



Annual Report 2025

[Www.welcomeofficelesvos.org](http://www.welcomeofficelesvos.org)



Lesvos, 15.02.2026

Introduction

02

Another year in Lesbos went by. There are less arrivals now on Lesbos than the previous years. Due to the violent operations to stop boats at sea the routes have changed towards south (Crete, Rhodos etc).

<https://taz.de/Migration-in-die-EU/!6149746/> (German)

<https://www.euronews.com/2025/12/20/over-1000-migrants-have-arrived-in-crete-in-december> (English)

The Greek Government has shown that many of the services implemented or paid through the Greek State are only partly functional. The translation services inside the camps are barely running. Financial Assistance that asylum seekers should receive is not being paid since many months. Many camps lack proper maintenance leading to containers that are broken, washing facilities not functioning. Etc. The government is announcing every month more repressive methods to stop refugees from coming. The Camp Managements are strictly throwing people out of the camps after they have received positive decision, leading to homelessness and lack of perspectives how to start a new life in Greece. All costs for the camps already in bad conditions are to be cut.

<https://www.ekathimerini.com/politics/1282997/migration-ministry-signs-new-agreement-to-cut-costs-on-asylum-seekers-services/>

Meanwhile criminal charges are implemented on refugees with no papers. Deteriorating their situation from having no rights anyway to being criminals:

<https://balkaninsight.com/2025/09/03/greece-passes-law-potentially-jailing-rejected-asylum-seekers/> (English)

<https://srdefenders.org/greece-public-statements-against-migrants-rights-ngos-and-new-restrictions-on-the-right-to-seek-asylum-joint-c>

The criminalisation of migrants and their supporters has not stopped.

Meanwhile some humanitarian workers were finally acquitted after 7,5 years the government makes new laws to punish NGO workers and threatens NGOs publicly.

<https://rsaegean.org/en/greece-ngo-work-a-punishable-offence/> (English)

<https://taz.de/Urteil-gegen-Fluchthelferinnen/!6147386/> (German)

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c98j7n2xj1xo> (English)



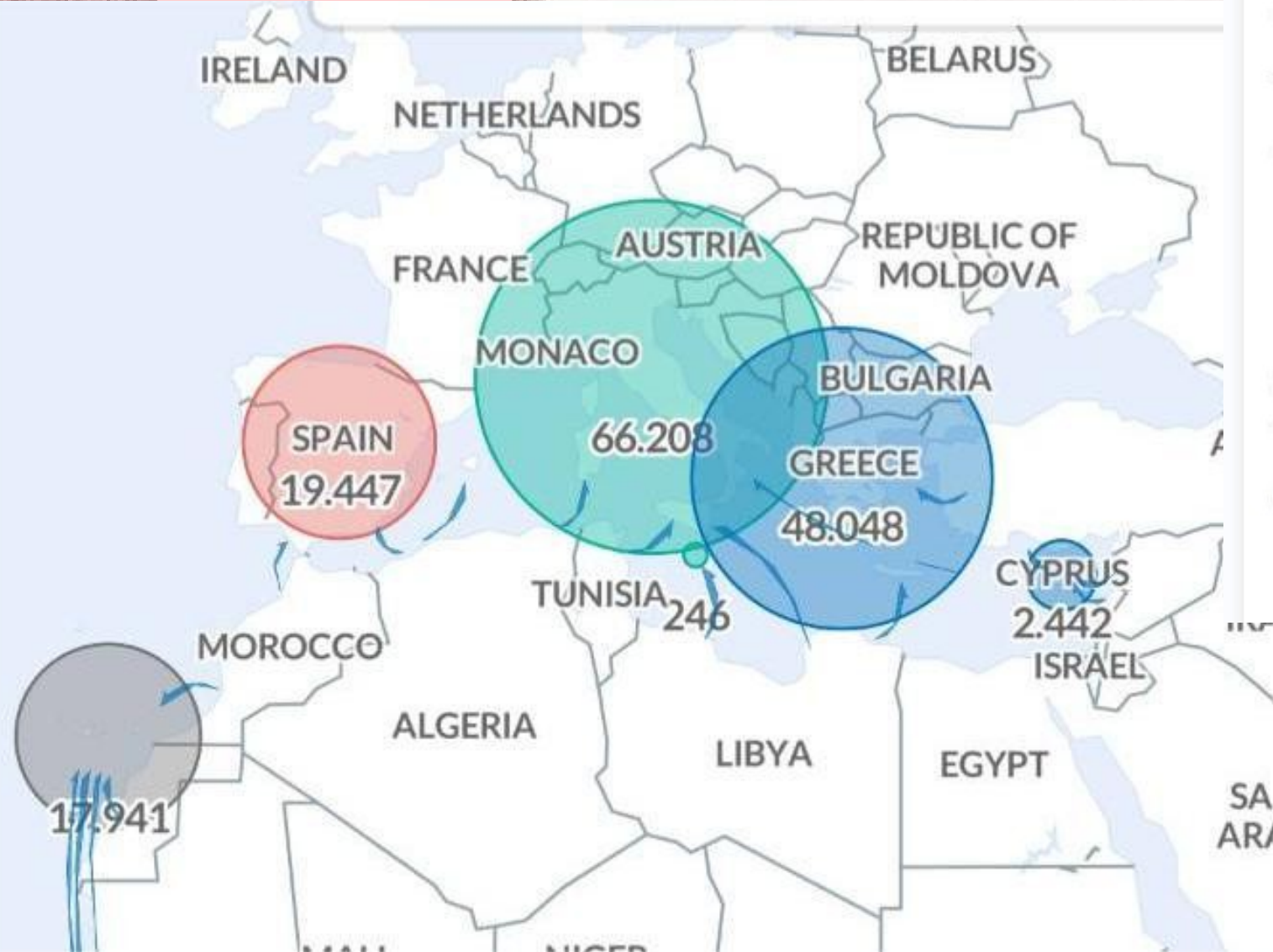
Alice Kleinschmidt, legal representative welcome office lesbos

ARRIVALS 2025 EUROPE AND GREECE

<https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/europe-sea-arrivals> (29.12.2025)

Arrivals Greece 2025

Sea Arrivals Europe 2025



Europe Sea Arrivals / Greece

Total arrivals in 2025

48,048

Last updated 31 Dec 2025

Sea arrivals in 2025

41,751

Last updated 31 Dec 2025



Selected numbers 2025

In the year 2025 3963 refugees were registered as new arrivals on Lesbos. Less than 10% of the overall sea arrivals to Greece are coming to Lesbos. Routes have changed towards more south due to the ongoing Push-Back strategies in the Aegean. Shipwrecks and people dying through actions of the European funded Greek Coastguard in 2025 continue.

0 €

Is the amount of money you get once you are a recognized refugee in Greece. There are no social benefits as in other countries, you have 30 days to leave the camp after you receive your positive decision

48.048

Refugees arrived to Greece in 2025 from them **41.751 via the sea** (compared to 54.417 in 2024) according to UNHCR

3963

Refugees arrived **with boats** to Lesbos in 2025 (compared to 11.000 in 2024)

***Dead and missing**

107

1300

Refugees are residing on Lesbos by end of December 2025

33%

Of them are children

95%

Of them come from violent crisis regions such as Afghanistan, Syria, Palestine, Sudan, Somalia, D.R. Congo and Eritrea

1,5 years

Is the max. time that at least one family we know has spent in the camps of Lesbos due to asylum procedure limbo in 2025, minimum time from arrival until receiving travel documents is 3 months often at least 6 months



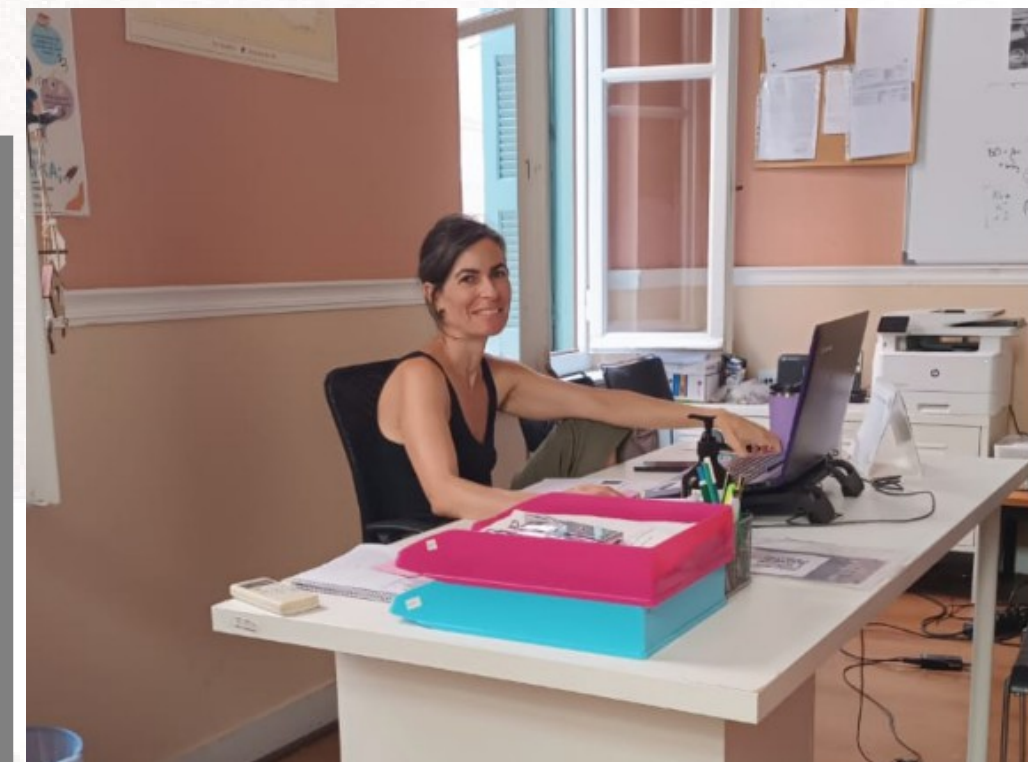
Sources and more information:

<https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean/location/5179>

Our team 2025

Our core team in 2025 consisted of 3 people up to March and after 2 people:

- Two receptionists / social consultants, Greek/English speaking. They were responsible for the Information Point at the Welcome Office – accompanying people to public services and trying to solve any issues coming up as the main reception point: Thenia and Natasa.
- One part time housing manager responsible for the housing project / and also taking part of the Info Point/ Case Work at the Office January to March 2025: Joana.
- One coordinator responsible for the projects, advocacy, administration, fundraising, supplies, communication and supervision, after March also for housing: Alice.
- Additionally we cooperated with Tobi and Aziz for the VC Mytilini Radio Project until Summer 2025



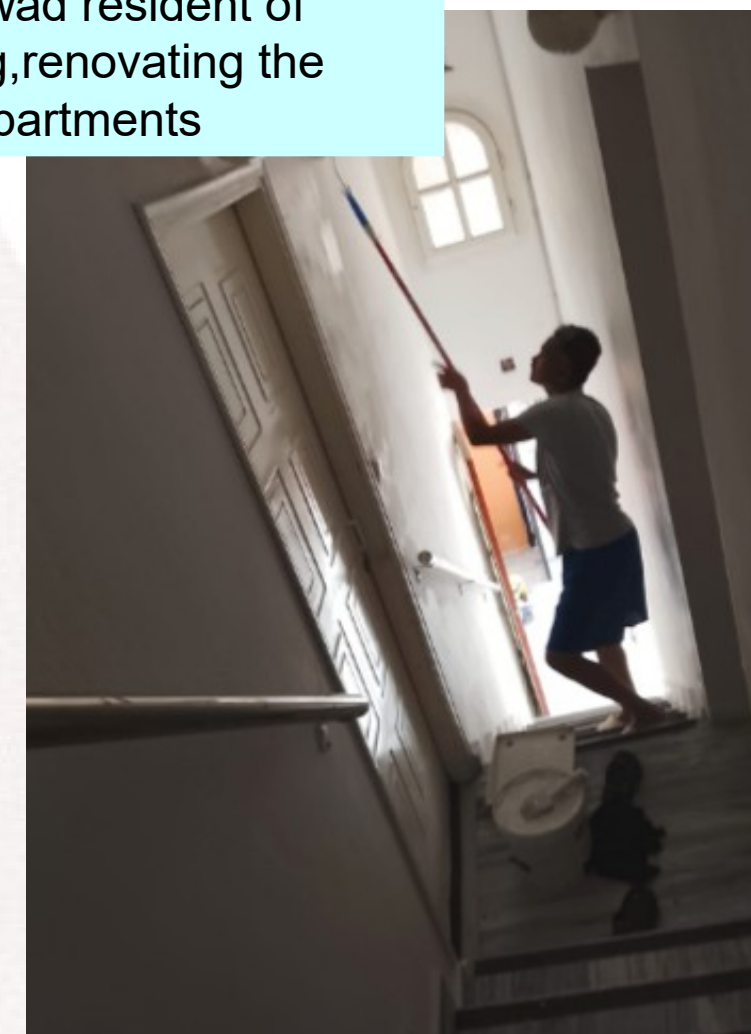
Pictures: Natasa in the office and Awad resident of housing, renovating the apartments

Our Impact

We welcome all people on the move in Lesbos. We refer, we speak up and advocate, we stand in solidarity, we find flexible solutions, we explain about other services, accompany to public institutions, we do individual consultations and psychosocial support, but also group sessions about workers and social rights.

We offer warm and safe spaces outside of the camp in form of individual apartments and shared flats. We connect with other actors and initiatives on a working level but also on journalistic and research level. We stand against the isolation of refugees and violence at the borders, we support where it is needed.

We cooperate with self organized groups and collectives. Together with our office visitors, participants of workshops and people in our housing projects we reached almost 2200 people through the year. We give orientation, support and solidarity that is not given in a camp.



Welcome Office

Our Welcome Office is situated very central in Mytilini close to the port. We do applications (e.g. renewal of residence permits online), we book appointments (.e.g at public hospital), and we accompany cases (e.g. to the registry office for birth certificate or the tax office for registration), we prepare all the necessary paperwork and provide translation of documents (often people wonder what kind of papers they are holding in their hands).

In 2025 we had 845 individuals for taxis net codes only. We offer information and counselling mainly in the areas of administrative support which means how to get social insurance number, how to register at public services, how to open a bank account, where to find clothes for free, we help applying for a job or as unemployed. We give general information about the asylum procedures, kindergardens or how to rent an apartment. We accompany to other offices or refer to other organizations. We try to be a smiling information point. We are also an open space for other initiatives that do not have the means to rent their own space. We are part of the integration and the protection working groups on the island - and conected to many other organisation in order to combine local ressources. Our office is open mondays to fridays 09:15 to 15:30. The space is the base where we coordinate the other projects such as housing, radio workshops, individual consultations etc. We are able there to recieve donations such as food or non food items to distribute where it is most needed (clothes and hygiene items distributions). Our clients are residents of the camp or self accomodated in the city center. Not all have the chance or the wish of staying in Lesbos. For the ones that do (integration) we have often many follow up session, and accompany them through all the first steps of their life here.



1905

Total visits to our social counselling desks

845 new clients

86 integration cases

Housing of vulnerable refugees

We started with **14 apartments** in 2025 and due to the rising in electricity in water bills we downsized to 10 apartments end of year. **1 safe shelter for single women and mothers** (shared Apartment with 5 rooms), 1 safe shelter for queer refugees (Shared apartment with 5 rooms) and **8 apartments for families** and single mothers with children (not shared). In most of the cases the reason to seek housing that was mentioned is for the well being of the children or due to serious health issues or protection issues inside the camp also homelessness after being recognised as a refugee was a big issue this year that for end of year we added an Emergency Flat to our pool of safe spaces.

107
individuals
hosted in 2025

37
Children

We received around 50% of our residents through referrals from other organisation that were flagging protection or health issues inside the camp. The rest came and asked for help themselves in our office.

The average of staying in 2025 was 6 month, especially for single mothers and less perspectives where to go after the time of staying was always more than 3 months, in some cases a year even.

We provided apartments for 11 families
And a safe space for 11 single mothers

Countries of origin in our housing project:
Sudan, Afghanistan, Syria, Sierra Leone, Somalia, D.R. Congo, Iran, Iraq, Kamerun, South Sudan, Eritrea, Guinea, Ethiopia, Palestine, and Stateless

The children ages ranged from new born up to teenagers, The mothers ages from 18 to 40 years old. In our waiting lists through the year were another 100 cases of families and singles that we were not able to host. Our housing project ranges from short term emergency housing to integration transition to find a selfustainable life on Lesvos.

Coordination and Awareness 2025

1. Regular Meetings with stakeholders on the island

We are part of the monthly integration working group with state and non-governmental actors on the island chaired by UNHCR.

We are part of the bi-weekly protection working group with actors on the island that work in the sectors of child protection, legal aid, health, housing, psychosocial support etc.

2. Visits of Researchers/Journalists/Independent Outlets:

We had approximately 15 researchers visiting during the year from Universities in Europe and the U.S.A., to whom we gave an overview on the current situation of refugees on the island.

We had 5 journalists interview us with the same purpose, one team of documentary film makers and 2 independent Bloggers who wrote about Lesbos as part of their journey.

3. Workshops

Three times per year we cooperate with a university from Denmark that visit for one week with a student group of around 15-25 students each time. With them we accompany their "tour" through the island, visiting arrival points, former camps, and the new camp. We give a workshop about the situation on the island and the history of solidarity of the last 10 years.

4. Partner or potential partner organisations visiting

We had approx. 10 organisations visiting in 2025 consisting of 1-5 people per visit. Sometimes the visits are for 2 days or for one week. We show them our projects/ sometimes the houses if needed, meeting refugees, discussing with other organisations on the island, giving them a warm welcome and a "tour" visiting main sites on the island. Some of the organisations visiting this year were: Kerk in Actie (NL), Hummanity Now (USA), Just Humans (DE), Hammer Forum (DE), a community center from Monaco called Belevue and their founders (DE), a German welcoming initiative from a small village in Bavaria, (2 personal visits one Zoom call), we had a big delegation visiting from Radio Helsinki with whom we ran a Erasmus + program beginning of the year 2025.

~20

Organisations on the island and in Greece we closely work together (sharing information, advocating, meetings etc),

100+

Visitors from abroad we informed about the situation of refugees on the island and our projects

Financial Overview 2025*

- Overall expenses: -280.274,32 €
- Overall Income: +284.501,17 €
- Housing/Safe Shelter(s) Project: -106.838,79 €
(Rent of all apartments up to 14 at a time), Electricity, Water, Supermarket Vouchers for residents, medical care, Hygiene Items, 1 Staff for coordinating, Non-Food Items, Maintenance, lawyers for custody, new kitchen equipments etc.)
- Welcome Office: - 48.978,45 €
(2,5 staff members, office rent, utilities, and office supplies)
- Self Organized Projects (Solidarity Collectives): - 55.953 €
(Direct support for refugees: Food, Transport, Passport fees, Group activities, etc.)
- Partner Projects (other NGOs who we implement for): - 45.385,64 €
(Border Violence Monitoring Network (Staff), Radio Project (mainly staff), Collective Aid (Non food items distributions), Respekt for Greece (Volunteer Flat expenses)
- Organizations costs outside projects: -23.117,86 €
(Overall Coordination, Accounting, Audit, taxes, insurance etc.)

* for a more detailed financial report please E-Mail us (we send automatically to all our main donors)

alice@welcomeofficelesvos.org



Associated projects and cooperating partners 2025

- We ran a radio project called VC Mytilini – doing workshops and podcasts in and about Lesbos until Summer 2025 when the project ended: <https://de.cba.media/podcast/vc-mytilini>
- We cooperate with the „Lesvos LGBTIQ+ Refugee Solidarity“ collectiv for refugees that aim to fill the gap in supporting queer people on the move in Lesbos (ONGOING):
<https://www.instagram.com/lesvos.lgbtiq.solidarity/>
- We host a women collective to fight against patriarchy and borders – a self led refugee collective of women (ONGOING):
<https://www.instagram.com/women.in.solidarity/>
- We partnered with local food distribution initiatives in order to provide basic food provision to the most vulnerable (Until September 2025 when the project shot down):
<https://www.instagram.com/noborderkitchenlesvos/>
- We share a space with the legal centre lesbos in order to have the very important legal aid fighting for human rights (ONGOING): <https://legalcentrelesvos.org/>
- We cooperate with Respect for Greece association in Germany, to coordinate a Volunteer Program on the island, for people that become active with refugees (ONGOING).
- **TOGETHER WE ARE STRONG – SOLIDARITY WINS!**

SUPPORTERS of our work that made all this possible:

- **Freundeskreis für Kinder in Not e.V., DE**
- **Kerk in Actie, NL**
- **Ursula-Wandres-Stiftung, DE**
- **Doro Blancke Stiftung, AT**
- **Medico International, DE**
- **Radio Helsinki, AT**
- **Borderline Europe, DE**
- **Hammer Forum, DE**
- **Mission Lifeline, DE**
- **Mediterranean Women´s Fund, FR**
- **Stiftung DO, DE**
- **Elly, Sjanet, Family and Friends, NL**
- **Respekt für Griechenland e.V., DE**



- **Makersspace , FR**
 - **Lean on Us e.V., DE**
 - **Hummanity Now, USA**
 - **Collective Aid, UK**
- And many private donors we are very very very thankful for all you have done**