



Finnish Red Cross



Joy, hope and trust

# Annual Report 2024

Finnish Red Cross  
16.5.2025

Finnish Red Cross online friend Noora Räsänen messages with her friends by email or on Telegram or Discord. She has had seven online friends and shares news with some of them even after longer periods.

Photo: Vesa Ranta

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## Finnish Red Cross in brief

The Finnish Red Cross (FRC) is a humanitarian assistance organisation the purpose of which is to help those in greatest need at home and abroad. It is a part of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, which provides assistance in disasters and crises in accordance with its seven Fundamental Principles.

The global ability of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to act is based on its neutrality and independence.

The Finnish Red Cross is one of the largest voluntary organisations in Finland. Its purpose is to protect in all circumstances life and health and to safeguard human dignity and human rights, to help the most vulnerable in order to prevent and alleviate human suffering, as well as to support and assist the country's public authorities in times of peace as well as of war and armed conflict.

The Finnish Red Cross helps people when disasters and accidents strike and trains them to be prepared for them. The organisation encourages people to look after their health and to take care of one another.

### Governance

The highest decision-making power in the Finnish Red Cross belongs to the General Assembly, which convenes every third year. The next General Assembly will be held in 2026. The General Assembly elects the President as well as the Board and the Council of the Finnish Red Cross, which lead the action of the organisation.

The Finnish Red Cross is an association governed by public law, which carries out its activities throughout the country. The organisational units comprising the Finnish Red Cross are its central administration, districts and local branches. The organisational units with their institutions constitute the Finnish Red Cross. FRC's separate institutions – the Blood Service, Youth shelters and Kontti second-hand stores – are part of Finnish Red Cross central administration. First aid training offered by the Finnish Red Cross is centralised in Punainen Risti Ensiapu Oy, a limited company jointly owned by the Headquarters and the districts.

In 2024 the Finnish Red Cross had a total of 412 local branches, whose activities were supported by 12 regional districts. The districts, branches and Punainen Risti Ensiapu Oy prepare separate financial statements, which are not included in those of Finnish Red Cross central administration.

Finnish Red Cross volunteers work in local branches. The paid employees of the 12 district offices support the volunteers through regular contact, training and events. The reception centres run by the Finnish Red Cross operate under each district.

Finnish Red Cross voluntary activities and assistance work both in Finland and abroad are coordinated by the Headquarters. Its responsibilities include the development of Finnish Red Cross action, national collaboration with public authorities, national campaigns and international cooperation. The Headquarters is also in charge of Finnish Red Cross national advocacy work and promotes respect for its values in societal decision-making.

### Activity forms

- Assistance activities in accidents in Finland
- First aid groups, event first aid and first aid training
- Coordination of Voluntary Rescue Service
- Versatile friend activities
- Food aid and enhancing inclusion
- Red Cross Healthpoints and other health promotion
- Clubs and camps for children and young people
- Support to migrants, reception of refugees and asylum seekers
- Prison visitor activities and visits to detainees
- Restoring family links
- International disaster response and development cooperation
- Collections, campaigns and other fundraising
- Advocacy for people in greatest need
- Training in and dissemination of international humanitarian law
- Blood Service
- Kontti second-hand stores
- Youth shelters

## Finnish Red Cross in figures

<b>35,000</b>	volunteers and fundraisers
<b>111,000</b>	blood donors
<b>67,000</b>	members
<b>206,000</b>	supporters

## Fundamental Principles

### Humanity

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours – in its international and national capacity – to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

### Impartiality

The Movement makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

### Neutrality

In order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

### Independence

The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

### Voluntary Service

It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

### Unity

There can be only one Red Cross or one Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry out its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

### Universality

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all Societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.

# Annual Report for the year 2024

## Introduction

**The global operating environment** is undergoing a major transformation, and international relations as well as global challenges are reflected also in our daily lives. The need for humanitarian aid is growing but resources are diminishing. Also in Finland the operating environment has changed rapidly, and various sectors of society place expectations on the Red Cross. In a transformed operating environment, societal advocacy is increasingly important.

**The year 2024** was characterised by strong preparedness and contingency planning. The Finnish Red Cross put increasing effort into building resources and competencies to be able to operate effectively in all situations. The development founded on local preparedness will continue throughout the General Assembly period.

**In a world in turmoil**, the significance of volunteering is highlighted. Volunteers are an integral part of the Finnish welfare society. They increase both their own and other people's wellbeing in daily life and in crises. A key element of Red Cross volunteering is diversity. The inclusion of different people, especially immigrants, in the action enriches thinking and offers new perspectives. The Board of the Finnish Red Cross has also called for young people's stronger inclusion in the organisation's decision-making and action. Diversity is not merely a value but also an operational asset that reinforces the organisation both locally and as a part of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Only a diverse volunteer base will ensure that the Red Cross can access all communities – also the most vulnerable.

**The reform of operational modalities** in the Finnish Red Cross was launched as per the decision of the General Assembly. During the year, nearly 1,600 people were engaged in various discussions and surveys that envisaged what the Red Cross would be like if it was founded today. These insights and research data will serve as the basis for progressing towards concrete proposals for activity models in 2025.

**An essential element** in organisational development is measuring impact. In addition to the outcomes of its action, the Red Cross must be able to more accurately assess its impact. This will ensure that resources are used effectively, and that the Red Cross reaches the people that really need its help.

**Finnish Red Cross economy** has shown favourable development, and sound financial management enables flexible operations and preparedness for future challenges. The tightening situation in public economy and changes in the international financial outlook for humanitarian aid and development cooperation will be shown also in Finnish Red Cross action and require preparing for their impact.

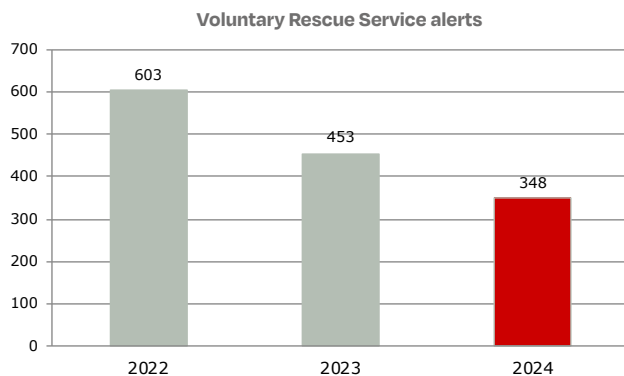
# Help is available locally

## Good planning as the foundation of comprehensive preparedness

In 2024, comprehensive preparedness culture and contingency planning was reinforced at all levels of the organisation. An electronic preparedness plan for local branches was designed and will be introduced in 2025. The role of contact persons for preparedness was streamlined and support for them was provided throughout the country. The status of preparedness in emergency support services was reviewed, and a quality guideline was drawn for it, which will be put to use in 2025.

Staff members were trained through preparedness courses and comprehensive preparedness events. Training was organised for five districts in coordination, assessment and planning, on the basis of which they sharpened their plans for a large-scale influx of migrants. The entire staff of four districts strengthened their preparedness and tested their preparedness plans in separate exercises. A preparedness exercise Kesä24 was organised in the Headquarters, which increased the staff members' competence in leading national operations, in international cooperation and acting in accordance with the Fundamental Principles. The Kontti second-hand chain developed contingency planning as a part of comprehensive preparedness.

Preparedness networks were mapped and network collaboration was intensified. The districts and Headquarters participated in key preparedness-promoting networks. Scenario collaboration was conducted with public authorities. The coordination, action and network of the Voluntary Rescue Service (Vapepa) were strengthened. In addition, an OHTO mobile app was created, which will make alerting volunteers to assistance duties more efficient. A 'Diversity in assistance activities' training was designed for the Voluntary Rescue Service.



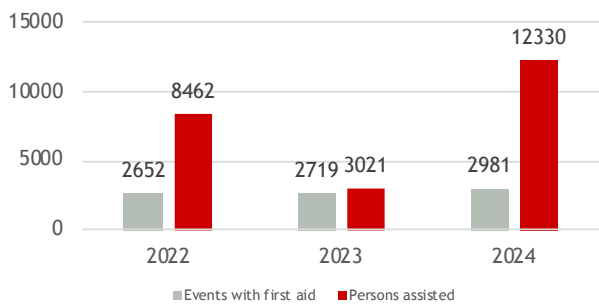
*Voluntary Rescue Service Vapepa practised search and rescue in Valkeakoski in the Lauha24 exercise. Vapepa coordination and network was enhanced during the year.*

## Assistance in incidents and preparing for abnormal situations

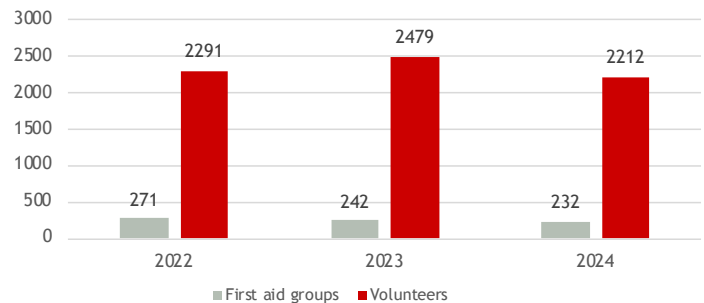
The Finnish Red Cross provided crisis assistance and psychosocial support in the school shooting incident in Viertola, Vantaa. Red Cross Youth shelters also offered support through the helpline and online services. The Red Cross Emergency group of psychologists provided crisis assistance over several months to children, their carers and school staff that had been at the incident site.

Psychosocial support related to abnormal situations was enhanced. The alerting, coordination, briefing and training of thousands of volunteers in different situations were simulated. The need for domestic evacuation supplies was identified, and negotiations on storage spaces for domestic supplies will be conducted regionally. On-call preparedness, the number of alert groups and on-call volunteers and their competencies were increased.

Events with first aid and persons assisted



First aid groups and volunteers in them



Red Cross volunteers Teemu Hiilinen and Vesa Vahermaa met pupils returning to school after the Viertola school shooting incident. Volunteers provided discussion help also to parents escorting their children to school.

## Support to migrating people

The role of the Finnish Red Cross in organising reception centre activities reduced as a consequence of competitive bidding. At the beginning of the year, 36 units had approx. 14,000 clients, and at year-end the Red Cross ran nine units with 6,000 clients.

The Red Cross strengthened its preparedness to act in large-scale influxes of migrants by increasing competencies in identifying assistance needs and in restoring family links. District and reception centre staff were given training in protection. A total of 15 trainings or inductions in restoring and maintaining family links were organised for volunteers and employees.

National guidance and advice for undocumented people as well as group and health point activities were continued and developed further.

Red Cross volunteers met 811 relocated refugees and 32 reunified family members at Helsinki-Vantaa airport.

Advice in family reunification was given to more than 60 persons. The number of new tracing requests started was 81. The total number of persons sought was 117, with 14 cases concluded in finding the family members. In addition, 12 Red Cross messages were delivered in cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The Finnish Red Cross received over 500 assistance requests from persons with migrant backgrounds. An online support service was launched for persons with migrant backgrounds.

Visits of psychosocial support services continued regularly at the Helsinki and Konnunsuo detention units.

The Safe Mind project within the EU4 Health programme continued to support the mental well-being of people who have fled to Finland from Ukraine, for example through 163 events organised in local branches. The project also trained Ukrainian, Russian and English-speaking psychosocial support volunteers and trainers.

*Red Cross volunteers guide and give advice to undocumented migrants nationwide for example on finding and accessing services.*



Four sea containers with clothing aid were despatched to Tajikistan from the Kontti chain logistics centre.



## Kontti stores as links in the chain of helping and as providers of employment

The Kontti chain raises funds for the Red Cross by selling donated second-hand items. In 2024, two new stores were opened and a new operating model was introduced. In the model of the Merituuli store opened in Suomenoja, Espoo, the items are sorted and prepared for selling in the Kontti logistics centre in Malminkartano, Helsinki. A Kontti store using the traditional model was opened in Leppävaara, Espoo.

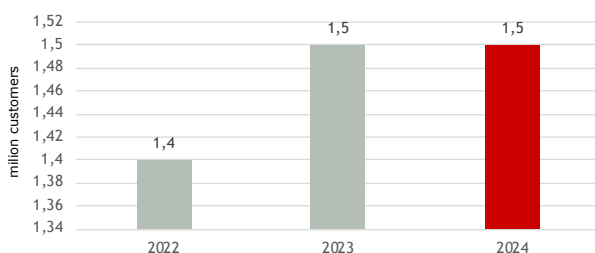
The operations of the Kontti chain logistics centre were expanded. The activities to be developed manage the flow of goods in the capital region and level the volume of goods between the stores in the capital region and southern Finland. Goods flow management is an integral element of the Kontti chain's sustainability programme. In November, four sea containers with international clothing aid were despatched to Tajikistan from the Kontti logistics centre.

The Kontti stores sold a total of four million products. The turnover reached 19.3 million euros. The customer volume was lower than the year before especially during the winter months, and the turnover was about three per cent below the budget.

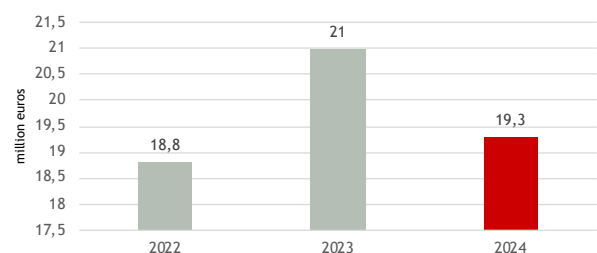
Subsidised employment is a part of the Kontti chain's societal responsibility. An average of 550 persons per month worked in the chain, of whom about 450 with various forms of labour subsidies.

The Kontti management and heads completed DEI training. In addition, instructors were given training in neurodiversity at the workplace.

Kontti stores customers



Kontti stores turnover



# Fast and effective international assistance

## Disaster preparedness and health highlighted in development cooperation

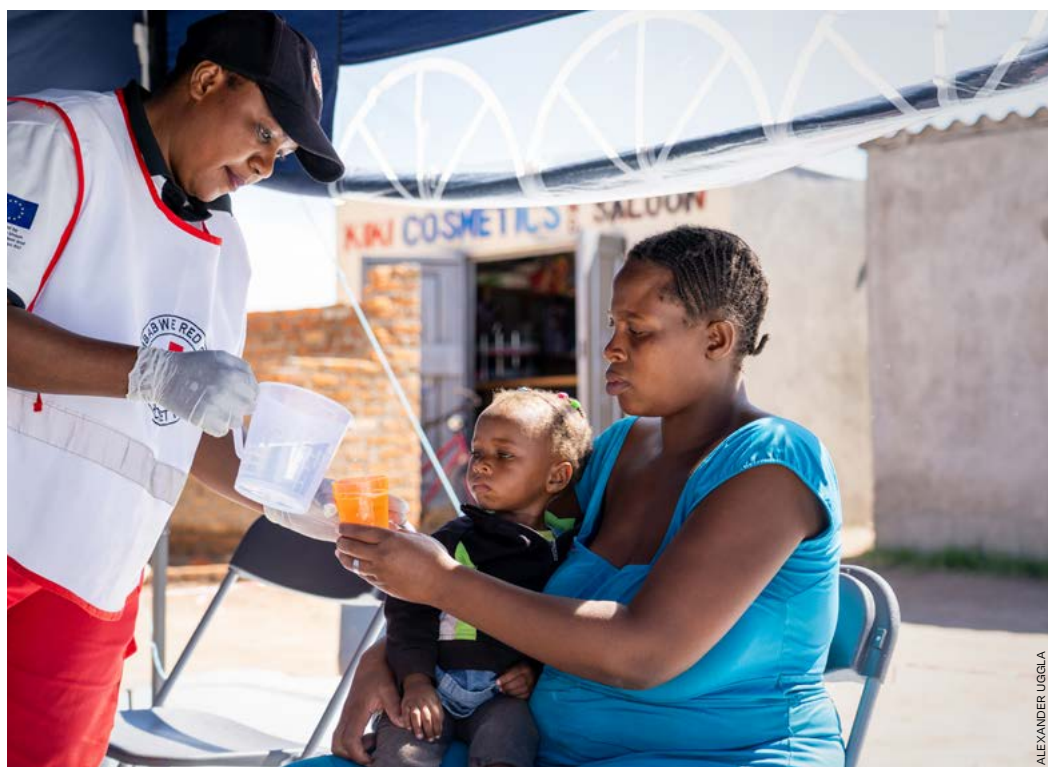
Diverse crises, conflicts and humanitarian needs impacted the implementation of development cooperation. The Finnish Red Cross aims at ensuring that humanitarian funding and development cooperation funding support each other.

The Development Cooperation Programme funded by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland focused on disaster preparedness, women's and girls' health, on ensuring long-term development in crisis areas and on enhancing local action. In addition to community-based work, the Programme emphasised the role of Red Cross and Red Crescent actors in raising awareness, promoting access to services and supporting healthcare service provision especially in fragile states, such as Burkina Faso, South Sudan, Somalia and Yemen. Support to partner Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in the target countries was complemented by funds from the Finnish Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund, used to respond to local disasters. The localisation of aid and building National Society capacities are key to development cooperation.

Funding from the European Commission Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) enabled the implementation of, among others, disaster preparedness, epidemic preparedness, cash assistance and promotion of risk awareness for example in Eswatini, Somalia, Tajikistan and Zimbabwe.

In Ukraine, the Finnish Red Cross launched support to a two-year health programme which strengthens the health and social services targeted especially at vulnerable population groups. Furthermore, the Finnish Red Cross supports the engagement of Ukrainian Red Cross volunteers and local branch action.

*Fungai Moyo brought her sick two-year-old Mirriam to the Red Cross oral rehydration point in Harare, Zimbabwe. Hundreds of cholera operation volunteers have been trained in the region with support from the European Union, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and Finnish Red Cross.*



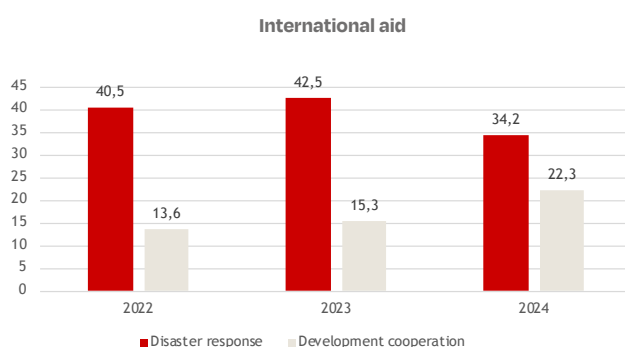
## Disaster response to Gaza and Eastern Africa

The Finnish Red Cross supported the assistance operations of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in the Middle East. Support to IFRC's Complex Emergencies operation was continued by deploying aid workers to the regional operation. The Logistics Emergency Response Unit serving the operation completed its mission at the end of January 2024.

In 2024, the largest operation the Finnish Red Cross was involved in was the establishment of a field hospital in Gaza in cooperation with the ICRC and several other National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Opened in May, more than 50,000 patients were treated during the year. The number of Finnish delegates working in the hospital was 29.

Eastern Africa is recovering from the 2020–2023 drought, and extreme weather events exacerbated by climate change also strained countries in the Sahel region. Internal conflicts for example in Sudan further worsened the humanitarian situation. The Finnish Red Cross supported disaster response programmes with funds from its Disaster Relief Fund and Finland's Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The Ministry's support enabled the implementation of the disaster response operation in Tigray, which is recovering from conflict. Funds from the Disaster Relief Fund were used to help people who had left their homes for example due to conflicts and flood devastation in Africa.

An EMT (Emergency Medical Teams) mentor training was organised in cooperation with the IFRC and WHO in Tampere as a part of the development of medical Emergency Response Units. The training had 26 participants, of whom eight from Finland. The training forms a part of the medical unit quality assurance process (EMT certification), which will be completed in 2025.



*Midwife Minna Vanhamäki admires a newborn baby in the field hospital in Gaza where the 60-bed field hospital opened in May 2024. In addition to the maternity department, the hospital services include an operating theatre and outpatient department, among others.*



## Material aid and delegates to help people in distress

The Finnish Red Cross Logistics Centre in Kalkku, Tampere despatched hospital beds and other items to Gaza, and operation theatre materials to Lebanon. In addition, aid was procured for operations in seven countries, including 400 MT of wheat to Niger, briquettes to Ukraine and clothing material to the Republic of Congo.

Emergency Response Units and preparedness stocks were replenished. The Logistics Centre took part in the procurement of an ERP system to develop its warehouse and procurement. The ERP will be introduced in 2025. The needs assessment of the new Logistics Centre building was finalised, and project planning will continue in 2025.

In 2024, the number of Finnish Red Cross delegate contracts was 125. The delegates supported National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in disaster response operations and long-term development cooperation projects focusing on Africa, Asia and the Middle East. Delegates worked, among others, in Ukraine, the ICRC hospital in Gaza and IFRC operations in the Middle East, the Mediterranean and Africa.

The Finnish Red Cross organised two IMPACT trainings for future delegates. A joint team leader training was held with the IFRC. Emergency Response Unit action was supported by organising basic training as well as specialised and refresher training in health, technical skills and logistics. The Finnish Red Cross sent 24 participants to international trainings preparing for disaster response duties.



*Paula Peltola from the Finnish Red Cross works as the chief technician in the field hospital in Gaza. The hospital water treatment system can be seen in the background.*

# A thriving community includes all

## Red Cross increasing inclusion

Voluntary activities in the Red Cross enhanced inclusion and community sense. The volume of activities open to all, such as meeting points, was increased. Their participants were successfully directed to become volunteers (Safe Mind project, food aid and Kontti). Methods increasing inclusion widened their scope, and for example communal meals found their place in local branch activities.

Work promoting young volunteers' inclusion and equal agency in the organisation is guided by the vision of young people's dream Red Cross. Measures were designed to fulfil these dreams, such as the development of a youth-friendly local branch and of a young influencers' network, which will enhance young people's engagement in the organisation's decision-making and volunteer action. According to the 2024 Volunteer barometer, young volunteers considered their inclusion as good as all volunteers did. At the end of the year, the number of young volunteers in the Finnish Red Cross was 7,969, which shows an increase of eight per cent from the previous year. The number of new young volunteers registered was 1,639, which was 18 per cent more than the year before. The share of young people under 29 in governance was 3.35 per cent.

To develop the activities, volunteers assessed action within integration support, and feedback was collected from participants with migrant backgrounds. Information about experiences and hopes related to integration was generated through discussions with set questions.

Collaboration with public authorities and CSOs in promoting wellbeing and health was enhanced. An electronic tool was created to map networks.

The Finnish Red Cross and the IFRC co-created a tool for promoting disability inclusion. Trainings in disability inclusion were also organised in collaboration with local organisations for persons with disabilities. Financial sustainability of partner Red Cross Societies was developed, among others, in Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe.

*Qurban Naseri serves as a community sponsor in the community-sponsored integration project co-funded by the EU, which aims to develop a new model for integration of immigrants.*



## New openings in loneliness work and psychosocial support

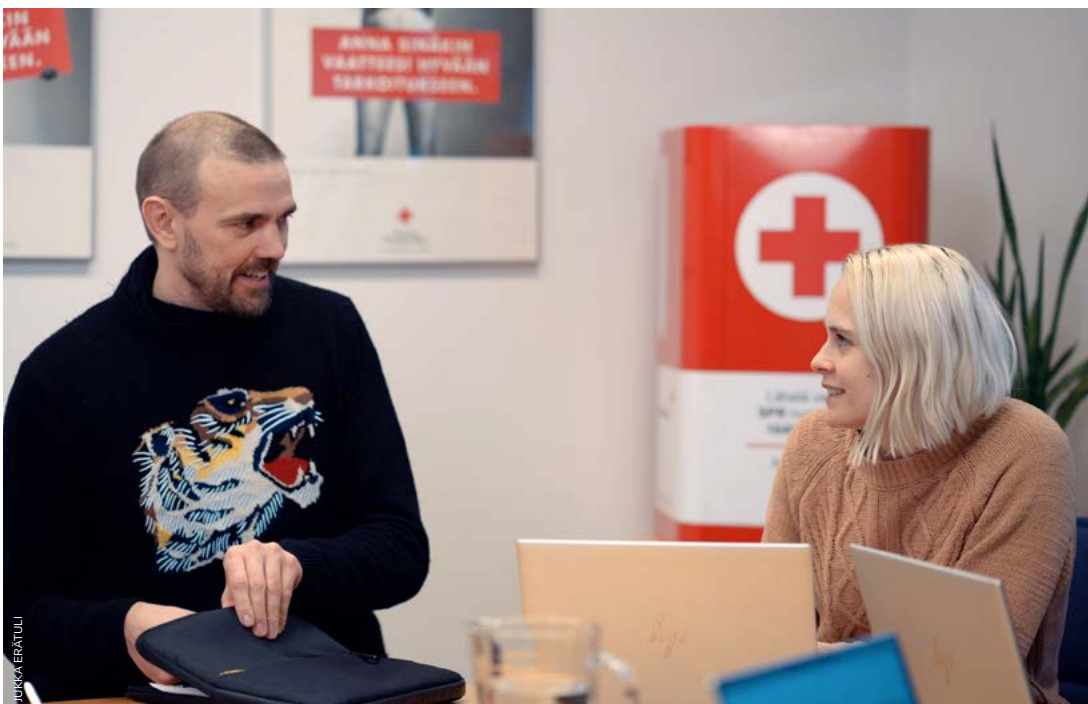
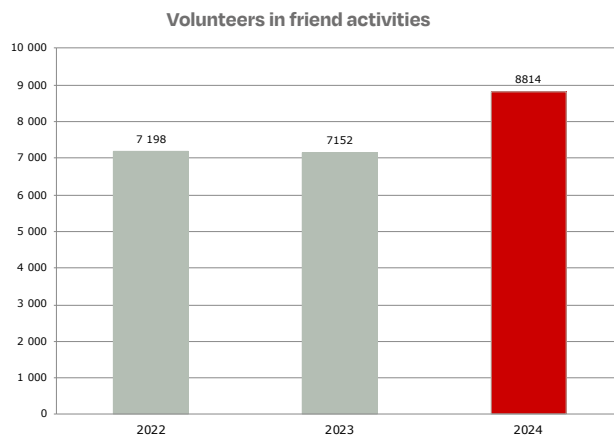
A special programme was launched to enhance work related to loneliness. New target groups were reached at meeting points and in peer groups. The number of volunteers engaged in friend activities in 2024 was 8,814. Help was provided to 39,708 persons. The national loneliness network coordinated by the Finnish Red Cross participated in writing the Inclusive Finland programme.

Harmonised and nationally coordinated models were built for receiving, training and supporting volunteers. In addition, capacities to launch online crisis work in abnormal and exceptional situations were improved. Almost 1,100 volunteers were involved in online helping in friend activities, migrant work and at Youth shelters, and they encountered people in need of help nearly 25,000 times.

Cooperation in psychosocial support between the Headquarters and districts was enhanced, and work to update materials and training was started. The quality recommendations of alert group action in psychosocial support were included in the quality guideline for emergency support services. The webinar for psychosocial support was attended by 125 volunteers.

The development of activity forms enhancing mental health and preventing mental health challenges was started. In addition, volunteers' needs were assessed to increase mental health related capacities and to root the IFRC approach of "There is no health without mental health" in the activities. A project was launched to enhance the inclusion of self-isolating people.

Reliable and up-to-date materials were offered to support the work of teachers. Learning materials with exercises in emotional and interaction skills were utilised in municipalities for entire age groups.



*More than 1,000 Finnish Red Cross online volunteers were engaged in various duties nationwide. They encountered people in need almost 25,000 times.*



The Finnish Red Cross builds people's capacities to look after their own and other people's wellbeing by various means. During the year, Punainen Risti Ensiapu trained nearly 100,000 people in first aid skills.

MARJANA MALKAVÄKI

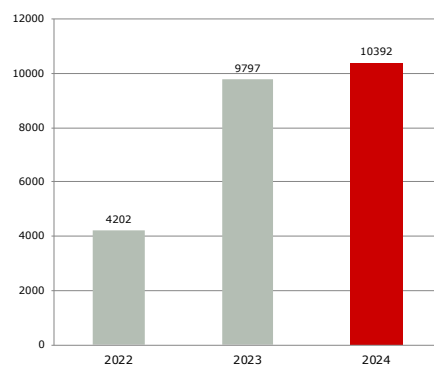
## Promoting comprehensive health

People's skills to look after their own comprehensive wellbeing and that of their closest ones were increased in activity groups and by training and campaigns. The number of participants in training events exceeded the goals. The accident prevention campaign communication gained millions of views. The number of volunteers trained in health promotion trainings was 1,427.

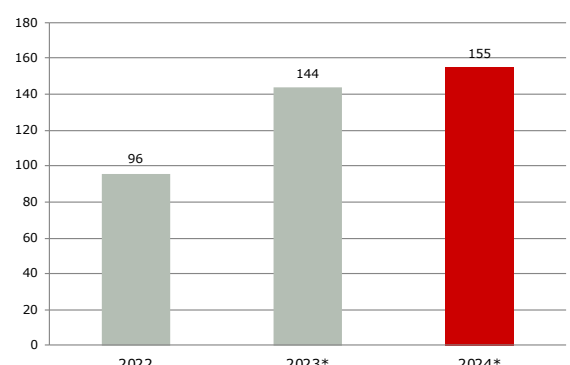
Health points were renamed Red Cross Health points. Electronic reporting was introduced for Health points, and a new basic training and Healthier Community training were piloted within the redesigned volunteer training path. New activity forms launched included training for substance users in the prevention of drug-related deaths and first aid, as well as harassment contact person activities. The demand for event first aid also grew. In event first aid, the number of service hours rose by 23.8 per cent (74,906 hours in total), and the number of persons assisted by 44.2 per cent (12,235 persons in total).

Punainen Risti Ensiapu is part of the Finnish Red Cross and the preparedness and response framework of the whole country. In 2024, Punainen Risti Ensiapu with its partner network gave training to nearly 100,000 people in first aid skills on its certified first aid courses, more than 8,000 school children, and 65 new trainers in first aid and health education (ETK®).

Visits to Health points



Number of Health points



\*Fixed locations / mobile Health points

# Supporting young people at Youth shelters and online

Young people and families were helped at Youth shelters in five wellbeing services counties and through versatile online services. Online helping provided additional response capacities alongside the 24-hour crisis service, accommodation and psychosocial support, as local branches and districts were able to guide young people and their families to get help online from all over Finland.

Online help included psychosocial support through the Online shelter, anonymous discussion help on the Sekasin chat, and enhancing young people's inclusion through Digiraati discussions. External funding other than that available for Youth shelters' core activities rendered online helping possible.

Through the Online shelter, young people and their carers could get help via processes consisting of one to ten meetings. Help was sought from all over Finland as well as from abroad. The strong growth in the demand during the second year of the service showed that there is a clear need for easily accessible national discussion help.

The number of Sekasin chat discussions was 38,809, of which 7,378 were conducted by Red Cross actors. Volunteers and students conducted 92.7 per cent of the discussions. The Viertola school shooting incident quadrupled the number of people seeking help on the Sekasin chat. In crisis situations, young people seek help on the internet, and online helping serves as a part of Finnish Red Cross comprehensive preparedness.

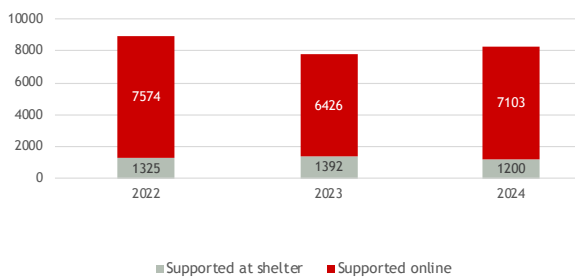
Digiraati discussions were organised on racism, on supporting the growth of young people belonging to sexual and gender minorities, and on pressures experienced by the young. Young people's messages were used in advocacy work during Helsinki Pride and the week against racism, among others. Furthermore, a pamphlet on safe spaces for all was published, compiling young people's thoughts on and hopes and demands for community sense, the future, racism and tackling it. The Digiraati advocacy bot had 5,199 visits and got 1,315 responses to surveys.

The Youth shelters provided assistance and support to 1,509 young people. Young people, parents and other closest ones were supported through discussion in 6,747 meetings. Young people and their closest ones mostly sought help for problems in mental wellbeing, human relations and acute crises. Based on systematically collected feedback, the young, their close communities and cooperation partners considered the help received meaningful and impactful.

The Teaching Recovery Techniques (TRT) training model, which is aimed at helping, among others, children and young people who have arrived from Ukraine, was developed and distributed in collaboration with the ITLA Children's Foundation. TRT is a preventive mental health group intervention for children and young people exposed to trauma and their carers. The TRT method was also adjusted, for example, to the Viertola school shooting incident. During the year, 178 professionals were trained, and people competent in using TRT were available in psychosocial support, migrant work and integration support services.

In the spring of 2024, an EU Amif-funded collaborative project for comprehensive and community support for persons arriving in the country alone (YTYÄ) was launched together with the Deaconess Foundation. The project enhances the comprehensive wellbeing, mental health and social relations of unaccompanied underage young people arriving in the country.

Young clients of Youth shelters



*Digiraati panels aim at strengthening young people's inclusion through online discussions on topics relevant to them. Online help is available through Nettiturvis and Sekasin chat.*



## Blood Service prepared 24/7

The Blood Service succeeded in collecting a sufficient amount of blood from volunteer blood donors throughout the year and in supplying hospitals with all the blood products needed for patient care. Whole blood was collected a total of 170,365 times, plasma 1,768 times and platelets 1,604 times. Plasma collection was relaunched after many years. Plasma and platelets are collected alongside with whole blood in the Blood Service's new location in the Jumbo mall in Vantaa.

The number of individual donors was 110,681, which corresponds to 3.1 per cent of the age-appropriate population. In terms of crisis preparedness and changing patient needs, the proportion is too small, and therefore it is important to increase and reshape the donor base. The number of new donors registered was over 18,000 but the target was missed by about 3,000 donors. However, the proportion of men among donors grew as per the target, reaching 45 per cent in 2024. The proportion of donors using English in blood donation rose to 2.1 per cent. This is a good sign of increasing diversity in the donor base.

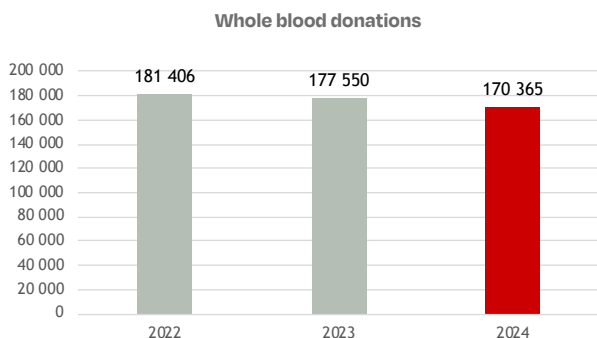
Hospitals requested a decreasing amount of blood products from the Blood Service. The number of blood transfusion tests and tissue compatibility tests requested from the Blood Service's laboratory also decreased slightly. However, the number of maternity clinic specimen tests grew. The Blood Service screens the blood of all mothers delivering in Finland to prevent the risk of antibodies developing in the mother's blood from harming the foetus.

The blood supply chain operations were particularly challenged by the food-borne hepatitis E epidemic detected in Finland in early 2024. The Blood Service quickly responded to the situation and introduced a new testing method within a few days. With the epidemic calming down and on the basis of a risk analysis, the testing could be discontinued towards the end of the year.

During the year, the Blood Service's Stem Cell Registry provided 160 stem cell transplants for the treatment of patients with severe blood diseases, such as leukaemia. This is the highest annual number in the registry's operating history. The number of transplants delivered abroad has grown significantly in recent years, which is a proof of the registry's operational capability and reliability.

Preparedness for exceptional circumstances and ensuring the continuity of operations have increasingly come to the forefront. Preparedness was actively developed through collaboration with authorities, exercises and contingency planning. The Blood Service operates every moment with the 24/7 principle and is prepared to react quickly to patient needs, such as in major accidents.

In 2024, the Blood Service had an average of 531 employees, whose contributions totalled the equivalent of 436 full-time employees.



*A man donated plasma in the new Blood Service location in Jumbo mall in Vantaa. Plasma collection was relaunched after many years.*

# A society building trust

## Statements and training for humanity

In its media statements and letters to the editor, the Finnish Red Cross emphasised key advocacy themes. During the year, Helsingin Sanomat published four letters to the editor: on youth loneliness, significance of online communities for young people, food aid as a booster of community sense, and the importance of independence of development policy goals for Finland's foreign policy. Aamulehti published a letter to the editor on intervening in racism experienced by young people.

The letter to the editor on the costs of loneliness to the district's wellbeing services county got through in 18 regional media. The districts signed and complemented the Headquarters text template also by a ready-made Excel calculator to point out how much loneliness costs to the wellbeing services county in question per year.

The Communications Unit utilised the expertise available in the international Red Cross network and assistance operations and participated in Nordic communications cooperation for example by organising the Nordic Skillshare event in Finland.

The Risk Zones materials were updated to support the work of teachers. In addition to a newsletter, the learning materials were marketed in the teachers' Freeed service, on social media and at various events. The Learning materials service had more than 48,000 individual users. According to a Red Cross survey, 97 per cent of the users would recommend Red Cross learning materials to their colleagues.

Furthermore, the Finnish Red Cross offered training to teachers and participated in the World at school seminars of faculties of education, the Educa Fair as well as many other events targeting education professionals, including subject teacher organisations' training events. The themes of global education were also promoted at the annual World Village Festival.

*The number of people resorting to food aid grows but the resources for providing it diminish. For many, food aid is a permanent part of coping in the daily life. Food aid also plays an important role in increasing community sense.*



## Campaigns to gain visibility, funds and new volunteers

Activity focuses were boosted by national campaigns.

### Friendship Day campaign 5–18 February 2024

The Friendship Day campaign challenged Finnish people to see loneliness and to take action to reduce it. The aim was to recruit new volunteers to friend activities. As a result of the campaign, 2,021 people ordered further information about friend activities and about 460 persons participated in friend training courses. Local branches organised 247 friend events during the campaign period. The results of the loneliness barometer and friend activities gained a lot of visibility in the media.

### Week against racism 18–24 March 2024

The week against racism encouraged everyone to intervene in racism and to take the side of humanity in their daily lives. A survey on racism was commissioned for the first time, which multiplied media visibility in comparison with previous years. The voices of persons who have experienced racism were brought up with an Identify and Act navigator that collected experiences of racism and activated users to consider their own behaviour and to intervene in racism in different situations. Hundreds of organisations participated in the campaign nationwide, and the morning assembly message reached over 30,000 school children. During the week Red Cross districts awarded actors that had promoted equality through their unprejudiced action.

### Red Cross week 6–12 May 2024

The Red Cross week focused on thanking and celebrating volunteers. During the week, Red Cross values were raised into attention, and volunteers and members were invited to become engaged. Membership campaigning was conducted in districts and local branches as well as through national advertising on the radio and Meta. The Neutral space webinar aired messages from the President and Secretary General of the Finnish Red Cross as well as thoughts on neutrality from active volunteers. The artist Ilta performed at the event.

*The Identify and Act navigator was developed as part of the work against racism. It offers a concrete tool for promoting intervening in racism. The photo is a screenshot of the navigator view.*



1 → You are at the shopping centre. You sit down on a bench to flip through your phone. Your attention is drawn to a passing woman who has a brown child in a pushchair.

Suddenly, a middle-aged man steps in front of the woman. He raises his fist to the woman's face and insults her. The man moves on and disappears into the crowd. The woman is visibly frightened and keeps looking around seeming desperate.

What do you do? \*

- A You stand up and look around for a security guard. You consider calling the emergency number. When the man leaves, you would like to go to the woman but don't want to intrude.
- B You stand up. You are ready to alert assistance. When the man leaves, you go to the woman. You ask if she is all right. You tell her that you saw what happened and that the man's behaviour was wrong and very hurtful.
- C You keep flipping through your phone. Better to act as if you didn't even notice the incident. You don't want to intervene because the situation looked threatening.

OK

## Hunger Day 12 September–12 October 2024

The national Hunger Day box collection was organised on 26–28 September, with 366 local branches and about 8,200 voluntary box collectors participating. The campaign messages focused on assistance needs in Gaza and in areas suffering from extreme weather events in Eastern Africa. A further emphasis was on making known that the funds of the Disaster Relief Fund also maintain preparedness to help domestically, for example by training volunteers for accidents and abnormal situations.

The Hunger Day raised 1.6 million euros to the Disaster Relief Fund. In 2024, the campaign period was shortened to one month from the previous two. With the narrower campaign time, the Hunger Day focused more clearly around the box collection.

## Good Holiday Spirit collection 21 November–24 December 2024

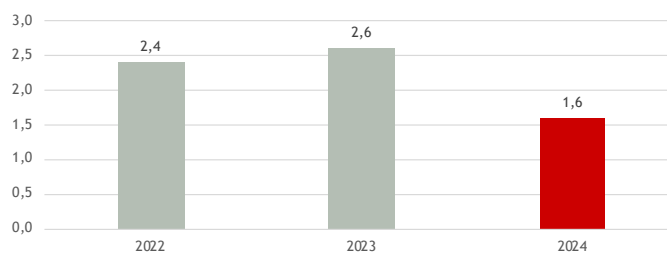
The Finnish Red Cross and the Mannerheim League for Child Welfare (MLL), together with the national broadcaster Yle, organised the Good Holiday Spirit collection for the 28th time. The campaign distributed 18,000 food gift vouchers of 70 euros to low-income families with children in Finland. The collection partners were K food stores and Lidl Finland. Local branches of the MLL and Red Cross distributed the gift vouchers in collaboration with professionals from, for example, maternity clinics, public social work and church social work.

## Other campaigns and theme days

In addition to the main campaigns, interested local branches were supported operationally and through communications in numerous other campaigns and theme days throughout the year:

- Pysy pystyssä campaign (Stay on your feet) 11–18 January 2024
- World Health Day 7 April 2024
- National accident day 13 September and 13 December 2024
- World Refugee Day 20 June 2024
- World Humanitarian Day 19 August 2024
- World First Aid Day 14 September 2024
- Week for Preventive Substance Abuse Work 4–10 November 2024
- Informal carers' week 25 November–1 December 2024
- International Volunteer Day 5 December 2024

Hunger Day collection result



*Hunger Day box collectors: left Kehinde Oso, centre Lakmini Kuruppa and right Uwah Ifiok. "I'm doing this to give people the chance to help others", says Kehinde.*



## Data into use to support assistance work

A centralised data platform for the Finnish Red Cross was built during the year. Following interviews with sector experts, a preparatory study was conducted, the data platform was defined and built on the Fabric platform, and finally integrated with the oma.punainenristi.fi system. As part of the development work, an assessment of the Power BI platform was also conducted, including a proposal for a future work modality.

As part of the data utilisation project, a model was defined for Headquarters data utilisation, to be launched in early 2025. In the model, common support functions for data utilisation, such as data platform development and maintenance as well as competence development, will be centralised in the Transformation unit. Data utilisation will be taken forward to expert units gradually by appointing staff members responsible for data to each unit.

To reform the statistics yearbook, an extensive preliminary study was conducted, which includes a service design study based on local branch input, and mapping of the technical implementation of a new statistical service.

The data utilisation project was concluded at the end of 2024.

## Increasing awareness of the Red Cross through advocacy

Awareness of the Red Cross was increased, among others, by meeting parliamentary groups, Office of the President of the Republic as well key collaboration Ministers and Ministries' leadership. Special efforts were made to increase awareness of Finnish Red Cross preparedness for exceptional circumstances. Attention was also paid to awareness of the Blood Service as part of national preparedness.

Further advocacy work was done on broader issues such as Government Reports on Foreign and Security Policy and on International Economic Relations and Development Cooperation. The topics raised emphasised the importance of supporting the most vulnerable countries and people, the principles of humanitarian aid, and the urgency of taking action to mitigate impacts of climate change.

In 2024, the Finnish Red Cross issued 21 statements and attended three Parliament hearings. In the spring, the emphasis was on immigration-related issues, and advocacy work was done especially in connection with the so-called border law. In the Parliament's poverty day, the Red Cross presented observations made within food aid. The Red Cross influenced the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health report on

*Three men with disabilities are repairing a wheelchair in a workshop in Aleppo, Syria. Finnish Red Cross cooperation with the IFRC and the Government of Finland in disability inclusion in humanitarian action was promoted in various forums throughout the year.*



the preconditions of social and health organisations' assistance work. At the end of the year, key Ministries were provided information about the humanitarian impacts of anti-personnel mines.

The Finnish Red Cross joined the Government's "Actions, not only words" anti-racism campaign.

Cooperation with the IFRC and Government of Finland in disability inclusion in humanitarian action was presented in various forums. Advocacy work for anticipatory humanitarian action continued. Advocacy for community health was started in 2024 by taking part in Finland's global health network. The Finnish Red Cross influenced the contents of the Government's climate negotiations and of WHO Pandemic Agreement negotiations.

Cooperation with the Red Cross EU Office was intensified in advocacy work related to the new European Parliament and the Commission. Collaboration in advocacy was conducted at the EU level, and several experts participated in the EU Office's training in advocacy work.

The first disclosure of lobbying activities was submitted to the Finnish Transparency Register in August, and related internal modalities were introduced. The preparation of an advocacy strategy was started.

## Accessible and equal Red Cross

In anti-racism work everyone was encouraged to intervene in racism and take the side of humanity in their daily lives. Models and materials to increase competencies were developed and put into practice. Anti-racism work was conducted at local, regional and national levels. Discussions and training on racism, anti-racism and Easy Language were organised for staff and volunteers. The participants of young people's Digiraati discussions expressed their concern for increased racism in Finland and hoped that adults would be more active in intervening.

Accessibility awareness was increased and critical development points were identified. The first aid and preparedness guidelines were reviewed and adjusted for better accessibility. More information was included in volunteers' communications training especially on the accessibility of digital communications. Due to the updating of the PunainenRisti.fi technical platform, the accessibility audit of the website will be conducted after the updating in 2025.

To map the accessibility of activities and to implement it in 2025–2026, measures have been planned and experts consulted by the Headquarters. The need to promote the topic through external expert services has been identified in the process.



*The pamphlet "Hear the sound of young people! Safe spaces for all" compiles young people's thoughts on and hopes and demands for community sense, racism and intervening in it.*

*In the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, the Finnish Red Cross submitted several pledges related to humanitarian law with European countries and their National Societies.*



## Promoting International Humanitarian Law

Training in international humanitarian law was given to Red Cross staff and volunteers, the Defence Forces and other key stakeholders, including civil servants at Ministries. Volunteer trainers held courses in humanitarian law for the general public in seven districts. Oulu district and the Headquarters jointly piloted a national online course in humanitarian law. Districts and local branches also organised other humanitarian law events. The learning material "Even wars have rules" aimed at upper comprehensive schools and upper secondary education was updated.

The results of the survey on humanitarian law commissioned by the Finnish Red Cross will help to develop action that promotes awareness of humanitarian law and its national implementation.

A webinar titled Gender, Armed Conflicts and the Laws of War was organised for civil servants together with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The webinar speakers included gender experts from the ICRC, NATO and the Defence Forces.

In the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, the Finnish Red Cross submitted three pledges together with the Government of Finland, two pledges together with the Nordic Red Cross Societies and their respective governments, and three pledges with EU Member States and the region's National Societies.

## Policies for responsible communications

The policies and guidelines for Finnish Red Cross tone, ethical photo production and photo use were reviewed, and actors will be trained in observing them in 2025.

# Change goals

## An open and safe space for all

A more open organisational culture was promoted by holding information sessions for employees on requested topics. Time was also reserved for dialogue. The HR unit continued to run the Lead to Change leadership training.

Psychological safety was discussed in connection with several trainings, and the principles for a safer space were systematically presented at staff and volunteer events. Harassment contact person training will be offered from the beginning of 2025 onwards in order to increase their use at different events.

A national webinar was organised for branch coaches on dealing with challenging situations in branches. Wellbeing at work was promoted by monitoring its development through surveys and by taking action to remedy identified shortcomings. The option for brief psychotherapy was added to occupational health services to support employees' coping in challenging life situations.

The wellbeing, motivation and inclusion of volunteers were measured with the new volunteer barometer. The results serve the development of volunteer activities. A branch development tool was introduced, and branch coaches were trained in using it. The tool will help branches in planning their action.

On the proposal of the Board of the Finnish Red Cross, the President of the Republic awarded 37 Gold, 79 Silver and 178 Bronze Medals of Merit. The Board further awarded 26 Badges of Merit. The Board awarded the Humanitarian Gesture recognition to Ujuni Ahmed and Elina Hirvonen for their book *Tytöille, jotka ajattelevat olevansa yksin*.

*The wellbeing, motivation and inclusion of Finnish Red Cross volunteers were measured by a barometer, the results of which will help to develop volunteer action.*



## Learning new things creates change

A new digital learning platform Vuolearning was deployed to facilitate the competence development of volunteers, employees and delegates. The platform is easy to use and scalable for preparedness duties when necessary. The first courses were launched in the autumn, and almost 250 courses were completed within a few months.

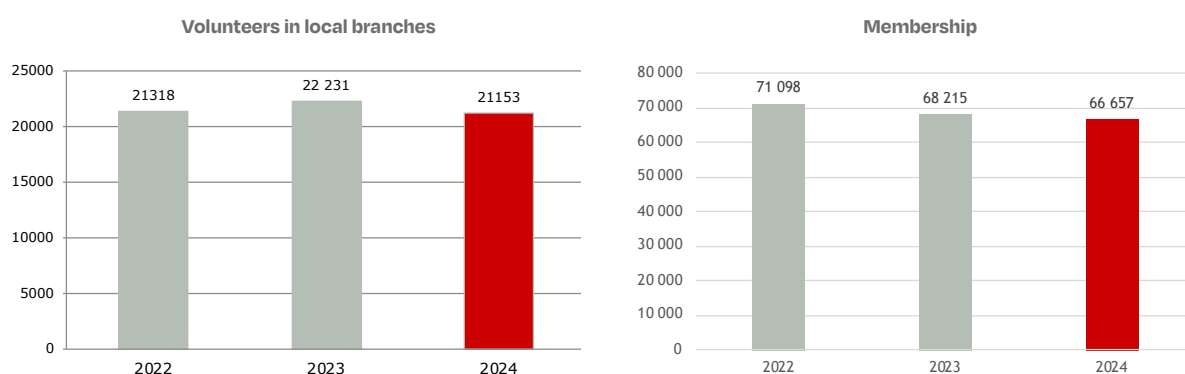
Coordination of Headquarters volunteer training was strengthened. As many as 144 training modules were available for volunteers. The recruitment of volunteer trainers was boosted, with 75 new trainers trained. A trainers' competence register was introduced. A large training day was organised twice during the year with over 700 participants. For many, the event is the first touch to Red Cross volunteer action.

Response preparedness was included in trainers' refresher trainings, which had 90 participants.

Red Cross leadership coaching was organised for the fourth time. A total of 24 volunteers and staff members developed their leadership competencies and networked together. The Vuolearning learning platform was utilised for the coaching for the first time.

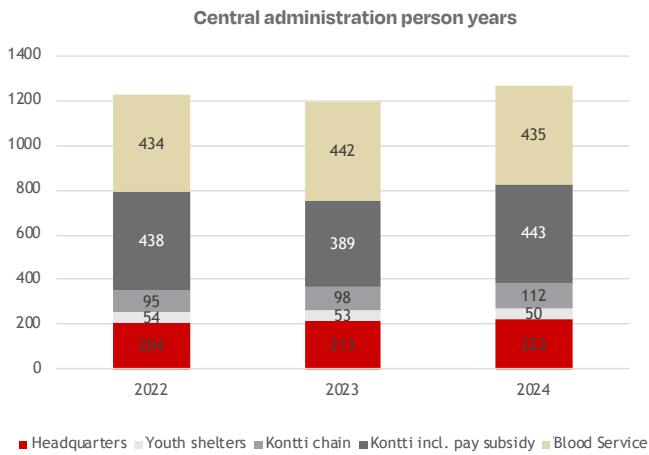
## Achieving goals through cooperation

Operational modalities were reformed in the Finnish Red Cross. To lead this transformation, a dedicated committee working under the Board was established. The committee led the gathering of information at district, local branch, network and staff events. The discussions particularly dealt with the question what the Red Cross would be like if it was established today.



*The Finnish Red Cross group leader course organised in Heinola in August built the participants' capacities to serve as group leaders for example in event first aid or alert duties.*





Working in cooperation teams between the districts and Headquarters was assessed during the year, on the basis of which a new operating model was developed. A working modality based on coaching pairs was introduced. The new kind of cooperation across organisational boundaries was shown in the redesigned Red Cross week.

Youth shelters transitioned to being a more integrated part of Headquarters domestic action. Together with the National youth committee, the committee appointed by the Board for the development of voluntary youth action launched pilots which were relevant for the reform of operational modalities. Youth shelters cooperated more closely with districts. In addition, there was extensive cooperation across unit and district boundaries in preparing for migrant influxes and in developing preparedness processes.

## Advantages of digitalisation into use

The Finnish Red Cross digitalisation programme develops volunteers' digital services, public online platforms, common tools for staff, and utilisation of data. Two significant new digital services were launched in 2024: the joint online learning platform for the entire organisation and digital environments for providing help online. New assistance forms were introduced within online environments, such as peer groups and the Red Cross online meeting point. During the year, almost 1,100 volunteers took part in helping online, and people in need of help were encountered online almost 25,000 times.

The utilisation of digitalisation is measured in the Finnish Red Cross by the number of local branches using the services. The goal is that by 2026, 70 per cent of the branches use the volunteer information system Oma, the Ossi registration tool for governance members, and either social media, preparedness system Ohto or the event first aid management system Hupsis. The proportion of local branches using Ossi exceeded the goal already during the first spring of the Strategy period, with 77 per cent of branches registering the changes in their governance in the spring of 2024.

*During the year, almost 1,100 volunteers took part in helping online. New online forms of help are launched constantly. Noora Räsänen serves as a Red Cross online friend.*



*The defining of the Finnish Red Cross brand identity was sharpened to support the production of material and content aligned with the brand. Diversity communications will be developed on the basis of survey findings.*



LASSI HÄRKINEN

## Versatile external and internal communications

In 2024, communications capacities of local branches, districts and the Headquarters were strengthened. The national Fundamentals in branch communications training had 29 participants. The Communication as a helping skill training had 44 and Use of social media in local branches 33 participants.

Training of trainers and further training was organised for communications trainers. At the end of the year, the total number of trainers was 15 in seven Finnish-speaking districts and one Swedish-speaking district.

LinkedIn coaching was organised for Headquarters and district staff to increase competence in using the channel and to support participants in creating new contacts there with experts, the media and the general public. The hybrid coaching and LinkedIn support channel had 47 participants.

The Punainenristi.fi website had an average of more than 45,000 individual visitors per month. The individual page view rate was about 171,000 per month. The Finnish Red Cross published about 1,700 posts on its main national social media channels Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and X (former Twitter). In total, the number of organic (unpaid) impressions was more than 9 million. In comparison with the previous year, the number of impressions grew by 33 per cent. Public engagement in the posts rose by 60 per cent. The most popular social media content was mainly posts on disaster response or first aid instructions. During the year, social media posts were commented more than 6,600 times. All comments were read, and the majority were reacted or responded to.

The number of national information bulletins sent out to the media was 26. The number of media hits in Finnish- and Swedish-language edited media was 7,980. The intranet, newsletters and information sessions, among others, were used for internal communication about Red Cross assistance work. In addition, communication about Finnish Red Cross finances was developed.

In Finnish Red Cross national media visibility, the emphasis was on conflicts. Its experts gave interviews, among others, on the Ukraine crisis as well as the conflict in the Middle East and situation in Gaza. The media visibility analysis of the Gaza–Israel conflict (October 2023–August 2024) showed that the Red Cross, Red Crescent and ICRC were mentioned about 1,600 times in total in digital news media, and 21 per cent of the articles mentioned the Red Cross in the headline or lead paragraph. Red Cross domestic response to sudden emergencies got visibility especially after the Viertola school shooting incident. Bulletins based on surveys into loneliness, racism as well as rules of war interested the media.

In the CSO category of the corporate communications research, the Finnish Red Cross placed first in the overall grade, monitoring communications, reliability, comprehensibility, and speed.

A report was commissioned on the current status and development fields of communications that take into account multilinguality and diversity. District websites were launched as part of the communication system overhaul replacing the RedNet service. The transfer of the Knowledge and skills component

directed at volunteers to the new platform got underway. The Headquarters and all districts developed the volunteer newsletter towards a more modern tool for internal communication.

The Finnish Red Cross magazine was refreshed and its name changed from Avun maailma to Punainen Risti. Its appearance was redesigned to better suit the new brand image, and the contents were partly refreshed.

The defining of the Finnish Red Cross brand identity was sharpened to improve the measurability of actions and to support the production of material and content aligned with the brand at all organisational levels. The brand book and graphic guidelines were moved to the website to facilitate better accessibility and more efficient maintenance. The photo concept was redesigned through co-creation and will be added to the website as a part of the brand guidelines.

## **A responsible foundation for operations**

The accounting of Finnish Red Cross's carbon footprint was started with the Humanitarian Carbon Calculator tool in the Headquarters and international operations. During the year, the pilot was expanded to institutions and districts, and the results will be available in early 2025. Local branches will join in 2025–2026.

The principles of a safer space in Finnish Red Cross action were translated into five languages (Swedish, English, Arabic, Ukrainian and Russian) and they will be dealt with more systematically at volunteer events.

The action of local branches was supported by offering a set financial management solution and by providing financial and HR management services to facilitate ERP and supervision in the branches. At the end of the year, 113 local branches used the accounting services. In addition, treasurers and operations inspectors were trained both in Finnish and in Swedish. The number of volunteers attending was 65. In accordance with the goals adopted for the General Assembly period, efforts are made to expand the coverage of centralised services to all branches. This will support good governance in local branches and set the preconditions for their well-functioning internal supervision.

Risk management identifies, assesses and manages risks affecting the Finnish Red Cross. Four critical entities have been identified as common strategic risks for the organisation: changing operating environment and funding, interest and engagement of volunteers, identification of core operations, and utilisation of data and digitalisation. The strategic risks were first and foremost controlled by ensuring that Finnish Red Cross action responds to assistance needs. The Red Cross must identify vulnerable people's needs and resources and reform its operational modalities.

On the basis of equality mapping, the central administration prepared a common Equality plan with development actions for the years 2024–2026. To strengthen diversity, equity and inclusion, line managers were coached in leading a large organisation and inclusive recruitment. An online course Equity and diversity in the Red Cross was completed and will be a part of the onboarding of present and new employees.

Line managers' work ability coaching continued, and the support model for challenging work ability situations was strengthened. A model for harmonious working was added to onboarding. Clear action models for intervening in inappropriate behaviour are now in place, as well as means to support a person who may have experienced harassment or discrimination.

Line managers were coached and supported in employment relationship issues, especially in connection with the change negotiations undertaken in reception centres. The joint support services entity expanded as the payroll management of Kontti employees with pay subsidy schemes was included in the centralised payroll services.

## **Balanced economy ensures continuity of aid**

The economic operating environment developed in a more positive direction, albeit more slowly than expected. Particularly the earlier inflation development and rising interest rates took a declining turn and supported expectations for a positive change in the economic conditions. However, the economic concerns in the CSO sector grew with the information about the upcoming cuts in the grants of the Funding Centre for Social Welfare and Health Organisations (STEA) as part of the expenditure savings in public finances. The impact will materialise especially in the years after 2025.

In 2024 the budget outturn as a whole was better than planned. This was especially due to good investment income and partly lower operational expenses than budgeted. The profit of the central administration's investment properties, 168.7 million euros, was +9.5 per cent. For the Headquarters, the surplus for the financial period was 0.5 million euros, excluding the profit of the Blood Service's investment property.

Finnish Red Cross institutions operated within the adopted budgets or better. The Blood Service's result, including the income of investment property, showed a deficit of 0.6 million euros. The 5.0 million euro profit of the Kontti chain accumulated the Disaster Relief Fund and funded Finnish Red Cross regional activities as planned. The 1.2 million euro deficit of the Youth shelters consisted of the organisation's self-financing share.

## Versatile means in fundraising

There were no major natural disasters in 2024, but conflicts became increasingly protracted. The Finnish Red Cross continued to develop means for donating and donor communications.

During the year, the Ukraine collection yielded 2.3 million euros to the Disaster Relief Fund. A total of 6.0 million euros of the funds raised and of yet unused funds from the previous year were spent in 2024 on assistance work mainly in Ukraine.

The traditional direct mailings to Disaster Relief Fund contributors were continued, as were card, lottery and advent calendar mailings to supporters of domestic work. The proceeds of the direct mailings were good, but the challenge faced in all mailings was the considerably risen material and mailing costs.

Recruitment of monthly contributors was successfully conducted both in the in-house team and by external service providers. The annual goals were clearly exceeded. Of the donation options offered, 50 per cent to domestic work and 50 per cent to the Disaster Relief Fund continued as the most popular choice. The yield of donations by wills was also significant, and donation by wills was further developed to ensure continuity.

Before Christmas funds were raised especially for people experiencing loneliness in Finland. The funds raised enable, for example, Youth shelter action, food aid and friend activities. The Christmas collection was launched in November with a special episode of a TV music programme *Vain elämää*, which told about Red Cross work in Finland to reduce loneliness. Companies and private persons also made Christmas donations to the Disaster Relief Fund and for helping in the Ukraine crisis.

Long-term good collaboration with corporate partners was continued. With support from LocalTapiola insurance company, big steps forward have been taken in developing online helping.

The product range and marketing of the Finnish Red Cross online store was reformed, with visible results in autumn and Christmas sales.

*In November a special Red Cross episode of Vain elämää TV music programme was broadcast, which raised funds for Red Cross work to reduce loneliness in Finland.*



## Research and development projects

A standardisation process was started together with the IFRC in the development work of medical Emergency Response Units.

A document titled *Why early warnings are not leading to early action?* was published. A disability inclusion tool developed by the Finnish Red Cross was updated and introduced throughout the IFRC network.

An assessment of the impact of the Identify and Act navigator developed by the Finnish Red Cross was started in the Helsinki University BYStar research project funded by Kone Foundation.

A survey was commissioned on awareness of humanitarian law.

A mapping was conducted in local branches to collect information about the number and response capacities of volunteers taking part in emergency support activities.

For the third time, the Finnish Red Cross conducted broader research on loneliness and its impacts through a barometer. The interdisciplinary Right to Belong project (R-to-B) sought research-based solutions to reduce children's and youth's loneliness and ostracism. Together with the Finnish Youth Research Society, chat services were being developed to support young people's wellbeing.

An AI solution trained by mental health professionals was introduced next to human help on the Sekasin chat. The chatbot has been co-created in Project 5/5 with Sekasin Collective and Illusian.

The survey on the wellbeing of food aid recipients was responded to by 700 recipients.

The reform of IT systems for financial management as well as logistics and procurement was launched by competitive tendering. A new ERP system was selected for the Finnish Red Cross through competitive tendering. The system will be introduced in 2025.

Preparations to draft the Personnel policy made progress during the year, and the payroll management system was put out to tender to select a new service provider.

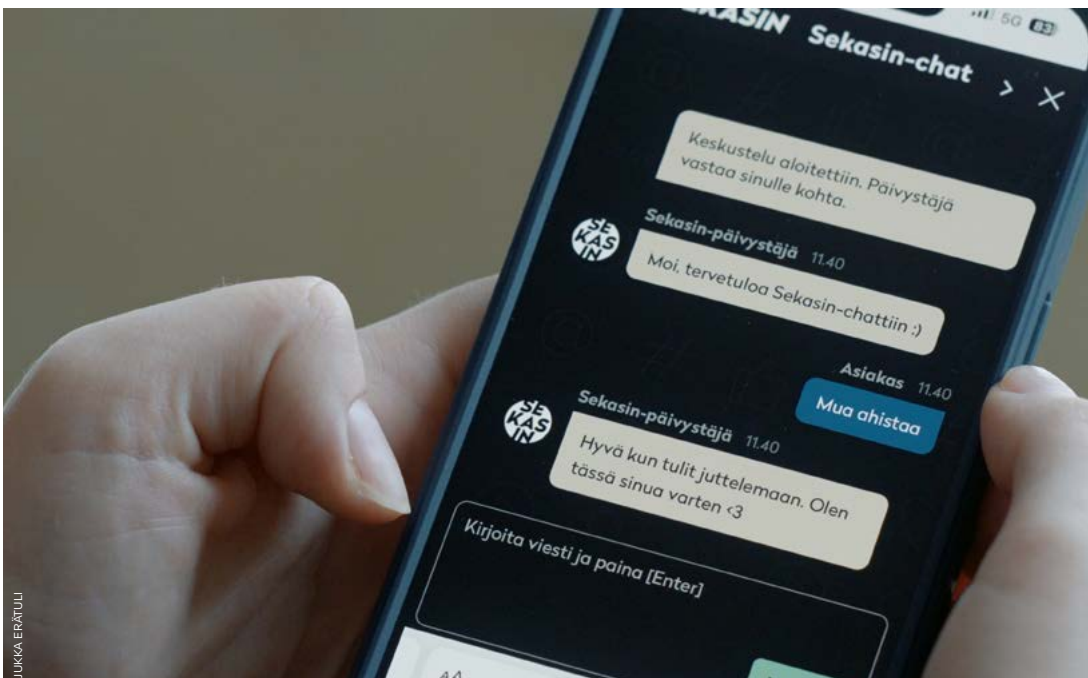
A new digital learning platform Vuolearning was introduced.

Kati Leskinen completed her thesis on accessibility of Finnish Red Cross digital services.

The Blood Service's new, updated focus areas of research include the effectiveness of the blood supply chain, the effectiveness of cell and tissue compatibility, and the development of products and services. The Blood Service spent a total of 4.73 million euros on research and product development activities, of which 1.65 million euros (39 per cent) was covered by external funding. This includes scientific research and the Advanced Cell Therapy Centre and the Biobank and sample service unit operations.

In 2024 Blood Service researchers were involved in as many as 52 peer-reviewed scientific publications, which were published in verified high-quality series. In addition, a doctoral thesis on tissue compatibility in kidney transplants was published.

A total of 500,000 euros was awarded as grants from the Blood Service's research fund to 12 projects. The grants were specifically targeted at scientific research on blood donation.



*Sekasin chat discussions totalled 38,809 in 2024. An AI solution trained by mental health professionals was introduced next to human help on the chat.*

*Afar in Ethiopia in one of the world's hottest places. Climate change has impacted the region's rainy seasons. "Before the prolonged drought we had many animals, but now only four are left of all our goats", says Ali Hussein (on the right).*



## Assessment of future development

In 2025 the cuts in social security and public services and their effect on people's livelihoods will become visible in society. The number of people resorting to food aid will grow while the resources available for it will diminish. The consequences of the cuts will also impact CSOs, which will have to adjust their action and look for innovative solutions to respond to assistance needs. In Finland, public funding particularly for social welfare and health is seeking new models. In the Finnish Red Cross, scarcity of public funding will affect both domestic and international action. Activities will be prioritised, and the role of own fundraising will grow. The significance of cooperation will increase, also within the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement.

With growing global humanitarian needs, the role and relevance of the international community will be challenged. The fundamentals of international and humanitarian law are questioned more forcefully also in Finland. Interest in security and preparedness issues is high. Climate change will become visible. Amid changes, local communities will become more important, and the Red Cross encourages people to help one another. Rapid technological development may also offer means to develop necessary solutions.

The Red Cross must live with the transition and find the best way to be a meaningful actor in a world where its principles are ever more essential.

# Public funding 2024

Finnish Red Cross domestic and international operations are co-funded by public funds. Significant strategic partners include, among others, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and STEA. A grant covering several years is presented in the calculation as per the Finnish Red Cross budget allocation plan.

	2024	2023
<b>Funding Centre for Social Welfare and Health Organisations (STEA)</b>		
Coordination of Voluntary Rescue Service	707,000 €	707,000 €
Drug, alcohol and sexual health work	275,000 €	279,500 €
Support activities for informal carers	0 €	373,000 €
Finnish Red Cross Youth shelter activities (Helsinki, Vantaa, Espoo, Tampere, Turku)	1,096,163 €	1,085,700 €
Immigration programme	364,444 €	370,844 €
Support to undocumented migrants	248,000 €	235,000 €
Domestic and leisure time accident prevention	105,000 €	105,000 €
Alternatives and accessibility in loneliness work (Yksi Näistä, 2024–2026)	625,000 €	0 €
Food and inclusion (2022–2024) share 2024	540,000 €	540,000 €
Development of coordination in food aid (2024–2026) share 2024	109,418 €	0 €
Integration, competence and community sense to volunteer activities (VOIMA, 2024–2026) share 2024	190,000 €	0 €
General grant	364,000 €	364,000 €
<b>Total STEA</b>	<b>4,624,025 €</b>	<b>4,060,044 €</b>
<b>Wellbeing services counties</b>		
Youth shelters (Helsinki, West Uusimaa, Vantaa and Kerava, Pirkanmaa, Southwest Finland)	1,052,700 €	1,152,947 €
Psychosocial support (Vantaa and Kerava)	52,626 €	0 €
<b>Total Wellbeing services counties</b>	<b>1,105,326 €</b>	<b>1,152,947 €</b>
<b>Cities</b>		
Employment-promoting and rehabilitative activities / Kontti (Helsinki, Pori, Joensuu, Kuopio, Lappeenranta)	111,457 €	119,113 €
Psychosocial support (Vantaa)	105,299 €	0 €
<b>Total cities</b>	<b>216,756 €</b>	<b>119,113 €</b>
<b>Finnish Immigration Service</b>		
Support services related to the reception of refugees, persons seeking protection and persons receiving temporary protection	348,135 €	562,418 €
<b>Ministry of Social Affairs and Health</b>		
National CSO coordination of food aid (9/2021–3/2024)	0 €	200,000 €
Food and help for all (9/2021–12/2023)	0 €	75,289 €
<b>Total Ministry of Social Affairs and Health</b>	<b>0 €</b>	<b>275,289 €</b>
<b>Ministry of Education and Culture</b>		
Youth activities	108,900 €	110,000 €
Promotion of youth inclusion in society (4/2022–3/2024)	20,950 €	99,000 €
Development of youth inclusion (11/2024–6/2026) share 2024	7,886 €	0 €
<b>Total Ministry of Education and Culture</b>	<b>137,736 €</b>	<b>209,000 €</b>

<b>Sivis Study Centre</b>		
Training	166,672 €	194,931 €
<b>Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment</b>		
Together against racism	102,000 €	92,881 €
Employment policy grantst	90,094 €	269,710 €
Community-sponsored integration, pilot project (2023–2025)	0 €	84,882 €
<b>Total Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment</b>	<b>192,094 €</b>	<b>447,473 €</b>
<b>Ministry for Foreign Affairs</b>		
International humanitarian law	63,000 €	65,000 €
International operations and programmes	31,200,000 €	33,900,000 €
<b>Total Ministry for Foreign Affairs</b>	<b>31,263,000 €</b>	<b>33,965,000 €</b>
<b>Ministry of Transport and Communications</b>		
Meteorological institute, international activities	159,599 €	0 €
<b>European Union</b>		
ESF Forward. Support to becoming independent by digital means in growth centres (3/2021–8/2023)	0 €	158,070 €
ESF Material aid and inclusion (6/2023–12/2024)	2,069,477 €	824,430 €
Amif Community-sponsored integration, pilot project (2023–2025) share 2024	344,252 €	246,609 €
Safe Mind IFRC (1/2023–9/2025) share 2024	301,317 €	120,402 €
Amif Comprehensive and community support to unaccompanied migrants (4/2024–9/2026) share 2024	64,743 €	0 €
European Research Executive Agency (REA) International activities	108,125 €	0 €
<b>Total European Union</b>	<b>2,887,914 €</b>	<b>1,349,511 €</b>
<b>MIELI Mental Health Finland</b>		
Online helping of the young / Sekasin chat (STEA)	111,400 €	114,000 €
<b>Itla Children's Foundation</b>		
TRT / Teaching Recovery Techniques (1/2024–12/2025) share 2024	78,863 €	0 €
<b>ECHO, Directorate-General of the European Commission for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations</b>		
International operations and programmes (through IFRC)	5,721,643 €	4,193,334 €
International operations and programmes	0 €	2,200,000 €
<b>Total ECHO, Directorate-General of the European Commission for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations</b>	<b>5,721,643 €</b>	<b>6,393,334 €</b>
<b>Total public funding</b>	<b>47,013,163 €</b>	<b>48,843,060 €</b>

# Use of restricted and self-financing funds

## 1. Antti Ahlström Fund

Purpose of the fund: To assist at discretion the sick and those who need help

### Use in 2024

#### Healthpoint activities

Development of Healthpoint monitoring information, concept design and quality. Materials, trainings of volunteers and supplies for collection of digital monitoring data, personnel costs. 77,930.55 €

#### Accidents

Self-financing share of the STEA grant targeted at reducing domestic and leisure accidents. Prevention of home and leisure accidents as well as work and traffic accidents by sharing information on accident prevention. 18,973.42 €

#### Support activities for informal carers

Self-financing share of the STEA grant targeted at support activities for informal carer families. Supporting informal carer families through volunteer activities. 2,313.00 €

#### FRC First aid group activities

First aid group activities 146,037.30 €

#### Fund total

**245,254.27 €**

## 2. Olga and Jalmari Välimaa Fund

Purpose of the fund: elderly people and friend activities

### Use in 2024

#### Prison activities

Development project of prison activities, expansion and development of activities and development of community-based activities in Finland. 4,610.00 €

#### Friendship Day campaign

Implementation of Friendship Day campaign, (campaigning, support for local events, and loneliness barometer) 29,166.00 €

#### Fund total

**33,776.00 €**

### 3. General Mannerheim and Baron von Troil Fund

Purpose of the fund: Finnish Red Cross wartime and peacetime action

#### Use in 2024

##### Domestic preparedness activities

Preparedness planning	61,697.04 €
Development of volunteer path	4,036.59 €
<b>Fund total</b>	<b>65,733.63 €</b>

### 4. Minna Emilia Frisk Fund

Purpose of the fund: To assist the war blind

#### Use in 2024

Grant to housing and rehabilitation support	9,000.00 €
<b>Fund total</b>	<b>9,000.00 €</b>

### 5. Jaakko Bascharoff Fund

Purpose of the fund: To strengthen the care of people with cleft lip and cleft palate as well as with speech defects

#### Use in 2024

Grants to ten persons: training-related travel grant	16,740.00 €
<b>Fund total</b>	<b>16,740.00 €</b>

**Total all funds** **370 503,90 €**

# Financial statements 2024

## Finnish Red Cross Central administration

<b>BALANCE SHEET A S S E T S</b>	1.1.-31.12.2024		1.1.-31.12.2023	
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>				
Intangible assets				
Intangible rights		6,385,169.66		7,786,727.28
Tangible assets				
Land	84,093.96		84,093.96	
Buildings	2,255,505.40		2,577,865.34	
Machinery and equipment	3,229,844.38		3,565,205.40	
Advance payments and other incomplete procuring	381,756.83	5,951,200.57	949,108.42	7,176,273.12
Securities		2,063.16		2,063.16
Investments				
Land	49,615.28		49,615.28	
Participating interests	2,500.00		2,500.00	
Other shares and similar rights of ownership	137,327,795.66	137,379,910.94	124,785,135.84	124,837,251.12
<b>SELF-FINANCING FUNDS</b>				
Securities	2,424,261.02		2,212,445.41	
Bank receivables	42,231.08	2,466,492.10	3,125.25	2,215,570.66
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>				
Inventories				
Goods		10,867,784.00		9,762,113.10
Debtors				
Long-term				
Other debtors		897,912.23		1,160,217.72
Short-term				
Trade debtors internal	531,462.61		488,628.17	
Trade debtors	6,155,863.79		7,340,631.85	
Other debtors	12,799,641.13		9,889,728.17	
Prepayments and accrued income	2,424,092.82	21,911,060.35	3,269,847.90	20,988,836.09
Cash in hand and at bank		9,967,501.39		43,273,485.61
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b><u>195,829,094.40</u></b>		<b><u>217,202,537.86</u></b>

	1.1.-31.12.2024		1.1.-31.12.2023	
<b>EQUITY AND RESERVES</b>				
<b>CAPITAL AND RESERVES</b>				
Restricted funds				
Self-financing funds	2,466,492.10		2,215,570.66	
Restricted funds	2,449,021.37		2,497,732.27	
Disaster Relief Fund	41,071,313.94	45,986,827.41	46,592,223.59	51,305,526.52
Other funds				
Blood Service research fund	21,474,848.57		21,974,848.57	
Joint operations fund	14,303,975.76	35,778,824.33	11,425,238.26	33,400,086.83
Retained earnings	73,210,262.47		72,204,206.70	
Deficit/surplus for the financial period	2,327,561.53	75,537,824.00	3,388,166.65	75,592,373.35
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL AND RESERVES</b>		<b>157,303,475.74</b>		<b>160,297,986.70</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>				
Long-term				
Loans from credit institutions	19,169.32		1,543,719.84	
Blood Service long-term debt	171,833.00	191,002.32	151,562.00	1,695,281.84
Short-term				
Loans from credit institutions	24,551.72		524,319.72	
Loan from organisational bank	2,319,864.64		2,009,344.66	
District cash pool accounts	5,610,156.38		14,015,170.88	
Advances received	7,933,035.97		11,148,373.48	
Trade creditors to FRC districts	777,891.14		520,619.16	
Trade creditors	5,712,187.59		9,485,230.55	
Other creditors	1,156,758.98		1,120,595.71	
Accruals and deferred income	14,800,169.92	38,334,616.34	16,385,615.16	55,209,269.32
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>38,525,618.66</b>		<b>56,904,551.16</b>
<b>TOTAL EQUITY AND RESERVES</b>		<b><u>195,829,094.40</u></b>		<b><u>217,202,537.86</u></b>

**Finnish Red Cross  
Central administration**

**INCOME STATEMENT**

	1.1.-31.12.2024	1.1.-31.12.2023
<b>Ordinary operations</b>		
Income	129,364,110.05	132,323,090.54
Expenses		
Staff expenses	-52,868,058.53	-50,954,474.61
Depreciation and amortisation	-4,504,111.33	-3,875,296.39
Other expenses	-105,926,656.78	-105,325,419.89
Defrayed from Disaster Relief Fund	19,994,326.27	18,830,857.76
Deficit of ordinary operations	-13,940,390.32	-9,001,242.59
<b>Fundraising</b>		
Donations, Disaster Relief Fund	15,892,495.72	19,324,844.17
Membership fees	268,665.50	278,009.81
Other income	10,749,664.21	9,046,342.51
Collection expenses, Disaster Relief Fund	-1,774,585.16	-1,653,786.51
Staff expenses	-2,958,743.16	-2,688,975.41
Depreciation and amortisation	-175,487.82	-155,046.03
Other expenses	-4,541,274.83	-4,140,453.69
Surplus of fundraising	17,460,734.46	20,010,934.85
Cumulative deficit/surplus	3,520,344.14	11,009,692.26
<b>Investments and financial activities</b>		
Income	14,740,989.39	13,066,225.54
Depreciation and amortisation	-154,987.54	-145,711.31
Expenses	-1,467,157.30	-1,655,716.19
Surplus/deficit of investments and financial activities	13,118,844.55	11,264,798.04
Cumulative deficit/surplus	16,639,188.69	22,274,490.30
<b>Subsidies</b>	364,000.00	364,000.00

## CASH FLOW STATEMENT

	2024	2023
<b>Cash flow from operating activities</b>		
<b>Cash flow from ordinary operations</b>		
Income of ordinary operations	129,364,110.05	132,323,090.54
Expenses of ordinary operations	-163,298,826.64	-160,155,190.89
Change in short-term interest-free receivables	-184,935.22	-1,176,507.97
Change in long-term receivables	262,305.49	426,151.91
Change in short-term interest-free liabilities	-13,152,108.37	7,710,326.66
Depreciation and amortisation	4,023,014.42	3,875,296.39
Change in inventories	-1,024,379.23	195,234.00
Other adjustments	5,189,676.99	-1,957,524.21
Subsidies	364,000.00	364,000.00
<b>Net operating cash flow</b>	<b>-38,457,142.51</b>	<b>-18,395,123.57</b>
<b>Cash flow from fundraising</b>		
Income of fundraising	26,910,825.43	28,649,196.49
Expenses of fundraising	-9,450,090.97	-8,638,261.64
Change in short-term interest-free receivables	0.00	70.00
Change in short-term interest-free liabilities	-732,419.04	-308,586.06
Change in inventories	-81,291.67	-67,020.40
<b>Net fundraising cash flow</b>	<b>16,647,023.75</b>	<b>19,635,398.39</b>
<b>Cash flow from investing</b>		
<b>Investing in fixed assets</b>		
Acquisition of fixed assets	-1,693,166.19	-3,032,753.57
Sales of fixed assets	0.00	8,000.00
<b>Investing in investments</b>		
Interest, dividend and other investment income	14,740,989.39	13,059,153.94
Investment expenses	-9,174,783.49	-4,838,320.54
Change in short-term interest-free receivables	-4,870.00	-4,242.00
Investment purchases	-58,389,453.23	-59,170,628.39
Investment sales	53,187,616.45	51,467,143.58
<b>Net investing cash flow</b>	<b>-1,333,667.07</b>	<b>-2,511,646.98</b>
<b>Cash flow from financing</b>		
Loan instalment	-1,718,078.06	-229,034.46
Organisational account	-8,405,014.50	7,207,539.92
<b>Net financing cash flow</b>	<b>-10,123,092.56</b>	<b>6,978,505.46</b>
<b>Net cash flow</b>	<b>-33,266,878.39</b>	<b>5,707,133.30</b>
Cash and cash equivalents 1 January	43,276,610.86	37,569,477.56
Change in cash and cash equivalents	-33,266,878.39	5,707,133.30
<b>Cash and cash equivalents 31 December</b>	<b>10,009,732.47</b>	<b>43,276,610.86</b>

# Action of Finnish Red Cross governing bodies in 2024

## Council

Convened twice to take decisions on statutory matters, such as Financial Statements, discharge from liability and membership fees, and also discussed, among others, the reform of operational modalities and focuses of the Strategic Programme's main goals.

Chairperson	Kari Otto
Deputy Chairperson	Viilomaa Päivi
Members	Audas-Willman Ann-Mari Blomberg Anders Dufva Sinituuli Hämäläinen Taina Ihalainen Harri Katavisto Nanna Koivisto Harri Kuusela Katja Kuusisto Raisa Laaksonen Jeanette Lehmus Arto Myyryläinen Riina Penttilä Roosa Pihlajamaa Marju Raita Petri Saloniemi Pia Sandell Birger Christian Tenhunen Tarja Toiva Ari Tuomainen Marja-Liisa Turkulainen Juha Uljas Raija Vehviläinen Hanna
Representatives of Ministries	Immonen-Seuguenot Piia Kohvakka Kimmo Lehto Marja Ruohola Juha-Petri Taarna Varpu Tervo Sini Wilhelmsson Niklas

## Board

Convened nine times with 156 agenda items, including regular items such as the finances, action plan and report, situation report of international operations, and monitoring the implementation of the Strategic Programme's main goals. In addition, the Board adopted the changes to the employment conditions of Finnish Red Cross international aid workers, the updated Policy on prevention of sexual harassment and abuse, the updated Data protection policy, and updated the Rules of procedure for the Headquarters. The Board discussed enhancing young people's agency in the Finnish Red Cross and decided on the hiring of several executive persons.

President	Aaltonen Elli
Vice-Presidents	Lindholm Max Sundqvist Dan Ylineva Riitta

Members	Jokiranta Harri Jolma-Taylor Maiju Piri Pekka Rissanen Ruut Sjösten Marju Tolonen Osmo
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## First Aid and Health Committee

Convened four times with 42 agenda items.

Chairperson	Hoppu Sanna
Deputy Chairperson	Tolonen Osmo

Members	Blek-Vehkaluoto Mari Garoff Ferdinand Halonen Katariina Harve-Rytsälä Heini Lyyra Markus
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## Board of the Kontti Second-hand Stores

Convened four times with 44 agenda items.

Chairperson	Sjösten Marju
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Members	Aulin Liina Freese Olli Hintsa Tero Pirttivaara Marja Saarikoski Marjaana
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## **Board of the Youth Shelters**

Convened five times with 53 agenda items.

Chairperson Ylineva Riitta  
Deputy Chairperson Lehtimäki Marja (until 30 September 2024)

Members Eid Mona  
Kurki Marjo  
Mannila Kalle-Pekka  
Rämö Eero  
Suurpää Leena (from 1 October 2024)  
Vaulo Taika  
Voutilainen Reetta

## **Committee on Development of Volunteer Youth Action**

Convened three times with 36 agenda items.

Chairperson Piri Pekka  
Deputy Chairperson Penttilä Roosa

Members Alaniemi Moona  
Hörkkö Tiina (until 31 May 2024)  
Mannila Kalle-Pekka  
Rantanen Piki  
Von Lerber Milja  
Waenthongkham Janina (until 13 August 2024)

## **Investment Committee**

Convened five times with 18 agenda items.

Chairperson Rämö Eero

Members Räsänen Mika  
Torsti Esko  
Väisänen Tapani

## **Finance and HR Committee**

Convened four times with 36 agenda items.

Chairperson Jolma-Taylor Maiju  
Deputy Chairperson Oksanen Tuula

Members Asikainen Mika  
Hellström Tom (from 15 October 2024)  
Laaksonen Maija  
Lumme-Tuomala Riitta  
Savolainen Pentti (until 7 October 2024)

## **Audit Committee**

Convened four times with 33 agenda items.

Chairperson	Lindholm Max
Deputy Chairperson	Kallasvuo Leena
Members	Neilimo Kari Nikander Mervi Nygård Kenneth Paul Mikael

## **Committee on Reforming Operational Modalities and the Organisation**

Convened five times with 37 agenda items.

Chairperson	Sundqvist Dan
Members	Cobertera Ferran Dufva Sinituuli Fernandez Daniel Jokiranta Harri Kuusisto Raisa Niittynen Joel Pilli-Sihvola Karoliina Rintaluoma Elisabeth Vataja Katri Ylipoussu Mimmu (from 11 October 2024)

## **National Youth Committee**

Convened four times with 51 agenda items.

Chairperson	Ylineva Riitta
Deputy Chairperson	Vaulo Taika
Members	Henriksson Sofia Penttilä Roosa Piirainen Christina Rintaluoma Elisabeth Sallinen Matias

## **Directorate of the Blood Service**

Convened six times with 94 agenda items.

Chairperson	Aarnisalo Piia
Deputy Chairperson	Rissanen Ruut
Members	Maksimainen Anna Martikainen Tarmo Ruohola Juha-Petri Viitanen Minttu

## **Arbitration Committee**

Did not convene in 2024

Chairperson                      Aaltonen Elli

Members                              Huttunen Mari  
   Kumpula Kristiina  
   Sandell Birger Ch.  
   Rämö Eero

*Humanity*  
*Impartiality*  
*Neutrality*  
*Independence*  
*Voluntary service*  
*Unity*  
*Universality*