



Jesuit Refugee Service Europe

Annual Report 2010





cover photo

A refugee family from northern Burma (Myanmar), resettled in Romania (© Don Doll SJ)

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The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) is an international Catholic organisation established in 1980 by Pedro Arrupe SJ. Its mission is to accompany, serve and defend the cause of forcibly displaced people.

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Acronyms & abbreviations used more than once in this issue:

ANDES	Advocacy Network for Destitute Migrants
DEVAS	Detention of Vulnerable Asylum Seekers
EASO	European Asylum Support Office
EU	European Union
FRONTEX	EU external border agency
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
EPIM	European Programme for Integration and Migration
NEF	Network of European Foundations
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
JRS	Jesuit Refugee Service
SAM	Service Accueil Migrants
SJM	Servicio Jesuita a Migrantes
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Bringing Refugee Voices to the Fore

Br Michael Schöpf SJ, Regional Director, JRS Europe

“It is death to go back home, and death to go to Europe. There is nothing for migrants to do but to try and pray.” These are the words of Hassan Muhumet Saleban, a Somali refugee who told a room full of journalists at a press conference we organised in Brussels about his journey to safety. His flight from Somalia took him to Libya, where he languished in a detention centre for months. Eventually he found refuge in Malta. His story was published by several news agencies throughout Europe.

In 2010 JRS Europe increased its efforts to bring refugee voices ever closer to policymakers at the European Union and within the member states. Throughout the continent we are present with refugees and are witness to their pain and suffering: within the walls of detention centres, during their downward spiral into destitution and social exclusion, and on the other side of Europe’s external borders. In order to help European policymakers become aware of their plight, we have had to undertake systematic research to collect refugees’ voices in ways that we have never done before.

The year was marked with the completion of the *Detention of Vulnerable Asylum Seekers (DEVAS)* project. We interviewed 685 detained asylum seekers and irregular migrants in 21 European countries. Their stories of life behind locked doors have been circulated in newspapers, to EU officials, national government ministers and civil society organisations around Europe. Many actors

around Europe and the world regard the report as an important and official reference tool for immigration detention and vulnerability.

On the other side of Europe, we spent weeks speaking with refugees living in Morocco and Algeria, and published their stories in a booklet. An unforgettable moment was an encounter with refugees living amidst the rocks in the desert outside of Tamanrasset, Algeria. There they were afflicted by dry dust and infection from having lived in open desert. “We cannot even come out to pray because of fear of the police,” said a Liberian man to our researcher.

Alongside this research, we sustained our effort in building a civil society network to combat the ongoing destitution of migrants. JRS offices in four countries held national events for the *Advocacy Network for Destitute Forced Migrants (ANDES)* project. The central aim of these events was to find new individuals and organisations that would join our campaign to reduce migrant destitution and safeguard their access to fundamental human rights. New partnerships were formed with judges, trade unions, medical associations and teachers’ unions.

The willingness of refugees to share their lives has taught us that their innate humanity is the one never-ending constant despite the ongoing adversity they face. The following pages share with you in greater detail the experiences and efforts we have made towards honouring their lives.

Detention centre 127bis near Brussels, where families with children used to be detained



© Daniel Nokin

Faces have been obscured for reasons of confidentiality

The work of the regional office

The work of JRS Europe is split into four distinct areas: coordination, project development, EU policy and advocacy, media and communications.

Regional Coordination Meetings & the Annual General Meeting

- In April, JRS country directors convened to reflect upon the connection between their work and Ignatian spirituality, and with the values of reconciliation. Workshops on the DEVAS and ANDES projects were held, and the JRS Europe operational guidelines were revised.
- In October, country directors participated in a communications and fundraising training. This was held in conjunction with the Annual General Meeting, in Malta, which focused on gaps in protection for the forcibly displaced. Christopher Hein, director of the Italian Refugee Council, was the keynote speaker. With his ideas in mind, attendees participated in workshops to develop the basis for the next strategic and action plan.

Project development (see page 5)

- The 18-month project on the detention of vulnerable asylum seekers (DEVAS) was completed in June. Offices in four countries organised national events within the framework of the ANDES conference.

EU policy and advocacy (see page 3)

- Technical input was made to the European Parliament's proposal to amend the FRONTEX Regulation.
- A presentation on detention was made at a ministerial meeting for asylum organised by the Belgian Presidency of the EU, and meetings were held with MEPs and Commission officials on the results of the DEVAS project.
- A booklet was published and disseminated to policymakers and journalists on the experiences of migrants living in Morocco and Algeria, entitled *I Don't Know Where to Go*.

Media and communications (see page 6)

- A presentation on refugees was made to French high school students visiting Brussels, and a new edition of the *Pedro Arrupe Award* was launched to raise refugee awareness among students throughout Europe.
- The DEVAS report received wide coverage in European media outlets.
- Preparatory work was undertaken to launch a JRS regional communications strategy.
- Several panel presentations were made at asylum and migration policy conferences in Brussels, Budapest, Rome and throughout Germany.

JRS Belgium's 10th anniversary celebration, held at the Brussels city hall with 200 in attendance



Advocating for rights and justice

DETENTION

The year was marked by political impasse on the European Commission's proposals to amend the *Reception Conditions Directive*. Whereas the European Parliament largely supported the Commission's proposals, the member states argued against the imposition of further EU legislation since current EU laws were not being properly implemented. A major obstacle in the negotiations rested on proposals that would impose narrow restrictions on asylum seeker detention, and introduce a number of new safeguards – such as access to information and vulnerability assessments – to detained asylum seekers. At the end of the year the Commission announced that it would publish new proposals in spring 2011, to assuage member states' concerns that new legislation would be inflexible and costly. Political debate on the *Dublin Regulation* remained stalled as well, due to disagreement between the Parliament and Council on provisions for regulating the detention of asylum seekers awaiting transfer to other member states.

JRS Europe completed the DEVAS project (see page 5) with the release of the final report *Becoming Vulnerable in Detention*. The report was carried by European media outlets and was cited in numerous publications around Europe, including high-profile detention reports from the

EU Fundamental Rights Agency and the Council of Europe. The report gave JRS Europe several opportunities to discuss the results with EU and national decision makers.

JRS strengthened its cooperation with the International Detention Coalition in order to bring more attention to finding alternatives to detention. JRS made an official intervention at a European Commission meeting on the *Return Directive*. In the presence of interior ministry officials, JRS used the DEVAS research to encourage member states to implement alternatives to detention for irregular migrants awaiting return.

DESTITUTION

JRS offices across Europe continued to accompany migrants who, as a consequence of state policies, are denied access to basic rights such as health care, housing, education, welfare assistance and employment. In the framework of the ANDES project (see page 5), national and European networks were created with partners from various sectors in civil society, e.g. trade unions, health organisations and teachers' associations. At the national level, JRS country offices and their partners developed common positions on destitution, and organised events to raise awareness among decision-makers and the general public.

Hassan Muhumet Saleban, a refugee living in Malta, spoke to international journalists at a JRS event in Brussels about his flight from Somalia, and the persecution he experienced while detained in of Libya (see page 6)



A new report on destitution, *Living in Limbo*, was published in March. It focuses on the social and legal situation of forced migrants living destitute in Belgium, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Annexes contain summaries of the situation in France, Slovenia and Ukraine. The report was well received by decision-makers and civil society, and covered by a wide range of media.

As 2010 was the European Year Against Poverty and Social Exclusion, JRS brought the destitution issue to the attention of EU policy makers. Several European Parliamentarians reacted positively, and on several occasions Parliament discussed how to improve migrants' access to basic services and fundamental rights.

EXTERNALISATION OF ASYLUM AND BORDER POLICIES

The EU and its member states continued developing strict control mechanisms at the external borders. Most significant were the joint policy and military operations conducted under the aegis of the EU border agency FRONTEX. Forced return at the external borders without any system for the identification of persons in need of protection, and the denial of access to a fair recognition procedure – a *de facto* denial of protection – have become problems of increasing importance. There continued to be a lack of independent oversight and transparency of border operations.

The debate has been heavily influenced by judicial and political arguments, and not by migrants' experiences and voices. In response JRS collected numerous testimonies of migrants living at the other side of the EU's external borders (see page 5). We learned that many refugees, asylum seekers and irregular migrants in Algeria and Morocco are unable to return to their countries of origin for valid legal or humanitarian reasons; others are unable to move to another country. They are not only denied protection, but also access to basic social rights and services, hindering their ability to build a decent life for themselves.

JRS strongly advocated for effective protection mechanisms to be included in EU border policies. The establishment of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) offers promise, but its competences and tasks have yet to be defined, leaving doubt as to what role it may play at the borders. Moreover, FRONTEX does not offer sufficient guarantee that people's rights will be upheld at the borders. Neither of the two have official protection mandates.

In media statements and communications to the

European Parliament and Commission, JRS called for an end to the policy of turning a blind eye to the atrocious treatment of migrants in neighbouring third countries. JRS strongly protested against the Italian policy of arbitrarily "pushing back" persons intercepted in the Mediterranean Sea. The issue was raised with the Commission who, despite the UNHCR office in Tripoli having been closed by the Libyan authorities, was negotiating a readmission agreement with the Gaddafi regime. A letter was sent to DG Home Affairs Commissioner Cecilia Malmström, who in response expressed her "hope" that the Libyan authorities respected international norms in their treatment of migrants.

EUROPEAN ASYLUM & MIGRATION POLITICS

JRS closely followed EU legislative developments on asylum, introducing the perspective of forced migrants at every opportunity. Together with several faith-based agencies, JRS commented on proposals to amend the *Qualification Directive* (containing minimum standards for a common refugee definition) and the *Asylum Procedures Directive*, in large part recognising the Commission's efforts to improve asylum procedures in Europe. Negotiations between the Parliament and Council did not bear any result, due to the reluctance of member states to improve protection mechanisms.

JRS followed the discussions on the application of the *Dublin Regulation*, especially in the context of returns to Greece, where asylum seekers faced deplorable conditions. JRS met with MEPs to advocate on behalf of asylum seekers and to report on the negative human impact caused by the regulation. On a practical level, JRS developed information sheets for asylum seekers who face transfer to another EU member state. The sheets were posted on JRS Europe's detention website, www.detention-in-europe.org, and were frequently used by organisations throughout Europe.

On 24th December, the *Return Directive* (providing minimum standards for the return of irregularly staying migrants) was due to be transposed into national law by all member states. The vast majority of them missed this deadline. During the year, JRS participated in discussions on the national level about necessary changes to domestic laws, especially on legal provisions regarding detention and the establishment of a system for monitoring forced returns.

Major projects



The DEVAS Project

JRS Europe completed an 18-month research project on detention conditions for vulnerable asylum seekers and irregular migrants. The main result was an in-depth report based on interviews with 685 detainees in 21 EU member states, entitled *Becoming Vulnerable in Detention*. The report revealed that everyone who is detained, irrespective of particular conditions or personal factors, is vulnerable to physical and mental harm in a detention centre. These findings were communicated at a conference in Brussels in June, which was attended by 100 persons and included speakers from the EU Parliament and Commission, civil society, the UN Refugee Agency and academia. On the same day, JRS presented concrete policy recommendations to MEPs and their assistants. The report received wide media coverage, and JRS offices in Germany, Malta and Portugal published national DEVAS reports. Other participating JRS offices were Belgium, Ireland, Italy, Romania, Slovenia, Sweden and the UK. The final report can be accessed on www.jrseurope.org.



The ANDES Project

JRS implemented the next phase of its project on migrant destitution in Europe, with continued funding from the Network of European Foundations (NEF), through its European Programme for Integration and Migration (EPIM). JRS offices in Malta, UK, Germany and Romania organised national events on the project's sub-themes – housing, employment, social welfare, healthcare and education – for the purposes of raising the project's public profile and engaging local policymakers in dialogue on the causes of destitution, and solutions for its alleviation. Partners were asked to reach out to new audiences, and develop new networks of people and organisations from a variety of backgrounds and disciplines. At the regional level, JRS convened a steering committee of European organisations working on issues such as homelessness, healthcare and education. The committee focused their efforts on planning the ANDES conference for early 2011.

The participating JRS offices were: Germany, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Romania, UK and Ukraine. Ceimigra, the Jesuit migration agency that forms part of SJM-Spain also participated.

The Maghreb Observatory Project

In recent years the EU and the member states have strengthened the external borders in order to stem irregular migration to the continent. This has led to severe consequences for migrants, from forced removals at the border, pushbacks in the Mediterranean Sea and to the denial of access to a fair asylum procedure in Europe. Against this background, JRS began an initiative to collect personal stories from migrants who are unable to reach Europe. Focusing initially in the Maghreb, the JRS 'Observatory Project' began with visits to Algeria, Mauritania, Morocco and Senegal in order to establish contact with persons and organisations that would regularly provide JRS with information on migration flows and testimonies from migrants. The JRS project in Casablanca, Morocco, is the principal contact point. Information collected during the year enabled JRS to propose recommendations to the new FRONTEX Regulation being debated in the European Parliament. The information was also used to produce a booklet documenting migrants' experiences in Morocco and Algeria, which was disseminated at a press conference in Brussels during December (see page 6).

Detention Visitors Support Group (DVSG) IV

For the fourth time, JRS organised a Detention Visitor Support Group seminar. This project brought together 30 staff and volunteers who regularly visit detainees across Europe. In four days, participants were given opportunities for professional exchange, reflection, and specialised training. The training theme was *Burnout – a problem of individuals or of the organisation?* For this purpose JRS contracted the services of Fr. Eckhard Frick SJ, professor at Ludwig Maximilians University in Munich, who specialises in psychiatry, psychology and psychodrama. His programme provided the detention visitors with an understanding of the phenomenon of burnout, its physical and behavioural signs and how to help someone who has "burned out". This was followed by a session focused on developing strategies for coping with burnout, and on understanding the personal need for training and social support. The training was complemented with a section on advocacy, in which participants exchanged good practices and strategies for improving their advocacy on behalf of asylum seekers in the Dublin system. In 2011 the training session will focus on identifying human rights violations in detention centres.

Communicating to the wider world

During the year JRS had a number of opportunities to communicate refugees' compelling stories to a variety of audiences. Lengthy articles featuring testimonies from the DEVAS report were printed in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and the *Inter-Press Service*. The conference in Brussels attracted EU policymakers and European NGOs, as well as many Belgian organisations and international bodies including the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. At a press conference in December, JRS invited a refugee living in Malta to present to journalists the story of his dangerous journey from Somalia to Libya, where he was detained in cruel conditions, before crossing the Mediterranean Sea to Malta. His story was covered widely by European press and received attention in Sweden's largest daily, *Dagens Nyheter*, and in one of Spain's largest news agencies, ABC.

These activities demonstrate a need for a strategic coordination of JRS communications at the European level. At the regional coordination meeting in April, JRS directors reflected on key advocacy messages for the DEVAS and ANDES projects. The Annual General Meeting, held in Malta in October, was dedicated to a media and communications training. On this occasion JRS directors highlighted the most powerful messages from the DEVAS project. In the second half of the year, the regional office tasked a staff person to begin planning for a regional communications strategy.

PUBLICATIONS

Editions of JRS Europe's newsletter, *The Refuge*, were published in May, July and November. Our monthly internal bulletin, *Progrès*, remained a valuable resource for all country offices. Work is in progress to improve both publications. In March, the ANDES report, *Living in Limbo* was published; in June the DEVAS report, *Becoming Vulnerable in Detention*; in December a booklet on the experiences of migrants living in Morocco and Algeria, *I Don't Know Where to Go*.

AWARENESS RAISING

JRS Europe launched the fourth edition the Pedro Arrupe Award, an educational project for students in European Jesuit schools. The award aims to

promote understanding and tolerance for refugees and forced migrants among young people by asking them to create innovative projects. The 2010-2011 edition features a new website and enhanced background material. JRS has contacted more than 80 schools and has published information leaflets in three languages.

To find out more go to

<http://www.jrseurope.org/pedroarrupe-award>

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

JRS received several invitations to speak to policymakers, NGOs and the broader public. These engagements offered JRS the opportunity to express its core positions, prioritising at every moment the impact of EU asylum and migration policy upon the human person. Some examples during the year include:

- A presentation to a class of French high school students on global refugee issues
- A panel presentation at a Greek Refugee Council conference in Athens on the human impact of the *Dublin Regulation*
- Co-leadership of a workshop on alternatives to detention at the annual general meeting of the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE), in Budapest
- A keynote speech at a JRS 30th anniversary celebration in Dublin, organised by JRS Ireland
- An intervention on alternatives to detention within the context of the *Return Directive* before member state interior ministry officials at a meeting organised by the European Commission
- A presentation about the final DEVAS project results at a conference in Rome by the International Organization for Migration
- A presentation of the DEVAS project at a ministerial conference in Brussels organised by the Belgian Presidency of the EU
- An intervention before MEPs during a session of the European Parliament Human Rights Committee, on the topic of protecting migrants' fundamental rights and access to asylum during FRONTEX operations
- A presentation at a public conference in Germany on the need to protect migrants' economic, social and cultural rights in order to reduce migrant destitution in Europe

Overview of JRS country offices

Refugees are at the heart of the JRS mission, and we strive to maintain as close proximity as possible to their day-to-day lives. In 2010, JRS offices in 14 countries worked to meet the basic needs of refugees, asylum seekers and other forcibly displaced people. Staff and volunteers met with them to provide services such as social and legal assistance, spiritual companionship, integration support, language lessons and psychosocial care.

Apart from direct services, JRS offices carried out awareness raising and advocacy initiatives to highlight the plight of forced migrants, the shortcomings of national and EU asylum and migration policies, and ways to improve protection standards.

The work undertaken by JRS offices reflects the region's three strategic priorities: detention, destitution and externalisation of asylum and border policies. None of the national offices are dedicated to solely one or the other strategic issue. JRS teams carry out a variety of activities in support of refugees that cannot all be reported here.

The country profiles in the following pages, each containing a testimony from a refugee, aim to answer two key questions: In 2010, what have been the most notable issues in the area of asylum and migration? What has been the local JRS response?

JRS staff from the country offices: (Clockwise) Fr Martin Stark SJ, director of JRS Germany, and Jonathan Parr, JRS UK assistant director; Sr Margaret Baxter, Marine Harrington and Sr Anne Elisabeth de Vuyst, of JRS UK; Fr Luigi Romano SJ, JRS Europe assistant director with Nicola Morris of JRS Ireland; Fr Joseph Cassar SJ, director of JRS Malta, and André Costa Jorge, director of JRS Portugal



DETENTION: Accompanied over 600 persons in five detention centres.

AWARENESS RAISING: Asylum and migration workshops for Jesuit school students; Celebrated 10th anniversary with a public reception at the Brussels city hall with over 200 in attendance.

ASYLUM: Provided legal counseling and conducted advocacy on behalf of asylum seekers being forcibly returned to the EU external borders via the *Dublin Regulation*.

KEEPING FAMILIES AND CHILDREN OUT OF DETENTION

For many years migrant families and their children have been subject to detention in Belgium. JRS and other local NGOs undertook a long campaign to end this practice. In response the government announced the development of an alternative to detention for families with children, applicable for the undocumented as well as families who apply for asylum at the border.

Families who would have been detained in the past are now placed in community-based private housing. They are provided with a dedicated caseworker whose task is to follow their case closely, and to provide all necessary assistance and information the family needs to resolve their immigration case, including potential voluntary return to their country of origin.

In 2010 JRS started to routinely visit these families to learn more about their needs and aspirations. The team also meets with the caseworkers in order to learn more about the legal aspects of each family's case.

Placement in the community means that children are able to attend local schools, and families are better able to meet their needs than they would be in a detention centre. Although still in its infancy, the programme has shown success in that most migrant families willingly cooperate with the authorities.

SEEKING SAFE SHELTER

Helena, from Guinea, arrived to Brussels airport with her 18-month-old baby. She asked for asylum and was brought to a housing unit. The Immigration Office asked France to take charge of her case because she came with a French visa.

The caseworker at the Immigration Office informed Stefanie, a JRS visitor, about Helena's vulnerability and confusion with the system. When Stefanie met Helena she saw that she was very anxious and worried. Helena described the suffering she and her child endured in Guinea and how she managed to flee. She was grateful for the help given by the caseworkers: "They are very nice. They explained many things to me and arranged an appointment with a doctor. They are the only persons I know in Belgium." The possibility of being returned to France, an unfamiliar country to her, made her panic. "Maybe they will send me back. I don't know what will happen to me. I have no one in France. I am scared."

Stefanie enlisted the help of JRS France and obtained information about asylum and accommodation procedures there. This assistance, as well as the help given by the caseworkers, helped Helena to cope when France eventually agreed to take charge of her case.

A few days later JRS received several calls from Helena: "The baby and I are fine. I met the organization at the airport; they knew I was coming. They gave me a shelter for the night and will help me to find other accommodation. I thank JRS so much. Please send my regards to the coaches as well."

Return houses for families with children in Zulte



© Vluchtelingenwerk Vlaanderen

FRANCE

INTEGRATION: A documentary about the *Welcome* project featured on French television; French classes for young Afghans in Paris; helped asylum seekers to find work in Saint-Etienne

WELCOMING ASYLUM SEEKERS TO FRANCE

Asylum seekers in France have the right to state-sponsored accommodation while their refugee application is being processed. But a 10.6% increase in asylum seekers in 2010 has left the government with fewer means to house them. Many are forced to stay in small hotels or are left homeless.

JRS developed the *Welcome* project to accommodate asylum seekers whom the state is unable to house. While at its base the project seeks to resolve the problem of housing, its real aim is one of accompaniment. Asylum seekers are supported by tutors, host families and JRS volunteers, each of whom endeavour to integrate the person into French society.

In 2010 approximately 35 families and five religious communities opened their doors to 60 persons. Asylum seekers are referred to JRS by associations that apply for housing on behalf of their clients, and follow-up on them while they are housed with host families. This ensures that persons in the direst situations are given priority. During their five or six week stay with a family, an asylum seeker regularly meets with a tutor who closely follows their situation. Since host families are not expected to offer permanent housing, JRS undertakes continuous research to find a long-term solution for the asylum seeker.

Host families and communities have expressed their joy at having welcomed a stranger into their homes. It has helped them to learn about the many difficulties encountered by those seeking asylum in France. These positive experiences have encouraged JRS to expand the *Welcome* network to Rennes, Nantes, Marseille, Lyon and Lille.

PEERING BEHIND CLOSED DOORS: RASHID'S STORY

I was born in Afghanistan. At the end of 2007 my life was turned upside-down. I had joined a group who maintained a successful commercial website on the Internet. Its success began to disturb the government, who feared it could become a political weapon. All of us were interrogated, threatened and even imprisoned. I left Afghanistan as soon as I was released, traveling with my cousin to France.

The journey was a nightmare. We feared being arrested by the police at the borders we crossed. I arrived to France in September 2008, and began to learn French. But I encountered many difficulties: my unfamiliarity with the country, the uncertainty of whether or not I would be granted refugee status and finding suitable lodging.

I began, like every other asylum seeker, by staying in small hotels. JRS helped me find a home with a host family, where I am now present. Living with a family has been a very enriching experience for me. It enabled me to perfect my French and to take part in French life, helping me to discover what is behind the doors and walls of buildings – parts of life that most foreigners never get to know. I've come to learn many things about French family life: What they eat in the morning and evening, their conversational topics. It is wonderful to be invited to live with a family.

A JRS France volunteer gives French lessons to asylum seekers



DETENTION: Visited detainees in Berlin, Eisenhüttenstadt and Munich every week to provide pastoral care, and social and legal counseling.

RETURN: Lobbied the authorities to introduce forced return monitoring procedures at the new international airport in Berlin.

DESTITUTION: Member of the *Hardship Commission*, which examines cases of people with vulnerabilities and special needs.

© Sibylle Fendt



Detained in Berlin

USING LEGAL ASSISTANCE TO HELP REFUGEES

Migrants who are detained in Germany often struggle with immigration procedures. Remand prisoners are provided with a state-sponsored lawyer if they cannot afford one. Migrant detainees also have the right to a lawyer, but they must find one on their own even though most cannot afford the cost. Lawyers in Germany can appeal for financial support on behalf of their client. To qualify for financial support lawyers must demonstrate that their case can win in court. In order to do so lawyers must know the case very well, meaning they must do a lot of work for no compensation.

JRS continued to meet this challenge with the ongoing implementation of its *Legal Aid Fund*, supported by lawyers and the Protestant and Catholic Church in Berlin, Brandenburg and Bavaria. During 2010, 63 percent of migrants supported by the fund were released from detention. Most of these persons were especially vulnerable to harm: minors, the physically and mentally ill, and persons in detention for more than two months. The fund is also used to prevent families from being separated by detention and return procedures.

The *Legal Aid Fund* shows that legal assistance is an invaluable means to challenge unnecessary detention, and to help persons in vulnerable situations.

DOING WHAT WE CAN IN TOUGH CIRCUMSTANCES

There are times when the *Legal Aid Fund* is unable to obtain positive outcomes. Mr Kotov, a 66-year-old man, was born in Russia of a German father and an Austrian mother. As a child he lived in various children's homes. In recent years he lived homeless in Lithuania; he was also stateless. Mr Kotov eventually found his way to Germany, but was arrested on two separate occasions. He was sent to the Berlin detention centre since he had no legal status in Germany. JRS pastoral visitors became very worried about Mr Kotov's situation. He was frequently confused and helpless. JRS provided him with a lawyer, sensing that his deteriorating state of mental health may impact his immigration case. Shortly before his deportation, JRS came across a medical report produced in Bavaria, where Mr Kotov had lived for some months. The report stated that he was suffering from schizophrenia. The medical staff within the Berlin detention centre knew of this information, but did nothing to stop his deportation. According to them, Mr Kotov's deportation would continue since he was not in a hospital, and nor did he have any recent medical procedures or operations. JRS took Mr Kotov's story to a large newspaper in Berlin to stir up political support via the media. Despite these efforts, Mr Kotov was eventually deported.

But there are occasions when legal assistance really makes a difference for refugees. Mr Rose, from Nigeria, was with chronic illness due to a special hormone defect. According to the German residence law 60-7 (*Aufenthaltsgesetz*), the government cannot deport people to a country if there is proof that return will endanger the freedom, life or health of the person. Using this, JRS provided Mr Rose with a lawyer from the *Legal Aid Fund*, who successfully argued that it was not possible for him to get the right medication in Nigeria because it was too expensive. As a result, Mr Rose was released from detention, permitted to stay in Germany and given access to the medication he needed.

IRELAND

LANGUAGE: A KEY TO INTEGRATION

JRS Ireland recognises the importance of English language skills for forced migrants seeking to integrate into Irish society. The primary objective is to provide migrants with language skills to fully participate in the social, cultural and economic life of the country. Motivated students may attain an internationally recognised English language certificate. Migrant students have the opportunity to form meaningful relationships with their volunteer tutors.

In 2010 JRS launched a new teaching framework to better prepare migrants for taking an English examination. The framework, *Test of Interactive English (TIE)*, recently developed by the Irish government, consists of oral and written sections that are marked separately so that asylum seekers, who in many cases have lived in Ireland for a long time, will have their high level of listening and speaking skills recognised. The TIE teaching method has given a common framework to JRS Ireland's English language lessons, which are taught by Jesuit school students, and Trinity College Dublin students. JRS used the teaching method to assist tutors with providing English language lessons in three direct provision centres, Hatch Hall and Georgian Court in Dublin, and Eyre Powell in Newbridge, resulting in four classes each week. The JRS team hopes that this development will help asylum seekers feel welcome in Irish society.

DETENTION: Weekly visits to women detained at Dóchas Centre; visited men detained at Cloverhill Prison on case-by-case basis.

ASYLUM: Provided weekly support to 30 asylum seekers in 7 Direct Provision Centres in Dublin and Limerick.

INTEGRATION: Launched two-year Limerick city and county integration strategy; developed content on integration for Limerick's main website.

ADVOCACY: Produced a special JRS 30th anniversary edition of Working Notes, journal of the Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice.

MAKING THE MOST OF MY TIME

Barat, from Afghanistan, describes how he came into contact with JRS Ireland's language services: "I was a Christian living in Northern Iraq. When my parents were killed I was forced to leave my home. I have been in Ireland for five years now and am still waiting for my case to be decided. Living in the hostel is so hard. I am young and want to work and do things with my life. But because I am an asylum seeker there are few opportunities for me. I volunteer in two organisations in my town."

JRS established weekly one-to one English classes. "I met JRS when Sister Eleanor came to the hostel to teach us English. She came every week, and afterwards brought us to a class outside of the hostel, located in a school where we learned English during lunch. It was nice to leave the hostel and meet other people." Barat was a very able and well-motivated student. He had a strong desire to improve himself. "Sr Eleanor and the people at JRS organised for me to do English exams in Dublin City University. I did the Key English Test and then the Preliminary English Test, and have certificates for both. At least now I feel like I have not been wasting all my time while waiting for my asylum case to be decided."

Jesuit school students teaching English to asylum seekers



DESTITUTION: Served meals to 350 people each week; provided social and legal assistance for 16.000 asylum seekers and refugees.

INTEGRATION: Offered Italian lessons to more than 100 students; assisted refugees with joining professional job training courses.

ADVOCACY: Participated in a platform of Italian NGOs to lobby the authorities to respect the right to asylum in Italy, and to cease the 'pushbacks' of migrants to Libya.

ACCOMPANYING VICTIMS OF TORTURE FIGHTING NIGHTMARES

In Italy, one out of every three refugees is a victim of torture. Every year Centro Astalli assists approximately 400 victims. During 2010 the majority of them have been young single males who left their families at home. There also are young women who are victims of rape, rarely accompanied by their children.

Centro Astalli supported torture victims by facilitating their access to health, legal, and social services, and submitting reports to the refugee determination authority in order to help them find housing and a job. Assistance was provided through the JRS social and legal outreach centre at Centro Astalli. Legal and social counsellors were responsible for first interviews with asylum seekers and refugees, and for following up on all social and legal aspects of each beneficiary's case. Persons who were known to be victims of torture were referred to doctors volunteering at the Centro Astalli medical clinic, where they provided medical assistance and psychological support.

Taking into account the mental health needs of torture victims, Centro Astalli partnered with the *Local Health Service* to establish a medical outpatient clinic for refugee victims of torture. The aim of this project is to improve the medical services that Centro Astalli provides, and to enable refugees and asylum seekers to become more aware of the *Local Health Services*, which are administered by the city of Rome.

My father and my brother were active members of the opposition party *Mouvement pour la Libération du Congo* (MLC), in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Their political involvement led to the condemnation of my family and I, and soldiers of the National Army persecuted us.

Everything in my life changed on 26th November 2009. All was destroyed. Soldiers burst into my house. They took my father and brother outside and killed them. Then they pinned my mother and I against the wall, separated us and took me into a derelict house. There I was kept for a few days, and was beaten and raped several times. In those days I hoped only to be killed and prayed for the Lord to give me death. On the third day my captors abandoned me close to the Congo River. I don't understand how but someone helped me by putting me on a ship going towards Congo Brazzaville. After few days I met a Congolese woman who, moved to pity by my condition, decided to help and offered me hospitality for one month. Then she helped me to escape. Thanks to her I reached Italy after a journey lasting several months.

Now I am a recognised refugee and living in the Centro Astalli accommodation centre, *La Casa di Giorgia*. Here I received support for the horrible experiences I have had. But my life remains very hard. Every night I fight nightmares. Every day I fight to survive.

Refugees and asylum seekers taking Italian courses at Centro Astalli



DETENTION: Offered regular legal advice, psychosocial care and spiritual support to detained asylum seekers and irregular migrants.

DESTITUTION: Provided social services, legal assistance and advice to help migrants integrate into Maltese society; launched a *Hardship Fund* to help vulnerable migrants left without entitlements and in poor conditions.

AWARENESS RAISING: Conducted frequent workshops with students at secondary and post-secondary schools about refugee issues.

WORKING TO END MIGRANT DESTITUTION

In 2010 JRS undertook two activities to communicate the problems of destitution to the broader public. The first was a pilot study published in March as a part of the ANDES project (see page 5). It shows that there are several causative and contributing factors that increase vulnerability to destitution for asylum seekers, beneficiaries of subsidiary protection and refused asylum seekers who cannot be returned. Maltese law does not clearly indicate the kinds of social welfare benefits each group of persons is entitled to. Receiving an allowance is dependent upon living in one of Malta's open centres, where conditions are inadequate, and in some cases sub-standard. Migrants who leave the open centres to begin a new life are thus stripped of their benefits. Many of them are unable to find employment and consequently become destitute because there is no other support.

The second was the release of a documentary, *Suspended Lives*. The film is based on the experiences of persecution and flight from the country of origin, the journey across the Sahara and the Mediterranean, and the negative human impacts of destitution as told by asylum seekers and migrants themselves. It is the centrepiece of a larger campaign against destitution in Malta. Free screenings have been organised in schools and other public venues, and the media has provided a great deal of coverage.

The Hal-Far Hanger Open Centre for asylum seekers



FINDING WAYS TO MANAGE

JRS Malta's pilot study found that it is very difficult for persons who lose their place in an open centre – who consequently have no place to sleep and no financial support – to be readmitted into the system. One interviewee said: "When I was released from detention I was placed at the Hal Far Tent Village. After four months I left and went to the Marsa Open Centre because I could not stand the conditions at the tent village. At the time I was working in construction. Eventually I had to stop working because of a serious back problem. I went to the immigration office and to Hal Far to ask for another allowance. But I never received anything."

Migrants who leave Malta and then return after a time face a reduction in their daily allowance. A beneficiary of subsidiary protection recounts, "I went abroad to find a job since I couldn't find one in Malta. I spent two months away, and then returned voluntarily. My fingerprints were not taken. I paid for my flight. The problem is that they reduced my allowance from €130.48 to €81.48 because I left Malta. I have to take medicine because of my condition... how am I supposed to manage like this? I need money to buy food... I cannot work since I am an old man."

There are limited accommodation alternatives for migrants. The most vulnerable persons face constant doubt as to whether they will continue to receive support or not. "When we were living in the open centre we were ordered to leave because other people were going to be placed there, so we had to give up our place. I told the management that I do not have any money but my husband is looking for a job." Since the family had to leave the open centre, they were no longer entitled to a daily allowance. "We cannot afford anything. When I went to ask for an allowance for my baby, they said they couldn't help. I still haven't found any help."

EXTERNALISATION: Provided food, clothing, transport grants and vocational training to single mothers and their children living in Casablanca.

CARING FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE

Strengthened EU border patrols have made it very difficult for people to travel to Europe, even those with genuine protection needs. As a consequence, many migrants have no other choice but to remain living in Morocco, since it is often too dangerous for them to travel back home. JRS responded to the needs of the most vulnerable migrants via the SAM project, *Service Accueil Migrants*. SAM is administered in partnership with the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary in Morocco. The programme first provided services only to single mothers and children, but in 2010 it expanded to offer services to all migrant women who came to JRS. Kindergarten classes were offered to children aged between two and six years. Workshops on sewing, knitting and cooking were offered to the women, as well as French and English language classes and basic computer courses.

The primary goal of SAM is to offer a safe place for migrant women to enhance their skills, take part in formational courses, and for children to attain a basic education in a non-threatening environment. Since its inception the SAM project has helped almost 300 women and approximately 150 children, who came to SAM fleeing from war and poverty, as well as poor social conditions such as severe unemployment.



A SAFE PLACE FOR MY CHILDREN AND I

I am from the Democratic Republic of Congo. I came to Morocco eight years ago by airplane with a student visa. I took courses in computer programming in the city of Fez. During my studies, I met a student from the same background as me. He had a Master's degree in management. We moved to Casablanca to find work, but also to see one of my brothers who lived there. We did not want to return to the DRC due to the difficult political and economic situation there. Our goal was to immigrate to Europe because most of my family is in France, and I have almost no one in the DRC.

My partner and I had two children. The birth of my first, a boy, went well. We still had some money, which allowed me to give birth in a private clinic. But the birth of my daughter was devastating. I thought I would die on that day. She was born premature in our home during the night. My brother called the ambulance since my partner was away. The ambulance took me to a public hospital located at Ain Seba. Being a migrant I was left without medical care. My daughter and I were ignored. Eventually my brother was able to have us transferred to a private clinic in Maarif. There we were properly taken care of, and the medical staff put my baby in an incubator. But private clinics are expensive. They confiscated my passport, saying that I would only get it back once I paid the bill. I found the money I needed but would rather not describe how I got it.

Luckily, my brother took us under his roof. The father of my children has not returned. We still want to immigrate to Europe, but it has become difficult due to the closed borders.

Every Saturday I go with my children to the SAM project. There we are given food and medical support when needed, and my children are given an education. The workers take the time to listen to our problems. SAM is a place where I can learn things such as languages, sewing and computers, and where I can make friends. Best of all it's a place where my children and I can stay safe.

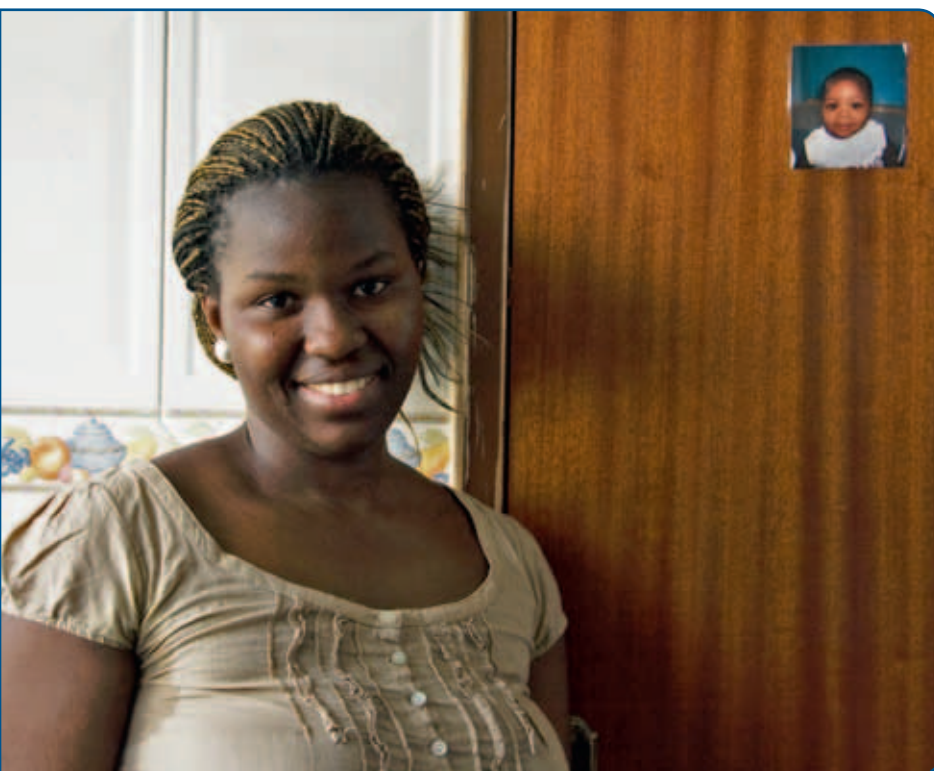
Day care for migrant children at the SAM project

PORTUGAL

DESTITUTION: Accommodated homeless migrants and offered medical support; created an advocacy network to address migrant destitution in Portugal; provided legal support to help migrants obtain a residence status.

INTEGRATION: Offered employment assistance and recognition of educational qualifications; gave Portuguese language courses.

DETENTION: Administered psychological and medical support to detainees in Porto.



Miloca, from Guinea Bissau, found work with JRS Portugal's help

PROFESSIONAL INTEGRATION: THE CHANCE OF A LIFETIME

The integration of migrants into Portuguese society has become a core aim of JRS Portugal. In economic recession, it has also become one of its most pressing challenges. Out of the 3.200 migrants who were accompanied by JRS in 2010, most cited employment as their most urgent need. Without work they have no means to support their families, find housing and ensure adequate food and clothing for themselves and their loved ones.

Many migrants come to JRS in a state of extreme social frailty: unemployed, without legal documentation and with little to no resources to support basic needs. A person's legal status is linked to employment, and the poor economy has left many migrants unemployed and consequently without a legal status.

In 2010 several innovative projects were developed to help migrants obtain a foothold in the labour market. JRS staff provides one-on-one vocational counseling, and found employers who were willing to hire qualified migrants. One such project was the *JRS Academy*. Its aim was to provide migrants – free of charge – with training courses that can help them adapt their skills for use in local society. In November the academy trained 29 migrants in housekeeping, childcare and basic care for dependent persons, and in restaurant services. In addition participants are offered tips and techniques to improve their job-searching strategies. Migrants are given a certificate to prove they have a specialised skill in a certain area, an added value for the employer.

THROUGH WORK WE CAN MAKE THIS LAND OURS

Migrants who come to JRS Portugal are very eager to find work, knowing full well that it is the key to integration. “As migrants we know that we need to battle. We are in a land that is not ours; but by working we can make it ours”, says a Venezuelan migrant who receives employment assistance from JRS.

Angela is a service user of the JRS Employment Integration Office. She has a family in São Tomé that she must care for. “When I first arrived to Portugal, my concerns were to find work so I could feed my daughter, register her in a school, pay for my housing and to send money to my husband and son who stayed behind.” Aside from employment, Angela wants to obtain a legal status in Portugal so she can continue providing for her family. “I have been in Portugal for three years. For one year I have worked two steady jobs, but neither of my bosses want to offer me a contract. I cannot obtain a legal status without a contract. I am now looking for another job so I can be legalised, because without any papers life is very hard.”

DETENTION: Legal assistance for 105 persons in Otopeni and Arad detention centres; conducted over 40 visits to detention centres.

ASYLUM AND MIGRATION: Organised more than 15 round tables and seminars to lobby national authorities for improved asylum and migration procedures.

DESTITUTION: Provided legal assistance to 95 destitute migrants and housing to 60 rejected asylum seekers; 80 persons received social assistance and emergency aid; Organised 200 educational classes with help from 30 volunteers.

RETURN: Developed 30 'country of return' information sheets for national lawyers and judges to aid their work and decision-making on return.

SUPPORTING THE RESETTLEMENT PROCESS

During 2010 JRS Romania demonstrated a high level of national leadership on asylum and refugee issues among civil society actors. An important example was their involvement in a new resettlement programme implemented by the Romanian government. In June, 38 Burmese refugees were resettled from Malaysia, making Romania one of the few countries in the world to actively facilitate access to this durable solution.

Working together with the Romanian Immigration Office and the UN Refugee Agency, JRS was one of the key NGOs to provide assistance to refugees resettled in Galati. The purpose of the project was to help refugees integrate into Romanian society for one year. The local JRS team was composed of a social worker, a professor and several volunteers, each of whom used their expertise to help the refugees adapt to life in Romania. Services included language classes, computer courses, cultural orientation and social counseling. Resettled families received assistance with accessing medical care, financial support and official documentation. JRS Romania also solicited material support and donations from the community at large.

RESETTLEMENT MEANT CHANGING OUR LIVES: A REFUGEE'S STORY

We want a better future for our children. At the same time we are concerned for our future. Like anyone else we only want good jobs so we can support our family.

During our stay in Romania we experienced some problems in the hospital because the medical staff does not know what a refugee is entitled to. Medical services are too expensive for us. But JRS helped us with our medical expenses. They also helped us with clothes, language and computer classes and offered us close support. We found the computer classes to be a very useful and important opportunity. They even took the time to show us the many beautiful sights in Romania. The Romanian language classes were difficult. But fortunately JRS volunteers helped us to do well.

A family from Kachin State, northern Burma (Myanmar), resettled in Galati



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SLOVENIA

DETENTION: Psychosocial support and pastoral care provided to migrants detained in Postojna.

ASYLUM: Psychosocial assistance, legal advice, computer courses and kindergarten services given to adults and children residing in the open centre for asylum seekers; initiated a programme to help human trafficking victims.

REACHING OUT TO NEW AUDIENCES

During the year JRS Slovenia made a special effort to increase its presence in the media and in academic institutions. The DEVAS project (see page 5) was a good opportunity for this, enabling JRS to present the conclusions of the final report to national media outlets and to raise awareness on the negative effects of detention among NGOs, the ombudsman and police. The country office presented the DEVAS results at the 4th congress of social work in Slovenia, and at a Scribani conference in Madrid. On World Refugee Day 2010, the country director spoke on behalf of national NGOs about the urgent needs of asylum seekers and refugees in front of a large audience, which included the Minister of the Interior and her staff. In addition, JRS continued production of a monthly radio programme entitled *Building a More Open Society*, participated at several national round tables and conferences, and published articles on the plight of refugees.

For the first time JRS Slovenia was present on *Sveto in svet* and *Na zdravje*, two of the most viewed national television programmes. A commentary about refugee issues, entitled *Prebudi se, aktiviraj se* (Wake up, activate yourself) was written for *Radio Ognjišče*, and was published in *Delo*, one of the biggest newspapers in Slovenia. All of these activities meant that JRS was able to keep the plight of refugees on the forefront of the public and political agenda.

Celebrating St Nicolas day with children in the asylum home



BEING AFRAID FOR THE WORST

I came to Slovenia with my partner and three children in 2005 from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Our fourth child was born in Slovenia. We asked for international protection and lived in the asylum home for two years. Our application was rejected, and as a result we were transferred to the detention centre in Postojna. We could not be returned to our country of origin because my partner did not have documentation proving he was from Bosnia. After living in the detention centre for several months, the JRS social worker and the staff from the detention centre began to help us look for another place to live. It was very difficult to find a home because, as Roma, many people did not want to have us as their neighbours.

Finally, we found a place to live. I began the procedure of getting all the necessary documents for my children and I. Since my youngest child is a Slovenian citizen, I was able to receive temporary residence for five years. The detention centre staff also helped us. This entire process left us with very little money.

My partner started to drink heavily and he became very aggressive to me and to my children. JRS helped me to go with my children into a safe house. After a year I returned to Ljubljana to work. My partner became violent once more. This time the police arrested him and expelled him from Slovenia. He mistreated me even during phone calls. As a Roma woman I could not leave him. My partner will soon be able to re-enter Slovenian territory. I am afraid of what will happen when he comes back.

DETENTION: Regularly visited irregular migrants held in Sweden's largest detention centre, Mårsta, near Stockholm International Airport



Mårsta, the biggest of Sweden's detention centres, located near Stockholm International Airport

CARING FOR THOSE IN VULNERABLE SITUATIONS

JRS Sweden conducted regular visits to irregular migrants held in Mårsta detention centre. The main tasks of the visitors is to give moral support to detainees, to help them get in touch with lawyers and relatives, and to offer mediation between detainees, the police and the Swedish Migration Board. JRS offers pastoral care for Catholics of both Western and Eastern rites. Liturgies, prayers and confessions are routinely offered.

Throughout the year the Swedish authorities regularly expelled Christian Iraqis to Baghdad, despite persistent reports testifying to the unsafe environment there. These returns have been possible due to a readmission agreement between the two countries. JRS and other NGOs lobbied the Swedish government to change this policy, and strived to at least provide pastoral care for this vulnerable group.

Another concern has been for asylum seekers detained under Dublin Regulation procedures. In these cases JRS established contacts with NGOs or JRS offices in the countries the detainees would be forcibly returned to. This was done to ensure adequate support and fair treatment upon arrival. In many cases JRS offices were able to receive asylum seekers due to JRS Sweden's efforts to make contact.

A PERILOUS JOURNEY

In 2007 traffickers had arranged to take Hakim, a young Iraqi man, from Syria to Sweden. Hakim does not remember the details of the trip, only that when they had crossed the Oeresund bridge between Denmark and Sweden, the agent kept his passport and disappeared.

Hakim asked for asylum. The determination procedure took two years. In 2009, the Swedish Migration Board decided that he did not qualify for asylum and should be deported. Hakim panicked and went into hiding. Not only had he been prey to criminal traffickers, lost all his money and his passport, but now also his asylum claim was rejected. Hakim lived each day in fear.

The police intercepted him after an identification control at Stockholm's central station. After one night at a police station he was brought to Mårsta detention centre. There he met a JRS volunteer who helped him contact a lawyer. After a long legal battle with the authorities, through an intervention via the Committee Against Torture of the United Nations, Hakim was finally granted a permanent residence permit.

UNITED KINGDOM

DETENTION: Regularly visited asylum seekers detained in Harmondsworth and Colnbrook immigration removal centres.

DESTITUTION: Offered hardship support to asylum seekers and refugees left destitute in the UK, via a day-centre run once per week in north London.

ADVOCACY: Recruited refugees to meet with UK Borders Agency staff to improve conditions at immigration reporting centres.

A JOURNEY TO THE LILIES: TESTIMONY FROM A SPIRITUAL COMPANION

In the Gospel, Jesus speaks about the beauty of the lilies of the field: they have nothing and yet are so beautiful. Nothing man-made can compare with them! Having listened to some of the life and faith journeys of refugees these past months helped me discover a richness and beauty of faith that compares to the lilies.

When I first opened myself to the horrific situations that circumstances have forced upon these refugees, it dawned on me that I would never be able to withstand the turmoil of their lives, let alone hold onto faith in a God who is with me, caring for me. But that says more about me than them.

One can only try to imagine what it would be like to live here for many years often with little or no support, being sent from pillar to post in a never-ending process of applications, denials and appeals. If they are not entitled to accommodation, then they are out on the streets. They experience acutely the loss of dignity in that they are not allowed to work. Their education means nothing. They are reduced to begging for clothes, food and people to change vouchers for money, so that they might call home. Imagine their profound disorientation and powerlessness.

Yet in listening to them, I found people with the most beautiful spirit. Many have that experiential certainty of faith that a caring God is with them. One told me he has nothing, only God. In this my refugee friends are to me like the lilies, who witness to the living God and His care.

PROVIDING SPIRITUAL ACCOMPANIMENT

In September 2010, JRS UK started the *Companions Project*. It is a spiritual accompaniment opportunity for refugees and asylum seekers who desire such a service. The project was created in response to the refugees' deep faith in God and their need to look at life from a faith perspective, as most of the time they are overwhelmed with answering questionnaires about their case and facing the legal challenges of applying for asylum. JRS staff and volunteers perceived these needs after having listened to refugees' stories for many years.

Listening to refugees, their stories and their needs has always been a vital dimension of JRS. Being able to do this in a safe environment with a spiritual guide allows displaced persons to tell their stories and share the pain of their journey. The *Companions Project* respects the traditions and faith of all participants. Spiritual companioning frequently opens up new ways of understanding life experiences. It can empower refugees to face the ongoing challenges of insertion into a new culture, and to help gather the strength needed to fully engage in a new reality.

Refugees meet with spiritual guides on a weekly basis, or by request. Guides spend time simply being with the refugees who come to them, working to build trust and companionship.

Finding peace in spiritual companionship



ACCOMPANIMENT: Provided room and board for up to 24 asylum seekers, plus legal representation, language instruction, job searching assistance and life-skills counselling.

ADVOCACY: Worked with government and social organisations to improve laws, administrative procedures and service delivery.

EXTERNALISATION: Monitored developments in Ukrainian law and changes in EU policy with respect to migrant flows to and from Ukraine.

NATIONAL GROWING PAINS

With the help of the EU, Ukraine progressively integrates into the international community. Daily news articles speak of new standards in food quality and control, in trade laws, transparent financial procedures and delivery of social services. These are not easy changes for a country of the size or history of Ukraine. Nonetheless, the government, following the people, knows it has only one direction to go.

Ukraine writes good laws. Implementation, however, is another matter. JRS constantly faces local administrators who have not been informed of laws regarding refugees and have no reference point for determining their responsibility. JRS Ukraine organised a conference for representatives of four ministries that deal with refugees. From 2009 through 2010 we studied in common the gaps between state law and local procedures. Our work ended with a thirty-page study of irregularities. More importantly, the study gave clarity to our advocacy. Procedures for the delivery of social services to asylum seekers have now been issued by the regional government. The government thanked JRS for its concern and insistence.

HUMANITY DESPITE BUREAUCRACY

It is difficult to ignore the vitality of two-year-old Svitlana. Each day she produces new words in any of the four languages in the house. The nine other children love her. The older women help the young mom raise her. She gives her own parents hope. However, for most of her two years of life, she did not 'legally' exist.

Her parents, Christians fleeing to the EU from Iraq, were left by smugglers in Ukraine. They were taken to an EU-funded detention centre. There she was born. As this was the first such occurrence in Ukraine, Svitlana was not registered as having been born, despite evidence to the contrary.

Ukrainian law offers citizenship to a child born on its territory, but there is no administrative procedure that allows this to happen. Our lawyers went to work. Svitlana needed a certificate of birth to begin the procedure. The hospital needed the passports of the parents to issue the certificate. The parents had lost their passports to smugglers. JRS appealed to the head office in Kyiv; they soon took our side. Our lawyer returned to the regional government for the birth certificate. The eight-person regional board, with sympathetic but pained expression, noted that they could not issue a birth certificate without levying a fine because Svitlana was not registered in time. The rules say that we could go to court or pay a fine. The fine was the equivalent of two euros. JRS paid the fine and then the procedures were changed. Now no one can doubt that Svitlana lives.



Two-year old Svitlana and her family at the JRS refugee house in Lviv

WESTERN BALKANS

DETENTION: Accompanied asylum seekers and irregular migrants held in detention near Zagreb, and asylum seekers in the reception centre in Macedonia.

ADVOCACY: Advocated for people's fundamental rights in detention, and for improved conditions and shorter asylum procedures.

INTEGRATION: Promoted reconciliation and integration, peace-building, tolerance as well as ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue between migrants and the host society.

HELPING MIGRANTS IN DETENTION

JRS in the Western Balkans area accompanied detained asylum seekers and irregular migrants from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Kosovo, Iraq, Sudan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Tunisia, Palestine and Russia. Weekly visits were made to the detention centre in Zagreb, Croatia, and the reception centre for asylum seekers in Skopje, Macedonia.

Through weekly visits JRS staff and volunteers provided detainees with a range of services, including psychosocial and educational support, pastoral support as well as language and computer courses. Together with other civil society partners, such as the Croatian Red Cross and Croatian Law Centre, JRS offered legal assistance to asylum seekers.

JRS continued its Land Mine Assistance project in Kosovo. Victims of land mine explosions were provided with prostheses, rehabilitation services, education and local integration support.

Antonina and her daughter Marijana



A NEVER-ENDING JOURNEY TO SAFETY

Antonina Orlova was born in St Petersburg in 1986. She lived there with her mother and brother until 2006, and met a Muslim man from Uzbekistan. As a family they lived in Uzbekistan for one year. During this time Antonina gave birth to a daughter, Marijana. Her husband became increasingly abusive, forcing Antonina to take Marijana back to St Petersburg.

In 2009 Antonina moved to Serbia and applied for asylum. After residing there for two months, she withdrew her application and went back to St Petersburg upon learning that her mother had become ill. The trip back home was a difficult one. She and her daughter traveled with a taxi, and were arrested by the border police as she crossed into Hungary. In prison she applied for asylum but was rejected. During this time her mother passed away. Antonina was eventually deported to St Petersburg.

Finding out that Antonina has returned with Marijana, her husband tried to kidnap them, but was unsuccessful. Feeling unsafe, Antonina and her daughter moved in with friends. In March 2010, Antonina took her daughter and traveled to Montenegro to apply for asylum, but was rejected once more. At that point she moved to Macedonia to make another application.

On 24th April she moved into the reception centre for single mothers in Macedonia. Her asylum application is in the appeals stage. JRS provides her with psychosocial support, legal advice and material support while she awaits the outcome of her appeal.

JRS activities in other countries

LUXEMBOURG

In January the JRS contact group travelled to the European Parliament in Brussels to meet with Luxembourg MEPs Charles Goerens and Frank Engel. Accompanied by a representative from JRS Europe, the group discussed the shortcomings of the Dublin Regulation, refugee resettlement schemes to Europe and the latest ideas on the issue of migration and development. As one of the meeting's results, Mr Goerens submitted a formal question to the European Commission on the issue of private fund transfers for migrants working in Europe. At the end of the year, the JRS group undertook preparations for the fifth Christian Life Communities meeting in Europe, to be held on the issue of forced migration in January of the next year. Agnes Rausch, the group's coordinator, participated at the JRS annual general meeting in Malta.

Throughout the year members of the JRS group accompanied asylum seekers, refugees and migrants living destitute in Luxembourg. During the summer the group encouraged Caritas staff in charge of integration to care for seven newly resettled Iraqi families. Information sent from JRS Europe was passed onto the asylum unit of the Immigration Ministry. The group maintained constant contact with the deputy director and the staff of the detention centre, where foreigners are held prior to their deportation.

SPAIN

The year was marked by an intense debate on the implementation of a newly adopted law on the rights and liberties of foreigners. The members of the *Servicio Jesuita a Migrantes* committed themselves to provide input to the government on the best way to implement the new law. *CeiMigra* and *Pueblos Unidos* were especially active, and worked together with Caritas Spain and the Spanish Refugee Council (CEAR). Taken altogether, civil society organisations submitted 69 proposals to the government. Among these, proposals for renewing authorisation of residence and for improving family reunification were of high priority.

At the end of the year, the government finished its strategic plan for citizenship and integration, done in order to improve relations with the autonomous communities in Spain. It was also used as a framework for relations between public administration and civil society. The plan was well received by the latter, but in the end proved difficult to implement due to oppositional political parties and declining state revenues.

Spain signed bilateral agreements with Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Norway, New Zealand, Paraguay and Peru that recognises the right of their citizens to vote in local Spanish elections. In order to vote, foreigners of these countries must be 18 years of age or older and registered with their local municipality, and must have a residence authorisation for five years.

Ready to begin a new life: A family from Kachin State, northern Burma (Myanmar), resettled in Galati with JRS Romania's help



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JRS Portugal policy officer, Ana Varela, with Malanda Mananga after telling him that he has been granted a hearing to obtain a residency permit. Malanda fled to Portugal from the Democratic Republic of Congo, spending two months in the dark hold of a cargo ship. He lived in the subway for two years before receiving help from JRS



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The structure of JRS Europe

JRS Europe was established in March 1992. It is an incorporated “International Association” under Belgian law (AISBL # 452165993), with a Constitution, General Assembly and Governing Council. It is recognised as a refugee-assisting NGO by the EU institutions and by several states both within Europe and beyond (namely Angola and Ethiopia).

JRS Europe is an integral part of the Jesuit Refugee Service worldwide and depends on the Conference of European Provincials. It is a project of the Conference and an inter-provincial apostolic work of the Society of Jesus in Europe. It covers around 20 Jesuit Provinces. National coordinators answer to their respective provincials and, for certain matters, directly to the European regional director.

The directors of the JRS country offices meet twice annually for a regional coordination meeting, which facilitates strategic planning for the region.

COUNTRY OFFICES:

BE, FR, DE, IE, IT, MT, MA, PT, RO, SI, SE, UA, UK, Western Balkans (Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia)

CONTACT PERSONS:

AT, DK, EE, HU, LX, NL, SK, ES, CH, Egypt and Lebanon

PERMANENT STAFF

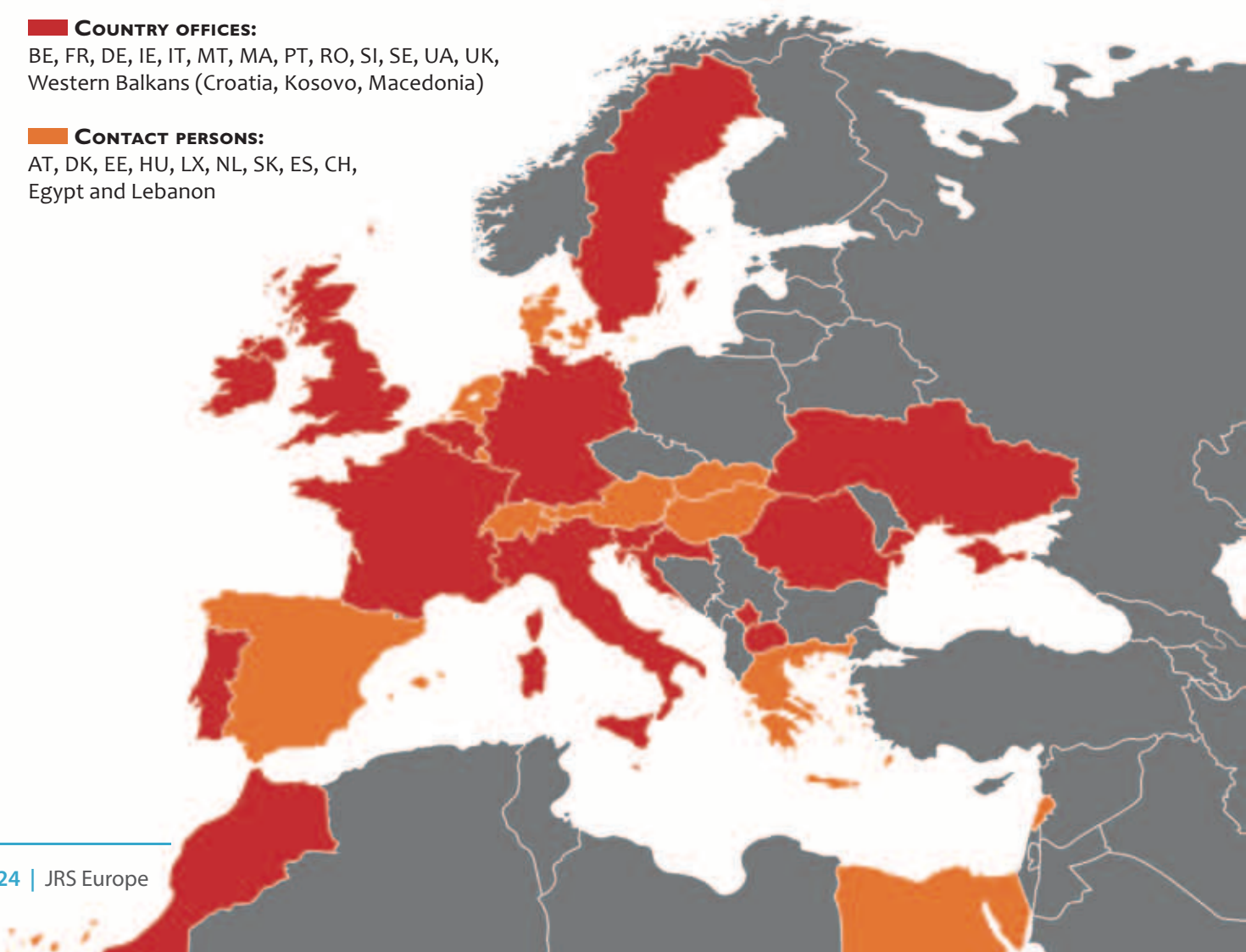
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Fr Luigi Romano SJ, assistant regional director
Stefan Kessler, senior policy and advocacy officer
Carola Jimenez-Asenjo, project development officer
Philip Amaral, policy and communications officer
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Rozemarijn Vanwijnsberghe, project support
Joseph Poncin, administrative support
Gianluigi Campogrande, policy support
Kieran Quigley, media intern (left in July)
Mary Kita, media volunteer (came in December)
Giulia Cortellesi, project officer (maternity leave replacement)

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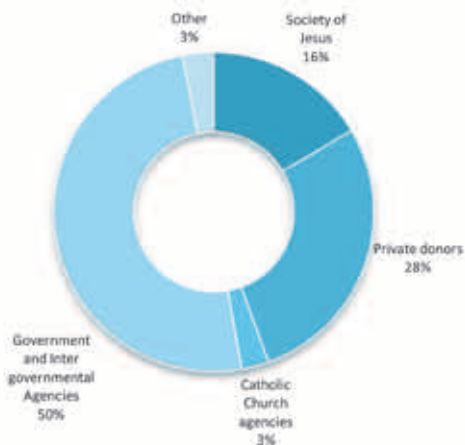
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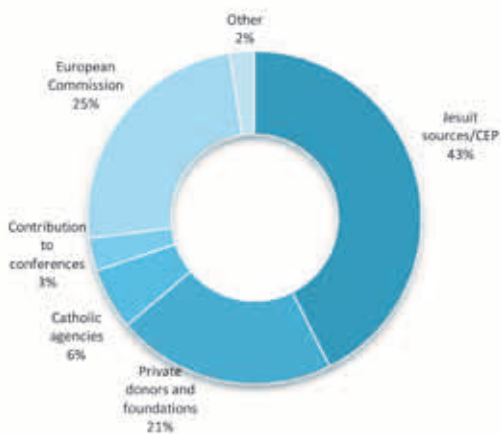
Financial summary

JRS-Europe country offices – source of income



Society of Jesus	825,125
Private donors	1,400,305
Catholic Church/agencies	138,224
Government and Intergovernmental Agencies	2,483,542
Other	159,525
TOTAL	5,006,720

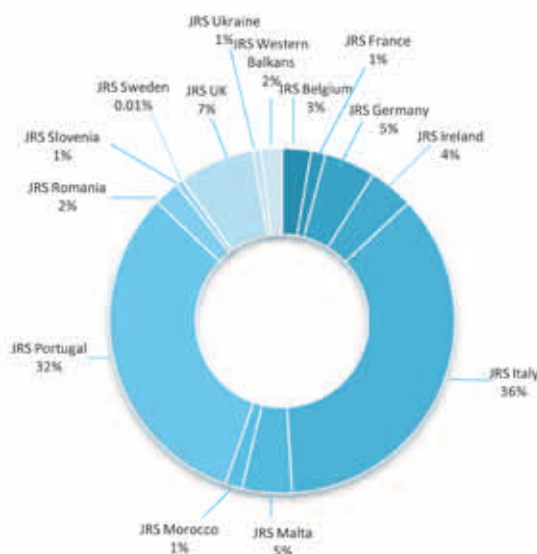
JRS-Europe Brussels – source of core income



Jesuit sources/CEP	154,400
Private donors and foundations	77,210
Catholic agencies	21,764
Contribution to conferences	11,573
European Commission	89,117
Other	8,704
TOTAL (*)	362,768

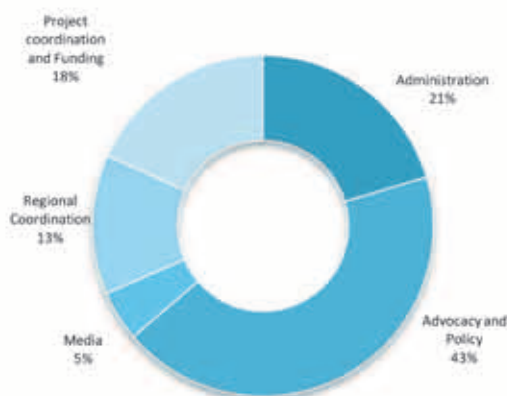
* The income not spent in 2010 was used to complete a reserves fund which is required in case of financial difficulties or in case the operations should have to cease any time in the future.

JRS-Europe country offices – expenditure



JRS Belgium	136,299
JRS France	67,260
JRS Germany	240,761
JRS Ireland	210,907
JRS Italy	1,810,000
JRS Malta	233,885
JRS Morocco	80,360
JRS Portugal	1,595,441
JRS Romania	122,084
JRS Slovenia	33,000
JRS Sweden	3,089
JRS UK	353,350
JRS Ukraine	37,258
JRS Western Balkans	99,905
TOTAL	5,023,599

JRS-Europe Brussels – core expenditure



Administration	60,952
Advocacy and Policy	108,431
Media	11,970
Regional Coordination	33,158
Project coordination and Funding	44,819
TOTAL	249,328

The 2010 accounts were audited by an independent auditor.



Mr Ali Amoah*, fled Somalia due to clan persecution. He first arrived to Italy, and lived there for several months with little social assistance: "I was homeless, sleeping in empty houses with other asylum seekers". He went to Germany and applied for refugee protection. Under EU law, German authorities sought to return him to Italy, as it was his first point of entry into the EU. Mr Amoah, with the help of advocates, challenged this decision, citing poor social conditions for asylum seekers in Italy. Nevertheless, after 80 days detention in Berlin, he was sent back.
(*not his real name)



Passing time in the detention
centre in Vottem, located near
Liège, Belgium



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serve

advocate



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