



## Migration Spotlight Session

### Introduction

Migration is a global and historic phenomenon that is interrelated with the transitions in scale, direction, demography, and frequency of which evolving humanitarian policies, programmes, and operational responses. The Movement has a long history of assisting, protecting and advocating for the most at-risk migrants, including refugees, across the globe. However, as a Movement we continue to witness unacceptable risks for migrants, including along migratory routes and an inability for many migrants to access the basic assistance and protection needed to ensure their safety, dignity and rights. The attention on migration and displacement related humanitarian challenges have significantly increased over the past decade and it remains one of the key humanitarian issues of today. The Europe region is greatly varied in its demography and especially in terms of migration movements have become extremely dynamic in the past decade, emphasizing the need to address the situation for migrants along all migratory routes. National Societies in the Europe region support migrants in many ways, through emergency operations, focused on population movement and other crises, and through longer term community programmes that aim to address the assistance, protection and social cohesion needs of migrants and host communities. These programmes and operations are complemented with a focus on principled advocacy and public communications for migrants' needs and rights as well as facilitating their social cohesion.

National Societies in the Europe region approach migration from a purely humanitarian and needs based perspective and support migrants in many ways. The RCRC Movement with its worldwide and Europe-wide operational presence is uniquely positioned through being permanently present at the local level along migratory routes in countries of origin, transit, and destination. National Societies are also uniquely positioned to respond to the intersecting crises migrants often face. They have a role as partner of choice for governments, humanitarian and development organizations and donors and as auxiliaries to their public authorities, they are well-positioned to facilitate cooperation within and across borders and along migratory routes. As a Movement, we are however concerned about

increasing xenophobia, politicization, criminalization and securitization of public discourse and policy on migration. We are also faced with new and evolving threats that affect the movement of people across borders, including the adverse impacts of climate change and disasters.

The Ukraine conflict is becoming the most vital driver for migration and displacement in Europe since World War II. The ongoing expansion of the conflict is estimated to deepen and expand humanitarian needs among millions of Ukrainians and impacted countries' host communities.

Therefore the 11th European Regional Conference provides a unique and historic opportunity to address the conflict in Ukraine and the impact on neighbouring countries, and beyond. To further discuss the Movement-wide humanitarian interventions accentuating as well as prioritising equity, inclusion, and access on humanitarian systems aim to support authorities while maintaining and establishing a joint humanitarian stance. This conference also provides an opportunity to reflect on progress, lessons learned, and new challenges faced since the 10<sup>th</sup> European Regional Competence, including progress on the specific migration commitments contained in the Almaty Declaration<sup>1</sup>

## General objective

The Movement's purely humanitarian approach to migration, the global reach of National Societies across 192 countries and along migratory routes and their being embedded in host communities, places us in a unique position to reduce the risks and enhance the resilience of migrants. Our trust with authorities and local communities as well as migrants supports our work in social inclusion. In this context, the Movement has reinforced its commitment to scaling up our work to bridge protection and assistance gaps along migratory routes; improve our collective capacity to understand and face evolving risks, as well as strengthen National Societies as critical actors in support of migrants.

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<sup>1</sup> [Almaty-Commitments\\_EN.pdf \(ifrc.org\)](#)

*"We commit to:*

- *Respond to the vulnerabilities of migrants and their humanitarian needs regardless of their legal status, and to expand social inclusion activities for and with migrants, including increased efforts to tackle discrimination and xenophobia;*
- *develop national and regional migration strategies and guidance when migrants are recognised to be among the most vulnerable in our domestic context, involving relevant internal and external stakeholders, including migrant and host communities;*
- *to defend the humanitarian space of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and advocate with relevant authorities about migrants' humanitarian needs and rights to ensure a principled approach to assisting migrants.*
- *cooperate in a more efficient and effective manner between NSs and the Governments in countries of origin, transit and destination for migrants, including migrant workers;*
- *Provide coordinated and complementary support to vulnerable migrants through transnational cooperation between NSs sharing similar realities along the migratory routes, creating synergies and allowing sharing of resources*

The commitment and role of the Movement in relation to migration has been repeatedly affirmed through several resolutions and high-level dialogues during past Councils of Delegates (CoD) and International Conferences (IC).<sup>2</sup> Most recently, the IFRC has adopted a new global Strategy 2030, which includes migration as one of five humanitarian priorities for the global network for the next decade.

In 2020, a mini survey to capture National Societies' views on migration-related emerging trends, significant challenges, and areas where the Movement should invest moving forward, was conducted. Having a 'Movement strategy on migration' was recognized as an important priority area and the development of such a strategy is now in progress aiming to strengthen the Movement's coherent positioning and coordinated action in favour of vulnerable migrants, capitalizing on the complementarity between the different Movement components. At the CoD 2022 the process resolution "Towards a Movement Strategy on Migration" will be submitted for adoption. It is critical that the leadership of the European NSs are engaged and support the process – both at CoD 2022 as well as in the development of the strategy and its implementation.

### **Specific objectives**

- Highlight and discuss emerging trends and most pressing humanitarian priorities as well as key challenges related to migration in the European regional context.
- Discuss with delegates the rationale for the Movement strategy on migration and their preliminary views on the content and focus for the strategy.
- Identify ways to improve intra-regional NS cooperation on migration on assisting, protecting and advocating for the needs of migrants, including considering models of cross-border and route-based collaboration suitable to the European context.

## **Expected outcomes**

- The European regional conference endorses the upcoming procedural CoD Resolution "Towards a Movement Strategy on Migration" and acknowledge the importance of a joint Movement approach in the field of migration.

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<sup>2</sup> Movement Statement on Migration and our Common Humanity (2019) - CoD [CD19\\_12DR-Movement-Declaration-on-Migration-draft-25-Oct-FINAL-EN.pdf \(rcrcconference.org\)](#) Restoring Family Links: Strategy for the RCRC Movement 2020 - 2025 - CoD [Draft New RFL Strategy \(rcrcconference.org\)](#) International RCRC Movement policy on addressing mental health and PSS (2019) - CoD [CD19\\_9DR-MHPSS-need-policy-draft-resolution-FINAL-EN-1.pdf \(rcrcconference.org\)](#) Movement Call for Action on the humanitarian needs of vulnerable migrants (2017) [CoD resolution template \(rcrcconference.org\)](#) Movement statement on migration: Ensuring Collective Action to Protect and Respond to the Needs and Vulnerabilities of Migrants (2015) - CoD [CoD15-R7-migration\\_EN.pdf \(rcrcconference.org\)](#) Migration: Ensuring Access, Dignity, Respect for Diversity and Social Inclusion (2011) – IC [R3 Migration\\_EN.pdf \(rcrcconference.org\)](#)

- The European regional conference provides inputs on trends/priorities and challenges from the region as well as strategies to improve NS cooperation and collaboration, including to be incorporated into the upcoming Movement Strategy.
- The European regional conference pledges commitments to further scale up assistance to migrants, irrespective of status, to better identify and protect the most at risk, and to advocate for the rights of the most vulnerable.
- The European regional conference pledges commitments to including support in the form of staff time and resources, to develop the forthcoming Strategy and its implementation.
- The European regional conference encourages developing the structure of peer-to-peer support in the area of migration, including humanitarian diplomacy/protection dialogue.
- The European regional conference endorses the development of a joint process to collect data/identified gaps in the migration field.

## Agenda of the workshop

### *Plenary session: Joint introductory part (30 min)*

- Introduction (*Martin Ärnlov, Secretary-General Swedish Red Cross*)
- External speaker (tbc)
- Policy speaker (tbc)
- Speaker (former refugee)

### *Break-out sessions (50-60 min):*

#### **1. “Principled humanitarian approach to migration and our role as auxiliary to authorities”**

- *How do we ensure the respect for the Fundamental principles in our work for and on behalf of migrants?*

**Facilitator: Dominik Stillhart, ICRC**

**Introduction: Kristina Meide, Lithuania Red Cross**

National societies and Movement components who seek to assist and protect migrants often face significant and, in some cases, numerous obstacles and ethical dilemmas to ensure a principled

humanitarian approach. These obstacles may be linked to the fact that many States, often influenced by public opinion, are adopting increasingly restrictive migration policies and often seek to tie humanitarian actors to some aspects of those policies. This may concern the participation of humanitarian actors in compliance activities, deportations or in campaigns set to discourage migration, or the transmission to government bodies of individual data collected from migrants.

Those challenges can contain restrictions or pressure from donors; pressure from the public; pressure from authorities; a “balanced approach” between migrants and host communities; barriers to accessing migrants; pressure to share humanitarian data etc.

*Guiding questions:*

- What examples do you have and what are the specific challenges faced by your NS related to the political, social and financial context in which you operate? To what extent is this hampering the ability to assist and protect migrants and what are the ethical considerations you grapple with?
- What is your experience as auxiliary to the authorities in migration related work? What are the opportunities and what are the challenges?
- Are there areas or circumstances where a complementary, coordinated or joint RCRC approach would assist you to address these challenges at a national level? What might this look like?

## 2. **“Current situation analysis and looking towards the future”**

- *What are the main trends, priorities, and challenges in our migration-related work in the European region? What might these be in the future?*

**Facilitator: Alexandra Segenstedt, Swedish Red Cross**

**Introduction: Jerzy Zaborowski, Polish Red Cross**

There is broad agreement on many of the key trends and priorities in European regional context: armed conflict (especially the situation in the Ukraine), violence and forced displacement; climate change; health threats and pandemics; data protection and digitalization, racism and xenophobia and preservation of humanitarian space. Similarly, there is an understanding that key challenges include access to essential services for all migrants irrespective of legal status; safe and dignified returns in

compliance with the principle of non-refoulement; protection of migrant's rights and prevention of family separation; disappearance and death along migratory routes.

*Guiding questions;*

- What other trends, priorities and challenges are important to regional migration dynamics?  
Please consider both now and for the years to come.
- What are the implications of these trends, priorities, and challenges for the Movement's ways of working in the area of migration?
- What measures, strategies and/or topics should be included in the Movement Strategy on migration in order to ensure the Movement is equipped to respond to these trends, priorities and challenges?

**3. “Cooperation, collaboration and mutual support in migration operations, humanitarian diplomacy and other activities”**

- *How could we as National Societies across Europe set a structure of peer-to-peer collaboration enabling an active support between national societies in the field of migration? How can we enhance this cooperation, including across borders and along migratory routes? What forms of peer-to-peer collaboration among National Societies currently exist in the region? What other forms or models of peer coordination and support would enhance our work in the field of migration?*

**Facilitator: Xavier Castellanos, IFRC**

**Introduction: Alper Kucuk, Turkish Red Crescent**

*Guiding questions;*

In addition to the existing forms of cooperation across Europe, including through the PERCO network:

- What knowledge or information do NSs currently have that could be useful to other NS?  
How can this be shared?
- Which specific aspects of NS work in migration should we prioritise in enhancing NS cooperation or intra-regional NS peer-peer cooperation, collaboration and support? (e.g.

cross border and route-based assistance and protection along migration routes, humanitarian diplomacy at the EU or national level etc).

- What mechanisms or models for NS cooperation, collaboration and support would be most helpful to the work of your NS?

*Joint summary panel (30 min) (tbc)*

- Report back from respective break-out
- Ending remarks
- IFRC
- ICRC