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Information bulletin no. 1

Flash floods in Europe

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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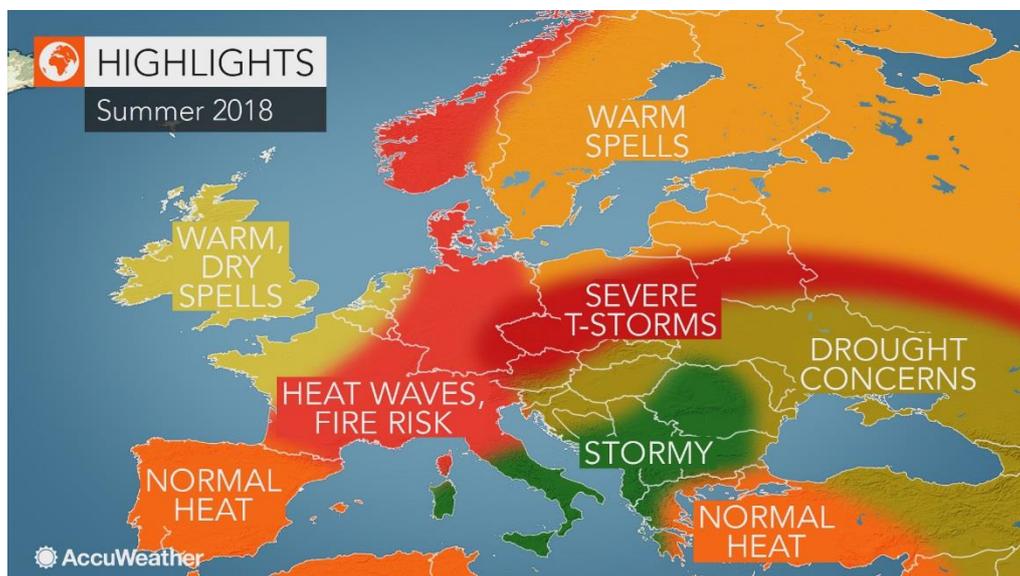
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Host National Societies: Bulgarian Red Cross, Georgia Red Cross Society, Hellenic Red Cross, Italian Red Cross, Red Cross of Serbia, Romanian Red Cross, Ukrainian Red Cross Society

This bulletin is being issued for information only and reflects the current situation and details available at this time.

The situation

Floods and flash floods have been occurring throughout Eastern and Southern Europe in the last weeks of June and during the first week of July 2018. Severe weather has been forecasted by agencies, such as AccuWeather.



Officials in **Bulgaria** reported that the provinces of Plovdiv, Pazardjik, Sofia, Smolyan, Bourgas have all been affected by floods on 29 June. Emergency services responded to 146 calls for assistance due to the flooding and storm damage. In Plovdiv Province, evacuation orders were issued for residents living along the Chaya River in Sadovo Municipality, after river embankments had been breached in two locations. Over 50 houses have been flooded in the province and the road between Plovdiv and Haskovo is closed. Over 30 homes were flooded in Smolyan province, where a state of emergency was declared in Chepelare and in the municipality of Smolyan where the Cherna River has overflowed. Around 26 homes were flooded or damaged by the storm in Pazardzhik province and 24 in Bourgas province. Homes and roads were damaged in Varna, Bourgas province, earlier this month after 71.5 mm of rain fell in 24 hours between 04 and early 05 June. In Sofia Province, a small number of evacuations were carried out in villages near Etropole, where around 7 houses were damaged.¹

¹ Source: flodlist.com

Despite the damages, there were no evacuations executed. By the first week of July, rainfall stopped in the affected regions.

Heavy rains formed flash floods in several regions of **Greece** during the last week of June following the Nefeli phenomenon; with its peak on 26 June. Floods hit the city center of **Mandra Attikis**, also affected by floods in November 2017, and several main roads have been blocked by the rainwater. Highways leading to and from the flooded areas have also been affected and traffic has stopped. Properties, houses and stores were flooded. Few people had to be rescued from stranded cars.

Several pipelines of the rainwater drainage network as well as some water barriers have broken in **Chalkidiki** city under the heavy load and has resulted in floods in various locations. Traffic in some of the main roads has stopped.

Near **Volos** city, villages outside have been flooded. Roads between these villages and highways leading to the city have been flooded and traffic has stopped. Two persons stranded in a car had to be rescued by the police and fire brigade's search and rescue operation. Damages to properties have also been reported.

The rainfall did not escalate in **Mandra** beyond the building that got mildly flooded and the affected roads. In this city the police closed some roads and highways for safety reasons whereas the Fire Service was receiving calls to drain water from flooded properties. As of 3 July, the weather was expected to stabilise, and no deaths and injuries have been reported.

In **Georgia**, on 5 July 2018, part of the mountain in Chuberi community has collapsed, which caused blocking of the Nenskra River. Accumulated water has flooded the Nenskra valley villages. There are 10 villages in Chuberi community with thousands of residents living there. Infrastructure has been damaged, roads and bridges connecting the villages as well as agricultural lands, fruit trees and wooden factories are totally destroyed. Electricity lines have been damaged. The Emergency Management Service and all relevant ministries are involved in the liquidation works of the flooding of the river Neskra in Chuberi village, in Mestia Municipality. A taskforce has been established. Rescue teams are mobilized and in case of need evacuation of the Chuberi population will be carried out.



Nenskra River flooding in Georgia. Photo: Georgian Red Cross

As much as 140 mm of rain fell in 2 hours on 3 July in the town of Moena, **Italy** and surrounding areas in the province of Trento in the northern part of Italy. The torrential rain caused rivers to overflow and sent mud and flood water raging through Moena's streets. Authorities pre-emptively evacuated around 60 people from their homes in Moena and areas near San Pellegrino. Safe accommodation was provided. Roads were closed for few hours in four locations around Soraga, Moena and San Pellegrino. No deaths and injuries have been reported.

In the last week of June, there were severe rainfalls on the territory of **Serbia**. Due to these weather conditions, many cities and municipalities were flooded. On 29 June 2018, there were thunderstorms in Vojvodina, Sumadija and Pomoravlje regions. Strong winds sweeping in Vojvodina impacted in Subotica (14 m/s) and Novi Sad (18 m/s). The most affected municipalities in Belgrade were Lazarevac, Rakovica and Obrenovac. In many locations, the sewage system could not receive large quantities of water, which fell on the territory of these cities and municipalities (Belgrade 30-50 L/m², Novi Sad 116 l/m², within 24 hours). In the municipality of Cukarica, a Roma settlement has been flooded, in the Municipality of Lazarevac 35 families were evacuated. Almost all evacuated people were accommodated with relatives and neighbours. In the municipality of Rakovica, about 20 houses have been flooded; in municipality of Obrenovac, 57 houses were partially flooded.

Romania was confronting with massive floods in the period between 29 June and 2 July. Five counties from the central and eastern areas of the country have been affected, namely Bacău, Brasov, Harghita, Neamt and Vrancea. As of 3 July, Bacău county is still in alert for bad weather with heavy rain.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs mobilised emergency teams across the country, including 12,000 police and gendarme officers, 3,200 firefighters and over 6,600 technical staff.

Ministry reported that between 28 and 29 June around 400 homes have been flooded and around 15 roads and bridges damaged or closed. Local media said that 20 households in Trifesti, Iași County, were evacuated by military firefighters. In Covasna county 263 people have been evacuated, since the dam on river Târlung was broken. 19 counties are still on orange alert for rains. The Prime Minister has called for damage assessments to be carried out as soon as the severe weather has passed so the Government can put in place concrete measures to help the population and affected communities.²

A storm hit western **Ukraine** on 28 June and then spread all over Ukraine during the night of June 29 – June 30. Strong winds downed dozens of trees and even bent metal billboards in Ukraine's east. Power was cut off in 400 villages and towns overnight because of the storm. Heavy rain caused Ukraine's Dniester, Syan, Siret, and Prut rivers to break their banks. The rivers' levels rose by more than two meters, causing flooding throughout Lviv, Chernivtsi, and Ivano-Frankivsk oblasts in western Ukraine, Ukraine's State Emergency Service reported on its website on June 30.

The storm started in western Ukraine on June 28. More than 200 houses, 35 fields, and 40 basements were flooded. Flood waters also destroyed 14 kilometers of roads. On 30 June 2018 heavy rain hit Chernihiv city, where 110 Households and institutions were flooded in 40 streets in the city consequently. 16 people were evacuated. Chernihiv Regional Red Cross Branch warehouse of clothing, footwear, and emergency response items were flooded also.



Red Cross teams provide support in central and eastern Romania
Photo: Romanian Red Cross

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Bulgaria

The Bulgarian Red Cross (BRC) is monitoring the situation and is in contact with the regional branches, which are responding to the floods. In Vratza region in the northern-western part of Bulgaria, the local RC branches supported the affected people (about 100 households in town Roman) with mineral water distribution. BRC colleagues provided disinfectants and cleaning materials to the affected population also in this location.

Georgia

The Mestia branch representatives of the Georgia Red Cross Society (GRCS) are responding to the disaster. Based on their last information, there are 33 families severely affected and had to leave their home. They are living in their relatives' houses in the safe area. According to the rapid assessment conducted by Georgia Red Cross Society (GRCS) volunteers together with local authorities, 1,143 people are affected by the disaster. GRCS Headquarter and the local branch representatives are in coordination with the local government and

² Source: floodlist.com

relevant structures. Together with volunteers, they are ready to assist the population through the provision of psychosocial support, first aid, and also with the supporting the fire brigades, in case of need.

Specialists of the National Environmental Agency are studying the causes of the disaster in the affected area. They are developing recommendations to carry out preventive measures, and planning to construct four temporary bridges to connect the villages of Chuberi community.

Greece

The General Secretariat of Civil Protection of the Ministry of the Interior has issued an alert for extreme weather phenomena and raised the alert level for all actors involved in the national response mechanism. The Hellenic Police has stopped the traffic in roads and highways that have been damaged by the floods. The Fire Brigade was providing search and rescue to people stranded in the floods and also is doing drainage from houses. Regional and municipal administrations have declared a state of emergency in the locations most heavily affected by the floods. The Hellenic Red Cross has been trying to get in contact with municipality in Mandra to provide Psychosocial First Aid to the affected population. The General Secretary of Civil Protection has visited Mandra in order to inspect the situation and participate in a coordination meeting organised by the Administration of the Region of Attica. According to reports the local authorities in the Northern regions of Greece, which were affected by the flood, have managed the situation with their local capacity.

Italy

The Italian Red Cross executed the following actions:

- 60 people were affected and the Italian RC is responding at local/provincial branch level,
- Affected people have been evacuated, local community provided safe environment for those people where Italian Red Cross supports in providing accommodation and food,
- 18 Italian Red Cross volunteers from local branches of the affected areas supported people to cover their basic needs during evacuation on the first hours of the emergency,
- RC teams started cleaning activities in the basement of the houses together with the firefighters.

Romania

Every Red Cross Branch from the affected areas are helping the population with the distribution of food and hygiene items.

- 350 parcels with hygiene items, 610 pairs of rain boots and 450 blankets have been displaced from the main warehouse of the Romanian RC has been delivered to the affected households,
- 298 locations were affected in 35 counties, 785 households and 906 people have been evacuated,
- Romanian RC is in continuously communication and coordinating with the authorities at local and national level.

Serbia

The Red Cross of Serbia is engaged in assisting more than 600 vulnerable families in 13 municipalities (Uzice, Pozarevac, Arandjelovac, Topola, Aleksinac, Petrovac na Mlavi, Ljig, Cukarica, Lazarevac, Rakovica, Barajevo, Grocka). Support is provided in the form of food and hygiene parcels, water tanks, shelter as accommodation for evacuated people, repair kits and dehumidifiers for early recovery of the affected households. All NDRTs are on stand by for rapid deployments.

Ukraine

On 4 July 2018, the National Committee of the URCS has worked out possible ways of providing humanitarian assistance to the affected population by the distribution of clothing, footwear, bed linen and hygiene items. By early July, the weather has stabilized. The State Emergency Service of Ukraine in Chernihiv region was involved in rescue operations with 18 units of equipment, 13 motor pumps and 69 personnel.

Social media updates on the situation can be found [here](#).

Contact information

For further information, specifically related to this emergency, please contact:

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All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the **Code of Conduct** for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and the **Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response (Sphere)** in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. The IFRC's vision is to inspire, **encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities** by National Societies, with a view to **preventing and alleviating human suffering**, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:



Save lives.
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and strengthen recovery
from disaster and crises.



Enable **healthy**
and **safe** living.



Promote **social inclusion**
and a culture of
non-violence and **peace**.