



**ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2013**

JESUIT  
REFUGEE  
SERVICE  
EUROPE



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

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**Cover photo:** Pope Francis greets a refugee during a mass in the Church of the Gesù. The mass was held during his visit to JRS Italy in September 2013.

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**Back cover photo:** Refugees passing time at the Hal-Far Hangar Open Centre. On hot summer days, it is cooler to be under the trees than in the furiously hot containers that serve as homes. © JRS MALTA

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction: Leaders wanted . . . . .	3
Regional coordination . . . . .	4
Policy and advocacy . . . . .	5
Major projects . . . . .	6
Communications . . . . .	7
Overview of JRS country offices . . . . .	9
Belgium . . . . .	10
France . . . . .	11
Germany . . . . .	12
Ireland . . . . .	13
Italy . . . . .	14
Malta . . . . .	15
Morocco . . . . .	16
Portugal . . . . .	17
Romania . . . . .	18
Slovenia . . . . .	19
SE Europe (Croatia, Macedonia, Kosovo). . . . .	20
Sweden . . . . .	21
Ukraine . . . . .	22
United Kingdom . . . . .	23
A visit from Pope Francis . . . . .	24
Appendices . . . . .	25
Appendix I - The structure of JRS in Europe. . . . .	26
Appendix II - Directory of JRS in Europe . . . . .	28
Appendix III - Financial summary . . . . .	30



Zaina (26) and Osama (32) are married with two children. The Syrian war forced them to flee to Greece. Because no EU country would give them a visa, they had to rely on smugglers, who beat them and stole their money and documents. In Greece, they were immediately detained.

"In Syria, we were afraid of war. In Greece, we are afraid of Golden Dawn, the police and being detained."

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## LEADERS WANTED

Pope Francis's visit to JRS Italy last September was hugely important. The positive reaction that came from his visit and his humble and compassionate interaction with refugees revealed a deep public craving for moral leadership on the issue of refugees and migrants in Europe.

Indeed, it seems that during 2013 Europe had lost its moral compass on how to treat people who come to us in need of protection. Two prominent examples stand out.

First is the war in Syria. Three million people have been forced from their homes. Scarcely 4% of these refugees have found their way into Europe because of nearly insurmountable legal barriers to entry. Save for a few exceptions, European

countries have not heeded calls to resettle more of Syria's refugees.

Second is the sinking of a migrant boat last October, off the coast of Lampedusa. Nearly 400 people died, including many children. Europe's political leaders expressed their outrage and commitment to prevent further tragedies from occurring. Instead of making a plan to enable refugees to safely and legally come to Europe, the EU proposed ways to further prevent irregular migration. Given a chance to open its embrace, the EU crossed its arms more tightly.

During 2013, JRS country offices endeavoured to fill in this gap of moral, and especially practical, leadership. JRS France recruited young people

to assist refugees to integrate into local society. In Germany, JRS took dozens of cases to local courts to end the detention of migrants in prisons. JRS Ireland worked with Irish policymakers to improve the country's asylum system.

In his speech to JRS Italy, Pope Francis said, "It is possible for all of us to do something". Despite the obstacles posed by our political system, the least that we as individual human beings can do for refugees and migrants is to engage in everyday acts of hospitality to show our political leaders that another way of leadership is entirely possible.

**Br Michael Schöpf, SJ**  
*Regional Director, JRS Europe*

## Regional Coordination

Based in Brussels, JRS Europe facilitates the network of JRS country offices by common planning and project work, advocating for refugees' rights at the EU-level and ensuring their voices are heard by policymakers.

### REGIONAL COORDINATION

- 'Urban refugees' was the main theme at the Annual General Meeting in Lisbon. Participants concluded that providing comprehensive services for refugees living in cities is the best way to support them.
- Two new strategic coordination groups were formed, one on advocacy and the other on communications. Both groups are composed of JRS staff from various country offices. Their aim is to take strategic leadership on JRS projects, advocacy work and inter-office communication.

### POLICY AND ADVOCACY

- JRS Europe published a report on forced migration through Croatia and Macedonia. Though the numbers of forced migrants have been rising in these two countries, protection standards have remained low.
- As the co-chair of the Frontex Consultative Forum on Fundamental Rights, JRS Europe led the strengthening of Frontex's human rights safeguards in a code of conduct for joint return operations.

### PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

- JRS Europe published the DIASP report, "Protection Interrupted", based on interviews with 257 asylum seekers in nine EU countries. The report identifies critical shortcomings of the Dublin Regulation and the serious impacts it has on asylum seekers' fundamental rights.
- JRS detention visitors attended the 7th Detention Visitors Support Group (DVSG). Participants were trained on identifying vulnerable migrants in detention and assessing migrants' mental health.

### MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS

- The JRS communications taskforce decided upon a strategy for internal communications in the region. The strategy's goals are to share information and news quickly, identify regional communications opportunities and to create a means and mechanisms for JRS staff and volunteers to communicate with each other.
- JRS Europe began work on a new website, based on the model of JRS International ([www.jrs.net](http://www.jrs.net)). It will be launched in the first half of 2014.

# Policy and Advocacy

## BORDERS

On the occasion of Croatia's accession to the EU, we launched a report on the situation of forced migrants in Croatia and Macedonia. It shows that the asylum system in Croatia is having trouble dealing with higher numbers of asylum seekers and migrants. The living conditions in the Vizbegovo reception centre, in Macedonia, are in an abysmal state, and the country's asylum procedures are in disarray.

We co-chaired the newly established Frontex Consultative Forum on Fundamental Rights. One result was the strengthening of human rights safeguards in a Code of Conduct for Joint Return Operations. The safeguards include stricter rules on the use of force and on the medical examination of returnees.

When hundreds of people died in shipwrecks off Lampedusa and Malta in October 2013, we joined the calls of Pope Francis and others for the EU to act and offer safe and legal ways for refugees seeking protection in Europe. Later, we criticised the results of the EU Commission-led "Task Force Mediterranean" as not going far enough to protect migrants' lives at sea.

## DESTITUTION

We closely followed the adoption of the Common European Asylum System, approved by the EU in the summer. In a statement issued together with other NGOs, we described the new legislation as providing a still imperfect legal framework for a common system. An improvement in the new system is that asylum seekers can be allowed to work after nine months. However, serious concerns remain. Some legal provisions lack clarity and are ambiguous, whilst others give too much discretion to member states, which may undermine the overall aim of achieving harmonised standards of protection across Europe. This includes provisions that are meant to uphold the social rights of migrants, but are not strong enough to do so.

## DETENTION

The EU adopted new rules for the detention of asylum seekers, contained within the Reception Conditions Directive. The rules permit member states to detain asylum seekers in a variety of situations, but they can only do so after meeting specific legal criteria. Asylum seekers must first be given the chance to live in the community. Moreover, states have to provide specific evidence and reasons when they do want to detain an asylum seeker. In the run-up

to the adoption, we successfully lobbied the EU Parliament to ensure that alternatives to detention were included in the rules. Member states have two years to implement the new rules into their national legislation.

## DUBLIN REGULATION

In June, we published a major research report, *Protection Interrupted*, documenting the negative effects of the Dublin Regulation on asylum seekers' fundamental rights. Its main conclusion is that the regulation hinders asylum seekers' access to protection in Europe. People are poorly informed about what will happen to them and families are split apart. Worryingly, people are forced to apply for asylum in EU countries with poorly functioning protection systems.

The report was published just before the EU adopted a new version of the Dublin Regulation, i.e. "Dublin III". The new regulation contains many improvements: a right to be informed, better judicial oversight, stricter rules on detention. Still, asylum seekers will continue to be forced to apply for protection in countries with weak asylum systems. Member states must start implementing the new regulation at the start of 2014.

## Major projects

### THE DUBLIN REGULATION'S IMPACT ON ASYLUM SEEKERS' PROTECTION (DIASP)

In June, we and our 10 partners completed the DIASP projects by releasing a report, *Protection Interrupted*, and organising an event in Brussels. The event was attended by nearly 100 persons, including EU Commission officials and EU Parliament staff, as well as lawyers, NGOs and researchers. Cecilia Wikström, a Swedish MEP and lead author of the new Dublin

Regulation, was the keynote speaker. A main conclusion of the conference was that Europe's asylum system must strike a better balance between the needs of EU countries and the protection needs of asylum seekers.

### DETENTION VISITORS SUPPORT GROUP (DVSG)

In June, JRS staff and volunteers took part in the 7th annual DVSG meeting in Brussels. The week-long meeting focused on dealing with the psychological needs of migrants in detention.

Participants learned how to identify psychological issues in the detainees they meet with, and how they can help. Forming positive and trusting relationships with detainees was a crucial point, as well as how JRS personnel can care for themselves after working in such stressful environments. After their training, participants took part in a session on how to do advocacy based on the information they collect from vulnerable detainees.



JRS Europe presented its DIASP report to a large audience in Brussels. In attendance were journalists, Belgian and European NGOs, lawyers and EU member state officials.

Sitting on the panel, from the left: Philip Amaral, JRS Europe; Cecilia Wikström, MEP from Sweden; Ibrahim Banaytu, a refugee living in Belgium; Stephen Ryan, European Commission; Emilie Wiinblad, UNHCR; Ana Fontal, ECRE. © JRS EUROPE

# Communications

During the year JRS Europe's messages were featured in several prominent news outlets in Europe. In particular we were able to convey our response to the horrendous migrant boat tragedy that occurred off the coast of Lampedusa on 3rd October in the *New York Times*, via a studio interview on *Euronews*, and the *IRIN* humanitarian news network.

IRIN also featured our research and policy stance on alternatives to detention. Our messages on the EU common asylum system were picked up by two German media outlets, *Tageszeitung* and *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. The two reports we released last year, *Protection Interrupted* and *From Back Door to Front Door*, were picked up by *Radio Vatican*, *EU Observer*, *Malta Today*, *The European Voice* and *Reuters Alertnet*.

The JRS Europe communications taskforce met twice during the year and had two notable results. The first is a campaign concept called "Communities of Hospitality". It aims to make Europe a more welcoming place for refugees and migrants by engaging EU citizens in everyday acts of hospitality. The second is a regional internal communications strategy. Its purpose is threefold: to build a culture of communication between JRS offices, to exchange news and information quickly and to identify regional communications opportunities.



The communications taskforce, proud of its efforts to get JRS Europe to better communicate its work with refugees.

Back row, from left: Philip Amaral and Michael Schöpf of JRS Europe.

Front Row: Rudi Baier, facilitator from OrgWerk; Danielle Vella, JRS International; Bianca Albu, JRS Romania; Mark Cachia, JRS Malta; André Costa Jorge, JRS Portugal; Jonathan Parr, JRS UK; Dorothee Hasskamp, JRS Germany; Nathalie Salazar, JRS Belgium; Katja Hennecke, facilitator from OrgWerk. © JRS EUROPE



Pope Francis greeting refugees during  
his visit to JRS Italy in September 2013.

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BELGIUM  
FRANCE  
GERMANY  
IRELAND  
ITALY  
MALTA  
MOROCCO  
PORTUGAL  
ROMANIA  
SLOVENIA  
SOUTHEAST EUROPE  
SWEDEN  
UKRAINE  
UNITED KINGDOM

## OVERVIEW OF JRS COUNTRY OFFICES

## BELGIUM

### REFUGEES CALL FOR DIGNITY

Afghan refugees staged many protests in 2013. Several hundred, amongst them many families, took shelter in empty buildings all over Brussels and were forcefully evicted. In September, 44 Afghan refugees were arrested during a protest and sent to detention centres.

By organising marches, the Afghans tried to draw the attention of the Belgian government to their dramatic situation. Most Afghan refugees have not obtained asylum in Belgium but cannot be sent back due to the instable and insecure conditions in their country. In the meantime, the government does not grant any rights to those who are waiting here without any legal status. JRS Belgium supported the Afghan refugees' call for the Belgian government to suspend returns to Afghanistan. However, no serious political debate on this issue has yet taken place.

### ACCOMPANIMENT

- Met with 500 detainees in four detention centres; visited 15 families living in the community in Belgium's only alternative to detention.

### ADVOCACY

- Participated in the platform, Justice for All, to protest against law changes that would reduce free legal assistance.

### COMMUNICATIONS

- Organised a film screening on detention for 200 people; presented JRS's work to 10 parishes and schools.

### TESTIMONY:

"How did you end up here?" I asked Yasir, a 20-year-old Afghan who had been arrested and detained a few weeks earlier. He said that he marched with other Afghans in Brussels to claim protection due to the unsafe situation in Afghanistan, but the police arrived and arrested them.

Yasir has searched for safety since 2010, when he left Pakistan. That is the country where his family had fled to when he was only five. But being a Hazara Shia he was also in danger in Pakistan. So he left to Sweden to apply for

asylum. The request was rejected; afterwards, he came to Belgium.

Yasir was horrified by the thought of having to return to Afghanistan, a country he had hardly any memories of. He only remembered his mother's stories and also that his father used to have a Kalashnikov to kill Taliban, which was the reason why they fled.

Thinking of this, Yasir bursts out in tears; so many years in search of safety and a normal life. Yet, one month after his arrest, he was given subsidiary protection status. At last some relief.



A rally for Afghan migrants living in a church in Brussels city centre. © CIRÈ

## FRANCE

### ENLISTING YOUNG PEOPLE

Those who have obtained a refugee status continue to face difficulties. Now that they have a status, they have to integrate into social life, and thus improve their French language skills. They also have to support themselves, so it is necessary to find a job in order to meet other needs such as housing. JRS France helps refugees in these situations by upgrading their level of education.

To do this, JRS has recruited a group of young people to accompany individual refugees as tutors. The tutors help refugees with their French language courses, and support them in finding jobs and housing. In addition, JRS France recruits students to play football with asylum seekers, and to organise communal dinners. Involving young people has been JRS France's way to enlarge its Welcome network, which is present in 15 cities in France.

A football match between asylum seekers and young French people.

© JRS FRANCE

### TESTIMONY

Tama is doing an internship at a boiler-making factory located about 10km from his house. One December morning, at 7am, Tama calls his tutor to say that he is at the factory but no one else is there. Astonished, the tutor exclaimed, *"But how did you go to work? There is 50cm of snow on the ground! You should not have gone on your bicycle, it's too dangerous."* Tama said, *"No, I walked."* In fact, he walked three hours in the cold to be at work on time. That day, Tama was the only one who reported for duty.

### ACCOMPANIMENT

- More than 100 refugees were provided with administrative follow-up and legal counselling.

### ADVOCACY

- Collaborated with the *Confédération Française du Droit d'Asile*. JRS France put forward ten proposals to the government to improve the living conditions of asylum seekers.

### EDUCATION

- Lobbied French authorities for improvements in emergency care and assistance to asylum seekers.



## GERMANY

### PRISONS ARE NOT A PLACE FOR MIGRANTS

On 18th November, the federal state of Bavaria announced they would stop detaining migrants in ordinary prisons. This policy change came about by judges who have decided in a string of cases that detaining migrants together with prisoners is contrary to the EU law.

These decisions are the result of a determined effort by JRS in Munich. Since September, their team has launched legal action in more

than 80 cases to challenge the detention of migrants in prisons.

This issue has now reached the EU Court of Justice in Luxembourg. In a year or two, judges from that court will issue a ruling that may be the catalyst for ending the detention of migrants in prisons all over Europe. Meanwhile, district courts in Bavaria are forbidding the detention of migrants in prisons until the EU judges make a decision. Three other federal states – Lower Saxony, Saxony and Mecklenburg-West Pomerania – have done the same. Migrants formerly detained in Bavarian prisons

are now in a new detention centre in the town of Mühldorf. Although it is still a detention facility, migrants experience better conditions and flexibility than they did in the prison. JRS visits the centre each week and is in close contact with migrants.

### TESTIMONY:

Ben A., a migrant from North Africa held in the new Bavarian detention facility in Mühldorf, whom JRS gave the opportunity to call his mother from the detention centre, told us: *"I do not want my mother to know that I am detained. I do not want her to be upset. When I call home, I tell her that I am at work."*

A migrant detained in Mühldorf, Bavaria, tries to understand a legal letter about his detention in German. © SJ-BILD / L. STUEBNER SJ



### ACCOMPANIMENT

- Visited 1000 asylum seekers and migrants detained in Berlin, Brandenburg and Bavaria.

### ADVOCACY

- Brought 130 cases to court, leading to the release of 90 people from detention. In Berlin and Brandenburg, 16 out of 28 cases have led to a release from detention.

### HARDSHIP COMMISSION

- Brought 79 appeals to the Senator of the Interior, resulting in 19 grants of permission to stay for individuals and families.

### LEGAL COUNSELLING

- Advised 150 persons on their legal cases.

## IRELAND

### NO END IN SIGHT

Contemporary debates concerning the Irish asylum system predominantly focus on the conditions in Direct Provision centres and alternatives to the Direct Provision system. Although both issues are of critical importance, JRS Ireland believes that the root problem is the fractured structure of the asylum determination process.

This unwieldy structure has led to a situation where a significant number of protection applicants are waiting excessive periods of time for a final decision on their claim. 1 in 7 asylum seekers are seven years or more in the system.

During 2013 the focus of JRS Ireland's advocacy work was to identify durable solutions for Direct Provision residents waiting in excess of 5 years for a final determination of their asylum application. JRS Ireland developed an internal policy paper, *No End in Sight*, and began a process of intensive direct engagement with policy makers on this issue.

JRS Ireland also maintained its regular visits to 10 Direct Provision centres across the country. Of growing concern is people at the end of the asylum process who are subject to deportation orders but cannot be removed for a variety of reasons. This group are subject to the greatest mental strain as their last legal hope has been extinguished and they are subject to what is effectively an indefinite sentence in Direct Provision.

### TESTIMONY:

John, from West Africa, sought asylum in Ireland in 2008. John was grateful for the safety and protection offered in Direct Provision, but he also struggled.

*"I hate it not being able to work. I am young and healthy. I need to be working. I hate sitting around and doing nothing."*

John's asylum claim was unsuccessful. He was issued a deportation order in late 2012. Only six months later he told JRS about it.

*"It is really difficult, but what can I do. Loads of guys here have them [deportation orders] but nobody talks about it. I guess they are afraid what others will think."*

Every month John is required to sign on with the Garda National Immigration Board.

*"The days I have to sign are hardest because I always have a fear I am not coming back here. They will keep me and put me on a plane. It can wreck my head."*

Since he received the deportation order staff in the Direct Provision centre have noticed he is less cheerful and more introverted. Asked how he keeps going, he smiles wistfully.

*"It is hard but what can I do. All I can do is wait and hope that something will change."*

### ACCOMPANIMENT

- Regularly visited individuals and families in 10 Direct Provision centres; weekly visits to 8-10 women detained in the Dóchas Centre (a prison).

### SERVE

- Weekly homework clubs for 30-35 children in Direct Provision centres in Dublin; crèche and after-school services for 50 children in Limerick.

### ADVOCATE

- Produced and disseminated 1,000 copies of the 2013 Intercultural & Interfaith calendar; initiated direct dialogue with policy makers to seek alternatives for asylum seekers living long term in Direct Provision.

Eugene Quinn, JRS Ireland Country Director, calling for durable solutions for asylum seekers living long term in Direct Provision at the launch of the Jesuit publication *Studies* in Dublin.

✶ DERMOT ROANTREE



## ITALY

**A PLACE FOR REFUGEES**

The shipwreck that caused the death of 366 migrants off the coast of Lampedusa in October 2013 was an illustration of the failure of EU governments to respond responsibly to migration flows.

During the year, JRS Italy urged Italian and EU institutions to adopt a unified strategy to save migrant lives at sea and to establish humanitarian channels to allow victims of war and conflict to safely obtain international protection. In addition, JRS has undertaken an intensive communications campaign on the right of people to migrate and not to be seen as criminals.

Most asylum seekers and migrants go to Rome after landing ashore in Lampedusa or other Italian ports. Daily life is hard for them in Rome. Many live destitute due to a lack of support.

The visit of Pope Francis to JRS Italy's soup kitchen created a great opportunity to speak about refugees and about the importance of receiving them. "The Church does not need to turn empty convents into hotels to earn money", said Pope Francis. "Empty convents are not ours; they are for the flesh of Christ, for refugees".

**TESTIMONY**

"My name is Adam and I'm a 33 year-old refugee from Sudan. Soldiers burned down my village in Darfur. My two younger sisters, aged 4 and 6, died in the fire. I was forced to enlist with

the rebels, my brother with government forces. Two months later, I was fighting against him.

*I never imagined that day the enemy could have been my elder brother. One in front of the other, we remained paralysed staring into each other's eyes. We didn't say a word to each other. Instead, I threw my rifle to the ground and began running. My flight ended in Italy.*

*The journey we refugees are forced to take in order to seek asylum in Europe is a crime against humanity. There were 170 people in the boat that brought me from Libya to Italy. Each one of us paid \$1,200 to take this journey; for many it was a ticket to their death. Seeking asylum shouldn't cost you your life.*

*The most difficult part for refugees in Italy is trying to raise public awareness of the tragedies in which our peoples live. We can't afford to give in to the pain, to close in on ourselves, to consider ourselves victims of injustice. If we do that we'll offend the memory of those who didn't make it.*

*We refugees have a duty to do our best to integrate into Italian society. It is difficult, but we must try. We arrived here full of hope and expectations. Yet many of us living in Italy don't have a bed, a hot meal or a place to call home where we can recover from our long journey and the horrors of war.*

*Even if integration seems more of a dream than reality, we can't give up. I was lucky; I was helped by friends in JRS Italy. They are my home, my second family."*

**ACCOMPANIMENT**

- Assisted 37,000 refugees and asylum seekers; 21,000 in Rome.

**SERVE**

- Soup kitchen for 400 people each week; social assistance for refugee victims of torture and pregnant refugees

**EDUCATION**

- 576 people attended JRS's Italian language school.

**OUTREACH**

- 13,320 students (10-18 years old) attended JRS workshops on asylum and inter-religious dialogue in more than 100 schools; more than 200 students took part in a writing competition.



Pope Francis' visit with refugees.  
© JRS ITALY

## MALTA

### IN DEFENSE OF ASYLUM SEEKERS

On 9 July the news broke that the government of Malta was considering returning 102 Somalis to Libya. These included unaccompanied minors, pregnant women, young children and babies. Reports emerged that the government had arranged for two Air Malta planes to remain on “stand-by” to remove them.

At the eleventh hour, at the request of a group of NGOs including JRS Malta, the European Court of Human Rights ordered Malta to refrain from returning the asylum seekers to Libya.

The Maltese government would have put the asylum seekers in grave danger had they returned them to Libya.

Even though Gaddafi is gone, migrants and asylum seekers still face arbitrary imprisonment, ill-treatment and abuse and it is impossible to obtain protection.

JRS Malta has consistently advocated against return to Libya, by highlighting the conditions on the ground for migrants and asylum seekers and the risks migrants face if returned there as well as by providing legal assistance to those migrants wishing to challenge violations of their rights.

### TESTIMONY

*“The first time we tried to leave Libya, the boat was damaged and taking in water. So we returned to Libya, where we were put in the hands of militias. We went through the first gate, the second, the third; I thought I would never leave that place, I was praying so hard. The Libyans asked us, ‘why did you try to cross the sea?’ They were so angry and they told us: ‘You are Africans, you come to our sea, you spoil it, go back to Africa.’ They accused us of working for Gaddafi. We were forced to lie flat on the floor for four to five hours, without moving, while the guards walked over us, beating us with metal rods and threatening us with guns. There were 32 of us, all men. They asked us, ‘are you Muslim?’ To those who replied yes, the guards ordered them to pray and, when they prayed, they kicked them. There was a good Samaritan among the militia, he said ‘they are Muslim, just leave them’.*

*When I heard the Maltese government was planning to return some people to Libya, I got a shock, I panicked. I thought it was me they wanted to take back. Dying would be better. Life for us in Libya is beyond imagination... I can never forget. It changes my mood when I remember. It really pains me. It is not good for a man to cry but I cannot express it otherwise. It really pains me deeply.” Abuubakar*

### ACCOMPANIMENT:

- 59 vulnerable persons in detention identified and provided with social work support; Over 300 asylum seekers and migrants cared for in the community.

### SERVE:

- Provided asylum information to over 2,000 newly arrived migrants; 41 individuals received psychological support; Psycho-educational group sessions for 180 detainees

### ADVOCATE:

- Provided legal services for 317 people.



# MOROCCO

## GOING TO SCHOOL

Most children who go to the JRS centre in Casablanca have never attended school before; or their education had been interrupted by war. Some of them reach adolescence without having mastered writing and the simplest calculations.

A turning point came in 2013. As part of its “new migration policy”, Morocco has undertaken to remove administrative barriers and to register these children in the national school system.

JRS was able to register 20 migrant children in 2013. Some were able to take an accelerated learning programme that would allow them to resume formal schooling or vocational training in the near future.

Despite this progress, these children still find it difficult to integrate into local society. It is hard for them to master the Arabic language and many still face racism by students and teachers. For these reasons, many parents still refuse to enroll their children in Moroccan schools.

JRS staff works to ensure that these children get the best out of their education by meeting regularly with teachers and engaging with parents.

## TESTIMONY

Hope was young when she left Nigeria for Europe. Her journey through the desert was long and difficult. There she became pregnant from a man she did not know and never saw again.

Arriving in Morocco, she and other Nigerian women were taken and held captive in an

apartment for two years. One day, Hope managed to escape with her daughter, who was then still a baby. She fled to Casablanca, where she joined up with a cousin from her village in Nigeria.

Ten years later, Hope is still in Morocco. She does not have a legal status, a job and a future here. She says she wants to go back to Nigeria one day. But it is impossible to go home empty handed; her family relies on her because she is the eldest.

Her daughter, Princess – who learned to read and write at the JRS centre – now has a chance to go to school. Princess speaks fluent English, French and Arabic, but she does not have a legal status. When she was born, her mother Hope gave the hospital a false name, fearing the Moroccan authorities. Under these conditions, it is almost impossible for Princess to get a birth certificate, which she needs to become legally recognised. At the JRS center, Hope fights for Princess to get an identity and a better future.



Migrant children painting a wall at the JRS centre in Casablanca.

© JRS MOROCCO

## ACCOMPANIMENT:

- 468 people came to the JRS centre, including 200 children

## SERVE:

- Provision of health care and social support to migrant women and their children; preschool classes for 75 children; nursery for 99 children.

## PORTUGAL

### STRIVING FOR A BETTER FUTURE

To help migrants find their way out of destitution, JRS Portugal organised a project called *Academy*. It provides training courses that help migrants adapt their skills and talents to the needs of the Portuguese labour market. Another project, *Casa em Ordem* (House in Order), has provided intensive training in domestic services, namely elderly care, childcare and culinary services, to 52 women. Participants were also taught motivational and job searching techniques, as well as a holistic intervention that involved social, legal and psychological support.

As a result, 79% of the women involved were able to find a job. They are still accompanied by JRS to make sure their experience remains positive and productive and helps them secure a more sustainable future for themselves and their families

### TESTIMONY

With the help of JRS, Tatiana, a 49-year-old Ukrainian woman, found the opportunity that she was looking for.

For several years she worked in a ceramics factory in northern Portugal. She managed to bring her son to Portugal, and for a while they both worked together before moving to Lisbon. Learning Portuguese has been tough. Tatiana says: "At first I did not understand anything,



Boating on the Tagus River: a great way to integrate.  
© JRS PORTUGAL

*and I always walked around with the dictionary. Later, I signed up with my son in the night course of Portuguese language, and this gave me the opportunity to express myself and deal with all the paperwork I needed."*

Nowadays, Tatiana is working in elderly care and is well-liked by her employer: "Tatiana is a very competent nurse; very serious, friendly and sweet. I like her a lot."

### ACCOMPANIMENT

- Assisted 3,361 migrants during 2013.

### SERVE

- Accommodated 54 vulnerable migrants in the Pedro Arrupe Centre; psycho-social services to 162 migrants in detention; language and professional training to 392 migrants.

### OUTREACH

- Intercultural education projects for 907 students from 30 schools in Lisbon.

### ADVOCACY

- Conducted campaigns to raise awareness on migrant destitution, detention and the need for social inclusion.

## ROMANIA

### ALTERNATIVES TO DETENTION

JRS Romania advocates for policies and mechanisms to prevent the unnecessary detention migrants. One example has been the JRS night shelter for destitute migrants, which is used as an alternative to detention. In some instances, JRS intervenes for the release of detainees who are then accommodated by JRS.

In 2013, 34 persons were accommodated in Pedro Arrupe Shelter. They were all supported with legal counselling, social counselling, in-kind donations of food and clothes, medical health care services, educational and leisure time activities. All of them were destitute with different legal statuses. At the end of the year, the shelter conditions were improved and its capacity extended, now being able to offer support also to women or families with children.

### TESTIMONY

In December, we were contacted by the General Inspectorate for Immigration in order to help a 42-year-old migrant, Mr. M., in detention. After fleeing conflict in Mali, he came to Greece by boat and then journeyed on foot to Macedonia and Serbia, eventually reaching Romania.

*"I was taken to the Otopeni detention centre but I don't know how I got there or for how long I stayed", he said. His medical condition*



Staying at the JRS Romania night shelter.  
© MUNIR H.

had worsened in detention, and he began to suffer poor mental health. After hospitalisation, he was placed in the Pedro Arrupe Shelter. Mr. M is now seeing a psychiatrist and is getting medical treatment with support from donations. His medical condition vastly improved after being released from detention.

Now, Mr. M. is more optimistic and confident. However, he doesn't know what to do next with his life. JRS will keep supporting him.

### ACCOMPANIMENT

- Met with more than 1,500 migrants and asylum seekers in 2013.

### SERVE

- Provided housing services, legal and social assistance, and employment help; regularly visited migrants in detention.

### ADVOCATE

- Worked with UNHCR to lobby the government for better reception conditions for refugees.

### PROJECTS

- Managed several projects on detention, return, integration, destitution and reception conditions with support from EU funds, UNHCR and private donors.

## SLOVENIA

### WORK IN THE ASYLUM HOME

JRS Slovenia's primary mission continues to be accompanying asylum seekers in the asylum reception centre in Ljubljana. Several projects were implemented in 2013, such as a kindergarten for the children, creative workshops, as well as psycho-social support for vulnerable asylum seekers.

During World Refugee Day on 20th June, JRS Slovenia invited asylum seekers to give a theatrical performance to the crowd, which included the Minister of the Interior. JRS Slovenia used the occasion to express the important challenges refugees face in Slovenia and the rest of Europe.

In addition to working with asylum seekers, the asylum home is where JRS takes part in meetings with other NGOs and staff working in the home. These meetings are used to identify problems and achieve solutions for the well-being of the asylum seekers.

### ACCOMPANY

- Weekly visits to the detention centre in Postojna.
- SERVE**
- Provision of psycho-social support, legal advice and pastoral care to migrant detainees; integration assistance for refugees; kindergarten for children in the asylum home.

### COMMUNICATION

- Monthly radio programme, *Radio Ognjišče*, about migration and refugee issues.

### TESTIMONY

We are the Asani family, with two children, Adrijan and Glitena. We come from a city called Uroševac in Kosovo. We left Kosovo because we are Roma and we faced much discrimination. It was not safe for us anymore.

In June 2008 we came to Slovenia and asked for asylum. Then we went to Sweden and Switzerland, but we were always sent back to Slovenia under the Dublin Regulation. Consequently, we have been living now in the asylum home since 2010. We are waiting for the decision of the higher court about our case.

We want to integrate into Slovene society. As

a father, I want to work and to take care of my family. My eldest daughter is doing well in school and she speaks Slovenian very well. My youngest son likes to go to the JRS kindergarten. He likes to play, but also to read books.

We see that Slovenia is trying its best to give asylum seekers safety and all they need. In our case, we will wait until the end of the asylum process as we are hoping that Slovenia will accept us and give us a positive answer to our asylum claim. Coping with this waiting is difficult for me and for my family. We just want to have a safe and joyful life like all the other people in Slovenia.



Celebrating World Refugee Day with the Interior Minister, Mr Gregor Vivant (second from left). JRS Slovenia director, Robin Schweiger, sits second from the right. © JRS SLOVENIA

## SE EUROPE (CROATIA, MACEDONIA, KOSOVO)

### MORE ASYLUM SEEKERS

During 2013 there has been an increase in the number of migrants travelling through South East Europe. Many pass through without registering themselves with the government authorities.

Each week, JRS staff and volunteers provide comprehensive services to asylum seekers and migrants in Croatia, Macedonia and Kosovo. Good relations are maintained with local civil society. During the year, JRS participated in four round-table planning meetings with organisations working on migration and refugee issues.

In 2013, JRS began to meet with asylum seekers

in the newly built reception centre in Kosovo, located 25km from Pristina. Services include Albanian language courses as well as medical support and emergency aid.

### TESTIMONY

Pierre, from Cameroon, arrived to the asylum reception centre in Croatia seven months ago. He is only one with Cameroon citizenship in centre. In Cameroon, he had a good life as a commercial airplane mechanic. The government asked him to work on military airplanes. He refused, but the government continued to pressure him.

The government made threats and even physically attacked him, leaving him with knife scars on his body; he even lost some of his teeth. Pierre ran away from Cameroon to Russia, and then came to Croatia. In Croatia he applied for asylum. During the first few months he was disoriented, feeling lost. He couldn't believe what happened; he had a good life in Cameroon.

After a few months, Pierre started learning Croatian. He wants to stay and work in Croatia. JRS has met with Pierre several times to provide accompaniment, counselling and educational support. He is still waiting for a decision on his asylum application.

The asylum centre in Kosovo.  
© JRS KOSOVO



### ACCOMPANIMENT

- Visits to asylum seekers and irregular migrants in detention centres.

### SERVE

- Psychosocial support, education, medical support, pastoral care and emergency services for asylum seekers.

### ADVOCACY

- Work with government authorities and civil society to improve conditions for asylum seekers and migrants; negotiated with the Ministry of Interior in Kosovo to support asylum seekers in the new reception centre.

### INTEGRATION

- Language courses in Croatia, Kosovo and Macedonia; promotion of tolerance and intercultural dialogue with host communities.

## SWEDEN

### VOLUNTEERS FOR JRS

JRS Sweden has focused its work on three areas during 2013. We have continued visiting the detention centre in Mårsta, outside of Stockholm, every two weeks with a group of volunteers mainly from the Santa Eugenia Catholic Church in Stockholm. We often have to mediate between the detainee, their lawyer and the Swedish authorities or by facilitating understanding of the deportation process.

A second area of work has been advocacy related to the DIASP project, for which we wrote a national report. The report was well received and we received positive feedback from several organisations. Finally, we have focused on recruiting more volunteers for the visits to the detention centre by collaborating with the person responsible for volunteers in the Santa Eugenia Catholic Parish. JRS Sweden has in this way received several new volunteers during 2013.

### ACCOMPANIMENT:

- Visits to the Mårsta detention centre, near Stockholm, every two weeks.

### SERVE:

- Legal assistance to detainees, as well as assistance relating to asylum procedures.

### TESTIMONY

*"I came to Sweden in 2009. Since then I have been trying to get asylum, as I heard that it was easiest in Sweden. I have relatives in Germany, but they told me better to try Sweden. After my application was rejected, I took the ferry from Stockholm to Turku, Finland, because my aunt has lived there for some time with her daughter. I was caught by the Finnish Police. I travelled without a ticket on the train, and the*

*train controllers reported me to the police. I did not have an ID. A few weeks ago I was returned to Sweden. Sweden is planning to deport me to Iraq, where I am from. But I think I better cooperate with the authorities, so I can then maybe try again to ask for asylum either to Finland or to Germany."*

**27-year-old man from Iraq.**

The Mårsta detention centre, situated about 7km from Stockholm Arlanda Airport.

© JRS SWEDEN



## UKRAINE

**MIGRANT MARKET AND THE MAIDAN: POLITICS AND PEOPLE**

The number of migrants entering Ukraine remains low. As a result, our refugee centre was home to only 15 people in 2013. Our focus in this past year has been with single-mother families, especially with their children.

While the Yanukovich government has legally improved the protocols for processing asylum seekers under direct pressure from the EU, it did not create hospitable courts for their reception. One of our strongest cases for asylum of an Iraqi family, complete with documentary evidence and Iraqi news articles, inexplicably failed every appeal. This and a new law against foreign residents led us to believe that a silent order had been given to refuse foreigners as much as possible.

The local UNHCR office has noted that a drop in migrant traffic is to be expected after Ukraine's revolution for the end of a corrupt government. Better government is already in place. This promises a better legal operation for asylum seekers, but not in the immediate future. Our centre is likely to remain low on refugees for another year.

Nevertheless, we were not without significant work this year, above all in the raising of children. Of the 15 asylum seekers, 8 were children, two of them born during their residency with us. This, along with the above, has led us to change our focus to concentrate on those with more dramatic needs.

**TESTIMONY**

"She" was found by the state police hidden in an apartment of the smugglers, pregnant and with a 3-year-old daughter. Able to communicate in Russian, she told her traumatic story with such simplicity and conviction that the police brought them directly to our door. Having lost sons in the conflicts of Afghanistan, she and her remaining four children watched as her husband and daughter were shot by rebel forces. She fled with her youngest and we received them without question. Two days later she went to the border to retrieve two more children who were sent separately, aged 7 and 9. One remains behind.

She was beaten and her life remains under threat; but her dignity never failed. No sooner were the children together than she had them sweeping the yard, tending the garden, and taking daily language lessons with her. They would see how many new Ukrainian words they could learn each day. The language has come

to them with amazing speed and they integrate comfortably. She looked for no pity and wanted none for her children. They could grieve, but they had to learn to accept, adapt, and move forward. Among all the asylum seekers who have lived with us, there were none with such integrity and so free of self-pity.

Ukrainian authorities have told us that her life remains under threat. It seems she was of a family of some means and had nannies to raise all her children from birth, including wet nursing. Her current pregnancy, due to rape following her husband's murder, came to term while she lived with us. Our women staff, one mother and two grandmothers, showed her how to hold the child, to feed it, and to care for it. It is the first child that she is raising on her own. No self-pity, no tears. On the contrary, she rejoices that she and her other three children have found life where there seemed none.

**ACCOMPANIMENT**

- Provision of room and board for up to 24 asylum seekers, plus legal representation, language instruction, job search, community life, and life-skills counseling.

**ADVOCACY**

- Work with government and social organisations to improve laws, administrative procedures, and delivery of services to migrants and refugees.

**EXTERNALISATION**

- Monitoring developments in Ukrainian law and changes in EU policy with respect to migrant flows in Ukraine.



From the back, silhouetted mother and child. © JRS UKRAINE

## UNITED KINGDOM

### ACTIVITY BASED WORKSHOPS

Since moving to our new offices a couple of years ago, we have benefitted from having a more flexible space for our work. This has been useful for building partnerships with local organisations and developing new activities and programmes within the spirit of our accompaniment work.

These partnerships have included English PEN and Fotosynthesis, both of which have organised workshops for our refugee friends. Both charities encourage and facilitate self-expression and empowerment through creative means: English PEN through the written word and Fotosynthesis through photography.

The workshops are a space for the refugees to learn a new skill, improve their English and to develop self-confidence and self-awareness in a creative way. Several of them have felt encouraged to perform their poetry in public meetings and their photography in exhibitions and magazine articles as part of the way they tell their own stories. This is a valuable way to engage with the wider public and raise awareness of refugee issues in the UK.

These workshops may not seem to be a priority at first glance when we know of the poverty and hardships faced by those left destitute by the asylum system in the UK. In and of

themselves they will not improve their life circumstances.

However, they are valuable elements of the service at JRS. They help reduce isolation, allow for interaction and conversation on “normal” and everyday things. It also crucially offers support to participants through sharing of common experiences.

### TESTIMONY

Nurjahan has taken part in the English PEN creative writing workshops and says:

“I enjoy writing about my feelings and I enjoy writing in English. I want to learn more about writing. I enjoy listening to other people’s stories, from different countries, making new friends, hearing their feelings about their journeys and memories. It is interesting for me. The teacher explaining about writing skills gives you confidence and you also learn from others in the class about the meaning of their poems.”

Nurjahan’s poem here is one of a few that she wrote during the workshops. This poem is about when she was young back at home in her country. Now, when she travels around London, she remembers journeying around the villages with her mother, and she remembers her mum and her friends.

### JOURNEY

My journey is like dark black  
My journey sounds like easy listening  
My journey feels like dry skin  
My journey smells like flowers  
My journey tastes like coffee.

My journey, black and white;  
I feel, I think:  
when I was very young I played with  
my friend and I felt like a small flower and  
I think to go with my mum, somewhere;  
my journey is easy listening music.

### ACCOMPANIMENT:

- Weekly day centre for more than 100 refugees and asylum seekers; regular activities with the companions programme.

### DETENTION:

- Regular visits to and chaplaincy services in Harmondsworth and Colnbrook Immigration Removal Centres and a weekly surgery at Colnbrook.

### ADVOCACY:

- Providing speakers at events, training workshops for refugees willing to speak publicly; facilitating visits of an MP and others to the detention centres.

## A VISIT FROM POPE FRANCIS

### A JOYOUS DAY

On 10 September, Pope Francis visited JRS Italy and spent time with an exuberant crowd of refugees, JRS staff and volunteers. It was a day of happiness and joy.

Speaking with the refugees, Pope Francis said: *"Each of you, dear friends, carries inside a story of tragedy, war and conflict ... But above all, every one of you carries inside a human and religious richness – a richness to be welcomed, not feared."*

Carol, a Syrian refugee, prepared a message specifically for the Pope. *"Holy Father, we turn our prayer to you. The Syrians in Europe feel a great responsibility to not be a burden; we want to feel as an active part of a new society. We want to offer our help, our wealth of skills and knowledge, our culture in the construction of a more just and welcoming society for those who flee war and persecution."*

Expressing his gratitude for the Pope's visit, JRS Italy director Fr Giovanni La Manna said: *"Your testimony and your presence here reminds us of the importance of being open to encounter those who have already paid the highest price ... Welcoming refugees allows us to share the hope of those fortunate enough to reach Italy to live in peace."*

Pope Francis entering Centro Astalli with its director, Fr Giovanni La Manna SJ, and meeting with refugees and workers in the soup kitchen. © ALESSIA GIULIANI



**APPENDIX I**  
**THE STRUCTURE OF JRS IN EUROPE**

**APPENDIX II**  
**DIRECTORY OF JRS IN EUROPE**

**APPENDIX III**  
**FINANCIAL SUMMARY**

**APPENDICES**

## Structure of JRS Europe in 2013

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 within Europe and beyond.

JRS Europe is a region of the Jesuit Refugee Service worldwide. In Europe, it is organised as a project of the Conference of European Provincials and an inter-provincial apostolic work of the Society of Jesus, covering 20 Jesuit provinces. National coordinators and directors answer to their respective provincials and for certain matters directly to the JRS Europe regional director.

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

### PERMANENT STAFF

Br Michael Schöpf Regional Director  
 Ms Carola Jimenez-Asenjo Project Development Coordinator  
 Mr Philip Amaral Advocacy and Communications Coordinator  
 Mr Stefan Kessler Senior Policy and Advocacy Officer  
 Ms Kate Putney Communications Officer (left in December)  
 Mr Davide Oddo Projects Assistant  
 Ms Isabelle de Sazilly Administrator

### VOLUNTEERS, INTERNS, TEMPORARY STAFF

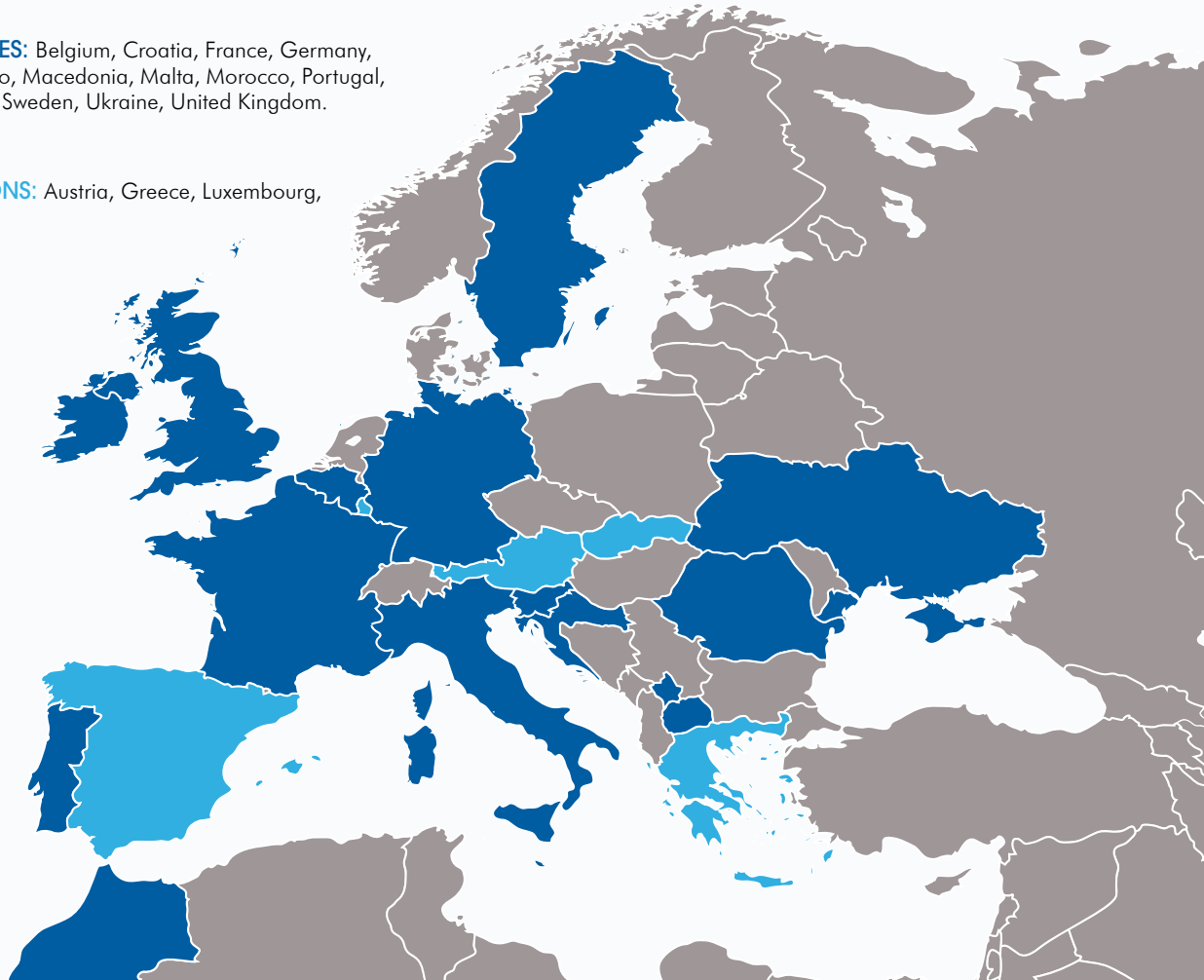
Mr Joseph Poncin Administrative Assistant  
 Mr Gianluigi Campogrande Advocacy Assistant  
 Mr Benedict Coleridge Volunteer Researcher  
 Mr David Colgan Media Assistant

### ADVISORY COUNCIL

Br Michael Schöpf SJ Regional Director, JRS Europe  
 Ms Louise Zanré Director, JRS UK  
 Ms Katrine Camilleri Director, JRS UK  
 Mr Ignacio Eguizábal Director, Alboan  
 Fr Alberto Brito SJ Jesuit Provincial, Portugal

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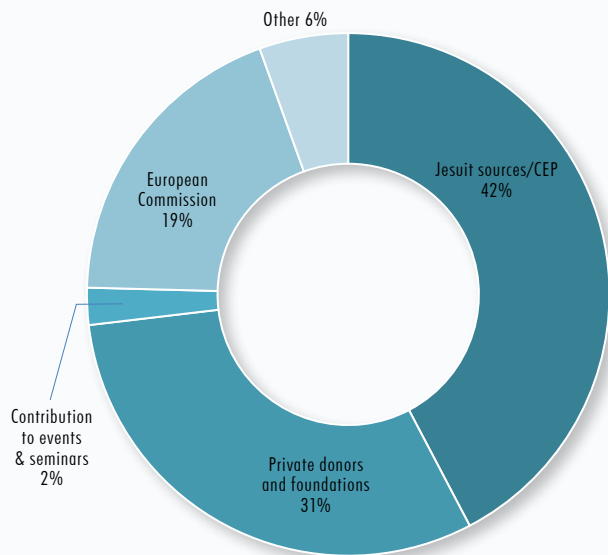
**Servicio Jesuita a Migrantes España**  
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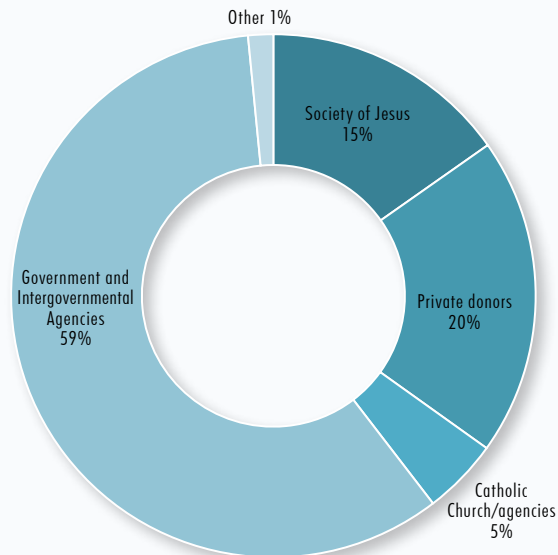
## Financial summary

### REGIONAL OFFICE - INCOME



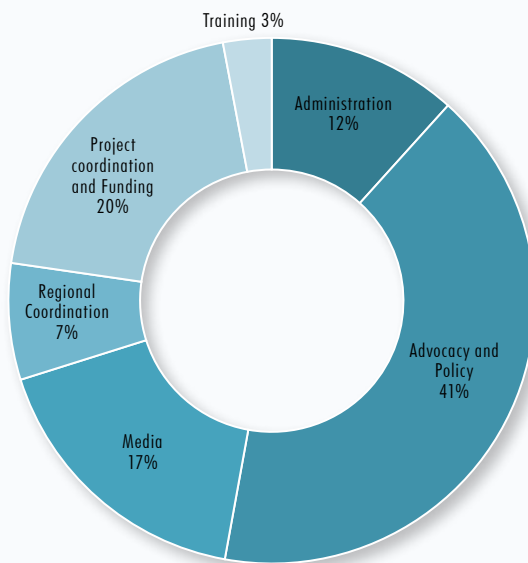
Jesuit sources/CEP	180.988
Private donors and foundations	131.868
Contribution to events & seminars	9.801
European Commission	81.653
Other	23.541
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>427.851</b>

### COUNTRY OFFICES - INCOME



Society of Jesus	965.631
Private donors	1.242.615
Catholic Church/agencies	297.265
Government and Intergovernmental Agencies	3.728.563
Other	98.229
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6.332.302</b>

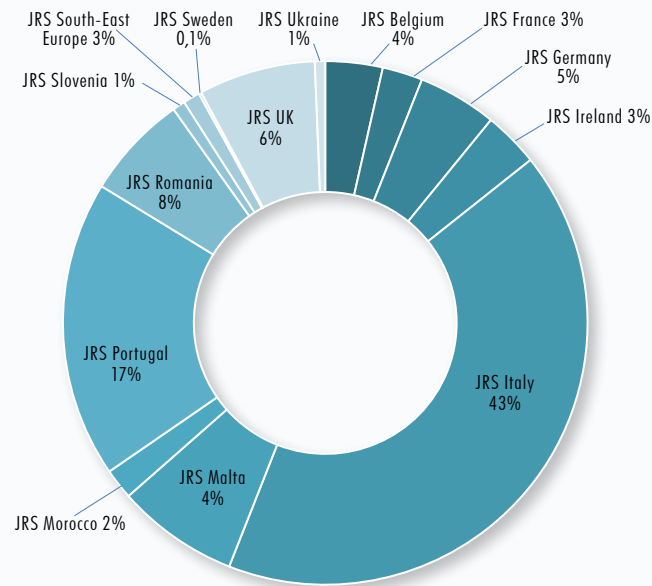
## REGIONAL OFFICE - EXPENDITURE



Administration	52.025
Advocacy and Policy	183.216
Media	76.931
Regional Coordination	31.803
Project coordination and Funding	87.780
Training	13.269
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>445.024</b>

The extra expenses (€17,172) correspond to Communications expenses made on reserves built up for that purpose during previous years.

## COUNTRY OFFICES - EXPENDITURE



JRS Belgium	244.771
JRS France	163.602
JRS Germany	300.400
JRS Ireland	203.496
JRS Italy	2.667.703
JRS Malta	291.857
JRS Morocco	108.506
JRS Portugal	1.048.402
JRS Romania	527.032
JRS Slovenia	27.100
JRS South-East Europe	201.880
JRS Sweden	3.149
JRS UK	395.812
JRS Ukraine	37.616
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6.221.325</b>



[www.jrseurope.org](http://www.jrseurope.org)

ACCOMPANY  
SERVE  
ADVOCATE