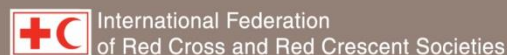


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Information bulletin

Portugal and Spain: Forest fires



Date of issue: 9 August 2018	
Date of disaster: Portugal – 3 August 2018 Spain – 6 August 2018	Point of contact: Seval Guzelkilinc, Disaster Management Coordinator IFRC Regional Office for Europe Phone: +36 1 888 45 05; email: seval.guzelkilinc@ifrc.org
Host National Society: Portuguese Red Cross, Spanish Red Cross	

This bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. Portuguese Red Cross and Spanish Red Cross are responding to the needs of the affected people, and coordinating closely with government authorities. Both National Societies, with the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), have determined that external assistance is not required – IFRC is therefore not seeking funding or other assistance from donors at this time.

The situation

Portugal

Due to the high risk of forest fires linked to extreme high temperatures, an alert was issued for the entire country for the period of 1–6 August. On 4 August, record-high temperatures were registered in 30 per cent of the country's temperature stations. Due to continuing severe weather conditions, particularly in southern Portugal, the authorities subsequently extended the alert until 7 August. More than 600 forest fires have been reported to date.

A severe fire started on 3 August in Perna da Negra in the municipality of Monchique (Faro District, southern Portugal), and, within two days, fires also spread to two other municipalities in Faro: Silves and Portimão. Several preventive evacuations have been undertaken to move local residents to safety, as well as tourists residing at two hotels. On 7 August, people in Rasmalho and Falacho, in the municipality of Silves were also evacuated as a preventive action. As of 7 August 2018, the number of evacuated people reached around 400.

Several houses have burnt down, and, by the time of writing, 79 people, including civilians and first responders, have been treated for injuries caused by the fires.

Spain

A forest fire started on 6 August in Llutxent (Vall d'Albaida county, Valencia province), 80 kilometres south of Valencia. The fire triggered the evacuation of 2,500 people overnight – including in the neighbouring town of Barx (Safor county), and in the La Drova area near Gandia city. The decision on evacuation was taken as a security precaution due to smoke and strong winds. Approximately 90 per cent of the evacuated people had been staying at second residences, and have returned to their primary homes. The other 10 per cent have evacuated to hotels or to their relatives'.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Portugal

The Portuguese Red Cross has been on the ground supporting people since the first day of the fire in Monchique, and has continued its relief work since. More than 130 staff and volunteers from 21 local branches have been involved in relief efforts to support people affected by the forest fire. Portuguese Red Cross has mobilised 21

ambulances for medical emergencies, 9 vehicles for evacuation of civilians, 3 coordination vehicles and 2 for logistics. Red Cross teams have provided logistical support for setting up a provisional shelter for evacuated people, with a capacity of 100. The shelter is managed by the Social Welfare Ministry, and is currently hosting 50 people.

Portuguese Red Cross has received in-kind donations including 30,000 bottles of water and 2,000 snacks from a foundation. These have been distributed to the firefighter brigade of Loulé municipality, which is directly involved in fighting the fires.

Spain

Spanish Red Cross Shelter Immediate Emergency Response Teams have been assisting people evacuated from the La Drova area, providing shelter for 42 people at Corea Cultural Centre in Gandia. To be prepared for further needs, Spanish Red Cross has made two more shelters ready: in Barx (100 beds) and in Rois de Corella (30 beds).

Communications

Health and heatwave awareness campaigns are being run by National Societies across Europe on social media and in the press to help people take steps to stay safe,

IFRC Europe issued a [press release](#) highlighting the work of National Societies and outlining health risks associated with extreme heat. The story was covered by international outlets including [Associated Press](#), [The New York Times](#) and [Bloomberg](#). IFRC distributed warnings and advice across its global social media channels and [IFRC Europe Twitter](#).

Contact information

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

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How we work

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,
protect livelihoods,
and strengthen recovery
from disaster and crises.



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



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