

<b>Emergency appeal n° MGR65001</b> <a href="#">Emergency Appeal</a> launched: 24/11/2021 <a href="#">Operational Strategy</a> published: 15/12/2021	<b>GLIDE n°:</b> <a href="#">OT-2021-000175-BLR</a> , <a href="#">OT-2021-000076-LTU</a> , <a href="#">OT-2021-000167-POL</a>
<b>Operation update # 2</b> <b>Date of issue: 20/01/2022</b>	<b>Timeframe covered by this update:</b> From 24/11/2021 <sup>1</sup> to 15/01/2022
<b>Operation timeframe: 12 months</b> 24/12/2021 – 30/11/2022	<b>Number of people being assisted:</b> 12,000 in Belarus, Lithuania and Poland
<b>Funding requirements (CHF):</b> CHF 9.5 million through the IFRC Emergency Appeal, CHF 10.7 million Federation-wide	<b>DREF amount initially allocated:</b> CHF 1 million in total as DREF loans to three National Societies ( <b>Belarus Red Cross; Lithuanian Red Cross and          Polish Red Cross</b> )

To date, this [Emergency Appeal](#), which seeks CHF 9,500,000, is **10,4 per cent funded**. Further funding contributions are needed to enable the National Societies in the region, with the support of the IFRC, to continue with the preparedness efforts and with the provision of humanitarian assistance and protection to the affected people.



*The Belarus Red Cross food distribution to migrants at the logistics centre. Photo: Belarus Red Cross*

<sup>1</sup> This Emergency Appeal was launched on 24 November 2021, however, this report also describes events preceding the appeal: the start of the first DREF operation in Lithuania is 12 July 2021, and DREF operations for Poland and Belarus were launched on 16 November 2021. Indicator figures for Lithuania cover the period since 12 July.

## A. SITUATION ANALYSIS

### Description of the situation

The migration situation related to Belarus and neighbouring countries started in May 2021 with an increasing number of migrants irregularly entering Lithuania from Belarus. Later in August 2021, there was an increase of migrants in Latvia and Poland. Since then, the situation has impacted an estimated 20,000 people spread across several countries, mainly Belarus, Poland and Lithuania. Following regular and daily attempts by people to cross the borders into the EU during the autumn and an escalation on the border which led to clashes in early November, the situation has de-escalated in December 2021 and early January 2022. 14 migrants are reported to have died in the terrain by the border over the past months.

Some migrants remain in the terrain by the border, but the majority on the **Belarus** side of the border have been moved to and are being housed in a logistic centre at Bruzgi border crossing. The number of people accommodated in the logistic centre has been gradually decreasing to 450, as stated by the Ministry of Emergency Situations in Belarus, however, other actors involved in the operation are putting the figure as high as 800. The exact number of migrants across Belarus (excluding the logistics centre) is unknown but estimated in the low hundreds (according to the Belarus Red Cross, UNHCR and IOM estimate). Also, migrants are being accommodated in centres in both Lithuania and Poland. **In Lithuania**, 3,200 people are held in five centres, pending asylum application processes, with the number of cumulative arrivals being equal to 4,332. Since August 2021, 8,200 persons have been pushed-back from the Lithuanian borders. **In Poland**, 1,675 migrants are in detention centres (with 972 persons being in detention centres for families and the rest in those for men) run by the border guards. Some migrants arriving from Belarus during last year are also placed in open centres run by the Office for Foreigners.

While the intensity of the situation has de-escalated, there are humanitarian needs, human rights violations and operational constraints that continue to cause concern. Temporary derogations from EU asylum and return rules are threatening to undermine fair asylum procedures, increase (de facto) detention, prolong registration periods, ease the process for returns, and support pushbacks. In addition, humanitarian actors continue to face limitations in accessing migrants in border areas. As a consequence, migrants, including those with special needs, are not getting the critical assistance or protection to which they are entitled.

The three National Red Cross Societies of Lithuania, Poland and Belarus have played a critical role as local actors in responding to humanitarian needs throughout this context. **Latvian Red Cross** is also involved in responding to the migration situation on the border between Latvia and Belarus. There have been regular attempts by migrants to cross the border with Latvia, albeit lower numbers than on other border stretches. Local branches of the Latvian Red Cross are providing food, hygiene products and blankets and clothing, and working closely with the border guards and NGOs.

The **Ukrainian Red Cross** is in the process of strengthening its preparedness for migration scenarios. Based on their ongoing discussions with the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine, it has asked their specific support in early January 2022 in preparation of increased number of migrants arriving to Ukraine from Belarus. A small contribution from the contingency budgets of the Emergency Appeal is being planned. The purpose would be to meet the basic needs of vulnerable people detained and improve the detention conditions, including through COVID-19 PPEs, hygiene items and other in-kind assistance.

**In Belarus**, the situation has calmed down, with no influx of significant number of migrants observed. The number of migrants staying in Belarus has also been significantly reduced due to repatriation flights through which 3,817 Iraqi migrants have been repatriated from Belarus and 112 from Lithuania and due to the IOM Assisted Voluntary Repatriation and Reintegration Programme which assisted 381 migrants to returned from Belarus to their countries of origin last year. Attempts to cross the border into the EU, at the borders with Poland, Lithuania, and Latvia, are reported, but they are limited in number and scale, due to harsh winter conditions and strengthened border protection measures. It is widely accepted that, despite continuing repatriation efforts, a caseload of several hundred persons will remain, due to their lack of ability or willingness to repatriate for a variety of reasons.

As the conditions at the logistics centre are not suitable for an extended stay, advocacy efforts for a more appropriate solutions are ongoing.

**In Lithuania**, over the past few months, the number of illegal border-crossings has fallen significantly. Most people who attempt to cross the Lithuanian border are being pushed back into Belarus. On 15 January 2022, Lithuania ended the State of Emergency at the border, however, the Lithuanian army continues to assist border guards in guarding the border. According to official statistics of the Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania, 97 people, who irregularly entered Lithuania from Belarus, had their asylum application approved, while 3,199 asylum claims were rejected. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania, 537 migrants have returned to their countries of origin from Lithuania, 482 of whom did so voluntarily. There are currently 3,200 foreigners living in five reception centres. The Lithuanian government (with the funding from the European Commission) is paying 1,000 euros as an incentive to migrants with irregular status who would voluntarily leave the country by 20 January 2022. Although basic food or allowances for groceries are provided in the reception centres, living conditions are not suitable for long-term stay. As some centres are similar to enclosed buildings (such as former correctional centre) or container houses, migrants might be resentful of the situation and have further traumas in an environment conducive to more frustrations about their situation.

**In Poland**, the reports by the Polish Border Guard showed a significant decrease of the daily attempts to cross the Polish border during the last month (mid-December 2021 to mid-January 2021) from the side of Belarus - from 500 to 29 daily attempts or persons, due to harsh weather conditions (low temperature, strong wind, high humidity). However, the number of migrants and attempts to cross the border can be expected to increase once the weather is improved. Some migrants are pushed back to Belarus, while some who ask for asylum in Poland, especially families or ill persons are transferred to detention centres. Currently, there are 1,675 persons in the detention centres. At the moment, the Polish Red Cross (PRC) has access to 5 family detention centres and 7 Polish Border Guard stations. The PRC provides migrants with basic food and negotiates gaining an access to other detention centres.

## Summary of response

### Overview of the National Societies and ongoing response

#### **Belarus**

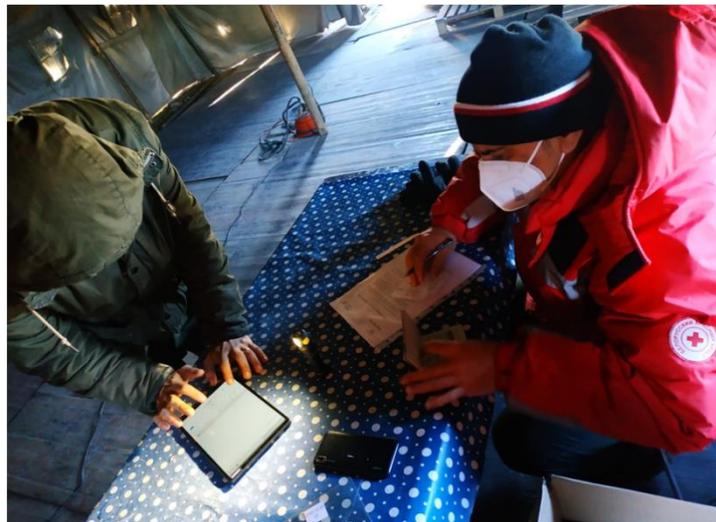
**Belarus Red Cross (BRC)** was established in 1921 and is the largest humanitarian organization in Belarus, present in all 158 districts of the country. BRC works in humanitarian aid (including COVID-19 response), home-based care and active ageing, community mobilization, health promotion and disease prevention and the integration of refugees. Two regional branches, the HQ, 30 staff and 180 volunteers are involved in the response. A [DREF Operation](#) was launched on 16 November 2021.

The BRC works closely with government agencies and international organisations to coordinate efforts and further operational assistance. The BRC has access to the migrants at the border and acts as a leading organisation in providing humanitarian assistance to the migrants in Belarus. The BRC has been in contact with the State Border Committee since August 2021, providing first occasional assistance to migrants with relief items (food parcels, hygiene items, clothing, blankets, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and referral to health services (in the border area and logistic centre). Since the escalation at the border, the BRC assisted over 2,000 migrants with relief items and restoring family links (RFL), medical aid and post-natal care for new-borns and their mothers. With most migrants in the border region concentrated at the logistics centre, the BRC is focusing the delivery of assistance (food, not-food items (NFI) and RFL) at the location.

Daily food distributions are taking place that include also a hot meal for lunch. The need for NFI (warm clothing, blankets, etc.) is largely covered. Remaining gaps are covered on a case-by-case basis. Hygiene items and COVID-19 protection materials are provided on a regular basis. The BRC is also distributing additional assistance provided by other organisations through their set-up and emergency team. The Grodno branch of BRC activated a crisis

room for post-natal care for new-borns and their mothers. The BRC continues to work on the provision of a mobile phone charging facility to assist RFL, overcoming hardware and permission constraints.

The number of people staying in urban centres in Belarus cannot be verified, as they rarely present themselves and ask for assistance. When possible, they are assisted with food parcels, hygiene kits, personal protection equipment, warm clothes and footwear, COVID-19-related information, psycho-social support and restoring family links assistance. The option of assisting this group of migrants with cash and voucher assistance is being looked into (i.e. to cover daily needs and accommodation).



*The Belarus Red Cross with the ICRC support carry out restoring family link activities at the logistics centre. Photo: ICRC*

#### Partner National Society support

The BRC received bilateral partner support from **Danish Red Cross** (approx. EUR 30,000 through emergency request mechanism for the replenishment of 500 sleeping bags, 1,000 rugs and 1,000 blankets and fuel used by the BRC to deliver assistance to migrants) and **Turkish Red Crescent** (in-kind donations). The **ICRC** is supporting RFL activities and deployed a RFL delegate.

#### **Lithuania**

**The Lithuanian Red Cross (LRC)** was established in 1919 and is present country-wide with 14 branches. 26 staff members and 324 volunteers are involved in the migration response. The LRC is mainly active in providing nursing and psychosocial care to older people, advocacy, first aid trainings, assistance to refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, providing humanitarian aid, and responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since 2004, LRCS has been a reliable implementing partner of UNHCR in Lithuania, ensuring the provision of professional legal assistance to refugees. Since 2010, thanks to an agreement with the State Border Guard Services and UNHCR, the LRCS has monitored reception conditions and appropriate implementation of asylum procedures. In addition, it has organised trainings for guard officers on how to interact with migrants at the border during the first 72 hours and contributed to the courses organised by UNHCR on international protection standards and the rights of asylum seekers directed at judges and lawyers, especially those participating in the Government's legal aid scheme. In June 2020, the LRC signed an agreement with the State Border Guard Service to expand its activities and deliver protection aid and monitoring assistance to all migrants in detention, including at border crossing points.

Since early summer 2021, the LRC has been providing humanitarian assistance in reception centres, border control and border crossing points to an increasing number of arriving migrants. Over 4,000 people have been assisted to date with clothing, hygiene, and food parcels, psychological first aid, community engagement, legal advice, translation, RFL assistance and provision of medication and medical care. At the moment, most people are located in 5 reception centres, where LRC provides humanitarian aid, legal and psycho-social support. The LRC has also received financial (appr. 42,560 CHF) and in-kind (worth appr. 410,440 CHF) donations from businesses and the general public, including in-kind assistance of clothes, food, hygiene items, toys, household items and provides in-cash assistance for specific migrants' needs. In addition, various government agencies are also responding to the emergency, including Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, Ministry of Health, Migration Department, the Foreigners Registration Centre, and the Refugee Reception Center. A [DREF operation](#) was launched on 12 July and extended in October 2021, and escalated into the Emergency Appeal on 24 November.

#### Partner National Society support

The LRC has received financial support from:

- **Iraqi Red Crescent** (10,000 USD) to provide Iraqi families with humanitarian support
- **German Red Cross** (100,360EUR) for purchasing 1,800 units of hygiene kits, psycho-social support kits and medical equipment (electrocardiograph, urinalysis analyser, haematological analyser, and CRP

analyser) to be distributed in 5 main reception centres, vehicle for the LRC staff and volunteers working in the reception centres daily

- **Italian Red Cross** (15,000 EUR) for purchasing laptops for the LRC staff involved in the operation as well as salary contribution of staff responsible for advocating for migrant's rights

### **Poland**

**The Polish Red Cross (PRC)** was established in 1919 and is present country wide. The PRC works in the areas of dissemination of international humanitarian law, restoring family links and tracing assistance, voluntary blood donation, social care and assistance to vulnerable groups, health and environmental sustainability promotion, first aid training, education programs, and providing humanitarian assistance in crises and disasters domestically and abroad. The PRC utilises in the operation the psychosocial support capacities it has recently developed through the EU-funded BaltPrep project.

The PRC has been actively responding to the situation and has expanded its activities since the beginning of October 2021 by providing clothes, food and hygiene items, first aid provision and referral to health services, restoring family links assistance as well as public communication. With the donations received domestically and from Movement partners, the PRC has been able to prepare aid packages for migrants consisting of warm clothes, shoes, a sleeping bag, a blanket, water, high-energy food, hygiene products and cleaning products.



*Received in-kind assistance for migrants and its redistribution by the Polish Red Cross. Photo: Polish Red Cross.*

These packages are made available at Local Distribution Points that are located at the border of the closed zone. Such local distribution points are also available to other NGOs that assist migrants. The aid items are also delivered to refugee centres (open and closed). So far, the PRC has provided in-kind assistance donated to them

domestically worth PLN 610,440 (appr. 138,000 CHF) and fund-raised PLN 148,113 (appr. 34,000 CHF) from domestic sources. The PRC has 100 volunteers with an additional 100 joining, 20 staff members, 2 branches and the HQ involved in the operation. A [DREF Operation](#) was launched on 16 November 2021 and made part of the Emergency Appeal a week later. The PRC signed a new Memorandum of Understanding with the Border Police late last year to allow for the Search and Rescue volunteer groups to provide lifesaving assistance and humanitarian aid to migrants being stranded in the area of seven Border Guard Posts. Moreover, the PRC staff and volunteers are providing assistance and restoring family links in detention centres.

#### *Partner National Society support*

The PRC has started a programme in cooperation with the **German Red Cross** aiming to support affected people affected with food and clothes packages.

For a summary on other state and non-state actor's response, please refer to the [Operational Strategy](#).

## Needs analysis - update

### **Needs analysis**

The total number of people caught up in the situation has decreased and is now estimated to be up to 10,000 people. The Emergency Appeal aims to assist an initial 12,000 people. This target number will likely be reduced in future revisions of the Operational Strategy, but also include a buffer for new arrivals and increased caseloads, informed by ongoing scenario work. The Emergency Appeal has a special focus on vulnerable and at-risk individuals, including unaccompanied minors and single women with children. The needs are informed by an ongoing monitoring and activities in the centres where migrants are being held. For people at the borders and on the move, the general immediate life-saving needs are clear, while longer-term needs will depend on how the context evolves. Across the countries, the migrants' access to medical care and health services is insufficient (such as immunisation, sexual and reproductive health, maternal and child health, management of noncommunicable diseases, disabilities, communicable diseases).

### **Belarus**

In Belarus, there is a need to continue responding to the immediate and basic needs of migrants in the logistics centre. Albeit their number is now reduced, the overall scenario and needs have not changed. The facility is still considered not suitable for a longer-term stay, particularly the sanitary situation, privacy, and access to communication are of concern. The local authorities in Grodno are exploring possibilities to accommodate the migrants at a tourist facility, but are not able to cover the involved costs. A basic needs-assessment was finalised in December 2021 and a more specific assessment is currently conducted by the IOM.

### **Lithuania**

No changes in needs are observed since the first [Operation Update](#) and [Operational Strategy](#).

### **Poland**

Based on interviews with migrants and border guard officers (in control of detention centres) new needs have been identified, apart from those mentioned in the Operational Strategy: children in detention centres have access to teachers but do not have school supplies. The PRC is currently procuring school supplies for 750 children.

## Operation Risks Assessment

For a detailed analysis, please refer to the [Operational Strategy](#).

## B. OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

### Update on the strategy

Please refer to the [Operational Strategy](#) for details. The Operational Strategy is planned to be revised in the coming weeks.

## C. DETAILED OPERATIONAL REPORT

 <b>Shelter, Housing and Settlements</b>		Number of people targeted:		Belarus	Lithuania	Poland
				5,000	4,000	TBD
<b>Objective:</b>	<i>The safety and well-being of people affected are strengthened through shelter solutions</i>					
<b>Key indicators</b>	Belarus		Lithuania		Poland	
	<b>Actual</b>	Target	<b>Actual</b>	Target	<b>Actual</b>	Target
	# of people receiving emergency shelter and household items / humanitarian kits					
	<b>2,280</b>	2,000	<b>3,334</b>	4,000	<b>112</b>	TBD
<b>Belarus:</b>						
The BRC has been in contact with the State Border Committee since August 2021, providing at first occasional assistance to migrants with relief items (food parcels, hygiene items, clothing, blankets, PPE). After the escalation at the border, the BRC has assisted over 2,000 migrants with relief items, including clothing and blankets. The BRC has continued to provide essential items (mattresses, sleeping bags, blankets, towels, warm shoes and clothing, etc.) to the entire population of the logistics centre, where people have been moved to. The distributions have been targeted and tailored to the needs.						
<b>Lithuania:</b>						
Over 3,300 people have been assisted to date with clothing items, including with items procured with the support of the DREF during 2021. In preparation for the harsh winter conditions, needs for clothing in the centre have been partially covered through donations collected by the LRC, complemented by shoes procured on the market. The 673 packages handed over so far to the Border Guard, for distribution to migrants in the border emergency zone, has also included clothing items.						
<b>Poland:</b>						
Thanks to significant in-kind donations, the PRC assisted 112 migrants in detention centres with relief packages (food parcels, hygiene items, clothing, blankets, PPE). Currently, the PRC is in the process of ordering and completing more clothing/hygiene/food packages.						

 <b>Livelihoods</b>		Number of people targeted:		Belarus	Lithuania	Poland
				5,000	-	300
<b>Objective:</b>	<i>The basic needs of affected people are covered through food security assistance</i>					
<b>Key indicators</b>	Belarus		Lithuania		Poland	
	<b>Actual</b>	Target	<b>Actual</b>	Target	<b>Actual</b>	Target
	# of people assisted to meet their basic food needs					
	<b>2,280</b>	5,000	<b>3,374</b>	-	<b>112</b>	300
<b>Belarus:</b>						
The BRC has on a daily basis distributed food parcels and hot meals in the border area as well as in the logistics centre, after people have been relocated. The nutritional needs for the people at the logistics centre were fully covered with a pre-packaged breakfast/dinner, and a hot meal for lunch. The composition of the meals continues to be adjusted, guided by nutritional value, preferences of the recipients and availability in the local market.						
<b>Lithuania:</b>						
The Lithuanian Red Cross has been distributing food parcels in the five centres since the summer, reaching 3,374 people by the end of 2021, however, on the long term, the focus of the operation is expected to shift						

towards specialised needs and assistance. Basic food needs by now are generally covered in these centres by other actors, thus it is not part of the longer-term strategy to distribute food in these locations. The LRC has started instead to focus on assisting people in the centres with specialised food needs, e.g. allergies, utilising the funding received from the Irish Red Cross. Food parcels (4,000 kits + 120 kits for children aged 0-3) are also handed over to the Border Guard for distribution in the border zone. At a later stage, in case direct access is granted to the National Society, direct food distribution in the border area may be scaled up again.

#### Poland:

As mentioned in Shelter, Housing and Settlement, 112 migrants in detention centres have received relief packages, which included food parcels, from the PRC. Currently, the PRC is in the process of procuring additional food parcels for migrants. The PRC food parcels are also distributed by other NGOs and the Polish Border Guards.

 <b>Multi-purpose Cash</b>		Number of people targeted:		Belarus	Lithuania	Poland
				150	100	-
<b>Objective:</b>	<i>Basic needs assistance for livelihoods security is provided to the most affected communities</i>					
<b>Key indicators</b>	<b>Belarus</b>		<b>Lithuania</b>		<b>Poland</b>	
	<b>Actual</b>	Target	<b>Actual</b>	Target	<b>Actual</b>	Target
	# of people assisted with cash and voucher assistance					
	0	150	<b>28</b>	100	-	-

#### Belarus:

Cash and voucher support related activities have not yet started, plans are to assess the feasibility of cash or voucher programming, and if confirmed, provide vouchers for food and household items and to cover urgent medical needs for migrants who stay in urban areas.

#### Lithuania:

For people who are granted asylum, basic needs arise related to transportation, food and medical supplies, as well as ensuring their integration. Through the emergency appeal, it is planned that 100 people will be assisted with cash and vouchers for covering transportation, food, accommodation and other needs. To date, 28 people have already been assisted through a fundraising campaign with vouchers for food and accommodation and public transport passes. LRC has also started to work on employability, meeting with potential employers to discuss possibilities for migrants seeking employment.

 <b>Health &amp; Care</b>		Number of people targeted:		Belarus	Lithuania	Poland
				5,000	3,000	300
<b>Objective:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; <i>The immediate risks to the health of affected populations are reduced</i></li> <li>&gt; <i>Transmission of diseases of epidemic potential is reduced</i></li> <li>&gt; <i>The psychosocial impacts of the emergency are lessened</i></li> </ul>					
<b>Key indicators</b>	<b>Belarus</b>		<b>Lithuania</b>		<b>Poland</b>	
	<b>Actual</b>	Target	<b>Actual</b>	Target	<b>Actual</b>	Target
	# of people assisted with First Aid					
	<b>203</b>	TBD	<i>N/A, indirect assistance</i>	-	<b>22</b>	300
# of staff and volunteers trained in MHPSS						
<b>50</b>	50	<b>211</b>	500	<i>20, still in progress</i>	75	

# of migrants provided with MHPSS					
800	TBD	121	125	16	300
# of people whose costs are covered for medical prescriptions and optical aid					
-	-	537	4,000	-	-

#### Belarus:

The BRC has been in contact with the State Border Committee since August 2021, providing at first occasional assistance to migrants with referral to health services (in the border area and logistic centre). The BRC has been providing first aid to treat injuries and PPE materials. Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) has been provided to approximately 800 people.

#### Lithuania:

Lithuania RC has been continuously assisting people in reception centres since August 2021, covering the costs of medicine for those who need it, to make sure people have access to the medication they need for chronic as well as acute health issues. According to the LRC survey in collaboration with WHO, conducted at the end of 2021, the quality of medical care provided to people (screening, treatment, medicines) was sufficient, good, or very good.

MHPSS activities have started in October 2021 and are maintained continuously. The National Society has also procured and distributed 200 First Aid kits to officers in camps, who utilised them according to the needs. First aid kit stocks have been replenished for repeated distributions as needs arise.

Medical testing equipment has been procured with the support of German Red Cross, to be used in the 5 main centres. The equipment includes electrocardiograph, urinalysis analyser, haematological (blood) analyser and c-reactive protein (CRP) analyser.

#### Poland:

Since early October 2021, the PRC has provided first aid to 22 persons in the field and detention centres, as well as provided migrants with referrals to health services, while 16 persons received MHPSS support.

The first MHPSS training has been organised targeting volunteers and staff involved in restoring family links activities. Next trainings are still in procurement phase. Search and rescue teams are ready to provide additional medical and MHPSS support for people in need. An agreement made between the PRC and the Polish Border Guard (PBG) gave the PBG an option to call for the PRC's search and rescue team when needed to provide search and rescue services or medical and MHPSS support.

 <b>Water, Sanitation and Hygiene</b>	Number of people targeted:		Belarus	Lithuania	Poland	
				5,000	4,000	4,000
Objective:	<i>Immediate reduction in risk of waterborne diseases, and diseases related to hygiene conditions</i>					
Key indicators	Belarus		Lithuania		Poland	
	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target
	# of people provided with hygiene items/ hygiene kits					
	2,280	5,000	2,890	4,000	112	4,000

#### Belarus:

Among other items, Belarus Red Cross has distributed hygiene items in the border area, as well as the logistics centre, and plans to implement hygiene promotion as well as COVID-19 awareness raising activities jointly with the vaccination activities of the authorities to reduce the risk of infection. The distributed hygiene items are covering the full needs of the people for the distribution cycle. Latrines facilities contract at the logistics centre will be replenished through Emergency Appeal funds. The management and cleaning is done by the local organisation since mid-November 2021.

**Lithuania:**

Over 2,890 people have been assisted to date with hygiene items in the reception centres, and relief items handed over to border guards include essential hygiene items as well. In partnership with WHO, LRC staff and volunteers organise info sessions on COVID-19 prevention and immunisation in the main 5 reception centres regularly. 1,380 diversified hygiene parcels were also handed over to the Border Guard for distribution in the border zone.

**Poland:**

Since October 2021, 112 persons in detention centres were assisted with hygiene kits as part of immediate relief, including also PPE to prevent the COVID-19 spreading. Additional hygiene kits are being procured.

 <b>Protection, Gender and Inclusion</b>	Number of people targeted:		Belarus	Lithuania	Poland	
			1,000	1,000	1,800	
<b>Objective:</b>	<i>Vulnerable and marginalised individuals and groups are assisted and empowered</i>					
<b>Key indicators</b>	Belarus		Lithuania		Poland	
	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target
	# of child-friendly spaces established					
	0	1	<b>10</b>	10	-	3
# of children provided with assistance (used child-friendly spaces / received toys)						
0	TBD	<b>500 children under 10 yrs have access</b>	TBD	<b>52</b>	TBD	

**Belarus:**

While providing assistance in the logistics centre, BRC has been assessing the situation and needs of people with disabilities. On the longer term, in case migrants will remain in a centre for longer periods of time, child-friendly spaces and community-based child protection activities are planned to be established, however, so far the situation, and location of migrants remains fluid. Planning, however, is at an advanced stage and services should be delivered within a short time.

The BRC has activated a Crisis Room in Grodno for post-natal care for new-born and their mothers. The current occupancy is four children and three mothers.

**Lithuania:**

As of the end of November 2021, Lithuanian Red Cross has established two child-friendly spaces in all 5 main reception centres and is providing opportunities for children to attend continuously. Since September 2021, all children have been attending schools, including daily language courses. They can attend child friendly spaces during non-school hours. Activities include drawing, playing, singing and other activities. 'Social clubs' for children and families have been created and events and workshops are organised (e.g. for skill development, and social events). Tools for skill development, but also for household activities (i.e. cooking, and hairdressing) is provided by LRC.

Further child protection functions are planned to be implemented to broaden the scope of assistance that child friendly spaces provide. The Danish Red Cross is providing technical support. LRC is also monitoring the needs for people with disabilities.

**Poland:**

As of mid-December, 52 children were provided with toys in detention centres (based on the assessment done with authorities). Currently the PRC is procuring more toys and leisure equipment. The PRC is also analysing and negotiating the procurement of school supplies for 750 children in detention centres, which have teachers but are lacking school supplies.



## Migration

Number of people targeted:

Belarus

1,000

Lithuania

2,000

Poland

600

### Objective:

- > Programmes and operations ensure safe and equitable provision of assistance
- > Specialised interventions for the protection of rights of migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees
- > National Societies are supported to provide life-saving and tracing/RFL assistance to migrants

### Key indicators

Belarus		Lithuania		Poland	
Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target
# of humanitarian service points established					
<b>8</b>	1	Pending direct access to border area	1	<b>6</b>	6 distr. points
# of migrants assisted with search and rescue					
-	-	-	-	N/A	300
# of migrants reached by RFL assistance					
<b>50</b>	1,000	<b>500</b>	2,000	<b>193</b>	800

### Belarus:

The BRC has assisted at least 2,280 people through 8 service points. These were set-up at the logistics centre, at the border and wherever people aggregated. Support to BRCS RFL service is provided through the longstanding RFL programming assistance from ICRC. An Arabic/Kurdish speaking specialist (made available by the ICRC) has been integrated into the BRC team to support with specific language skills and cultural insights the RFL work of the BRC.

Two mobile phone charging stations (with a total capacity of 40 devices) have been put into operation to facilitate RFL and to cover a need prominently voiced by the migrants assisted.

### Lithuania:

To facilitate access to charging stations and to help people charge phones, connect with family and friends and access information, three Wi-Fi modems have been installed in Medininkai Board Guards' School reception centre and one Wi-Fi modem in the Naujininkai reception centre. Through these modems, 229 people have been provided access to the internet.

LRC teams continuously monitor the conditions in reception and detention centres and regularly assesses migrants' needs. The LRC has employed four interpreters, to provide interpretation services and make sure that the needs of migrants can be assessed.

### Poland:

The PRC provided 193 migrants with restoring family links (RFL) assistance. The PRC also provided RFL trainings for local authorities. At the moment, materials on RFLs are being prepared.

Moreover, three shifts of Search and Rescue (SAR) teams provided medical assistance / first aid to migrants in the terrain and in detention centres. SAR shifts take place over the weekend, with 1 SAR team in action or on standby. The first SAR and MHPSS trainings was provided to the PRC volunteers and staff to improve the level of care. Six local distribution points are constantly available to people in need and other NGOs and provide food/clothing/hygiene kits for NGOs working with the migrants.

### Regional activities:

IFRC has provided support to the National Societies on good practices and Movement principles related to assisting and protecting migrants and displaced people.

On 11 December, IFRC Regional Office jointly with the ICRC organised a 1-day online training for the Polish RC on preparedness for migration response (including response planning and mobile team concept and implementation). The Search and Rescue volunteers, tracing volunteers and staff of the PRC (20 participants) learnt about contingency planning process and received guidance for minimum of protection actions, RFL and

dialogue with the authorities. The Red Cross Society of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Red Cross of the Republic of North Macedonia shared their lessons learnt and recommendations on mobile team concept based on their experiences in migration context. The Red Cross of North Macedonia has also shared their experiences with the Lithuanian Red Cross in an exchange organised by the ICRC on 18 January 2022.

## Enabling approaches



### National Society Strengthening

Objective:	<i>National Societies have strengthened capacities, systems and procedures, that enable to prepare for and respond to the crisis</i>						
	Belarus		Lithuania		Poland		
Key indicators	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	
	# of volunteers involved in the operation						
	180	200	324	1,000	100	200	
	# of volunteers who are insured						
	100%	200	100%	1,000	100%	200	
# of staff and volunteers provided with MHPSS							
N/A	250	79	TBD	-	TBD		

#### Belarus:

Around 180 volunteers are involved in the response, from two regional branches. Weekly rotations of disaster response teams allowed the pre-trained volunteers to gain valuable operational exposure and experience. Follow-up lesson learned workshops are planned once the situation allows. Additional logistics capacity, made available by the IFRC Country Cluster Office in Moscow helped to strengthen systems and procedures at HQ level.

#### Lithuania:

To ensure that all volunteers have access to psychosocial support to deal with the stress and potential psychological burden of providing humanitarian aid to people for a prolonged period of time, 5 PSS group sessions have been organized for volunteers since the beginning of the operation. The total number of volunteers who have been involved in the operation at one point is 324, with currently 150 being active. An insurance framework agreement ensures that all volunteers in the field are covered at all times.

#### Poland:

Currently 100 active PRC volunteers are involved into response to the crisis, 20 of whom took part in training with National Society, IFRC and ICRC experts (see Migration section above).

*For IFRC efforts in strengthening National Societies, please see the Secretariat services section below.*



## Community Engagement and Accountability

### Objective:

*Targeted communities are consulted and are able to share their views about assistance received or planned, and programmes and operations are planned and adapted accordingly.*

### Belarus:

In Belarus, in the area of the logistics centre, the host communities are not interacting with the migrants as the migrants are not permitted to exit the area. In other parts of the country the migrants are few and scattered. The question of community engagement has not arisen yet.

### Lithuania:

The LRC's work with host communities consist of positive reporting on migrants in local newspapers, including the reasons why people were forced to leave their homeland and what professional skills they have, how they spend their days in reception centres and how they could be integrated into the society and how the local communities can best assist the integration. LRC aims to attract potentials employers' attention so that people who receive asylum are able to find jobs easier and support themselves as well as become a part of local community. As mentioned above, LRC teams continuously monitor the centres where migrants are located, repeatedly gathering information on the situation and needs of migrants. A regular cycle of post-distribution monitoring has been maintained since the beginning of the operation, and feedback and findings are being used to inform and adjust the LRC's own response, but feedback is also relayed towards authorities, in case follow-up action and adjustments are requested from the centre management's side.

The LRC organises community engagement, leisure, and other similar activities in Medininkai, Kybartai, and Naujininkai reception centres. Other NGOs are also active in organising activities for migrants across five main centres. Moreover, as State guaranteed legal aid is provided only during the following stages of the application process: preparation of an appeal to the court and representation at the court hearing, migrants have limited access to information regarding their legal status as well as legal consultations, which are mostly covered by local NGOs (mainly the LRC) or private lawyers. Also, Migration Department and courts provide copies of documents containing crucial information on asylum procedures, including decisions, in Lithuanian language. As a result, people are not introduced to the motives of the decisions in the language they understand. European Asylum Support Office (EASO) interpreters are currently assisting the centres in informing migrants regarding their asylum application status.

### Poland:

The PRC closely monitors the situation. Needs assessment, conducted with authorities, shows that the aid provided so far to migrants (relief items, RFL and medical assistance) was positively received and assessed by the beneficiaries, who expressed their expectations for more assistance, especially in the area of RFL.

### Regional activities:

The IFRC provides support to the National Societies with feedback collection – needs assessments, post-distribution monitoring and satisfaction surveys. A training for National Societies on Community Engagement and Accountability is budgeted for in the funding requirements. A lessons learned workshop is being organised with the support of IFRC PMER, led by the Lithuanian Red Cross, scheduled for the end of January 2022, focussing on learnings from the response so far, to be utilised in maintaining good practices, and implementing changes and improvements if and as needed.



## Coordination and Partnerships

### Objective:

*To better articulate the auxiliary role of National Societies and their convening power among a plurality of stakeholders, and accordingly strengthen the IFRC network footprint in the response to the population movement crisis.*

The operation so far has clearly shown the unique position of National Societies as auxiliary to the public authorities. Access remains a challenge, but where access has been granted to humanitarian actors, it has been granted specifically for the Red Cross, in some cases exclusively.

### Belarus:

In the case of Belarus, the Belarus Red Cross (BRC) remains the only organisation with regular access to migrants on the border and with capacity to reach migrants elsewhere in Belarus through its network of branches. BRC has been requested to be the main coordinator of humanitarian assistance in the country and assistance by several UN agencies in Belarus is largely being provided through and delivered by the BRC, creating expectations for a strong coordination role. Discussions are taking place to formalise the coordination role in an agreement with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the State Border Committee. IFRC Belarus Office and the IFRC Country Cluster Delegation for the Russian Federation and Belarus have supported the BRC in strengthening its auxiliary role. Practically, assistance by several UN agencies in Belarus is largely being provided through and delivered by the BRC, also creating expectations on a strong coordination role.

### Lithuania:

LRC, together with other NGOs involved in the operation, had reached an agreement with the Lithuanian State that allowed NGOs to assist people caught at the border between Lithuania and Belarus. At the current stage, this solution enables the Red Cross to hand over hygiene, clothing and food kits to border guards who then distribute the items to people staying in the terrain along the Lithuania – Belarus border.

### Poland:

In Poland, the Polish Red Cross has established a fruitful cooperation with the Polish Border Guards and was granted an access to five detention centres and seven border guard stations near the border to better understand the needs and potential interventions that could require more regular access. The Polish Red Cross has already for some time been one of the key actors providing assistance to migrants in centres and engaging the authorities in ongoing dialogue about conditions and solutions in the centres. In all contexts, there are good examples of cooperating with civil society at large, from coordinating efforts and in-kind donations from the public to seeking humanitarian outcomes together through 'indirect distributions' in border areas where access has not been granted.

### Regional activities:

IFRC Regional Office for Europe (Regional Office) and IFRC Belarus Office have continued to meet with a wide variety of UN and other humanitarian agencies to discuss the humanitarian situation in the affected countries/in Belarus and potential collaborations. IFRC has also participated to all (seven) coordination meetings organised by DG ECHO for the key international organisations.

Internally within the Movement, the Regional Office has convened Movement components into joint meetings, to make the most of available resources, find synergies and exchange on both operational and policy/advocacy related matters of common interest.

The Regional Office is engaged in partners' coordination and resource mobilization activities, including technical support to National Societies in domestic voluntary income generation and capacity building. The Regional Office organised a Belarus and Neighbouring Countries Emergency Appeal Partners' Call on 25 November 2021 gathering 17 National Societies to get an update of the situation, priority actions and presentation of the Emergency Appeal. Second Partners' Call will take place on 20 January 2022. A Permanent Geneva Mission

briefing call took place on 2 December with the aim to galvanise additional support for the Emergency Appeal. Notably, the Permanent Mission briefing, focusing on traditional IFRC donors, attracted representatives from 22 Nation States, indicating a pronounced interest in the developing context. Financial support has been materialized from 8 countries, including National Societies and governments.

The Regional Office has been profiling the work of National Societies in Belarus, Poland and Lithuania since the start of the migration crisis. A press release and a joint statement with the ICRC has been published in November, and 13 interviews were organised for the IFRC spokesperson with media, including Euronews and TRT World. Key messages and photos have been nearly weekly in the Newswire, as well as several posts on IFRC Europe social media channels.



## Secretariat Services

### Objective

*To provide a range of quality support services to in-country IFRC member societies with the aim of saving costs and improving efficiency*

The Belarus Red Cross is supported through the IFRC Office in Belarus and Russia while for Poland and Lithuania, the Regional Office in Budapest functions as the Country Office. This will change in 2022 with the transition of the IFRC Office in Kyiv into a Country Cluster Office with a coverage that includes Poland and the Baltic states.

IFRC Regional Office deployed Operations Manager and CEA Delegate to Lithuania in August-September 2021. In October, an IFRC Delegate was deployed to Poland to support on communications and humanitarian diplomacy for one month. Rapid response surge deployments include Regional Operations Manager (from late November onwards), Operations Manager for Belarus, Regional Information Management Coordinator and Humanitarian Information Analysis Officer for scenario planning (from early December onwards).

The position of a six-month Regional Operations Manager for the overall Emergency Appeal was advertised in December 2021 and the recruitment is currently in the process. It is foreseen that various forms of technical support will be needed on different stages of the operation. In addition to surge capacities, existing technical expertise in the Regional Office, the wider region and member National Societies will continue to be used as needed.

A regional humanitarian diplomacy and advocacy strategy has been drafted as a living document for the Belarus and neighbouring countries population movement. The strategy determines the scope of IFRC support to National Societies in countries directly affected by the situation in their ongoing dialogue with the authorities, guides IFRC and National Societies in their positioning and advocacy efforts towards governments and other actors, such as EU institutions and facilitates the use of common messaging for improved humanitarian outcomes. The Regional Office will work with the National Societies to refine the key messages according to the specific issues and conditions faced in the respective country contexts.

A surge Information Management Coordinator for the operation is in place since mid-December and has been working closely with the Belarus Red Cross supporting them in data collection, analysis, visualisation, producing basic maps, conducting needs assessments, process design, etc., as required. The first visit to Belarus took place in late December 2020 to gather information about the context and information needs, and the second one – in mid-January 2022 to develop a registration system (to address the basic information need regarding the number of migrants staying at the logistics centre, their potential vulnerabilities and needs). The system is to be tested and rolled out in the third week of January 2022; it will also be the basis for the distribution monitoring. The IM coordinator is in continuous contact with both the National Society and SIMS network, assessing the sustainability of the system and potential alternatives/upgrades to be implemented in the following months.

A Humanitarian Information Analysis Officer for scenario planning has started in mid-December 2021 with a focus on the creation of future scenarios regarding the migrant situation in Belarus and neighbouring countries. The initial scenarios were developed in December 2021 based on interviews with Belarusian Red Cross, Polish Red Cross, Lithuanian Red Cross, IFRC, ICRC, UNHCR, IOM and UNICEF. First draft of the scenarios was shared with the concerned National Societies in early January 2022 for comments. The scenarios are expected to be finalised in early February. They will inform the adjustments to the operational strategy and facilitate preparedness for these scenarios.

The National Societies have received technical support from the IFRC Regional Office in several areas, such as disaster and crisis management, partnerships and resource development, communications, planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting, including the organisation of a lessons learnt workshop, migration, humanitarian diplomacy, cash and voucher assistance and logistics and procurement. IFRC Regional Office has also supported National Societies in providing insurance for the volunteers.

<b>Impact indicator:</b>	% of assisted people who report that the assistance received was relevant for their needs (composite indicator, based on PDM surveys in multiple sectors in the 3 countries, target: 70%)		
	<b>Belarus</b>	<b>Lithuania</b>	<b>Poland</b>
	<i>PDM data not yet available</i>	<i>Average of 52% satisfaction responses across all sectors</i>	<i>PDM data not yet available</i>



Activities organised by the Lithuanian Red Cross for migrant women. Photo: Lithuanian Red Cross.

## Contact information

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

### In the Belarus Red Cross Society

- Secretary General: **Dmitry Shevtsov**, [shevtsov@redcross.by](mailto:shevtsov@redcross.by) +375 17 327 14 17
- Operational coordination: **Igor Trusov**, Head of Disaster Response and Tracing Department, [igor.trusov@redcross.by](mailto:igor.trusov@redcross.by)

### In the Lithuanian Red Cross Society

- Head of Asylum and Migration Programme: **Eglė Samuchovaitė**, [egle@redcross.lt](mailto:egle@redcross.lt) +370 682 48 533
- Head of Resource Mobilization: **Monika Alimienė**, [Monika.alimiene@redcross.lt](mailto:Monika.alimiene@redcross.lt), +370 630 01803
- Head of Communications: **Luka Lesauskaitė**, [komunikacija@redcross.lt](mailto:komunikacija@redcross.lt), + 370 687 52351

### In the Polish Red Cross Society

- Secretary General: **Dorota Małecka**, [dorota.malecka@pck.pl](mailto:dorota.malecka@pck.pl), +48 22 32 61 222
- Operational coordination: **Katarzyna Stepińska**, [katarzyna.stepinska@pck.pl](mailto:katarzyna.stepinska@pck.pl), +48 22 32 61 290

### In the IFRC

- Regional Office for Europe, Head of Disasters, Climate and Crises Unit: **Andreas von Weissenberg**, [andreas.weissenberg@ifrc.org](mailto:andreas.weissenberg@ifrc.org)
- Country Cluster Delegation for the Russian Federation and Belarus, Head of Delegation: **John Entwistle**, [john.entwistle@ifrc.org](mailto:john.entwistle@ifrc.org)
- Geneva, Senior Officer Operations Coordination: **Antoine Belair**, [antoine.belair@ifrc.org](mailto:antoine.belair@ifrc.org)

### For Resource Mobilization and pledges support:

- Regional Office for Europe, Head of Partnerships and Resource Development: **Andrej Naricyn**, [andrej.naricyn@ifrc.org](mailto:andrej.naricyn@ifrc.org)

### For In-Kind donations and Mobilization table support:

- Geneva, Global humanitarian services and supply chain management, Global Advisor: **Nikola Jovanovic**, [nikola.jovanovic@ifrc.org](mailto:nikola.jovanovic@ifrc.org)

### For Communications and media inquiries:

- Regional Office for Europe, Communications Manager: **Corinne Ambler**, [corinne.ambler@ifrc.org](mailto:corinne.ambler@ifrc.org)

### Reference

Click here for:

- [Link to IFRC Emergency landing page](#)
- [Operation Update no.1](#)
- [Emergency Appeal](#) (24 Nov 2021)
- [Operational Strategy](#) (15 Dec 2021)
- [Information Bulletin](#) (11 Nov 2021)
- DREF Operations: [Lithuania](#) (12 Jul 2021), [Belarus](#), [Poland](#) (both 16 Nov 2021)
- [DREF Update for Lithuania](#) (13 Oct 2021)

## 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