



### Red Crescent Society of Turkmenistan\*

The Red Crescent Society of Turkmenistan (RCST) volunteers conducted awareness-raising campaigns in educational institutions and through household visits. 27,000 posters and leaflets, 1,775 medical disinfectants, 5,000 masks and 5,000 pairs of medical gloves have been distributed in 5 regions. Training sessions for 125 family doctors on prevention measures will be continued from February in 5 regions.



### Ukrainian Red Cross Society \*

The Ukrainian Red Cross Society (URCS) continues to react to COVID-19 in Ukraine and to provide humanitarian assistance. The National Society's key actions included communication activities on disease prevention through social media and disseminating printed materials among the local population, health education, and promotion of related information via social media. In January 2021, an information campaign covered up to 4,415 people, and up to 3,509 pieces of printed material was disseminated by URCS. The Ukrainian Red Cross Society Information Center has received 5,601 calls during the last month related to COVID-19 Q&A. The URCS continues to coordinate all its efforts with government institutions such as the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Social Infrastructure, local authorities, and other bodies around the country. Volunteers of URCS continue to carry out information and education



activities on COVID-19 and physically support the most vulnerable population. In January, about 300 people received PSS assistance, and up to 1,380 PSP packages were handed over. During the last month, 12,467 food parcels, 10,628 hygiene, and 1,973 WASH kits, 987 hot meals, snacks, hot beverages, 103 medical kits, and 607 potable water, 6,605 PPEs, 6,721 gloves, 634 disinfectants were distributed by URCS.

### Red Crescent Society of Uzbekistan\*



The Red Crescent Society of Uzbekistan (RCSU) is actively involved in COVID-19 preparedness and response coordination with the relevant ministries, authorities and WHO. RCSU distributed 14,485 masks, 57,918 hygiene items to staff and volunteers, and also to at risk groups in January 2021.

Throughout Uzbekistan, in local communities, in marketplaces, on public transport, etc., from March 2020 to February 2021, RCSU distributed a total of 54,867 information materials on COVID-19 prevention (3,919 in January), in Russian and Uzbek languages. RCSU organized 430 different events in January such as awareness-raising information sessions reaching 28,138 people in January. There have been 64 banners installed in Tashkent, central cities of regions and transit cities. Within the framework of a joint project with UNICEF, it is planned to provide practical assistance to low-income families.

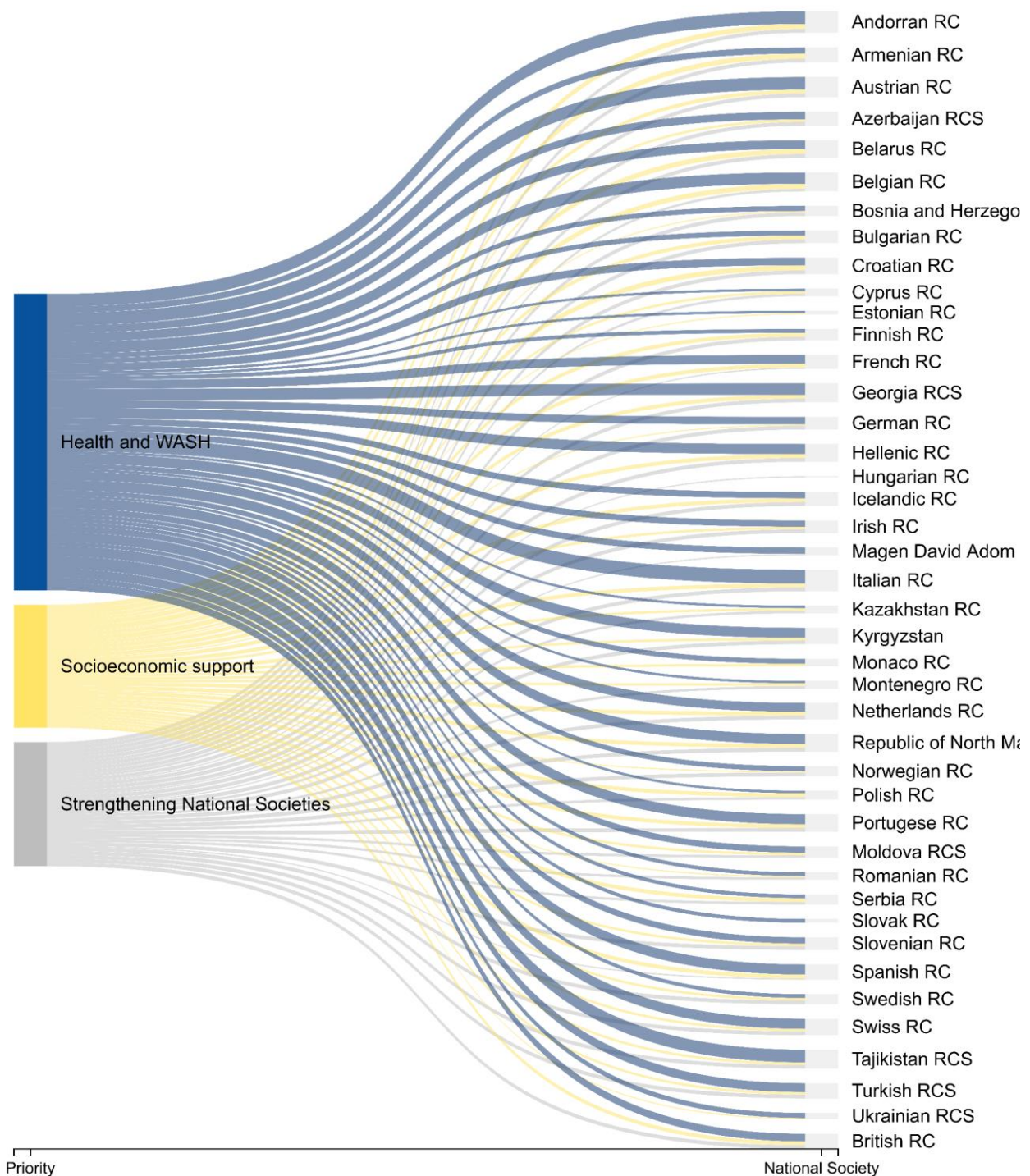
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*The list of National Societies and activities above is based on information submitted to the IFRC Regional Office for Europe on various channels and will be kept up to date. In case of required revisions/amendments or information about your NS which is missing, please let us know and it will be added with the next update.*

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# Annex: National Society Activities per COVID-19 priority areas



**Data Source:** National Society activities as reported in public COVID-19 field reports on GO-platform as of 5 February 2021. Reported activities include all National Society actions and are not limited to IFRC-funded activities. The 'thickness' of the blue lines reflects the number of different activities NS are involved in and does not reflect the 'volume' of those activities. Please visit the [NS Activities dashboard](#) on GO-platform for more detailed information.