



Annual report of actions 2022-Lesvos Solidarity



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A few words about us

After a very difficult year in 2021, with the closure and eviction of PIPKA, in 2022 we remained firm in our views and beliefs, aiming at new partnerships that gave us the momentum to achieve our goals. Our mission and vision remained the same with the main purpose of offering and providing decent living conditions for both the refugee population and the local community of Lesvos.

Working in an ever-changing context with political changes not only in the procedures for the recognition or not of refugees but also in the way we are recognised as a legal NGO, we have successfully met the challenges.

We managed to convey our messages and create an open and welcoming space where locals and refugees feel safe and welcome, reducing prejudice through their integration into Greek society. Building on the sense of solidarity of our people, we aim to move forward in exactly the same way in 2023.

2022, then, began with another war that led millions of people on the road to refuge in search of a safe haven. Ten years ago, in 2012, **Lesvos Solidarity** was laying the foundations for what would later become the home of hundreds of refugees who passed through the island of Lesvos. Today, and while solidarity in Greece is persecuted, the struggle for human rights continues by people defending life, dignity and equal opportunities for all. For this reason, the awarding of the **International Peace Prize** to **Lesvos Solidarity** and **Efi Latsoudi** by the German institute **die Schwelle** on **20 May** in **Bremen** gives all of us hope and courage to continue our work unhindered.

Situation in Lesvos

Remaining members of the Racist Violence Recording Network and participating in national and international conferences for the defense of human rights, we take a public stand for decent living conditions and this is evident through our actions and collaborations with other organisations.

Already in the second half of 2021, works started in Vastria for the construction of a new closed controlled facility for asylum seekers, which would accommodate 6,500 people in the future. In early 2022, the North Aegean Region appealed to the Council of State to stop the works as the area is protected and is located in a large forest area. The Council's decision is awaited and in the meantime, work in Vastria continues.

Solidarity of Lesvos has been registered for years with the Ministry of Immigration and Asylum and has met all the requirements.

Respecting the principles of human rights, we have provided the following services for 2022:

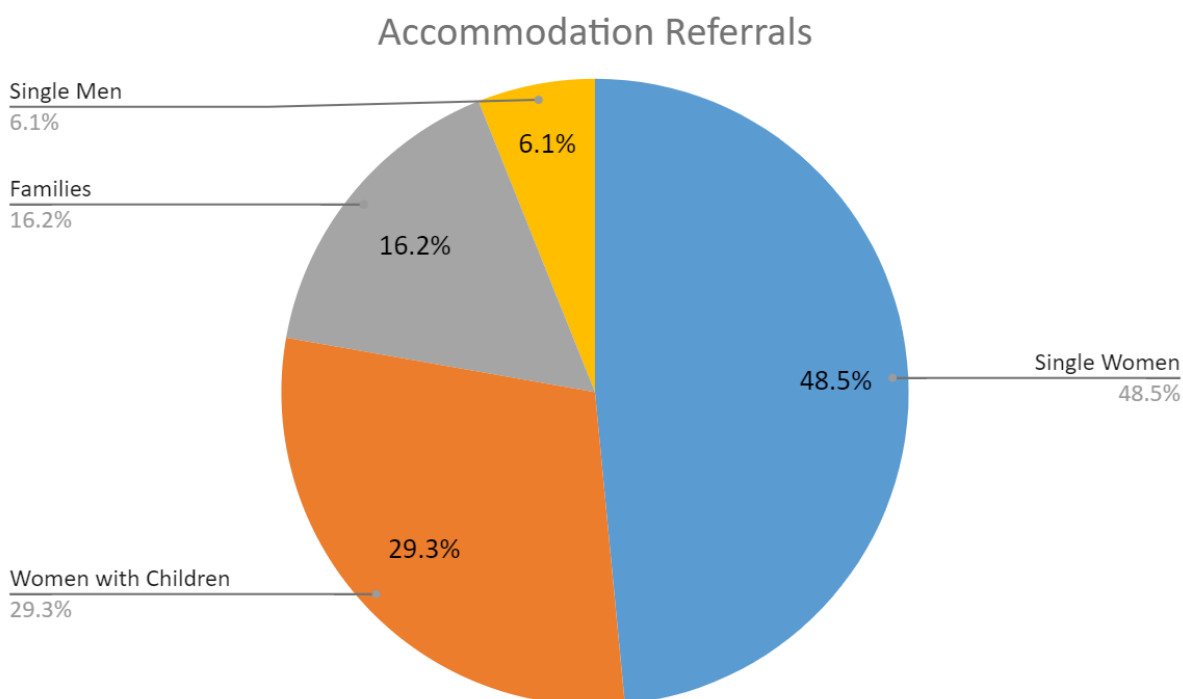
3. Housing and Psychosocial Support:

In response to the needs of the refugee population for decent living conditions, Solidarity of Lesvos was able to provide apartments in the city centre that fully meet the needs of its beneficiaries. Apart from safe accommodation, our organization provided medical care, basic necessities, food and psychosocial support. We also tried to integrate our beneficiaries into the labour market, first by involving them in Greek language courses and then by teaching them the basic services they can turn to in order to resolve their issues. Our cooperation with local community bodies and other organisations is crucial. In addition, integration sessions were held on topics such as navigating emergency services, framing living in Greek society (house contract, managing bills, etc.) and psychoeducation by a clinical psychologist on basic psychological dysfunctions and their resolution.

Although many independent living hostels around Greece were forced to close due to financial liquidity, Lesvos Solidarity tried and succeeded in maintaining 3 hostels with high quality services.

Our three homes have accommodated women alone or with children, pregnant women and vulnerable families. Most of the beneficiaries were in need of housing as they were defenseless and alone with their minor children in an inhospitable environment with no access to public health services. While staying in our homes, they felt safe and warm and were gradually integrated into the other activities of the organization.

From 01-01-2022 to 31-12-2022 the psychosocial team received 32 housing referrals representing a total of 72 persons, namely 24 single women or women with children (ages between 18 and 61 years old) and 8 vulnerable families. Most were from Afghanistan, and the remaining countries were Syria, Yemen, Sierra Leone, Eritrea, Cameroon, Iran, Iraq and New Guinea. At the same time, we received 2 referrals involving single men, which we could not accept due to lack of space. In total there were 30 minors in the total number of referrals. Of all referrals 48% were single females.



Of the above referrals we accepted 12, a total of 27 people, either because our apartments were full from 2021 as our guests stay at least 6 months from the time of admission, or because some cases were disabled people and could not access the main area of our apartments or because they needed structures that were staffed 24/7. Upon admission to the home, residents obtain an address and other information necessary to either travel or obtain a job. And our main purpose is to integrate them into Greek society. So it is obvious that the need for housing is great and

Solidarity will seek partnerships with other agencies to fill this gap. Another challenge is to bring together people from different nationalities, cultures and vulnerabilities and create a sense of community.

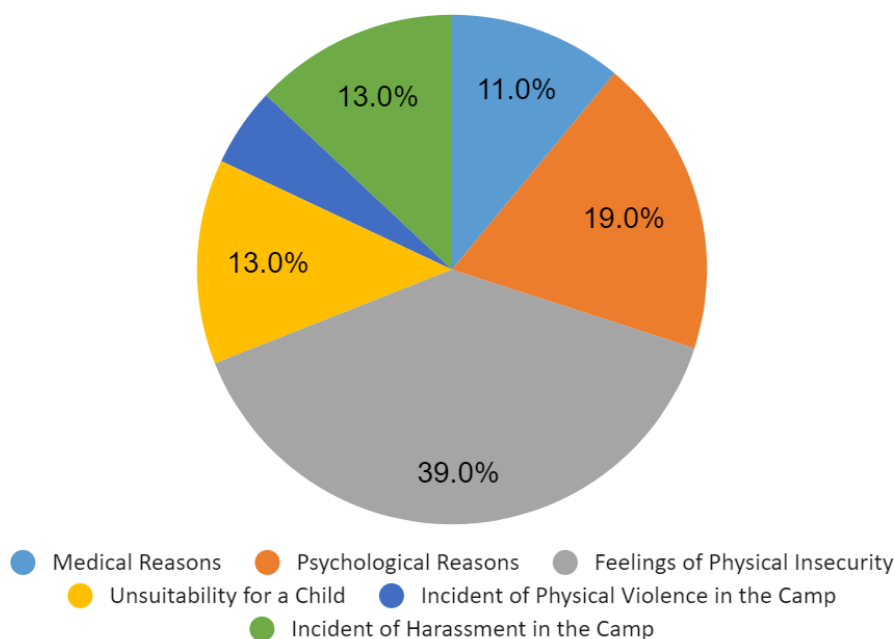
B) Medical and psychological support

In addition to housing, residents in Solidarity Houses are supported by a multidisciplinary team, consisting of a social worker, a psychologist, a nurse and interpreters, a receptionist and a coordinator. In addition, our human resources include volunteer nurses from the Mytilene Hospital as well as a general practitioner. So, our beneficiaries are examined more quickly and efficiently, without being hindered by bureaucracy. Lesvos Solidarity is able to cover the expenses of people who are in an extremely difficult situation.

All of our beneficiaries had at least one medical problem, while 67% reported having mental health issues. 44% said they would like to see a mental health professional in the near future. 80% claimed to have experienced at least one form of violence in the past.

The reasons why most of them sought accommodation are: 39% for safety, 11% for health care that they could not get inside the camp, 5% for hygiene reasons, while 19% of women who have children reported that they seek alternative accommodation due to unsuitability of the environment for their children (poor hygiene, difficulty in accessing proper nutrition). The graph below shows the reasons and the corresponding percentages.

Reasons for Housing Request



In addition to our beneficiaries, our medical team offers advice, referral documents and medical treatments to other camp residents and locals based first on the severity of the situation and then on a first come, first served basis.

In 2022, we provided medical services to 76 vulnerable people with more than 234 interventions including medical and blood tests. 69 appointments were scheduled with private doctors and 125 at the public hospital. The medical team planned 3 information activities during the year regarding first aid.

c) Food distribution

The cut-off of financial assistance and the refusal to provide food support to recognised refugees and rejected asylum seekers had created a significant gap for one of the basic needs of refugees. To address the need for proper nutrition and combat malnutrition, LeSol is implementing a food distribution program. Vulnerable refugees who meet vulnerability criteria are placed on a list maintained by the organisation. Recipients stay either in Kara Tepe camp or

in Mytilene. At the same time, the organisation maintains a separate list for locals facing financial difficulties.

As LeSol beneficiaries are among the most vulnerable refugee population (single mothers with newborns, pregnant women, people with chronic illnesses), access to adequate food is vital for their well-being. Our goal is to give the refugee population back a sense of dignity.

The preparation of the list of beneficiaries is done by the social worker of the organisation, through a session held to identify their needs. The packing of the boxes with all the necessary food and varieties is done by the logistics department of the organization. Distribution is done at predetermined distribution points outside the camp on a regular weekly basis.

Each vulnerable family receives a box with all the food they need to prepare their meals for the week, giving people a sense of self-reliance and dignity. Each box contains: 1 kg of potatoes, 1 kg of onions, 1 kg of tomatoes, 2 packets of seasonal vegetables 200g each, 1 kg of fruit (apples or oranges and one seasonal), 2 pieces of chicken, 200 g of meat, 250 g of rice, 1 litre of milk, 250 g of cheese, 400 g of tomato paste, 2 kg of flour, 500 g of salt, 1 kg of sugar, 6 eggs, 500 g of yogurt and 100 sachets of tea.

The content of each food box is proportional to the cultural and religious background of the beneficiary, taking into account all dietary restrictions (allergies, food intolerances, etc.).

One hundred and thirty-five people have benefited from food distribution throughout 2022. Of these, 33 were men, 39 women and 55 children. A total of 2,655 food packages were distributed. Through future partnerships we want to retain the beneficiaries we already serve and be able to expand the food program.

4. Mosaik Support Centre

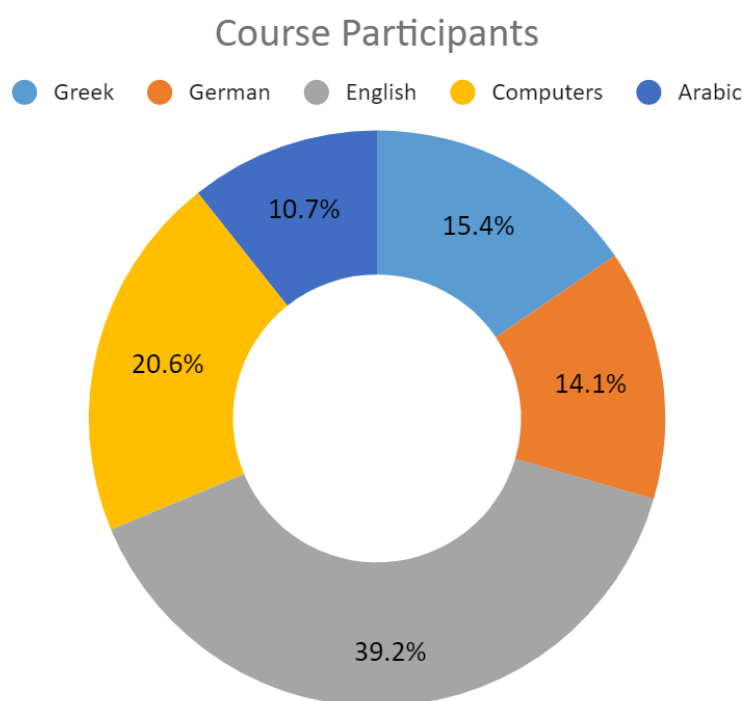
The Solidarity Support Centre of Lesbos, which has been operating since 2016 in the centre of Mytilene, is a point of interaction of many nationalities as we are visited daily by refugees and locals. It operates Monday-Friday from 09.00-20.00.

Mosaik offers its beneficiaries the opportunity to attend courses in Greek, German, Computer, Arabic and English free of charge. Our courses are also offered online. Many courses are attended simultaneously by locals, Greeks and volunteers from other organizations. Besides,

many creative and recycling workshops take place in our centre. At the same time, someone who visits us can ask for psychosocial and medical help from our interdisciplinary team. It is understood that a beneficiary can receive help from several of our services.

α) Education

In 2022, we had 1,386 enrollments. In Greek 214 students participated, in English 543, in German 195, in Arabic 148 and in Computer courses 286.



Our teaching staff contribute to the implementation of the Erasmus programmes, in which we cooperate with other organisations from the rest of Europe to implement actions and organise events with a view to exchanging views and experiences.

b) Training seminars and workshops for the integration of refugees:

Our employees also participate in training seminars, which during 2022 amounted to 8, where they were trained to improve our services.

We organized 22 educational workshops where our beneficiaries were able to learn useful information about daily self-care, the concept of recycling, and prevention of various diseases. Most of the workshops were aimed at integrating the refugees into the local community. The workshops were open and free for everyone. 234 people participated in them.

c) Employment and work.

Lesvos Solidarity is trying to integrate the refugee population into the labour market. The multidisciplinary team is trained and continuously educated to be able to respond to changing labour market needs. By organising briefings, the framework of the labour market in Greece and the procedures to be fulfilled in order to be able to apply for a position are explained. We work directly with local institutions and public services to achieve our goals. Nevertheless, the lack of jobs for refugees is a difficulty that we have to overcome.

5. Safe Passage Workshop

The Safe Passage workshop is a great example of Lesvos Solidarity trying to integrate refugees into the labour market. All the tailors and cutters come from the refugee population.

All products are made from recycled materials, mainly from boats that arrive on the island, life jackets found on the shores, old fabrics and tents. Apart from producing nice items, our organization's contribution to the protection of the environment is great as we collect the above materials from the seas and soil.

Safe Passage Workshop maintains an online store: <https://lesvossolidarityshop.org/>

Recyclable materials used during 2022

Materials	Quantities
Lifejackets	11.85
Old fabrics(kg)	18.75
Boats (kg)	10396.76
Tents(kg)	81.54
New fabrics (kg)	58.65

Production for 2022

Products	Cutting	Retrieved from
Wallets	1520	1087
Small pencil cases	1020	1336
Cassettes	764	388
Cases for notebook	7	42
Medium cases for notebook	192	202
Vanity bag	260	257
Necessaire	341	325
Waist Bags	925	883
Back bag	141	107
Bag for shopping	50	71
Postman's bag	156	206
Weekender	19	13
Backpack wanderer	226	261
Small bowl	0	174
Big bowl	0	43
Coasters (pack)	0	41
Keychain	0	350
Special keychain	2020	0
Shoulder bag	64	116
Total	7705	5902

In 2022, 16 people were employed in the laboratory due to the demand for our products.

New products

A new product has been added to our existing products. A mini shoulder bag for everyday use with two pockets and zipper. It is a small and practical bag to fit all the necessary items. It is made entirely from recycled fabrics and discarded materials from tents, the white parts are the main tent fabrics, the top part is made from tent interiors or life jackets and the bottom front pocket is made from tent windows.

Each model is unique, with different colours and different combinations; dimensions: 19 x 15 cm approx. All products are handmade, dimensions may vary slightly

6. Humade Crafts Workshop

The Humade Crafts Workshop, located inside the Mosaik Support Center, is a recycling workshop that combines creating and learning. Waste and natural materials are used to create decorative, artistic and utilitarian objects. The workshop also includes sorting and distributing items.

The main purpose of the workshop is the reuse of waste that we often consider useless. The workshops are open to young and old, locals and refugees alike. Through this interaction, we share views and experiences related to the environment and specifically recycling. Every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 13.00- 21.00 workshops take place and are open to the public. In the workshops, any idea one can think of can be realized with any materials one wants to use. There were 66 workshops held at our center and 304 people participated.

The Humade Crafts Workshop every Monday and Friday was held in Primary schools in isolated villages in order to promote the refugee issue as the inhabitants of small areas are not fully familiar with it. 19 workshops were held and 219 students participated. In addition to schools, many workshops are held in village cultural centres with a large participation of young and old alike. 23 workshops were held and 250 people participated. At the same time, the workshop also participated in events on welfare, respect for the environment and human rights.

Twenty workshops were held in Athens and 167 people participated. Many of the workshop projects were carried out abroad and many objects adorn museums in Europe. This year, 2

workshops were held in Germany and Spain respectively with 341 participants. Also, 4 online educational workshops were held.

7. Local community

To assist both vulnerable people and the public health system, Lesvos Solidarity collaborated with the social service of the Vostaneio Hospital of Mytilene, providing needs to the native and refugee population such as air ambulances, interpreting, examinations at the Pasteur Institute, dedicated nurses in emergency cases, etc.

As Mosaik is an open space that everyone can access, 53 people from the local community were referred to our psychosocial team and 9 of them received psychological help while 13 families were beneficiaries of our food programme. 24 appointments in private and 38 at the public hospital were made. In addition, 48 medications were given for the whole year to vulnerable families of the local population.

We work closely with public services of the Municipality of Mytilene, such as IKA, EODY, OAED and local food entrepreneurs. At the same time, we support the local community financially by renting the building where we are housed, the apartments of our beneficiaries as well as many other expenses incurred in local shops.

8. Themis Program

In response to the refugees' request for housing and safe living conditions, Lesvos Solidarity tried and found an abandoned house belonging to the Charity Shops of the Municipality of Mytilene. The project has as its main purpose the housing of vulnerable refugees with the main objectives of vocational rehabilitation, education and training of refugees. The project started in November with 4 staff members consisting of a coordinator who supervised the project, a lawyer, an engineer and a financial partner. The future goal was to start with 4 workers, who would have continuous training while attending Greek classes for more effective integration.

Also, after the completion of the works, it is planned to accommodate 24 people from vulnerable families. The property is leased from the Charity Shops of Mytilene to Solidarity of Lesvos at a monthly rent and subject to being fully renovated by us. Solidarity agreed to this condition intending to invest 180.000E for the total renovation.

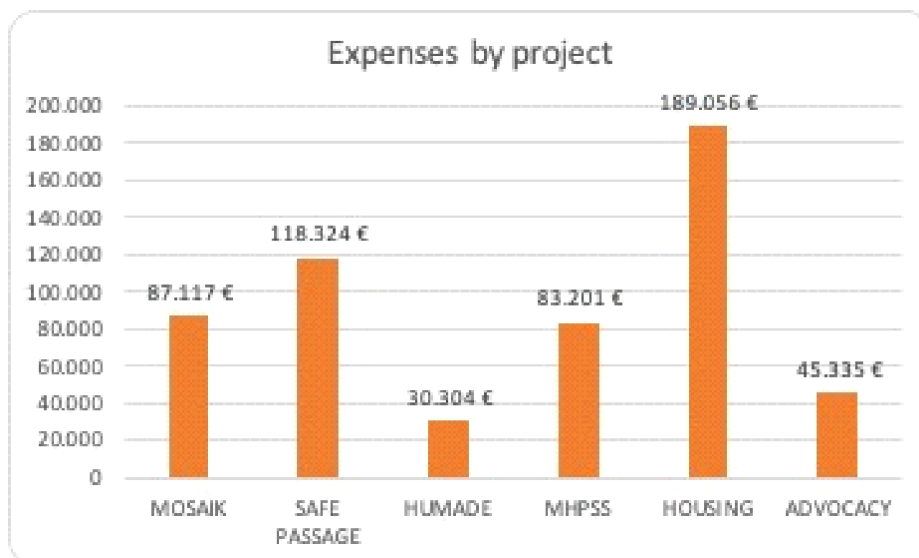
The property is a three-storey house with different entrances and an area of 105,06 sqm each and a total area of 315,18 sqm. Each floor is arranged in 4 different rooms and contains a kitchen and a bathroom.

9. Financial data

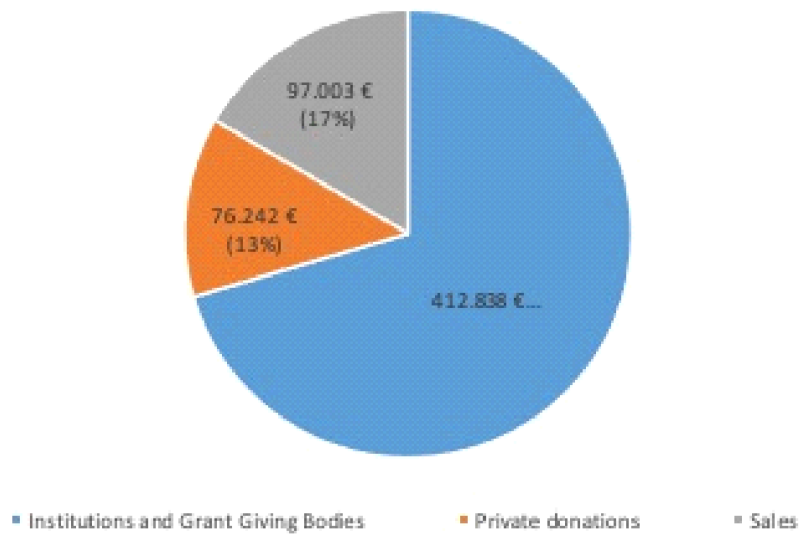
The charts below provide an estimate* of our total revenues and expenses for 2022.

We received over 900 donations from 248 different donors, which made our many projects possible and contributed to the employment of 62 people, including 18 refugees and 44 Greeks. In total, salaries (both field and administrator) made up more than 62% of our expenses.

*All provide numerical estimates and do not constitute an official financial statement



Income



Share of expenses field/admin

