

INFORMATION BULLETIN



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

CENTRAL EUROPE: HEAT WAVE

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The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in 185 countries.

In Brief

This Bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the situation and the information available at this time. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

The International Federation undertakes activities that are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to achieve the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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All International Federation 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 is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For longer-term programmes in this or other countries or regions, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for national society profiles, please also access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

The Situation

Over the past few weeks the Central Europe Region has been hit by an unusually strong heat wave that has come from Africa. The highest Europe temperature of 43.3 degrees Celsius was measured in Podgorica, capital of Montenegro. High heat combined with high UV radiation lead to health crisis and threat to life. As a consequence of high heat, more than 30 persons died in Romania this summer. The heat and dry conditions sparked a rash of

fires causing deaths too: in Romania two people died and 26 were injured, while in Montenegro one person died in fire. Weather forecast for the coming days remains the same: very hot and dry, with temperatures around + 40 degrees Celsius.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Macedonian Red Cross

Macedonian Red Cross has mobilized its First Aid teams in 29 municipalities mostly affected by heat wave. Each of these branches deployed two First Aid teams, with three members in each team, to assist the population of Macedonia. The teams are based in the most critical locations such as at the bus station, market places and shopping centres. These teams provide first aid assistance, distribute water and leaflets with information how to behave during the heat wave. The same assistance is provided in Skopje, the capital of Macedonia. 45 members of the National Disaster Response Team as well as the members of the Red Cross Youth Club have been deployed and organized in five teams around the town. Macedonian Red Cross water purification equipment is on stand by. Initial information from the field shows that population of Macedonia highly appreciates the Red Cross work.

Macedonian Red Cross is a member of the National Crisis Management Centre that organized meeting with all relevant institutions in Skopje on 17 July due to the heat wave affecting the country.



Croatian Red Cross volunteers distribute drinking water along the highway.

Croatian Red Cross

Croatian Red Cross volunteers are distributing fresh drinking water to hundreds and thousands of people driving along the highway to reach one of the holiday resorts on the Adriatic coast. It is not unusual to have 15 to 20 kilometres long vehicle queues created in front of tunnels and on the highway exits points at this time of the year. Croatian Red Cross has prepared 100,000 bottles of drinking water to be distributed along the critical points of the highway to those exposed to high temperatures in long queues.

Montenegro Red Cross

Branches of the Montenegro Red Cross have mobilized their first aid teams and disaster response team members to respond to the needs of communities. Along the beaches of Montenegro Red Cross life guards warn people about adequate behaviour and provide first aid assistance if needed. Furthermore, the Red Cross works closely with the National Institution for Disaster Response and has made all its resources available to be used in case of need. Since Montenegro has had number of fires causing lost of one human life, Montenegro Red Cross team members participate in Joint Commission that works on fire prevention.

Romanian Red Cross

Operation Centre for Emergency Situation announced a code orange warning for the period 19 – 22 July in 32 out of 42 counties in Romania. Weather temperatures during this period are forecasted to be between 39 and 42 degrees Celsius. Romanian Red Cross has an on going water distribution operation in the most affected counties: Dolj, Olt, Teleorman, Ilfov, Ialomita, Dambovita, Bucharest, Braila, Galati and Bacau. So far 45,000 litres of water, donated by a company from Bucharest, have been distributed. In cooperation with local authorities, Red Cross branches distribute water to the people who still live in Red Cross tents as a consequence of the severe

flooding that hit Romania last year in April. In cooperation with Prefect's offices and City Halls, Romanian Red Cross branches conduct primary health assistance activities in locations provided by the authorities. Several retail chains in Bucharest have made space available for the Romanian Red Cross volunteers and authorities to install primary health assistance facilities.

Bulgarian Red Cross

The air temperatures all around Bulgaria have reached close to +40 degrees Celsius or even more. People often seek medical help. In the town of Kyustendil alone, 91 people felt sick because of the heat. Bulgarian Red Cross started with the water distribution and providing blood pressure check-ups in all of the 28 regional Red Cross branches in Bulgaria. Red Cross volunteers and staff are organized in teams and are located on squares and other public places to provide water and medical assistance. All of the Red Cross activities are done in cooperation with local authorities, but also with local business sector that has responded to the Red Cross appeal by donating drinking water.



Bulgarian Red Cross team provide health assistance to people hit by extreme hot weather in Bulgaria.

Conclusion

All above mentioned Red Cross National Societies have been quick and active in responding to the heat wave caused disasters in their respective countries. Furthermore, they have been working closely together with national and local disaster response authorities in providing coordinated assistance to the needy ones. The work of the Red Cross has been recognized and well covered by national media.

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