

# 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: FLOODS

*Information Bulletin*  
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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 over 183 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.**

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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 14 days, the region of Central Europe has been hit by seasonal flooding – as a result of rapid rises in temperature, melting winter snows and heavy rainfall.

**Poland**

In Poland flooding has affected mainly farmland - agricultural and grazing land. There were no reports to evacuate people from their houses in the affected areas. The level of water in rivers in the affected areas is now going down.

**Czech Republic**

In the Czech Republic the gradual melting of snow, together with heavy rainfall and high winds, has swollen streams and rivers. Where rivers have burst their banks, some areas have now been covered by flood water for up to 14 days. Damage assessments are on going. Several hundred people were evacuated from their homes in at-risk or affected areas. At present there are very few people in the evacuation centres, as most are hosted by relatives. There are reports of hundreds of damaged houses but none so far destroyed. Most of the damage in homes has been to household equipment. The emergency situation remains, however water levels are slowing decreasing in the affected rivers.

*Action taken by government*

The Czech government has earmarked funds to help those affected by the floods. An emergency situation has been called in seven out of 14 regions of the country. Water engineers have been regulating the outflow into dams from the highest risk rivers. The government has adopted a notice concerning social benefits for vulnerable people affected by the flood.

**Slovakia**

Heavy rains and melting snow in Slovakia have also led to flooding over the past two weeks. Although the situation has not been as dramatic as in neighbouring Czech Republic, areas in the east and west of the country have been affected. The levels of water in the affected areas and rivers are now decreasing.

**Hungary**

In the capital Budapest, a state of emergency was declared on Monday 3 April. The river Danube had risen more than 10 centimetres overnight and crested at 861 centimetres at Margaret Island on Tuesday 4 April, at midnight. The river level has exceeded the level reached in 2002 during the major floods. Flood alerts are also in place along 3,800 kilometres representing three-quarters of all Hungary's waterways, and the highest, third-degree alert has been ordered along 1,012 kilometres, including the Danube section at Budapest. Many of Hungary's rivers crested on Tuesday 4 April but are expected to remain at high levels for a longer period.

Out of Hungary's 20 counties, 12 (Komárom-Esztergom, Bács-Kiskun, Békés, Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén, Csongrád, Fejér, Győr-Sopron, Hajdú-Bihar, Heves, Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok, Pest, Tolna, and Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg Counties) are currently affected by flood or inland waters. Most of the rivers in Hungary are flooding (Tisa, Rába, Körös, Bodrog, Túr, Szamos, Kraszna, Zagyva, Maros.)

The number of people forced to leave their homes inundated or threatened by flood over the past weeks has risen to 549, mainly from Pest county in central Hungary and the northern regions. As many as 32,600 people are under threat. Many villages on the Danube bend (Northern Hungary) are cut off from road access and are now isolated. Most of the roads along the Danube bend, in the north of Budapest are impassable. A 15-km section of Highway 6, a main traffic artery running near the flooding Danube south of Budapest, was closed, so that wild animals trapped in the flooded plain could safely cross to the other side and head for higher ground. However, all important industrial facilities near the Danube, including the Paks nuclear power station, are secure and roads in the vicinity are clear. Shipping traffic along the Danube was banned from Monday, except for ferries serving communities cut off by the floods.

The daily costs of the flood defence operations are estimated around EUR 570,000-760,000. About 10,000 professional water management experts, rescue workers, soldiers and fire fighters as well as 10,000 volunteers are involved in intensive flood control and rescue operations. Troops of 6,000 soldiers, 5,000 police, 1,000 firemen and 815 border guards were mobilised and dispatched to the worst-hit areas in the country, and some 25,000 people, half of them volunteers, were on non-stop duty.

Recovery will be slow and there could be more flood surges on the Danube and the more unpredictable offshoot of the other major river, the Tisa.

**Romania**

Following the heavy rains, in the middle of March, four counties in the western and southwestern parts of Romania were affected: Dolj, Gorj, Mehedinti and Olt. At the same time, the eastern and northeastern parts were severely affected by snow storms. The most seriously affected county was Mehedinti. Destruction was continuing in some villages, as a result of land slides. The Inspectorates for Management of Emergency Situations managed to evacuate 150 people from the flooded areas in Mehedinti, despite initial reluctance from the inhabitants who were afraid of looting in their absence. Evacuated people were accommodated in schools in neighbouring localities. Sand bags have been positioned to reinforce the affected embankment of the river Drincea, in the village of Punghina.

**Serbia and Montenegro**

Due to the heavy floods and uncontrolled deforestation in the last several years, landslides occurred on the territory of several municipalities in Serbia in the last few weeks. The most serious situation is in village Bogdanje which is three kilometres from the municipality of Trstenik, where round 130 houses are damaged, and more than 200 citizens have been evacuated.

A state of emergency has been proclaimed in the municipalities of Trstenik, Loznica and Lucane. In Koceljeva municipality as a consequence of 95 landslides, around 67 houses are damaged and six of them completely destroyed. In Ljig municipality, 150 landslides were reported and more than 60 local roads cut. Landslides occurred in the municipality of Osecina, with fifty households flooded and another thirty households in danger, including the Red Cross building. In Prijepolje municipality around 70 houses are flooded, due to the rising of underground water and mountain springs. In Novi Pazar more than 300 houses are flooded and three bridges damaged.

On 23 March at 12.26 pm, in Mionica municipality, well-known by seismic activities, an earthquake of 4.8 degree on the Richter scale occurred. According to the Seismic Centre of Serbia, the epicentre of the earthquake was around 15 km towards south of Mionica, near mountain Maljen. No serious damage to houses was reported.

Latest figures say that there have been 3,000 landslides and water levels of several rivers in Serbia remain high.

**Red Cross and Red Crescent action****Polish Red Cross**

The Polish Red Cross is working through its regional branches to assess needs in the affected areas. It will also provide further information on response at a local level.

**Czech Red Cross**

The main crisis committee (MCC) of the Czech Red Cross was convened on 29 March at the beginning of the emergency. The committee has been communicating with crisis staff at branch level, regarding the capacity for action of the crisis units at a branch level. These local units continue to monitor the situation and are taking action where needed. The crisis staff of the local branches are cooperating with the local authorities in the towns of České Budejovice, Českém Krumlove, Písku, Prachaticích, Jindrichove Hradci and Liberci. The current need as assessed by the local units is for dryers and the Czech Red Cross will focus its response on this. At present there are 400 dryers available for distribution. The Czech Red Cross has launched a national appeal for financial support for the victims of the flood – seeking support in kind to provide more dryers to affected families, and also for funds for post flooding replacement of damaged house equipment.

**Slovak Red Cross**

The Slovak Red Cross has been active from the beginning of the crisis through its local branches, which have been distributing emergency relief items and equipment via two Red Cross warehouses. On 31 March a national appeal for funds was launched by the Slovak Red Cross. In the towns of Senici and Komarno, water pumps, drying machines, disinfectants and clothes have been distributed to affected populations.

**Hungarian Red Cross**

On 6 April the Hungarian Prime Minister, Ferenc Gyurcsany, spoke with five key aid organizations and state emergency managers at an emergency coordination meeting hosted by the Hungarian Red Cross headquarters in Budapest. The organizations discussed coordination mechanisms during the current flood operation. A national

appeal for contributions to the flood operation was launched on Thursday 6 April and Friday 7 April through six national and 20 regional newspapers. The Hungarian Red Cross has also issued its own national appeal for funds. The local Red Cross branches in affected areas are supporting with the distribution of mattresses and covers and other relief items. Needs assessments are ongoing. The Hungarian Red Cross has received offers of support from the Ukrainian Red Cross, German Red Cross and Turkish Red Crescent.

### **Romanian Red Cross**

All four Branches in the affected area started to evaluate the situation in the field from the beginning of the emergency situation. Based on their assessments and requirements, the headquarters of the Romanian Red Cross ordered distributions from the Regional Warehouse Alba to Mehedinti Branch - 100 blankets, 100 sleeping bags and 100 bed linen sets. All these items are being distributed by the volunteers of Mehedinti RRC Branch to evacuated people. Further humanitarian relief help will be provided according to branch requests and based on the latest assessment data. The Romanian Red Cross is also finalizing the post flood recovery operation following the widespread flooding in 2005. This operation is due to end in May 2006, and is supported by regional disaster response team members, who have been working with their colleagues in Bucharest since summer 2005.

### **Serbia and Montenegro Red Cross Society**

The National Society is monitoring the situations and Red Cross staff in the affected areas are members of the crisis headquarters. So far, 210 family hygiene parcels and three water containers (1200 litres each) were distributed to village Bogdanje; 300 blankets, 100 mattresses, 100 hygiene parcels and 50 pairs of rubber boots were sent to Novi Pazar.

Two assessment teams of Serbian Red Cross started assessment in Koceljevo, Ljig, Osecina and Loznica. A third team went to Trstenik/Bogdanje and Brus while a fourth one will assess the situation in Kragujevac. Accommodation of the affected with host families is a temporary solution. The local Red Cross branches expressed a need for containers for the affected families. Currently, there is a need for 20 containers, but as the situation is deteriorating 30-50 containers will be needed.

### **Regional Delegation**

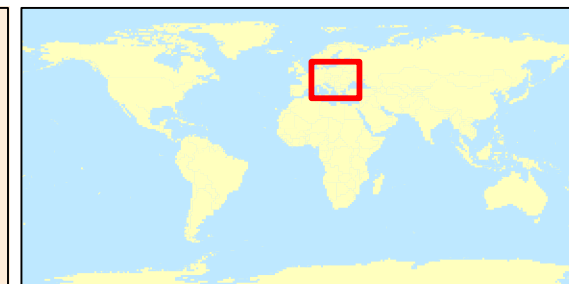
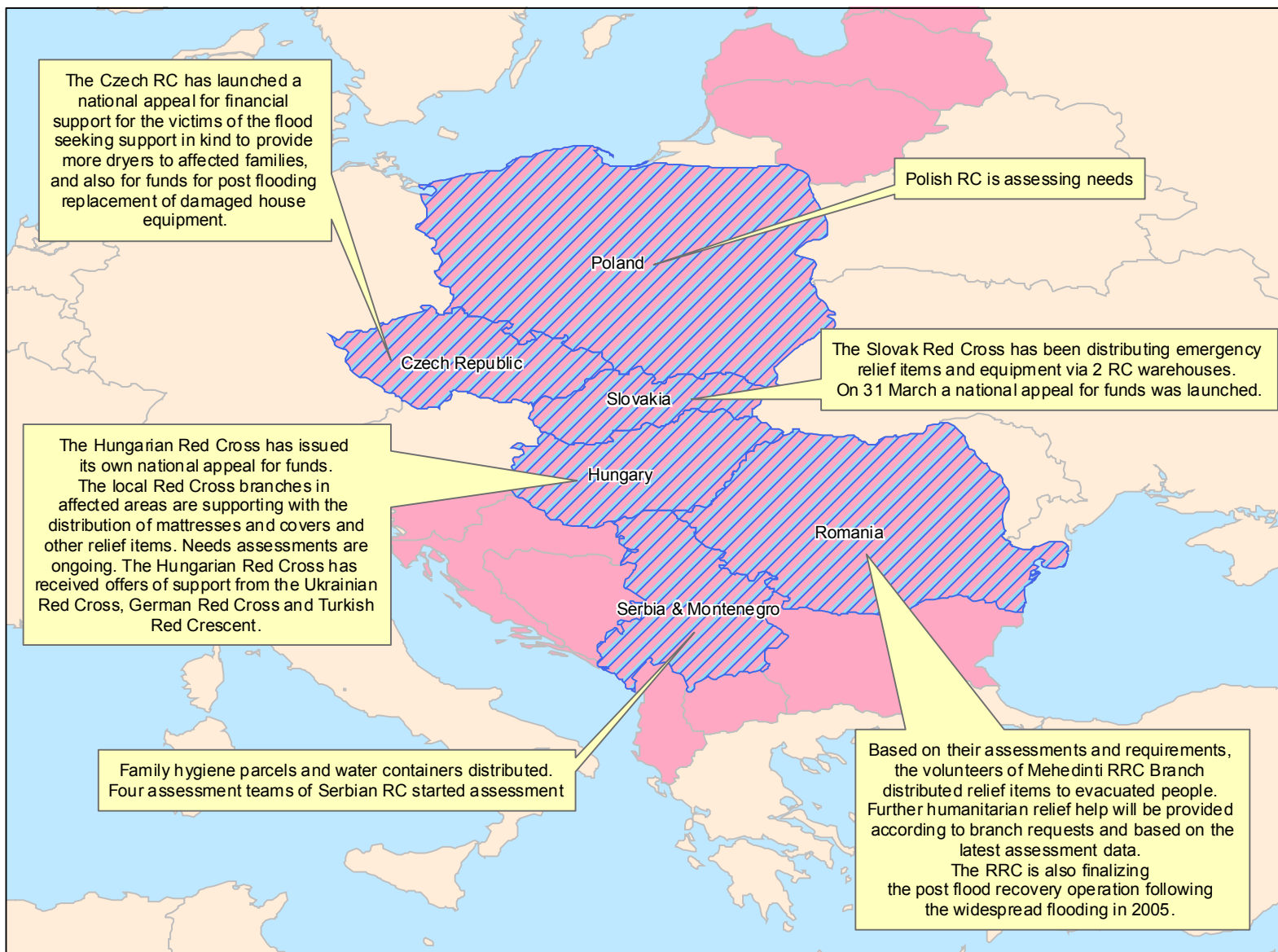
The Regional Delegation, through its regional disaster management coordinator, is monitoring the situation closely. During a meeting of National Society disaster management coordinators held in Croatia on Thursday 6 and Friday 7 April, the regional flooding situation was discussed. Contingency plans were made, and the possibilities for deployment from the regional disaster management team were discussed.

When and if needed, further information bulletins or DREF bulletins will be launched in the coming weeks.

[\*Click here to return to the title page or contact information.\*](#)



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