**POLISH RED CROSS EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**REPORT ON** Institutional and Programmatic **acTIVITIES**

 **of Polish Red cross IN THE YEAR 2016**

**Warsaw, May 2017**

**I FOREWORD**

Reports of provincial branch boards and of the Head Office departments served as the basis for drawing this “Report on Institutional and Programmatic Achievements of Polish Red Cross in the year 2016”.

In keeping with § 27 subsection 3 of the Statutes, the supreme body, i.e. the PRC National Congress has the ability to examine and assess reports on activities, endorsed by the Executive Board. Moreover, the National Society, as a public benefit entity, is bound to submit yearly reports to the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and to make them public.

Every yearly report on the National Society’s achievements constitutes a source of information about its activities, including the performance of tasks defined in the programmatic strategy, voted by the National Congress for its term of office. Sharing the report’s contents with the public enables the latter to get acquainted with PRC activities and their outcomes.

**II. Characteristics of a public benefit organization**

1. Polish Red Cross

14, Mokotowska Street, 00-561 Warsaw

National Court Register number 0000225587, as from 24.01.2005, Company Registration Number 007023731.

The Organization was founded on 18 January 1919 as the Polish Red Cross Association, recognized by the International Committee of the Red Cross on 14 July 1919 and admitted to the League of Red Cross Societies, presently the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies on 16 September 1919. It has been, since 1927, bearing the name of “Polski Czerwony Krzyż” [Polish Red Cross] and using the acronym “PCK” [PRC]. Polish Red Cross is a National Society, as stipulated in the Geneva Conventions for the protection of war victims of 12 August 1949 (Off. J., 1956, No. 38, doc. 171) as well as in Additional Protocols to the aforementioned Conventions, of 8 June 1977 (Off. J., 1992, No. 41, doc. 175) and of 9 December 2005 (Off. J., 2009, No. 127, doc. 1049), Poland is party of.

Legal basis for PRC activities

* Law of 16 November 1964 on the Polish Red Cross (Off. J. No 41, item 276),
* its own Statutes, approved by Cabinet decree of 20 September 2011 (Off. J. of 12 October 2011, No 217, item 1284),
* resolutions of International Conferences of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

2. Polish Red Cross is endowed with legal status. Its duration is indeterminate.

3. The emblem of the National Society is a regular red cross on a white ground, displayed separately or together with the designation „Polski Czerwony Krzyż” or „PCK”. The rules and ways of usage and protection of the red cross emblem are specified by the Law on the Polish Red Cross, the set of regulations adopted by the organs of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, as well as by legal provisions in force in Poland.

4. Polish Red Cross operates on a voluntary basis and is auxiliary to public authorities in the field of humanitarian work, in compliance with the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, as the sole national society entitled to carry out its activities in Poland. In relation to the public authorities, the National Society maintains autonomy, which allows it to act in all time in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of the Movement, i.e. humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality.

5. The goal of Polish Red Cross (§ 8 of the Statutes) is to prevent and alleviate human suffering in all times and in all circumstances, while preserving impartiality and making no discrimination, in particular as to nationality, ethnic identity, social origin, race, sex, religion or political opinions.

6. The National Society’s programmatic document is “Polish Red Cross strategy for the term of office 2016-2020”, adopted by vote No 7/2016 of the PRC National Congress of 19 June 2016

7. The Polish Red Cross basic organizational units are circles, clubs and any groups consisting of members. Primary units can be set up in any environment (place of residence, of work, of studies, or affiliated to PRC boards). Besides, throughout the country operate PRC provincial and district branches. All the entities make up a countrywide framework of the National Society. The latter’s supreme body, the National Congress is summoned at least once a year. The current governance is exerted by the Executive Board and a Praesidium appointed from among its members.

8. PRC Executive Board members in 2016:

 - until 19 June 2016:

* Stanisław Kracik – President,
* Adam Fornal – Vice-President,
* Marek Hok – Vice President,
* Leszek Mizieliński – Vice-President
* Jerzy Bisek – member,
* Marek Brodzki – member,
* Jarosław Cieszkiewicz – member,
* Marzena Dobrowolska – member,
* Sławomir Kaczyński – member,
* Jerzy Kornaus – member,
* Zbigniew Misiejuk – member.

 - since 19 June 2016:

* Stanisław Kracik – President,
* Jarosław Cieszkiewicz – member,
* Jerzy Kornaus – member,
* Jerzy Bisek – member,
* Marek Brodzki – member,
* Joanna Chełmińska – member,
* Jerzy Kotowicz – member,
* Zbigniew Misiejuk – member,
* Antoni Olak – member,
* Paulinna Szymańska – member,
* Anna Zacharek – member.

 9. The Executive Board’s Praesidium, since 19 June 2016, consisted of:

* Stanisław Kracik – President,
* Jarosław Cieszkiewicz – member,
* Jerzy Kornaus – member,
* Joanna Chełmińska – member,
* Jerzy Kotowicz – member.

**III. Statutory activities**

**III. 1. Putting into effect Polish Red Cross strategy**

 In 2016 organizational entities of Polish Red Cross executed the tasks contained in “PRC Strategy for the term of office 2016-2020”, adopted by vote No 7/2016 of the PRC National Congress of 19 June 2016. The priority areas indicated therein, both general and target-oriented, set ground for a number of activities taken up at entity level, depending on local circumstances, the beneficiaries’ needs, as well as on core capacities, and financial resources of the entities concerned.

 The above mentioned Strategy, while taking into account:

1. the mission and the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement,
2. the strategy of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies under the motto “Saving lives, changing minds”,
3. the goal and tasks set in the Law on the Polish Red Cross and in the NS Statutes,
4. resolutions voted at the 31st International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in Geneva in 2011 and pledges made then by Polish Red Cross,
5. an almost 100-year experience of the National Society in bringing relief to the needy in all times and circumstances,

 defined the following priority areas for activities:

1. preparing for emergencies and assisting victims of disasters, catastrophes and accidents,
2. developing welfare services for the sake of the most vulnerable,
3. promoting a healthy lifestyle and developing PRC honorary (i.e. voluntary) blood donorship,
4. disseminating Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and of international humanitarian law, shaping attitudes of tolerance and respect for human dignity,
5. strengthening the National Society’s core organizational and financial capabilities, in order to make it perform the statutory tasks more efficiently.

Within the scope of public benefit activities, in 2016 Polish Red Cross performed the following tasks:

* non-accommodation support, including assistance to families and individuals facing hardships and to the elderly; opening opportunities to such vulnerable persons, providing home-based care for the bed-ridden,
* protection and promotion of health, spreading the idea of non-remunerated blood donorship,
* rescuing and protecting the population.

**III. 1.1. In the field of disaster preparedness and assistance to victims,** in 2016 the PRC Rescue System consisted of 18 emergency rescue teams (including one medical rescue team and one dedicated to special rescuing), involving 387 members, as well as of four humanitarian relief groups, comprising 85 members. Altogether, the PRC rescue teams provided security to 1,268 assemblies and events, organized 305 training courses, performed 421 rescue skill shows and assisted 4,262 persons. PRC rescue teams are registered in the respective province governor’s offices as units cooperating with the State Medical Rescue System.

 Within the PRC Rescue System were carried out:

- 10 training courses focused on a rescue operation in an area where a construction disaster occurred; more than 300 PRC rescue group members participated, from the whole country; during the workshops, theoretical and practical issues were presented, while security of work on the spot of the accident was a major topic; other requirements were to evacuate the wounded from places difficult to access, to perform tasks while facing shortages of resources, human and material, and to assure an efficient emergency management. Two operations were carried out thanks to a support of the Head Office; four were executed by the PRC Wrocław Medical Team, as the entity having the greatest ability to cope with such challenges. Each time four PRC Rescue System units at least participated in the training course; the other activities were performed by different units on their own account.

-12 training courses dealt with tracing people unaccounted for in a green belt land; more than 420 rescuers were operating; theoretical and practical workshops addressed the usage of GPS technology in facilitating research, from an observation platform to teams consisting of three missing persons seekers each; tactics and stages of searching methods, from the launching of inquiry to the outcome hoped for. Three out of twelve operations were carried out with the organizational support of PRC Head Office, four were performed by the PRC Medical Rescue Teams of Wrocław and/or Warsaw; in each course, no less than four units of the PRC Rescue System participated. The other activities were performed by different units on their own account.

 The reason, why tracing people unaccounted for in a green belt land became a priority, is an increasing involvement of PRC Rescue Teams in conducting such activities. From January to December 2016 more than 25 times they were commissioned by the Police to perform this kind of operation, thus efficiently implementing the provisions of the letter of intent on cooperation and support, by making available resources owned by PRC to the Police conducting tracing operations, in particular to its Missing Persons Centre, the PRC Rescue Teams are a recognized partner of.

 In 2016 PRC Rescue System was one of the main providers of medical care to participants of the World Youth Days in Cracow; the National Society put at their disposal considerable resources. Apart from transport and hospital treatment, PRC took on the biggest tasks among the shareholders; it focused on ensuring security, by successfully setting up:

* the biggest network of hospital tents managed by one entity,
* the biggest network of permanent healthcare facilities managed by one entity.

Ensuring medical security to participants of the World Youth Days in Cracow proved a great challenge to the PRC Rescue System from all points of view: logistic, managerial and operational.

 The task was assigned to Polish Red Cross by the Lesser Poland Provincial Office in three separate contracts. It was put into effect by 12 PRC Rescue Teams, totalizing 4.750 work hours. The PRC Executive Board’s view is that the NS Rescue System had come a long way. On completion of the World Youth Days, one could easily say that the objective set after the year 2007 had been reached: although the units are widespread throughout the country, PRC is able, in case of need, to act as a united and fully professional entity.

 The participation of Polish Red Cross in ensuring medical care during that large-scale event had been prepared constantly since 2015; a coordinator (PRC rescuer) had been appointed and made responsible for planning and setting up the operation, as well as for managing and coordinating the use of human and material resources of the PRC Rescue System. A staff member from the Head Office had been also requested to supervise and support the task performance. The two persons were accountable for making arrangements with the ordering entity and for the overall implementation framework.

 Several initiatives in the field of rescuing were taken by PRC branches, e.g.:

In May 2016 the PRC Zabrze Rescue Team paid a visit to the German Red Cross Oberhausen county branch, invited there for having won the Provincial First Aid Championship, organized by PRC in 2015. During the visit, the two teams, exchanging experiences in this area, were providers of healthcare to participants of mass events in the region. The Silesian Province Board, on 16 May 2016, empowered a representative to coordinate and assess the activities of the PRC Rescue Teams.

The PRC Cracow Rescue Team, consisting of 37 persons, including 17 NS members and 20 volunteers (out of whom 12,62% are constantly involved in activities) conducted several operations in 2016: carried out a series of high-quality first aid courses and renewed certificates of 14 rescuers; organized 4 internal rescue exercises, took part in external exercises, ensured healthcare during 37 events, at the request of external entities and of PRC units; cooperated with the Lesser Poland Tracing and Rescue Civil Group in locating the unaccounted for, in training courses and in exchange of experiences. The Team participated in 4 tracing operations and in regular meetings of the provincial Crisis Management Working Groups.

Another part of the disaster preparedness scheme are emergency warehouses; 30 were managed by the NS, including 14 provincial and 16 at the district level, ready to assist at once 9,257 persons. Relief in kind was provided by them to 862 persons.

Within the first priority area there is an important objective: to enhance the public’s knowledge about the first aid practice. Training courses are conducted according to the guidelines of the European Resuscitation Council and of the European Reference Centre for First Aid Education. In 2016, in all the provincial branches, first aid coordinators cooperating with PRC instructors, were offering and organizing training courses to companies and individuals. Another task of the first aid coordinators consists in organizing meetings and workshops for their respective instructors; if conducted regularly, these gatherings enable their participants to update their knowledge and skills.

In 2016, the number of first aid instructors operating in PRC attained 464, out of whom 243 conducted training activities. Confirming the competences of FA instructors remained an ongoing procedure. In 2016, at the request of PRC provincial branches, 75 instructors had their competences confirmed.

Because of the need to train new PRC FA instructors, two dedicated courses were carried out: in Warsaw and Opole. They were organized by PRC Head Office, and conducted on the basis of the Groundwork Program for FA Instructors Course and Instructors’ Formation Materials.

Throughout the year was being completed the database of PRC FA instructors; consequently, appropriate files were updated.

New cards for instructors were issued. A credit-card format document contains the bearer’s photograph, his/her full name, the license number, as well as the issuance and the expiry dates. The cards are issued by PRC provincial branch offices to new instructors to those whose competences have been renewed or whose cards have been lost or destroyed.

In 2016 were carried out 97 courses for youth, resulting in the issuance of schoolmate certificate to 6,970 persons; and for adults, 1,211 involving 19,148 persons, including 535 basic (5-hour) courses for 8,437 persons; 421 groundwork (16-hour) courses for 5,912 persons; and 255 other courses, ending with a certificate issuance to 4,799 persons. In other kinds of educational ventures, numbering 2,217, the number of participants attained 181,240. Out of them, the Head Office organized 62 events, attracting 6,200 persons. Provincial and district branches have at their disposal a number of teaching aids for their courses:

* adult-sized manikins – 355 items,
* child-sized manikins – 126 items,
* AED – 53 items,
* laptops – 72 items
* multimedia projectors – 88 units

8 FA instructors at the Head Office were equipped with 5 adult-sized and 4 child-sized manikins. They served to train altogether 1,099 persons at courses of different type.

In 2016 a certain number of certificates were issued, ordered by PRC provincial branches:

* 4,334 for those who completed the elementary course,
* 4,360 for those who completed the groundwork course,
* 2,789 schoolmate certificates, handed out free of charge to PRC provincial branches,
* 3,207 certificates for the basic course,
* 1,138 certificates for other kinds of courses.

All the year round activities were taken, aimed at acquiring new clients, i.e. companies willing to have their staff trained in first aid.

In the PRC First Aid Championship, organized according to the regulations, on three levels:

* district (district branches), with 727 teams participating,
* provincial (provincial branches), totaling 147 participants,
* national, organized by the PRC Head Office, in cooperation with the PRC Pomerania Province Branch Board in Gdańsk, with 16 teams representing the provincial branches.

Were also assessed first aid skills of the secondary and primary school youth, addressees of the educational endeavours.

 In the Lesser Poland Province Branch championship for this age group were carried out by the Wieliczka District Branch, PRC Delegation for the Cracow county and Cracow. The Opole Province Branch organized 3rd FA Championship for secondary schools.

 Among the greatest health promotion campaigns developed on the territory of the Greater Poland Province Branch in Poznań, one should mention the educational program “I know how to save a life”, targeting primary school-attending children from the city of Poznań and its district. A 1.5 hour course was performed on pre-medical first aid for 2,248 persons in scholastic establishments. To conclude it, a contest was organized, involving pupils of primary school 5th grade. The action’s aim was to help the children acquire the habits of rendering assistance to people in need, and of giving basic first aid in emergency. Theory and practical skills, adapted to the age and profiles of the young participants, were evaluated. The competition proved very popular, since 22 teams took part therein from the city and district of Poznań. In the Silesia Province Branch activities were taken targeting the youngest primary school pupils; the contest “The Little Rescuer” was organized again, aimed at getting them interested in FA-related issues; participants were attending classes grading from 1st to 6th.

 The West Pomerania Province Branch organized in 2016 altogether 52 FA training courses for 743 persons. Schools, jointly with the retail networks Castorama and Bricoman, were involved in training activities, but also other companies and institutions, like Polish State Railways in Szczecin, Social Welfare Centre in the same town, Drunk Tank, hotels etc. FA displays were staged in the framework of “We collect blood for Poland” campaign, carried out together with the “Musketeers Group” in front of the supermarkets being part of the two chains owned by them.

 The Silesia PB embarked on a specific project for the purpose of promoting FA knowledge and skills. In the Congress and Recreation Centre “Eagles’ Nest” in Szczyrk, took place from 24 to 26 January 2016 the 3rd National FA Para Championship, organized by the above-mentioned branch, together with the Medical Emergency Service in Bielsko-Biała, the Beskidy Mountain Emergency Rescue Team in Szczyrk and the Order of Malta Aid Service, division in Kęty. The Scientific Committee was presided by Prof. Krystyn Sosada, Silesia province consultant for emergency medicine, whereas the para championship’s commander-in-chief was Krzysztof Wilczek – an experienced employee of the Bielsko-Biała Emergency Medical Service. The event was subsequent to five editions of workshops for the disabled, entitled “We can save lives as well” and focused on basic FA skills and on safe behaviour in life- or health-threatening situations. The workshop was followed by an evaluating test and the issuance of certificates to the participants. The involvement of the handicapped in the workshops and para championship make these events meaningful indeed: not only the knowledge and skills were acquired, but also integration of participants was ensured; they raised their level of competence and became aware of their ability, in spite of their disabilities, to efficiently administer first aid in life-threatening circumstances, and even to take on responsibility for disaster management in emergency operations, either at work, or elsewhere in everyday life.

**III 1. 2. Development of program activities aimed at assisting the most vulnerable groups**

A priority area, where two strategic goals have been singled out: to improve the situation of people in need and to counter social exclusion of individuals and groups.

In 2016 PRC provided welfare relief, consisting of food parcels, clothes, cash allotments etc. to 174,265 persons, including:

* - 78,561 women,
* - 21,433 handicapped persons
* - 19,479 retired persons,
* - 4,320 homeless,
* - 1,267 victims of violence,
* - 31,482 unemployed,
* - 81,510 poverty-stricken persons,
* - 2,888 persons overcoming dependency and members of their families
* - 11,016 single parents,
* - 26,797 children and youth, including 8,369 from communities under threat.

 From among the above-listed groups of beneficiaries, 93,397 persons received relief no less than twice in 2016, including 47,173 women; total worth of the assistance provided reached PLN 6,918,066.92.

 During the whole year, 94 relief centers were run and 155 contracts signed with local authorities for homecare services. Altogether 14,285 people, including 10,313 women, were covered by the scheme, financed from the National Society’s budget. Care services were provided by 5,279 PRC “sisters” (personal care assistants).

 In 2016, the NS continued putting into effect the Operational Food Program for the years 2014-2020, within the framework of the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD); in Poland this program is implemented by the Agricultural Market Agency in cooperation with partner organizations, i.e. NGOs, having national or intra-regional scopes, i.e. Polish Red Cross, the Federation of Polish Food Banks and the Polish Committee of Social Welfare. The Program’s managing partner is the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. FEAD’s task consists not only in meeting basic needs, but also in taking social inclusion measures, such as guidance and support to help people out of poverty. The Operational Food Program supports persons and families undergoing material deprivation, consisting in their inability to meet food needs.

The aim set for the 2015 sub-program’s implementation, continued in 2016, was to provide assistance to those in greatest need, by distributing among them parcels containing different commodity groups, e.g. : pasta, white rice, barley gruel, milk, cheese spread, coffee ersatz, minced pork and juicy meatballs. The final recipients were persons and families suffering from material deprivation and receiving support from Social Welfare Centers. Respective county or town Centers had been made responsible for the final selection, but the homeless’ eligibility had been determined by the organizations participating in the program. Within the 2015 sub-program (implemented from May 2015 to June 2016) the commodities were forwarded to 20 PRC warehouses in the provinces of Lower Silesia, Mazovia, Sub-Carpathia, Pomerania, Silesia, West Pomerania, Świętokrzyskie and Lubuskie. Food was distributed by:

* PRC Lower Silesia Province Branch,
* PRC Mazovia Province Branch,
* PRC Sub-Carpathia Province Branch,
* PRC Pomerania Province Branch,
* PRC Silesia Province Branch,
* PRC West Pomerania Province Branch,
* PRC Świętokrzyskie Province Branch,
* PRC Lubuskie Province Branch.

 Altogether the NS distributed 5,145.70 MT of food worth PLN 15,631,300.55. 547,369 was the number of food parcels handed over to 92,892 persons, appropriately selected, including more than 30,000 children under 15 years of age.

* Within the Subprogram 2015 activities were carried out, financed from supplementary funds and aimed at strengthening autonomy and competencies in household management; for example:
* cooking workshops for different age groups, animated by nutrition experts, chefs and dietitians, presenting meal preparation ideas and explaining how to benefit from foodstuff,
* dietary workshops promoting wholesome food,
* education programs, aimed at making participants acquainted with principles of healthy feeding and countering food waste.
* economic education workshops (learning how to draft, implement and implement a household budget, as well as to supervise its execution, taking into account the cash and in-kind income of families, including the food donations received),

The program and workshop participants under Subprogram 2015, carried out by PRC, totalled 19,439.

 Since September 2016, the “Yellow Plate” program is under way, put into effect by five major charities: Polish Red Cross, Polish Food Banks, SOS Children's Villages, Children's Friends' Association and Caritas, using funds provided by the co-operating Kulczyk Foundation. PRC has been implementing the program since October 2016 in 25 schools, involving 1,179 schoolmates from the provinces Łódzkie, Lesser Poland, Mazovia, Opolskie, Sub-Carpathia and Pomerania. From the beginning to the end of December, within the program, 55,488 warm and 5,712 cold meals were served. 41 lectures and workshops carried out, focused on education. The six provincial branches disbursed for this purpose, from the program budget the amount of PLN 265,439.41.

 The selection of establishments and recruitment of young beneficiaries took place in September 2016, when also provincial coordinators were appointed and local volunteers, as well as staff members were being prepared to implement the program in schools. The nourishment operation started on 1st October. Thanks to the co-financing scheme, the participating establishments were able to improve the nutritional quality of the meals served, modifying the lunch menu by introducing wholesome products, e.g. two types of vegetable salads proposed for lunch, and inn this way, striving to meet the consumers’ various tastes. Jointly with school canteen staff and catering services, different well-balanced meals were prepared, in order to respond to young people’s energy requirements. Consequently the habit of gnawing on unhealthy snacks after lunch was reduced. The dishes proposed contained veal, turkey, duck, fish, fruit and vegetables, as well as creamy soups. From observations and teachers’ reports one may conclude that the betterment of food quality resulted in a diminished susceptibility to infections. In one school was launched the EU School Fruit Scheme, aimed at breaking children’s unhealthy eating habits.

 During three months several educational operations were performed, focused on wholesome nourishment, targeting children and parents alike and addressing all the age groups.

 Thanks to the program, educational establishments were paying more attention to health oriented education of children. Dedicated lectures were delivered. Schoolmates learned more about the nutritional value of different products and the types of vitamins contained therein; consequently, they became aware of the need to distinguish between the recommended and the avoidable kinds of foodstuff.

 In the Sub-Carpathia province, the student volunteer group “Projector” agreed to join the implementation team.

 In every month of the program duration, on the average, 1,179 children were benefiting from the supplementary feeding program. The quality of food in schools, either having their own kitchen, or resorting to catering services, improved. Fruit and vegetable juices were made available instead of water, a choice of enlarged portions of fresh vegetable salads was provided for lunch and yoghurts were often served at the end of the meal. In one school a “Baked Potato Feast” was organized, involving local people, who donated fruit and vegetables, used to make healthy salads. Contests were carried out, concerning wholesome nutrition. Smartly composed recipes and meals made of quality products attracted to school canteens more pupils, now persuaded into eating more fruit and vegetables.

 Every month education activities were conducted for younger and older students; one of the aims was to teach them table manners and to care for the appearance of the dishes served. Lectures on healthy food were delivered by teachers, who were insisting on the importance of fruit consumption in one’s everyday diet, and thus evaluating the children’s knowledge of this type of foodstuff and their awareness of its role in life.

 The activities performed were made public on websites of the participating schools and of PRC implementing branches; some press reports appeared as well.

 The “Yellow Plate” program, focused on improving nutrition, lasted three months in 2016, addressing every child concerned. Pupils, their parents and teachers alike highly appreciated the program. Since the menus were constantly modified, now the children are more willing to eat in canteens, and during the meals gladly help themselves to fruit and vegetables. Teachers say that the workshops succeeded in letting the schoolmates acquire healthy dietary habits, but also in making them aware of the need to behave appropriately; incidentally, the number of complaints of abdominal pain diminished considerably. The program had also an impact on the adults’ awareness of the importance of healthy diet for their offspring. As for schools, they lay more stress on health-oriented education and on shaping positive eating habits. All the participants deem it necessary to continue the program and to maintain the nutritional standards for schools and home, worked out thanks to the “Yellow Plate”.

Since 2012 Polish Red Cross has been cooperating with TESCO Poland in carrying into effect the “Decent Childhood” campaign. Proceeds from collections are used to finance Christmas parcels, school lunches and summer holidays for the deprived children. Every year three collections are carried out: at Christmas, Easter and in September (for purchase of school supply kits).

 In 2015, the funds raised amounted altogether to PLN 278,641.46, whereas since the program implementation’s beginning, they reached almost PLN 1,500,000. They enabled us to finance support to children from poverty-stricken families. Last but not least, money must be spent on relief items in the very place where it has been collected by the NS provincial and district branches.

In 2016 we were continuing our fundraising campaign in the retail network “Stokrotka”. The PRC provincial and district branches yielded in three operations PLN 77,167.35.

 The total cost of our community welfare relief, including food supplementation in 2016 amounts to PLN 8,088,773.75. Means for the implementation were received from sponsors, i.a. companies and institutions, but also raised in public collections in the framework of our campaigns: “Easter with PRC”, “Outfit for a Schoolmate”, “Action against Hunger” or “Red Cross Christmas Eve”. Moreover, the NS was recipient of four relief consignments from abroad, weighing 5.800 MT, worth PLN 15,000, as well as of 4,433.524 kg of domestic donations worth PLN 6,017.017.02.

 In 2016 PRC was managing 70 different care centers: one curative and care providing establishments, night shelters for the homeless, day care centers, social welfare homes, emergency response centers, soup kitchens etc. They offered altogether 2,077 places and permanent care or other forms of assistance were provided to 7,951 persons.

 In provincial branches were conducted caring activities, aimed at matching the needs of different groups of vulnerable persons. Here are some examples of such operations:

 PRC West Pomerania branch in Szczecin runs a Welfare Establishment for persons affected or threatened by homelessness. The unit’s aim is to improve their sanitary conditions, to persuade them and all those on the brink of exclusion into taking care of their hygiene, and thus to diminish a risk of infectious disease outbreaks. This care center consists of two bathrooms (having been used by 123 persons 1,529 times during the year), of a cloth warehouse (having attracted 237 beneficiaries) and of a waiting-room.

In the West Pomerania province five emergency relief warehouses were also run by the NS, as well as one used for crisis interventions, and two rehabilitation equipment loan centers, managed by the PRC Koszalin and Szczecin provincial brances; the total number of beneficiaries attained 1,940 in 2016.

Throughout the year several care establishments, opened earlier by the West Pomerania PB, continued their activities, i.e.

* “Senior-Wigor Day Center”, located at 45c and 45a Królowej Jadwigi street Szczecin;
* “Café Senior 2”, a retirement club, affiliated to West Pomerania province branch;
* PRC Supportive Day Center called “The Merry Cottage” in Szczecin;
* PRC Day Care Center for the Elderly, “Café Senior” in Stargard;
* “Senior-Wigor Day Center” in Stargard;
* A community-based self-help PRC House, type AC, for adults suffering from protracted mental diseases and showing behavioral disturbances.

 To cut a long story short, in 2016 six care and support entities continued to operate under the responsibility of the West Pomerania PB; among their beneficiaries: 133 persons were over 60; 20 were affected by a protracted psychical illness; other persons were showing chronic mental disabilities or other kind of prolonged psychiatric disturbances; 360 destitute/homeless, using bathing facilities and resorting to cloth warehouse, 48 poverty-stricken children, under threat of social exclusion.

 The PRC Lesser Poland PB, all the year round provided home-based care for the bed-ridden, under contracts with local government units, on the basis of competitions or allocations by tender won, the donations received and the businesses run. Tasks were performed by district branches in Bochnia, Chrzanów, Nowy Sącz, Wieliczka, the PRC Delegation in Miechów and Cracow county, in the Mogilany communal area, Kocmyrzów, Luborzyca and in the PRC Municipal Office. The provincial branch was running ten care centers for the bed-ridden, covering the needs of 1,730 patients. 518 PRC health attendants were rendering this service. For all the care providers, the branch board organized a workplace safety training, a first aid course and a lecture on the contents of respective contracts signed with social welfare centers and local authorities. The knowledge providers were care activity coordinators, certified nurses, PRC FA instructors, but also occupational health and safety practitioners. Besides, PRC donated to persons under care of the Community Welfare Center beds, bed linen, underwear, second-hand clothes, rehabilitation equipment and food parcels.

The Council of Ladies affiliated to PRC continued their campaign, “Let’s arrange holidays for badly-off children”; its 2016 edition was patronized by the Republic’s First Lady, Ms. Agata Kornhauser Duda on an honorary basis, while the media patronage was assumed, once again, by the Polish Television (TVP Info and Regional Channels). The 2016 operation proved a success, financially, but more importantly the number of individuals and companies “opening their hearts” has been on the increase since the campaign’s beginning; consequently, they made considerable cash donations and put up for auction valuable objects. On 5 December, in the Stanislas Theatre in Łazienki Park the final charity concert was performed, for the purpose of summing up the campaign aimed at organizing summer vacation for poverty-stricken children. Proceeds of the auction, which followed, as usual, together with the other funds raised, not only enabled 250 or even 300 children to participate in summer educational activities, but also made it possible to finance the purchase of cloth, school outfits and food parcels.

 In 2016 the chapter of the European Business Club Poland bestowed upon the PRC Council of Ladies a Pro Publico Bono award “for help and sensitiveness to the needs of the youngest children from low-income families, and for long-term activity aimed at improving the child’s world”.

**III 1.3. Promoting healthy lifestyle and developing volunteer-based blood donorship**

 Promoting health and wholesome lifestyle and enhancing health-oriented attitudes within the population address mainly children and youth. In those age groups, in 2016, were organized 12,526 contests, training courses, lectures, chats and other kinds of events, with the number of participants rising to 405,837. Among adults 644 health promotion actions involved 46,007 persons. The highest number of events (1,813), but not of youth participants (55,343) was witnessed on the territory of the Greater Poland PB, followed by their counterparts from Kuyavia-Pomerania (respective figures: 1,704 and 51,950), Warmia and Masuria (1,490 and 32,142). As for the number of young people involved, record holder is the Pomerania branch, having attracted as many as 56,966 persons to take part in 415 actions. Among adults, the best result was attained by the Mazovia PB (127 operations having assembled 7,632 persons), second place was taken by the Lesser Poland branch (respectively 126 and 5,338) and third, by its its Greater Poland counterpart (91 and 17,659).

 Among health promoting activities, in the whole country 1,686 actions focused on HIV/AIDS were carried out, totalling 37,043 persons, including 1,460 actions involving 33,571 young people.

 Activities concerning the promotion of health and of wholesome lifestyle were also performed during summer holiday camps, organized by PRC provincial and district branches. In 2016 in 37 community-based sojourns, training camps, rest-cure and winter stays, the number of children and youth participating was 1,596, whereas 525 more took part in 11 holiday sojourns organized on part-time basis. Altogether, 1,148 members of the age groups concerned benefited free of charge from the recreation opportunities, including all the part-time participants.

 During the school year 2015/2016 the 24th edition of “PRC Olympic Nationwide Healthy Lifestyle Contest” was carried out. For the third time the competitors were allowed to complete online tests. Thanks to a partnership with Coca Cola HBC Poland, new technologies were again available; therefore the contest’s conduct was facilitated. During the district stage the contestants persuaded some 42,000 relatives and colleagues into the exercises they were conducting.

 Honorary patronage over this major event was extended by the Minister of National Education, the Chief Sanitary Inspector, the Rector of Łódź Medical University, Directors of the National AIDS Center and of the National Food and Nutrition Institute.

 The finals of the contest, at the national level, took place at “Trylogia” Hotel in Zielonka, from 9 to 11 June 2016. All those involved were accommodated in double or triple rooms with plumbing facilities and had full catering provided; respective costs were covered by the organizer, i.e. PRC Head Office, from the funds donated by the Partner (Coca Cola HBC Poland).

 The agenda consisted of a 100 question test about threats to human health, appropriate nutrition, environmental conservation and principles of healthy lifestyle. The contestants had to present before the jury an action conceived and performed by themselves, aimed at promoting healthy lifestyle, but also to prove their life saving skills by practicing a CPR on a resuscitation manikin and administer first aid to a fake accident “victim”.

 31 schoolmates representing 16 provinces competed in the finals, in two age groups (secondary and upper secondary school levels). The jury having evaluated all the results and summed up the three parts of the contest, i.e.:

* test aimed at assessing the knowledge of healthy lifestyle principles, first aid, promotion of health, prevention, conservation and activities of the International Red Cross Movement and the Polish NS;
* practical FA examination;
* presentation of a pro-health action,

the jury, announcing their verdict, singled out the best contestants, from provincial branches Podlaskie, Kuyavia-Pomerania and Lesser Poland (in lower secondary school competition), as well as Mazovia, Greater Poland and Kuyavia-Pomerania (for the upper secondary level).

 In 2016, the PRC Head Office coordinated the following education programs targeting children and youth:

* “We care for our health” – concerning principles of wholesome food-making in kindergartens and lower primary school forms. The program’s aim is to strengthen the educational process through an information campaign and to promote appropriate nourishment. During the year the teachers and PRC volunteers trained 2,000 children.
* “The Little Rescuer” – about the first aid education in primary school forms 1 to 4. The number of trainees among children reached 10,000.
* “Don’t feel unconcerned: learn first aid skills”, addressing secondary school students.

 In 2016 operated 1,076 PRC Volunteer Blood Donor Clubs, totalling 26,624 PRC members and 49,549 volunteers, were active within the National Society. In other units, the number of donors was 2,635 among members, and 5,552 among volunteers. From PRC non-remunerated donors were collected altogether 131,125.80 litres of blood, which stands for 27,32 % of total donated blood volume.

 A number of initiatives were taken throughout the country to promote non-remunerated blood donorship, including 3,072 events and initiatives, i.a.:

13th edition, 2015/2016, of the Nationwide School and University Tournament, “Young blood saves life”, with the participation of 20,748 schoolmates and 4,684 students who donated a total of 14,523 litres of blood; in 14 provinces 276 upper secondary and post-secondary schools and 16 universities.

 11th edition of the operation “Firemen in VBD – Ardent Rescuer – Hot Blood”, in collaboration with the National Headquarters of the State Fire Service and with the Executive Board of the Association of Voluntary Fire Brigades in the Republic of Poland. 53 detachments of the State Fire Service and 190 units of Voluntary Brigades took part in the project. Altogether, from 1st January to 10 December 2016, 3,177 firepersons in 14 provinces donated blood and promoted the idea of this non-remunerated gesture. As a result of the program’s implementation, 7,260 litres of blood were collected from firepersons and from the donors they managed to encourage;

 Together with a group of independent businesspersons, under the label “Musketeers Group” (Intermarché and Bricomarché supermarket chains) the 9th edition of “We collect blood for Poland” campaign was launched in 16 provinces and covered 191 localities. Apart from the collection itself, numerous promotion actions were conducted: first aid shows, displays of rescue techniques, arts competitions and stage performances. During five months, more than 4,174 persons donated 1,877 litres of blood and the actions were accompanied by a series of events promoting a healthy lifestyle and the voluntary blood donorship, e.g. contests for children and promotional gatherings.

 8th edition of the operation conducted jointly with Motorcycle Clubs, active under the umbrella of the Congress of Polish Motorcyclist Clubs, “Motor-Heart: blood is a gift of life”, which took place on 4 June 2016 and yielded 2,225 litres of blood.

 In compliance with provisions of the Law on the Public Blood Service concerning the State Awards procedure, the National Society, with financial support from the Ministry of Health, conferred the “Honorary Blood Donor Medal” and the respective title upon 33,682 persons.

 Every year, in November, the Voluntary Blood Donorship Days are celebrated, when the most deserving donors obtain State decorations – “Honorary Blood Donor Decoration: Meritorious to National Health” – but also PRC Honorary Blood Donor Medals, “Crystal Heart”, and other decorations are awarded by the National Society.

 In 2015 the President of the Republic of Poland bestowed State medals upon individuals for their achievements in blood donorship and in disseminating the Red Cross values:

* Gold Cross of Merit – 28 recipients;
* Silver Cross of Merit – 52 recipients;
* Bronze Cross of Merit – 48 recipients.

The above mentioned decorations, handed over to the NS in January 2016, were delivered to the laureates during celebration meetings.

Moreover, the President of the Republic, in 2016, decorated with

* Cavalier’s Cross of Polonia Restituta Order – 3 persons;
* Gold order of Merit – 59 persons;
* Silver Cross of Merit – 85 persons;
* Bronze Cross of Merit – 85 persons.

Besides, 224 persons were awarded, by the Minister of Health, “the Honorary Blood Donor Decoration: Meritorious to National Health“, whereas the Chapter of “Crystal Heart” bestowed this decoration upon 69 persons for their role in developing non-remunerated blood donorship.

 2016 was a jubilee year for two social and promotional events celebrated by the PRC voluntary donors:

 In June, in Mikoszewo (close to Gdańsk in the territory of Pomerania PB), took place the 40th National Rally “The Red Rose”; bringing together 295 donors from, 23 VBD clubs from the whole country and one rally team from Germany. The PRC club affiliated to LOTOS Inc. was hosting the event, benefiting from a logistic support of the PRC Pomerania PB and from the provincial Voluntary Blood Donorship Council.

 On the last weekend of August in the PRC training and recreation center in Sława was carried out the 30th Voluntary Blood Donor Motor Car Rally, gathering more than 200 persons from 14 provinces.

 In October, the 3rd Circulation for Blood Race was organized in Cracow, along Czerwienski boulevard, for the purpose of promoting VBD, raising funds for its development and giving example of wholesome lifestyle by an exertion of open-air running. Organizers address not only sports professionals and amateurs, but also everyone who cares for the idea of sharing, in this way, part of one’s nature and is aware that only this gift out of the goodness of one’s heart makes it possible, every day, to improve the health and to save the life of somebody else. On that occasion out of 515 runners 53 persons were ready to donate, but 42 were selected, and their collection yielded 18.9 litres of blood.

**III 1.4. Disseminating Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and of international humanitarian law, shaping attitudes of tolerance and respect for human dignity**

remain one of the key statutory objectives of the Polish Red Cross. Within this framework the following achievements should be mentioned:

* The 20th edition of the Polish Course on International Humanitarian Law, held from 21 to 25 November 2016, organized by the PRC IHL Dissemination Center, took place in Radziejowice, in a cultural workers residence of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. The group of 30 trainees consisted of university students, representatives of the Headquarters of the Polish Fire Service, members of the armed forces or units subordinate to the Ministry of the Interior, as well as employees of PRC branches and NGO activists. The lecturers were members of the PRC Committee for Disseminating IHL, officials from the Ministry of National Defence and the War Studies University. The workshops, like in precedent years, were focused on case studies related with the contents of lectures. The course’s co-organizer, together with the Ministries of National Defence and International Affairs was the Polish Fire Service. The anniversary lecture was delivered by the chairman of the IHL Commission for the dissemination of International Humanitarian Law, Dr. Marcin Marcinko.
* Professor Remigiusz Bierzanek Memorial Contest – The closing ceremony of the 20th Radziejowice Course was marked by the hand-over of awards to the winners of the 19th edition of Professor Remigiusz Bierzanek Memorial Contest of LL.B. and LL.M. dissertations and LL.D. theses dealing with IHL. The prizes had been funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Legal and Treaty Department). For the first time a graduation work was rewarded in its category. A call for candidates was launched, in view of the contest’s following edition, and posters were sent out to large universities in Poland.
* PRC Committee for the Dissemination of International Humanitarian Law, affiliated with the Executive Board held two sessions in 2015. At the top of the agenda were traditionally the Polish Course on IHL in Radziejowice, and Professor Remigiusz Bierzanek Memorial Contest. Another issues discussed were a project concerning the use of drones of the Foundation of Initiatives for International Criminal Law and Human Rights in Central and Eastern Europe, and a conference in Cracow on “Protecting Cultural Heritage in Times of Armed Conflicts”.
* The PRC Committee of Red Cross Emblem Protection held one session and several remote consultations. At the central level, 37 cases were taken up, out of which 18 resulted in consultations and 19 in interventions. The Committee’s chairperson arranged and conducted a training course on the protection of emblem for staff members of the Lesser Poland branch and of selected district branches of the province.
* The Inter-ministerial Committee for International Humanitarian Law: PRC representatives participated in this body’s regular meetings, in order to report on the fulfillment of humanitarian pledges.
* Lectures and training courses – the Department’s staff members took part in a seminar in IHL at the Faculty of Law at Warsaw University and conducted a series of lectures and workshops for soldiers and NCOs, organized by the Military Centre for Civic Education and the War Studies University.
* IHL Library – in 2016 the IHL Dissemination Centre was opening access to its resources for teachers, students and pupils not only from Warsaw, but from the whole country, who could either read books on the spot or borrow them. The premises were updated, whereas new publications were registered, got by courtesy of IFRC, the ICRC and several friendly publishing companies; also new releases could be awarded to the LL.B., LL.M. and LL.D contestants.
* The program “Exploring Humanitarian Law” was carried out at the secondary and post-secondary levels, prepared together with the Ministry of Education and the Center for Education Development. Teachers in charge of civic education and military preparation were another target group. Sets of reference materials on pen-drives were forwarded to some 250 educators.

The PRC Head Office has been inviting branches to join it in several activities:

* The IHL Center makes provincial branches boards involved in Pr. Bierzanek Contest, thus contributing to a promotion of the whole NS; some students preparing their theses or dissertations, seeking professional guidance, keep in touch with this entity.
* Every year 10 employees or volunteers of provincial and district branches are invited to follow the Polish Course on International Humanitarian Law in Radziejowice.
* Provincial branches were implementing the program “Exploring Humanitarian Law” in secondary and post-secondary schools.
* The Committee of Red Cross Emblem Protection was supporting provincial branches in matters concerning breaches of rules on the protection of the emblem and voiced its opinion on a number of logo design concepts submitted.

The International Cooperation Department of the PRC Head Office launched or coordinated initiatives of the NS at the international level:

* At the request of international coordination entities, standard core questionnaires were filled in and sent back, thus contributing to an exchange of information and good practices between the Movement’s components (some 12);
* The department was providing follow-up information via email and phone about the activities worldwide of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement’s components about prospects of embarking on a mission abroad (10 requests monthly on the average); but also about ongoing and planned activities in Ukraine, Yemen, Syria, as well as about the migration crisis affecting European countries.
* Were prepared and published materials concerning the activities of PRC and of the entire Movement on [www.pck.pl](http://www.pck.pl) web page and in IFRC newsletters, which contributed to a promotion of the NS at home and worldwide.
* Background information and operation materials were assembled and made available to the NS governance, the staff and the Executive Board, with reference to meetings with partners, lists of matters dealt with in the preceding years, the framework of the International Movement and the extent of competence of every deliberating and decision-making body, public collections carried out in European countries and the Department’s planned tasks.
* Projects were drafted for the Ministries of Foreign Affairs (humanitarian assistance to Ukraine, IHL Course in Radziejowice, Pr. Bierzanek Memorial Contest) and of National Education (“Exploring Humanitarian Law”).
* Problem-focused and financial assessments of the Department’s activities were also made.
* Eight travels abroad of delegations were coordinated: that consisted in booking and ticket arrangements and in applications for refund, which turned out at least partially successful.

 Cooperation with the Movement’s components and with external partners took the following forms:

* Regular participation was maintained in meetings of the European Legal Supporters Group.
* Partner cooperation was summed up with the Central and Eastern European Initiative for International Criminal Law and Human Rights concerning the project “5 Tons over Earth”, aimed at providing knowledge about different aspects of unmanned combat air systems put in place (UCAS) and at raising public awareness thereof. The knowledge gathered so far gives no grounds for an unequivocal opposition, in the light of the international law, to the development and usage of UCAS; however, questions appear and doubts are raised about certain cases of their application, as well as about developing them under very limited supervision of human operators. Coalition adherents are convinced that those systems can only be installed in accordance with the binding international law and in particular, with human rights.
* Partnership was maintained with National Societies within the framework of the “Anti-Trafficking Network”, focused on the human trafficking issue.
* A meeting was coordinated of a delegation of the IFRC Regional Office for Europe in Budapest with employees of the PRC Head Office and members of the Executive Board. The NS financial status and operational capacities were on the agenda and some assumptions were agreed upon concerning the quality improvement program (the certification process is to be resumed), relations between Head Office and provincial branches and strengthening of the NS financial position. Following that meeting, one of the IFRC delegates was invited to attend the PRC National Congress in Jachranka.
* Another meeting was arranged between Director General and ICRC representatives, paying a visit to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They proceeded with an exchange of information referring to ongoing relief operation in Syria and to the envisaged scope for cooperation, in this respect, between the government of Poland and the NS on one hand, and the ICRC on the other. As a consequence, PRC was approached by some media covering armed conflicts worldwide.
* Negotiations resumed with the government about the fulfillment of the humanitarian pledges signed at the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.
* Accounts were squared and implementation summed up of the project financed form the budget of Ministry of Foreign Affairs within the program “Humanitarian Aid 2015”, under the title “Improving access to healthcare for internally displaced persons in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast”. The project consisted in a distribution of 1255 vouchers among selected groups of refugees under threat of social exclusion. Its objectives are: to make available, free of charge, medicines and means of hygiene, to reduce any adoption of negative strategy for coping with crisis by 750 families of internal refugees facing particular hardships; to strengthen the local structures of Ukrainian Red Cross Society, to coordinate activities through a monitoring of the implementation, to organize meetings and workshops, as well as to support the local economy, namely Ukrainian businesspersons from Dnipropetrovsk district, by purchasing medical supplies in refugee settlements’ vicinities.
* As for another project implemented, “Young people against HIV - strengthening the capacities of the Belarusian Red Cross in the field of HIV/AIDS education in the Brest and Grodno oblasts”, funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (grant “Polish Development Assistance 2015”), accounts were squared and implementation summed up as well. This project consisted in training 40 volunteers of BRC to become AIDS prevention providers, and in organizing a series of workshops for the beneficiaries, i.e. people aged 15 to 31, who according to government statistics, because of their lifestyle, constitute the most vulnerable group in this respect. The project aims at making some 2700 persons aware of the danger and thus at contributing to a drop in AIDS-related mortality and in new HIV infections in Belarus.

 The International Cooperation Department of PRC Head Office continued to inform the public on the international relief sent in response to appeals for supporting victims of armed conflicts, mainly in Ukraine, Syria and Yemen, and of natural disasters, like in Nepal.

 Translation from or into Polish, English and French of materials (current documents, incoming and outgoing correspondence, reports) was also performed by the Department.

 Meeting a commitment bestowed by the State, Polish Red Cross runs a national tracing service, provided for by the Geneva Conventions. Among the main responsibilities of this unit are activities for the sake of victims of the Second World War, of other armed conflicts and of natural disasters. It also conducts researches for humanitarian reasons. In 2016 the Service received 10,210 letters, domestic and international, out of which 8,638 concerned

* + - tracing and establishing the fate of family members – 1,159;
		- issuing certificates of war vicissitudes – 2,400;
		- searching for war graves – 2,208;
		- various matters – 2,916.

Throughout the year, the number of inquiries opened amounted to 4,115 and of those concluded, to 4,274. The break-down is as follows:

* inquiries launched, outstanding – 2,769,
* requests for documents – 199,
* correspondence about search for war graves and exhumations carried on – 1,147,
* positive outcomes of inquiry – 268,
* negative outcomes of inquiry – 1,186,
* satisfactory certificates – 602,
* dissatisfactory certificates – 918,
* grave locations found (military and civilian war victims) – 1,115,
* negative results of grave search notified – 171
* messages – 14,
* various correspondence, domestic and international – 1,521

Altogether, in 2016,

* 382 new individual documents, obtained from Polish and foreign archives, were filed,
* 41,990 original nominative documents concerning war victims were entered into the database,
* 5,882 documents were scanned,
* 1,441 applicants were received personally.

The following activities of the Tracing Service in 2016 should be mentioned:

On 25 February the Head of Service took part in a conference on “How to respond to the increased inflow of asylum-seekers, refugees and migrants?” organized by the foundation Refugee.pl and the Representation in Poland of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

On 4 and 5 March in Trzebiatów, the Head of Service participated in the commemoration of some 80 German evacuees, predominantly children, from the region of Kołobrzeg, who died when the plane carrying them crashed into a lake close to Rogowo.

On 11 March the Head of Service joined in a debate on “How Poland and Europe can help women refugees”, organized by the European Parliament Information Office and the Institute of Public Affairs.

On 21 March the Head of Service attended a seminar, held under the auspices of UNHCR Representation in Poland on “Legal framework for an admission of refugees, exclusive of resettlement”.

From 20 to 22 April the Head of Service was present at the annual conference of Red Cross and Red Crescent NS representatives, convened by the ICRC and held in Sarajevo. The meeting was attended, i.a., by delegates of the American, Australian, Canadian and New Zealand RC societies, as well as of the ICRC delegations from Iraq, Beirut, Islamabad, Kabul and Tunis. The discussions were were centered on the problems dealt with daily by National Societies; in particular in the countries most affected by an influx of refugees from Africa and Syria in 2015, along the so-called Balkans trail. Under debate were also tracing activities after the border closure following the signature of the EU-Turkey agreement.

From 3 to 5 May the Head of Service took part in a workshop on migration issues, prepared by the IFRC in Budapest and aimed at training the participants, but also at enabling NS representatives to exchange information about their work with migrants.

That year again, the Service, within the “Museum at Night” campaign, on 14 May, made available to the public its nonpareil archives, including genuine files containing data of concentration camp prisoners, and other nazi jails, registers of hospitals for wounded insurgents and other evidence items related to the Warsaw uprising, but also death certificates of Polish nationals who passed away in camps and prisons on the territories of Germany and Poland. The visitors had an opportunity to check, if the name of a relative had been registered, or to submit a request for tracing.

From 1 to 3 June the Head of Service and her Deputy underwent a training workshop for the staff of archives of remembrance, organized by the Archives of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum. The topics comprised a “Vision of ideal archives” and “Availability of data on the prisoners and other victims of World War II on web pages of memorial museums”.

On 6 July, the Head of Service attended a joined session of the Kashubian Parliamentary Group and My Kazakhstan Association; at that opportunity, a book was launched, entitled “From khanate to republic: historical and contemporary factors of Kazakhstan statehood”.

On 11 July the Head of Service took part in one of the regular meetings of the Polish-German War Graves Commission, and in another one, of the “Memory” Foundation’s Council, she is member of.

On 12 September the Head of Service participated in the commemoration in Malbork of the discovery of a grave containing remains of numerous World War II civilian victims.

From 14 to 16 September the Head of Service and her deputy were present at the annual meeting of archivists and database operators working on World War II-related documents.

On 6 October the Head of Service attended the opening ceremony of the exhibition “Solidarity and support. The aid to the people of Warsaw and its surroundings, expelled out of the city during the Warsaw Uprising”, and in the Column Hall of the Diet (lower chamber of the Parliament) a conference, conceived by the “Dulag 121” Museum.

On 7 October, the Head of Service participated in an international conference on “Local approaches to the migration crisis: Dutch and Polish integration experiences”, organized by The Netherlands Embassy in Warsaw, the European Commission Representation in Poland and the Institute of Public Affairs.

On 8 October, at a ceremonial concert, marking the end of the Pawiak prison remembrance days and rendering homage to its victims, the National PRC Tracing Service was awarded with the 50th Anniversary Medal of the Pawiak Prison Museum, as a token of gratitude for a long-lasting involvement in maintaining memory of the victims.

On 22 October the Head of Service attended a commemoration of victims of unsuccessful escapes and of organized expulsions, as well as a celebration of the 10th anniversary of a German war cemetery in Stare Czarnowo.

From 26 to 28 October the Head of Service attended a meeting of the Platform for European Red Cross Cooperation on Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrants (PERCO) in Dublin.

On 7 and 8 October an employee of the Tracing Service of the Ukrainian Red Cross Society paid a visit to its PRC counterpart, for the purpose of improving cooperation of the two NS, in particular on tracing victims of World War II, on work in armed conflict zones nowadays and on searching for war graves.

On 16 November the Head of Service joined in the Age Gender Diversity Participatory Assessment 2016, presented by the UNHCR Representation in Poland.

On 1 December the Head of Service attended a debate with Cecilia Wikström, the European Parliament rapporteur, concerning draft regulations related to establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national or a stateless person. The discussion was initiated by the European Parliament Information Office in Warsaw.

On 12 and 13 the Head of Service participated in a meeting in Budapest on migration issues related to Central and Southern Europe. The purpose of that gathering, conceived by the IFRC as a follow-up to a workshop held in May 2016, was to offer training and to enable an exchange of experiences between National Societies in their work for migrants.

**Our activities aimed at shaping humanitarian attitudes, receptivity to human suffering and respect for human dignity** address mainly children and youth. Projects in this respect are implemented in school and university circles, as well as within Voluntary Youth Instructors (SIM), who convey them to local communities. In 2016 were active:

* 2,833 school and university circles, and SIM groups, totaling 49,151 members and 31,999 volunteers,
* 848 “Squirrel” clubs, in kindergartens and lower primary classes; their membership amounts to 38,613.

The programs implemented in this age group of the Society’s members and volunteers focused on welfare assistance, on countering social dysfunctions, on security in a broad sense, on their ability to function within a community, on children and youth development, and last but not least, on health and wholesome lifestyle. Getting involved in campaigns like “Gold rush” “Outfit for a schoolmate”, “Easter with PRC” or “Red Cross Christmas Eve”, made them more aware of other people's needs, able to render assistance and respectful towards the principles of community life. Thanks to activities of that kind they improve their self-evaluation and enhance their awareness of existing needs, thus overcoming idleness and boredom. Provincial and district branches were managing day rooms and carrying out local programs targeting different age groups.

 Representatives of PRC Youth took part in the 61st International Study and Friendship Camp hosted by the Austrian Red Cross in Langenlois, yearly meeting of young people involved in Red Cross and Red Crescent activities. The camp was open from 11 to 25 July to NS representatives aged 16 to 23, under the slogan “Be part of it. Activate personal ambitions towards common goals”. The task set by the organizers before the youth volunteers consisted in building effective problem solving teams. Since collective work proves one of the best ways to accomplish given objectives, every participant’s strengths, combined with the different skills of other people contribute to the team’s success.

 In 2016 the 22nd European Youth Cooperation Meeting, one of the most important events for Red Cross and Red Crescent youth on this continent, took place in Montenegro. For financial reasons, PRC representatives were unable to participate

**III. 1. 5. Strengthening the National Society’s core, organizational and financial capacities, in order to make it execute statutory tasks more efficiently** is the fifth priority area determined by the National Congress. In that field, four strategic goals were singled out:

* to modify the NS structure and organizational scheme, as well as the functioning of statutory bodies, in order to more effectively support the activities of members and volunteers,
* to ensure adequate funding for the functioning and activities of PRC, including the implementation of the programs adopted,
* to efficiently manage and develop human resources,
* to professionalize promotion activities conducted by PRC.

At the conclusion of the reporting and electoral campaign, by virtue of the Statues, a PRC National Congress was held on 18 and 19 June 2016 in Jachranka. Once adopted the report of the outgoing Board, the latter received approval. The Congress passed a resolution determining the composition of statutory bodies and elected, by secret ballot, for the tenure 2016-2020:

1. President of the Polish Red Cross – Stanisław Kracik

members of the Executive Board: members of the Main Audit Committee:

1. Jerzy Bisek, 1. Artur Czado,

2. Marek Brodzki, 2. Sławomir Dudziak,

3. Jolanta Chełmińska, 3. Krzysztof Kowalski,

4. Jarosław Cieszkiewicz, 4. Ryszard Woliński,

5. Jerzy Kotowicz, 5. Olaf Piotr Zaborowski.

6. Jerzy Kornaus,

7. Zbigniew Misiejuk,

8. Antoni Olak members of Organizational Arbitration

9. Paulina Szymańska Court:

10. Anna Zacharek. 1. Włodzimierz Blajerski,

 2. Bartłomiej Biejasz,

PRC Honorary Medal Jury members; 3. Małgorzata Drab,

1. Andrzej Czerwiński, 4.Jadwiga Grendzińska-Gozdek,

2. Bernard Krupski, 5. Mariusz Malewicz,

3. Eugeniusz Taradajko, 6. Elżbieta Mikos-Skuza,

4. Jan Kowalczyk. 7. Jerzy Zaborowski.

The respective bodies constituted themselves as follows:

Jarosław Cieszkiewicz and Jerzy Kornaus were elected Polish Red Cross Vice-Presidents.

The Executive Board elected a Praesidium consisting of:

1. Stanisław Kracik,

2. Jarosław Cieszkiewicz,

3. Jerzy Kornaus,

4. Jolanta Chełmińska,

5. Jerzy Kotowicz.

The Executive Board determined the assignments of its members as follows:

1. **Stanisław Kracik, PRC President, the highest rank holder in the National Society**

1. exerts general surveillance over the SN and is accountable for its functioning to the PRC National Congress;
2. organizes the work of the Executive Board and of its Praesidium, chairs their sessions and an ordinary National Congress,
3. represents the NS in internal and external matters, concludes agreements and contracts concerning the entire NS, cooperates with the supreme State authorities and with local governments,
4. supervises the cooperation of PRC with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and with the International Committee of the Red Cross,
5. on the grounds of the Executive Board’s appropriate resolution employs and dismisses the Director General and gives him/her official orders,
6. supervises the internal audit performed by the PRC Executive Board, cooperates with the Main Audit Committee,
7. signs, on behalf of the Executive Board and its Praesidium, applications for State decorations, including ministerial orders, awards medals and other decorations to natural or legal persons having rendered conspicuous services to PRC,
8. cooperates with presidents of PRC provincial branches,
9. may designate a vice-president to act as his/her proxy for all matters falling within the scope of his/her competence,
10. cooperates with the Board of Lower Silesia Province Branch.

2. **Jerzy Kornaus – PRC Vice-President, member of the Executive Board’s Praesidium**

1. cooperates with boards of PRC Subcarpathia and Silesia provinces,
2. monitors and supports NS activities in the fields of voluntary blood donorship and healthcare assistance.

3. **Jarosław Cieszkiewicz – PRC Vice-President, member of the Executive Board’s Praesidium**

1. cooperates with boards of PRC Pomerania and West Pomerania branches,
2. monitors and supports promotion and protection of health within the NS, helps the EB member responsible for PRC Youth Movement’s activities, promotes the International Movement’s ideas, also in social media.

4. **Jolanta Chełmińska – member of the PRC Executive Board and of its Praesidium:**

1. cooperates with boards of PRC Kuyavia-Pomerania and Greater Poland branches,
2. monitors and supports NS promotion activities and those related to PRC history.

5. **Jerzy Kotowicz – member of the PRC Executive Board and of its Praesidium**

1. cooperates with PRC Podlaskie Province Branch Board,
2. monitors and supports NS international cooperation, in particular with the ICRC, the IFRC, including its Budapest delegation, supports activities aimed t strengthening the NS position in Warsaw, monitors and supports activities related to the protection of health.

6.  **Jerzy Bisek – member of the PRC Executive Board and of its Praesidium:**

1. cooperates with PRC Świętokrzyskie Branch Board,
2. monitors and supports PRC activities concerning crisis management and coping with emergencies, as well as implementing NS disaster preparedness and crisis management program.

7. **Marek Brodzki** **– member of the PRC Executive Board**

1. cooperates with PRC Lubuskie Branch Board,
2. monitors and supports PRC first aid and rescue-related activities.

8. **Zbigniew Misiejuk – member of the PRC Executive Board**

1. cooperates with boards of PRC Mazovia and Warmia and Masuria branches,
2. monitors the NS funds and cooperates with the Financial Commission.

9. **Antoni Olak – member of the PRC Executive Board**

1. cooperates with boards of PRC Lubelskie and Lesser Poland branches,
2. monitors and supports PRC community welfare assistance and family focused care, highlighting security and development, while taking into account existing threats.

10. **Paulina Szymańska – member of the PRC Executive Board**

1. cooperates with PRC Opolskie Branch Board,
2. monitors and supports PRC Youth Movement’s activities, promotes the International Movement’s ideas, also in social media.

11. **Anna Zacharek – member of the PRC Executive Board**

1. cooperates with PRC Łódzkie Branch Board,
2. monitors and supports PRC Youth Movement’s activities and the NS activity in rendering welfare assistance, as well as in countering homelessness and social exclusion.

Artur Czado became chairman of the Main Audit Committee, in accordance with § 36 subsection 2b of the PRC Statutes. The NS President presiding also the PRC Honorary Medal Jury, Eugeniusz Taradajko was elected as that body’s vice-chairman. As for the Organizational Arbitration Court, it elected as chairperson Elżbieta Mikos-Skuza and as her deputies Włodzimierz Blajerski and Mariusz Malewicz.

Besides, the National Congress passed the following resolutions:

* on conferring Honorary Membership,
* “The PRC Strategy for the years 2016/2020” (No 7/2016),

regulations for the Executive Board (No 8/2016)

* regulations for the Organizational Arbitration Court (No 9/2016),
* principles of elections to statutory bodies (No 10/2016),
* choice of the audit performer to assess PRC financial report for 2015 (11a/2016),

composition of the PRC Executive Board, designation of NS representatives, and making declaration of intent (12/2016),

* motions submitted to the National Congress during its session (No 13/2016),
* on the PRC financial system (No 14/2016),
* on calculating the compulsive deduction to be made for the Solidarity Fund (No 15/2016).

 In 2016 were functioning 16 provincial branches, 202 district branches and 26 PRC delegations. Besides, apart from school and university circles, “SIM” groups, “Squirrel” clubs and Voluntary Blood Donors Clubs, referred to in other parts of this report, there were 262 circles (professional or in communities), totalling 5,957 adult members (in community-based groups or industrial plants), and 5,292 volunteers. Altogether in all basic units (circles, clubs, adult and youth groups) were enlisted as members 82,119 persons. During the year 2016 the number of new adherents attained 6,828, whereas the number of those who resigned, 8,249. Moreover, 86,843 volunteers cooperated with the NS, including 31,999 children and young people, 49,549 persons in the voluntary blood donor movement and 5,295 in other adult milieus. From among the 202 district branches mentioned in reports of their respective provincial counterparts, 21 do not meet the requirement of § 22, subsection 1 of the PRC Statutes (to have at least 3 basic units comprising adult NS members); out of those branches, 3 failed to communicate any data so far (Polkowice and Wałbrzych – Lower Silesia province; Mława – Mazovia province).

In 2016 were employed by the NS:

* 755 persons on a permanent basis (including 672 women): 190 in provincial branch offices and 176 in district branch offices and delegations, 66 at the Head Office, 3 in PRC training centers, 61 in care centers (as heads of posts/commissioned nurses), 178 persons were employed as healthcare providers (PRC “sisters”), 78 in PRC care centers, and 3 persons were running business activities;
* 4,338 persons working under temporary contracts, including 3,464 PRC “sisters”, 91 in PRC care centers, 83 in provincial branch offices, 598 in district branch offices and delegations, 28 at the Head Office, 5 in training centers, 57 running business activities and 11 persons as heads of posts/ commissioned nurses.

 In 2016 we continued the campaign addressing all the personal income tax-payers, under a slogan for this purpose:

>> 4 bread rolls, 2 little swans, write down two “fives”, draw a snowman, add “seven”:

 0000 22 55 8 7

this way you will fill many stomachs <<.

Further one reads: “Helping is as easy as pie! Remember this National Court Register number and transfer 1% of your income to make the poorest children benefit from warm meals, holiday camps and education kits. Support the Polish Red Cross!!!”.

In 2016 the funds yielded by “1% PIT program” were earmarked to finance the “Decent childhood” campaign. Within its scope were provided meals at school canteens and day centers, financed summer holiday camp, purchased school equipment, prepared Christmas or Easter food parcels and organized after-hour education activities.

The Promotion Department of Head Office distributed the materials among provincial branches and produced a fan page on Facebook. Provincial branches received also graphic designs ready to be printed and used in local broadcast messages.

In 2016 Atom Inc. agreed to prepare for us, free of charge, a new web page. This project is expected to complete by the end of 2017.

A contract was signed with PayU, which enables our e-shop to accept payments online. The service will be available on the new web page.

**III 2. International cooperation**

Apart from the activities mentioned earlier in this report, in 2016

* cooperation was carried on with the Foundation for Somalia; the objective is to raise funds for building and equipping a hospital in Adado under the Polish Red Cross patronage: handover was coordinated of four consignments of Polfa Inc. to meet the needs of the newly constructed establishment; basic means of protection were supplied to the Foundation’s team during several project site visits,
* together with the ICRC talks were held with Warsaw and Jagiellonian Universities on setting up regular meetings for would-be delegation employees and humanitarian mission performers,
* we took part in the Conference Call on Syria, in the opening gala of the HumanDOC Film Festival and in a seminar “Afghanistan Then and Now: a Women’s Perspective”.

Several branches of the NS were also involved in international cooperation.

**III. 3. Polish Red Cross highest decision-making bodies:**

The reporting and electoral National Congress has been described earlier.

As far as the Executive Board is concerned, in 2016, from 1 January to 18 June it had four meetings and pronounced 49 resolutions. Four sessions of the EB Praesidium took place as well.

During the new tenure, from June to December, six meetings were held and 167 resolutions taken, i.a.:

* 108 concerning legal empowerment,
* 26 concerning specific power of attorney,
* 12 concerning financial issues,
* 24 concerning other aspects of statutory activities, e.g. appointing of commissions, sale and purchase of vehicles,
* 7 concerning the economy and real estate management.

All the sessions were attended by President Stanisław Kracik, Vice-President Jerzy Kornaus, as well as Executive Board members Marek Brodzki, Jerzy Kotowicz and Zbigniew Misiejuk. Was ascertained one absence of Vice-President Jarosław Cieszkiewicz, but also of Jerzy Bisek and Paulina Szymańska. Anna Zacharek missed two meetings, whereas Jolanta Chełmińska and Antoni Olak – three.

The Presidium of the Executive Board met several times, usually before the Board’s sessions, in order to evaluate the draft materials submitted.

The PRC Honorary Medal Jury met twice, examining the nominations and awarded 888 decorations, as a tribute to deserving persons and institutions:

- to 46, of first degree,

- to 118, of second degree,

- to 205, of third degree,

- to 519, of fourth degree.

**IV. Supervision**

In 2016 in PRC, 150 external inspections were carried out (by communal and municipal councils, Agricultural Market Agency, School Superintendent’s Offices, State Sanitary Inspectorate, Polish Social Insurance Institution, Community Welfare Services, National Labour Inspectorate). In 17 cases, audit recommendations were given; most of them were actually followed.

**V. Recapitulation**

In 2016 the NS was implementing the tasks set in the “PRC Strategy for the years 2012-2016”, endorsed by the respective resolution of the National Congress in 2012, and in the “Polish Red Cross Strategy for the years 2016-2020”, endorsed by the resolution No 7/2016 of the PRC National Congress, of 19 June 2016. Focus was put mainly on such statutory activities as community welfare relief and home-based care for the bed-ridden, promotion of health and of a wholesome lifestyle, including voluntary blood donorship, rescuing and first aid. Much stress was laid on promoting humanitarian principles and values, disseminating international humanitarian law applicable to armed conflicts, as well as shaping attitudes of tolerance and respect for human dignity.

The greatest number of programs and operations covering health and promoting healthy lifestyle in 2016 addressed children and youth. “PRC Olympic Nationwide Healthy Lifestyle Contest” turned out very popular, and First Aid Championship also attracted great interest.

Although care provision has been considered as one of priority activities, and in spite of efforts made by provincial and district branches to obtain commissioned assignments, the number of care units diminished by 10, and the number of contracts signed with local authorities, by 6; nevertheless, as compared with the previous year, there were 606 more autonomous beneficiaries, and 33 more persons receiving neighbourly care. An increase in the number of persons under care was reported by 12 provincial branches: by more than 100 beneficiaries in Lubelskie PB (+416), Greater Poland PB (+244), Subcarpathia PB (+203) and Łódzkie PB (+162). Alarmingly, a decline in respective numbers was acknowledged by Warmia-Masuria PB (-244) Silesia PB (-144), Pomerania PB (-137) and Lesser Poland PB (-133).

Voluntary blood donors, active within PRC VBD clubs and members of other basic units, make up a large group of PRC adult members and volunteers. Provincial and district branches participate in nation-wide donorship promotion campaigns, but also carry out their own projects in this field. A continued diminishing club membership trend and a shrinking number of clubs result probably from the amendment, in 2014, to the Regulations for the councils of PRC VBD, and to the Principles of functioning of the PRC VBD movement. More than half of the provincial branch boards dismissed the idea of setting up, on their respective territories, a PRC VBD council; whereas such bodies undoubtedly boost the Voluntary Blood Donorship movement.

While comparing the figures related to the organization’s membership in 2015 (the year following the one when the amended “Principles” came into force) and in 2016, one clearly sees a decrease in the number of PRC VBD clubs (by 52) and in the volume of blood collected from club members (by 2,407 liters).

The greatest falls in the number of clubs were observed in PRC Subcarpathia PB (-28) and Lesser Poland (-16). No PRC VBD council had been appointed in those two branches. A growing trend was witnessed in five branches, out of which the record is held by PRC Pomerania PB (+28) followed by PRC Greater Poland PB (+7). In those two branches, PRC VBD councils have been functioning.

A comparison of statistics concerning youth activities in 2015 and in 2016 shows a growing membership in 9 provincial branches, in particular in Pomerania PRC PB (+ 4,169 in units of all kinds); moreover, an increase was noted in the numbers of circles (from 55 in 2015 to 265 in 2016) and of volunteers (by 1,817); also in Silesia PRC PB (by 663 – only in primary and lower secondary schools, whereas in the other categories a decrease was ascertained); in Lubelskie PRC PB branch (+535 – in primary and lower secondary schools, school complexes and universities, whereas in post-secondary schools and “SIM” groups respective numbers slightly diminished). In 7 branches the figure dropped, most sharply in PRC Łódzkie PB (–982; only in school complexes did membership increase, by 195; in other schools and “SIM” groups a fall was witnessed); in Mazovia (–670: decrease in all types of schools and “SIM” groups); in Warmia and Mazuria –466 (fall in the number of members in primary and lower secondary schools and in “SIM” groups; in all other categories there was an increase); in Greater Poland (–457: membership diminished in post-secondary schools, in school complexes and “SIM” groups, but it rose in primary and lower secondary schools and in universities).

In three provincial branches (Łódzkie, Mazovia and Greater Poland) a decline was noted in the numbers of circles and volunteers, whereas in Warmia and Mazuria only membership dropped off; as for the other data, increase was seen: of circles (by 28) and of volunteers (by 566).

In spite of a diminishing membership of basic units and a fall in the number of their adherents, still many socially engaged people, in particular among children and youth, as well as within the VBD movement are active within the NS.

Notwithstanding numerous organizational and financial problems, the activities described in this report brought measurable results, bearing witness to the dedication of the Polish Red Cross members, volunteers and employees, and highlighting their involvement in implementing the National Society’s statutory tasks.