

20
23

HRLP ANNUAL REPORT



DEFENDING THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS OF PEOPLE ON THE MOVE IN GREECE

20
23

THIS REPORT IS INTENDED TO PROVIDE AN OVERVIEW OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS LEGAL PROJECT'S IMPACT, ACTIVITIES AND FINANCES IN 2023

It outlines the work that the Human Rights Legal Project undertook to defend the fundamental rights of people on the move in Greece, and how we sought accountability for state-sponsored criminality at the border.

It is a non-exhaustive report and additional information can be found on our [website](#).

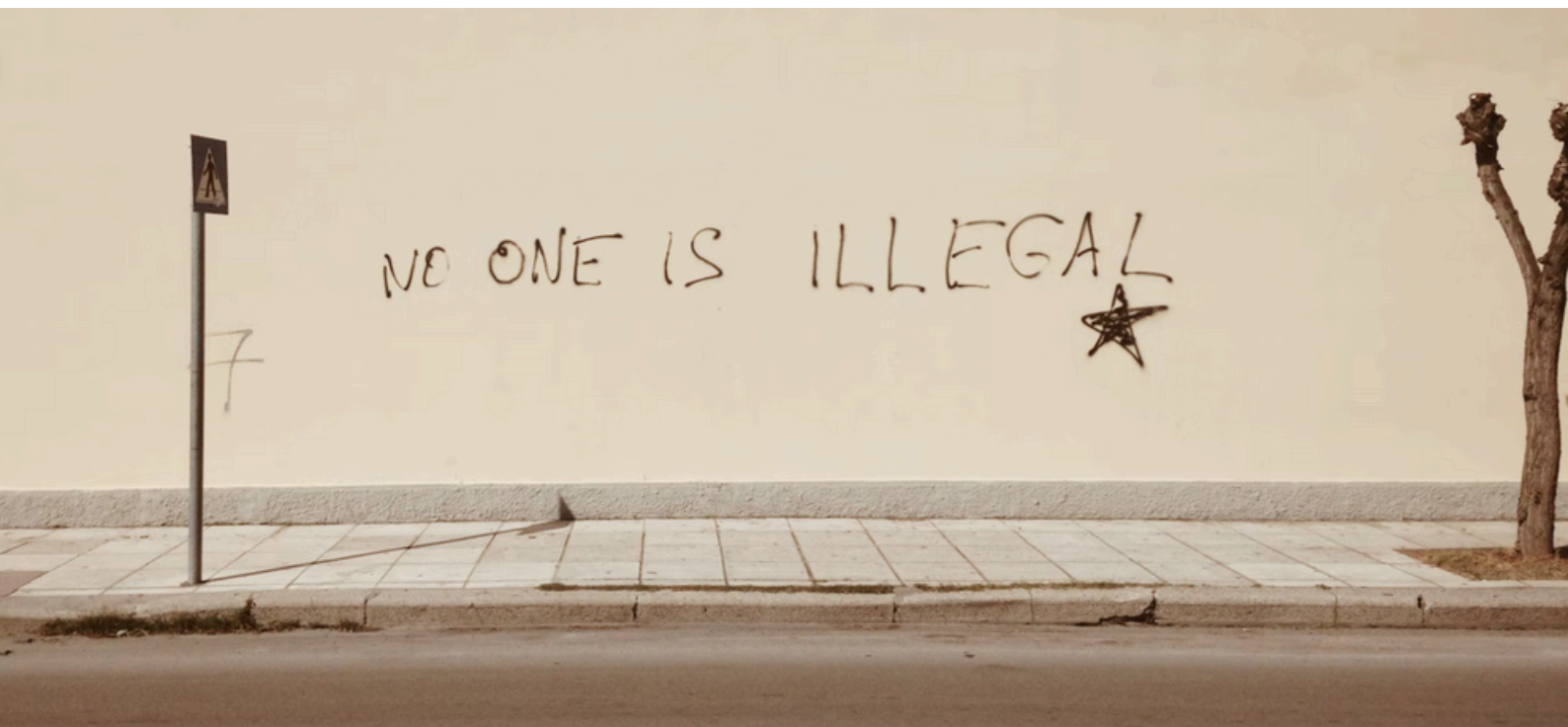


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INTRODUCTION

2023 WAS A YEAR OF WIDESPREAD CONFLICT AND VOLATILITY ACROSS THE GLOBE. YET INSTEAD OF MEETING THESE CHALLENGES WITH SOLIDARITY AND POLICIES TO PROTECT, WE WITNESSED STATES EXERCISING EGREGIOUS AND SYSTEMATIC VIOLATIONS OF THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS OF PEOPLE ON THE MOVE AT THE EXTERNAL EUROPEAN UNION (EU) BORDER.

Within the EU, we witnessed an escalation in political rhetoric calling for the reinforcement of borders, which was matched by enhanced levels of border violence with minimal state accountability, and exacerbated by the denigration of asylum seekers by media outlets.

The securitisation of migration policy and practice had real-life consequences for people on the move in 2023: unsettling accounts of abuse and violence, callous recklessness of state authorities, and disregard for human dignity. In 2023 alone, thousands perished in deadly shipwrecks in the Mediterranean.

Against this backdrop, the Human Rights Legal project continues to address grave violations of human rights perpetrated against people seeking asylum in Greece, with a focus on the island of Samos. In 2023, we assisted a total of 257 people, spanning cases such as the criminalisation of boat drivers, discriminatory medical negligence, police brutality, and pushbacks.

We provided emergency legal assistance on 105 occasions to ensure that individuals landing on Samos were guaranteed their right to seek international protection. We filed 4 lawsuits, submitted 4 reports to the Greek Ombudsman, and for the first time, filed 3 requests for the indication of interim measures before the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR).

This is just a sample of the multifaceted approach we took in 2023 to support individuals whose rights had been violated and to leverage the law to affect change on a systemic level.

CONTEXT OF OUR ACTION

THE SITUATION IN GREECE FOR REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS IN 2023 WAS LARGELY CHARACTERISED BY HOSTILITY, POOR CONDITIONS, AND VARYING DEGREES OF PROCEDURAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS, COUPLED WITH A CHALLENGING AND INCREASINGLY RESTRICTIVE CIVIL SOCIETY SPACE.

THE PYLOS SHIPWRECK

An event that scarred 2023 was the shipwreck of the fishing vessel Adrianna on 14 June. The ship, which was carrying around 750 people, was off the coast of Pylos when it sank. Only 104 people survived, and 40 of them filed a [lawsuit](#) regarding alleged attempts by the Greek authorities to [tow their boat away from Greek waters](#) causing the shipwreck, instead of rescuing them. Not only has there been a [distinct lack of accountability](#) for the role that the Greek authorities played in this tragedy, but the State has also prosecuted [9 of the survivors](#). These individuals were accused of forming a criminal organisation, facilitating the illegal entry of third-country nationals, and ultimately, causing the shipwreck.

HRLP UNDERTOOK THE DEFENCE OF 4 OF THESE INDIVIDUALS. IN THE TRIAL ON 21 MAY 2024 THE COURT ACCEPTED HRLP'S ARGUMENT THAT GREECE HAD NO JURISDICTION TO TRY THE ACCUSED, AS THE SHIPWRECK HAPPENED IN INTERNATIONAL WATERS. ALL 9 ACCUSED MEN WERE RELEASED AFTER SPENDING 11 MONTHS IN PRE-TRIAL DETENTION.

The Pylos shipwreck came shortly after a [series of revelations of pushbacks](#) perpetrated by the Hellenic Coast Guard, including the [New York Times investigation](#) in May, which documented a pushback of 12 asylum seekers from the island of Lesbos, leading the European Commission to [call for an official investigation](#). Both events are believed to have been key contributing drivers for the suspension of pushbacks from land since July 2023. Pushbacks at sea have however continued to happen with the same vigour and frequency as before.



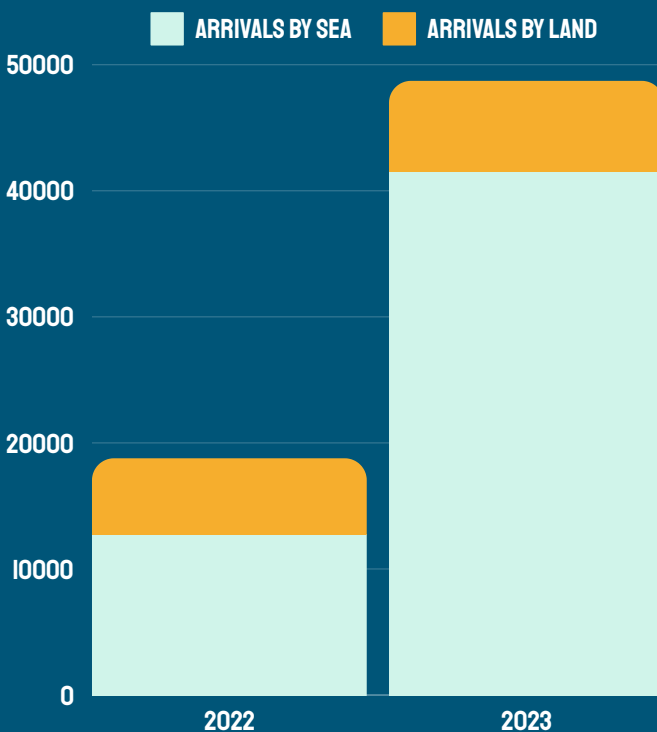
WILDFIRES & RACIALLY MOTIVATED VIOLENCE

In August 2023, Greece suffered from devastating wildfires which had a tragic impact for the entire population, including refugees and asylum seekers. At least 20 people who were believed to have crossed the Evros River to seek asylum in the EU, were found dead in the forest of Dadia in Evros.

At the same time, it spurred further anti-immigrant sentiment in Greece, fueled in part by racist propaganda and government statements that targeted asylum seekers as the ones responsible for the wildfires in the Evros region. This led to attacks by local vigilantes and criminalisation by the Greek authorities.

ARRIVALS & DE FACTO DETENTION

In the last four months of the year, there was a rapid increase in the number of people arriving to the Greek islands to apply for international protection.



DATA FROM UNHCR

It soon became evident that the EU-funded Closed Controlled Access Centres of the Greek islands - which had long been praised by policymakers as the solution - were unable to manage refugee arrivals, while also ensuring respect for fundamental rights and due process. This resulted in the normalisation of de facto detention of newly arrived asylum seekers, who, along with having their movement restricted, were also faced with inhumane and degrading living conditions, causing HRLP and partner organisations to call for the centres' closure.

SAMOS CCAC

In Samos, refugees and asylum seekers are accommodated in one of the aforementioned Closed and Controlled Access Centres (CCAC). The centre was inaugurated in September 2021 and was the first of its kind in the EU. It is isolated, located in an inland, mountainous area of the island, about 9 km away from Vathy, the main city. Human rights groups and NGOs have widely reported the substandard and undignified conditions of the camp, and highlighted particularly:

STRICT CONTROL & SURVEILLANCE



Strict control and surveillance is exerted 24/7 on the residents, who are not allowed to leave the structure between 8pm to 8am. The facilities are heavily guarded by police officers and security personnel, while several incidents of police brutality have been reported. Mobile phones are taken by the police upon arrival for between 7-10 days, resulting in a mass violation of applicants' privacy and leaving new arrivals with no possibility to reach out for medical or legal support to NGOs operating outside the CCAC.

LACK OF MEDICAL CARE



Medical access is severely limited in the CCAC. Newly arrived people have reported being denied medical and psychological care by the Hellenic National Public Health Organization (EODY), due to their lack of documentation in Greece, including persons with chronic medical issues. Since the opening of the CCAC, EODY has not appointed a medical doctor to the camp. Vulnerability assessments are also lacking, delayed or violating due process.

WATER SHORTAGES



Water supply to the CCAC was already insufficient before the sharp increase in the number of residents and dramatically deteriorated over the summer of 2023. Without water, the toilets/showers and the washing machines are not working, rendering residents unable to meet their most basic hygienic needs.

OVERCROWDING



The CCAC was originally designed to accommodate 2040 people; as of 31 December 2023, there were 3890 applicants for international protection registered. Newly arrived people are made to sleep in spaces such as classrooms and kitchens, without beds and mattresses, meaning they are forced to sleep on the ground, and proper access to bathrooms, sufficient food and fresh water, and are denied any form of privacy.

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

OUR TEAM

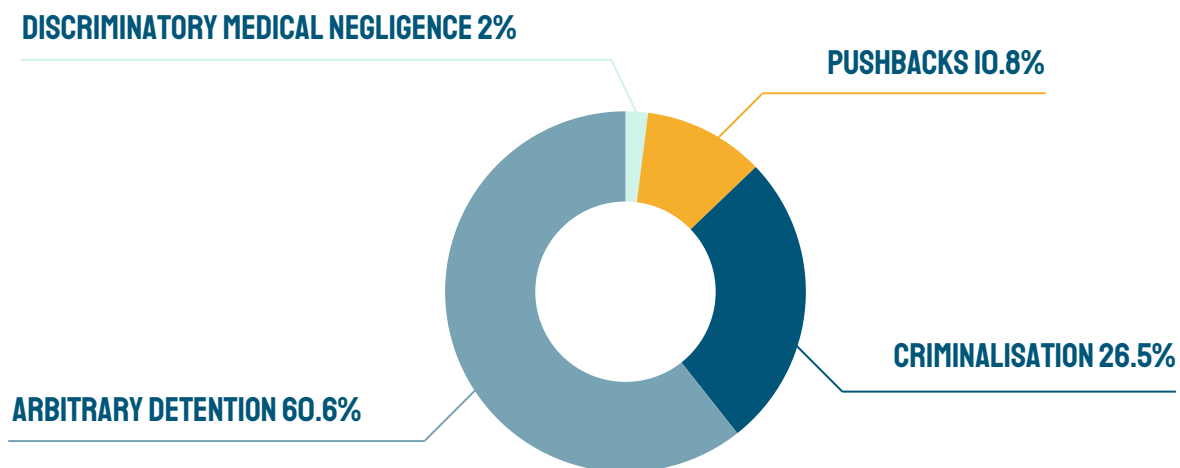
In 2023, HRLP was run by ten people: the team based on Samos consisting of two lawyers, a legal Coordinator, and a legal assistant; and a board with five members, who are also the co-founders, providing management and organisational support remotely.

We continued our work with a consultant human rights lawyer, who has extensive experience with the European Court of Human Rights and other Council of Europe human rights-monitoring mechanisms, as well as with several volunteers, mainly supporting fundraising. As ever, our work would not have been possible in 2023 without the diligence and dedication of our interpreters and community mediators.



OUR IMPACT IN 2023

IN 2023, WE ASSISTED A TOTAL OF 257 PEOPLE, 63 OF WHICH WE REPRESENTED IN COURT. WE ALSO PROVIDED EMERGENCY LEGAL ASSISTANCE* 105 TIMES.



5

DISCRIMINATORY
MEDICAL
NEGLIGENCE

INCLUDING, FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE INSTIGATION OF LEGAL PROCEEDINGS BEFORE THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

27

PUSHBACKS

INCLUDING THE FILING OF SEVERAL LAWSUITS AGAINST THE GREEK AUTHORITIES ON BEHALF OF VICTIMS OF PUSHBACKS.

66

CRIMINALISATION

FIND MORE DATA ON THESE CASES IN THE CRIMINALISATION SECTION IN THE FOLLOWING PAGE.

151

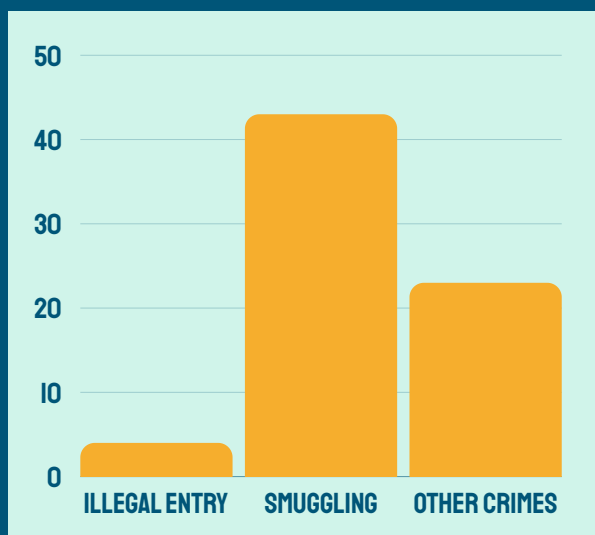
ARBITRARY
DETENTION

PEOPLE WERE ILLEGALLY DETAINED WITHIN THE PREMISES OF THE CLOSED CONTROLLED ACCESS CENTRE OF SAMOS.

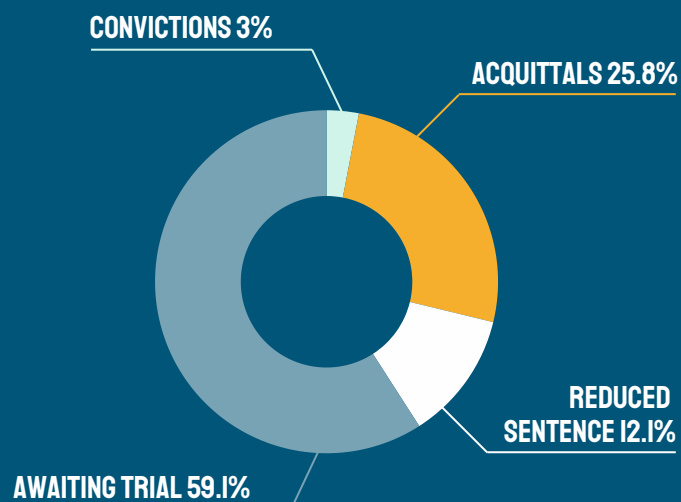
* Emergency legal assistance refers to the organisation's intervention to guarantee the right to apply for international protection for newly arrived asylum seekers on the island of Samos. These interventions started to prevent pushbacks from land from happening.

CRIMINALISATION CASES

Out of the 257 people assisted, 66 people were victims of criminalisation by the Greek authorities. Of those, 4 people were accused of illegal entry, 43 of facilitating the illegal entry of third-country nationals into the Greek territory, and 24 of other crimes in connection with incidents in the CCAC, such as protests or arson.



CRIMINALISATION CASES BY CATEGORY



17 people were acquitted, 8 had their sentences reduced, 2 were convicted and the others are waiting for their trial. It is worth noting that there are currently significant delays due to numerous postponements.

LEGAL ACTIONS

4 LAWSUITS ON BEHALF OF 7 PLAINTIFFS

- 1 pushback case
- 2 cases of police violence
- 1 case of attempted pushback and violence on behalf of State agents

2 OBJECTIONS TO DETENTION BEFORE THE ADMINISTRATIVE COURT

3 REQUESTS FOR INTERIM MEASURES BEFORE THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS, 2 OF WHICH WERE THEN SENT AS FULL APPLICATIONS

LEGAL SUBMISSIONS

4 REPORTS TO THE GREEK OMBUDSMAN

- 2 cases regarding police violence inside the Samos CCAC
- 2 cases regarding the unlawful detention of newly arrived asylum-seekers and the inhumane conditions of their detention



REPORT TO THE NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

REPORT TO THE GROUP OF EXPERTS ON ACTION AGAINST VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (GREVIO)

- Prepared in collaboration with I HAVE RIGHTS, it focused on the sexual and gender-based violence that takes place during pushbacks. The submission was incorporated in GREVIO's [Baseline Evaluation Report on Greece](#).

SUBMISSION TO THE COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

- Prepared in collaboration with I HAVE RIGHTS, it presented evidence of systematic and structural human rights violations of people on the move on Samos. This submission aims to assist the Committee monitoring the implementation of the judgment [Safi and others v. Greece](#), concerning the 2014 capsizing of a boat close to the Greek island Farmakonisi, resulting in the death of 11 asylum seekers, three women and eight children, from Afghanistan.

EMERGENCY LEGAL ASSISTANCE

HRLP is regularly contacted on its hotline by people who have just landed by boat on the shores of Samos and who request assistance. In 105 such cases, we informed the authorities and Médecins Sans Frontières of the arrival, through a joint Standard Operating Procedure that we spearheaded, thereby effectively preventing potential pushbacks and guaranteeing the right to apply for international protection for new arrivals to Samos.

CASE PROFILES

THE FOLLOWING CASES HAVE BEEN SELECTED BECAUSE, IN THEIR DIVERSITY, THEY REPRESENT THE WORK OF HRLP, BOTH IN TERMS OF MANDATE AND OF LEGAL ACTIONS TAKEN

I. CRIMINALISATION OF PEOPLE ON THE MOVE: THE CASE OF CHELIK MEMET

HRLP lawyers represent victims of criminalization. Similarly to pushbacks, the criminalization of migration is a politically motivated state policy, in contravention of human rights principles, designed to punish migrants and deter prospective asylum seekers from entering Greece. Criminalization is a direct attack on the fundamental right to seek asylum and therefore on principles of humanity and dignity.

CASE SUMMARY



A BOAT CARRYING CHELIK AND 154 PEOPLE IS RESCUED IN CH / SEP 2021

Chelik Memet, a Turkish Kurdish asylum-seeker left Turkey by boat, with 154 other passengers. The boat was heading toward Italy but it started to take on water, the passengers were rescued by an oil tanker which brought them to Crete; one pregnant woman drowned.



CHELIK IS ARRESTED ON SMUGGLING CHARGES / SEP 2021

Accusations were solely based on the fact that he was taking videos with his phone at the time of the rescue.



CHELIK IS FOUND GUILTY IN FIRST INSTANCE AND SENTENCED TO 155 YEARS OF PRISON / SEP 2022

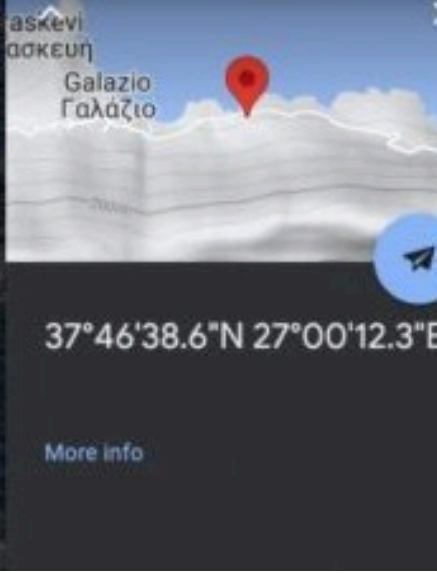
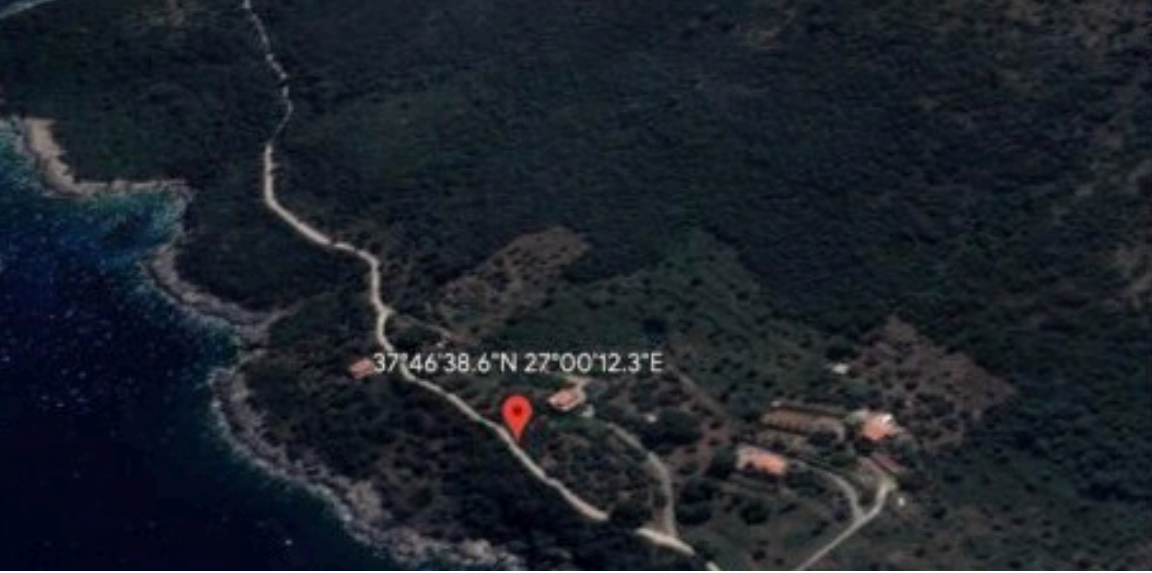
The Court found the defendant guilty of smuggling, as part of a criminal organization, and of the transfer of third-country nationals during which a death occurred. Under the law, the penalty is one life sentence for each boat passenger.



CHELIK IS ACQUITTED OF ALL CHARGES AND RELEASED / DEC 2023

The Court accepted the objections of HRLP's lawyers and found that Greece had no jurisdiction to prosecute the defendant as the shipwreck took place in international waters. Before being acquitted, Chelik spent 2 years in pre-trial detention.

READ MORE ON THE CASE ON OUR [WEBSITE](#)



II. PUSHBACKS AND GENERAL BORDER VIOLENCE : THE CASE OF SAMAH AND M.


HRLP met Samah and her cousin M. in February 2023. Together with 8 other people, they were the victims of a pushback in late January 2023. The group had landed on Samos and contacted our hotline. While waiting to be rescued, the group was caught by individuals who are often referred to as the ‘dark police’, and they were beaten and robbed. Afterwards, they were taken on boats of the Hellenic Coast Guard and cast adrift on a life raft in Turkish waters.

ON 8 MAY WE FILED A LAWSUIT AGAINST THE AUTHORITIES FOR CAUSING BODILY HARM, ROBBERY, INHUMANE AND DEGRADING TREATMENTS AND VOLUNTARY ENDANGERMENT OF LIFE

HRLP collaborated with the journalists Katy Fallon and Giorgos Christides on their investigation [Surviving hell in Samos: Beaten, robbed and pushed back from Greek ‘Paradise’](#). A video of Samah explaining her traumatic experience, create in collaboration with Oxfam, can be found on our [website](#).

Investigation / Migration





29 / 04 / 2023

SURVIVING HELL IN SAMOS: BEATEN, ROBBED, AND PUSHED BACK FROM GREEK ‘PARADISE’



2023 HIGHLIGHTS

SHARING TWO SUCCESSES OF OUR 2023

Legal work is based on lengthy procedures, which can be frustrating for the people we support. However, when these procedures are successful and the people are vindicated, it is a great joy and our team is proud to be able to contribute to the recognition of the damage suffered by people during their migratory journey. We would like to share with you two victories of 2023.

I. REZA AND ABDUL KADER'S ACQUITTALS

CASE SUMMARY

Reza and Abdul Kader respectively fled Syria and Iran. They were both forced to drive the boat during their journey to come to Greece.

They entered Greece through the island of Samos. Both were charged with intentionally and serially facilitating third-country nationals' illegal entry into Greek territory, facing imprisonment for up to 10 years and a fine of at least 20,000€.

THEY WERE BOTH ACQUITTED OF ALL CHARGES / OCT 2023

READ MORE ON THE CASE ON OUR [WEBSITE](#)



FOR THE FIRST TIME, A GREEK COURT FOUND THAT REFUGEES ARE EXCLUDED FROM THE SCOPE OF LAW 4251/2014 ON IMMIGRATION, SOCIAL INTEGRATION CODE AND OTHER PROVISIONS, AND THEREFORE CANNOT COMMIT THE OFFENCE OF FACILITATING ILLEGAL ENTRY OF THIRD NATIONALS AND OF ILLEGAL TRANSFER OF THIRD NATIONALS.

While the law is clear and the HRLP lawyers systematically raise this argument, it was the first time that a Greek Court used this article to acquit defendants accused of facilitating the illegal entry of third-country nationals because they are beneficiaries of international protection within the meaning of the 1951 Geneva Convention.

II. INTERIM MEASURES GRANTED BY THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

CASE SUMMARY

Z.H. AND HER DAUGHTER S.T.H. ARRIVED ON SAMOS AND ARE DE FACTO DETAINED / SEP 2023

In September, HRLP met Z.H. and her 6-month-old daughter S.T.H., who had a heart and stomach condition. Upon arrival on Samos, Z.H. and S.T.H. were assisted by Médecins Sans Frontières, who asked for their immediate transfer to the General Hospital of Samos. In the hospital, Z.H. was informed that they should be transferred to Athens, in order for S.T.H. to receive proper medical care. Z.H. and S.T.H. were instead taken to Samos CCAC and de facto detained.

A HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN THE CCAC / SEP 2023

The situation in Samos CCAC was described as a humanitarian crisis due to the lack of medical services inside the premises, the water shortages, the insufficient food, the sanitary conditions and the lack of dedicated facilities for vulnerable asylum seekers.

HRLP SUBMITS INTERIM MEASURES TO THE ECTHR / SEP 2023

In the absence of a reaction from the authorities and given the critical situation of the applicants, on 18 September 2023 HRLP's lawyers submitted a request for interim measures to the European Court of Human Rights based on Rule 39 of the Rules of the Court.

INTERIM MEASURES ARE GRANTED / SEP 2023

After the decision, Z.H. and S.T.H.'s asylum applications were registered and they were granted the right to move freely throughout Greece.

[READ MORE ON THE CASE ON OUR WEBSITE](#)



THE COURT DECIDED "IN THE INTERESTS OF THE PARTIES AND THE PROPER CONDUCT OF THE PROCEEDINGS BEFORE IT, TO INDICATE TO THE GOVERNMENT OF GREECE, UNDER RULE 39, THAT THE SECOND APPLICANT SHOULD BE PROVIDED WITH APPROPRIATE MEDICAL CARE AND THE APPLICANTS SHOULD BE ENSURED ADEQUATE LIVING CONDITIONS, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THEIR EXTREME VULNERABILITY".

ADVOCACY & AWARENESS

THROUGHOUT 2023, THE HRLP HAS WORKED TO RAISE AWARENESS ON STATE CRIMINALITY AT THE BORDER BY CONDUCTING OUTREACH ACTIVITIES TO AFFECTED COMMUNITIES AND BY COLLABORATING WITH PARTNER ORGANISATIONS IN GREECE

OUTREACH

We conducted and/or participated in different workshops, alone as well as in collaboration, mostly with I HAVE RIGHTS and Avocats sans Frontières. These workshops took place in NGO community centres and were designed to provide information to asylum seekers and answer questions about human rights and state criminality at the EU border. Most of the workshops we deliver are open to anyone, while we also participated in workshops specifically designed for women and people from the LGBTQIA+ community.

In April 2023, HRLP started working with the health promoter supervisor of Médecins Sans Frontières to prepare a workshop on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV). The objective of the joint workshop is to raise awareness and address the types of SGBV inflicted on people on the move by state agents.

In September, October, and November, we had to adapt our outreach strategy to the sharp increase of de facto and unlawful detention of people in the CCAC for extended periods. Consequently, many people couldn't attend the workshops, and especially those who had arrived recently were less likely to have access to contact details of the different actors offering support on the island. Hence, we decided to conduct online outreach to people who had contacted us upon arrival through our Emergency Legal Assistance protocol and enquired about their situation and well-being.



COLLABORATION WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Over the years, we have built strong ties and collaborative ways of working with many of the organisations and international agencies working on Samos. The collaboration takes place through a referral pathway system between actors and is enhanced by regular thematic working groups and meetings. We refer asylum cases to the organizations [I Have Rights](#) (IHR) and [Avocats sans Frontières France](#) (ASF), or to the lawyers of [Médecins sans Frontières](#) (MSF) and [Metadrasi](#) in more complex cases. Additionally, we refer people to MSF for medical and/or mental health support, and collaborate with them in cases of police violence. At the same time, we receive referrals from most actors in Samos, including UNHCR, MSF, [SelfMaid](#), ASF, IHR and [Samos Volunteers](#).

Beyond Samos, we work in collaboration with organisations and networks across Greece and the European Union to share knowledge and collaborate to increase our impact.

JOINT INITIATIVES

With the aim of raising awareness and making visible the violations of rights that we encounter in our work and in order to change policies and practices, in 2023 we have contributed to statements, reports and submissions.



== LETTER TO THE GREEK BAR ASSOCIATION

HRLP contributed to a letter written to the Greek Bar Association regarding the role and rights of lawyers when they assist newly arrived people, before their registration.

== REPORT TO THE GREEK OMBUDSPERSON

HRLP, ASF and IHR submitted a report to the Ombudsperson regarding the arbitrary and unlawful practices of the Administration of the CCAC which impose excessive restrictions on their free entry to the Camp. The organizations pinpointed specific practices that constitute excessive limitations on their free entry to public services. Such restrictions violate the Lawyer's Code and, most importantly, result in the restriction of refugees' right to legal assistance. In a letter to the CCAC, the Ombudsperson indicated to the Administration not to impose limitations beyond what is absolutely necessary.

== REPORT TO THE COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

HRLP and IHR presented evidence of systematic and structural human rights violations of people on the move on Samos to the Committee of Ministers of the CoE. This submission aims to assist the Committee monitoring the implementation of the judgement Safi and others v. Greece (application no. 5418/15), concerning the 2014 capsizing of a boat close to the Greek island Farmakonisi, resulting in the death of 11 asylum seekers, three women and eight children, from Afghanistan.





HRLP and IHR submitted a [joint report](#) to the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, the independent monitoring body of the Istanbul Convention. The report highlights several violations of the Convention on Samos, including gender-based violence during pushbacks; the conditions of detention of women in the CCAC of Samos; the rights of victims of sex trafficking, most of whom are women, and the possibilities that migrant victims of gender-based violence realistically have of raising their complaints.



HRLP and 28 organizations across Greece [called](#) for an effective investigation of any wrongdoing in relation to the alleged pushback committed by the Hellenic Coast Guard on the island of Lesbos denounced in May 2023 by a reportage of the New York Times.



HRLP and 22 organizations across Greece issued a [statement](#) in September regarding the unlawful detention in appalling conditions in the CCAC of Lesbos and Samos.



HRLP contributed to a [statement](#), issued in January 2024, denouncing the inhumane and degrading conditions in the CCAC of Samos.

WORKING GROUPS

HRLP is an active and regular member of different working groups and fora which gather civil society actors in Samos, as well as at regional and national levels.

LEGAL AID MEETING SAMOS

- Coordinated by UNHCR, legal actors in Samos and sometimes the asylum services

LEGAL AID NETWORK AND ADVOCACY NETWORK

- Monthly meetings coordinated by Equal Legal Aid
- A fora where legal aid organisations from across Greece share updates and information, and establish collaborate

COORDINATORS MEETING

- Coordinated by Samos Volunteers
- Bi-monthly, seven non-governmental organisations, focus on Samos

PROTECTION WORKING GROUP

- Coordinated by UNHCR, takes place monthly
- Participants are local NGOs, UNHCR and, at times, authorities such as Europol and Frontex
- Focus on ‘protection’ issues in Samos, conditions inside the CCAC

AD HOC MEETINGS

- E.g., meeting with the Assistant High Commissioner for Protection of the UNHCR or meeting with Frontex Fundamental Rights Officers

OTHER PARTNERS



LEGAL CENTRE LESVOS



CAPTAIN SUPPORT
NETWORK GROUP



BORDERLINE EUROPE



EQUAL LEGAL AID

SPECIAL THANKS TO ALEXIS GEORGIOULIS AND IASONAS APOSTOLOPOULOS

FINANCIAL REPORT

JANUARY - DECEMBER 2023

The figures in this report reflect the total transactions of the HRLP between January and December 2023. All calculations are based on Euro amounts.

| OPENING BALANCE - 1 JAN 2023 | CLOSING BALANCE - 31 DEC 2023 |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| € 15,980 | €10,019 |

TABLE 1. 2023 OPENING AND CLOSING BALANCES

| | 2023 | 2022 |
|-------------|----------|----------|
| INCOME | €154,615 | €150,428 |
| EXPENDITURE | €160,577 | €134,449 |

TABLE 2. INCOME VS EXPENDITURE 2022 AND 2023

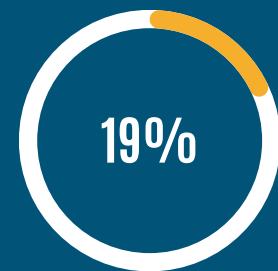
* WE HAD €15,980 SURPLUS TO SPEND FROM 2022

% CHANGE 2022 TO 2023

* ALL PERCENTAGES ROUNDED TO
NEAREST WHOLE NUMBER



INCOME INCREASE



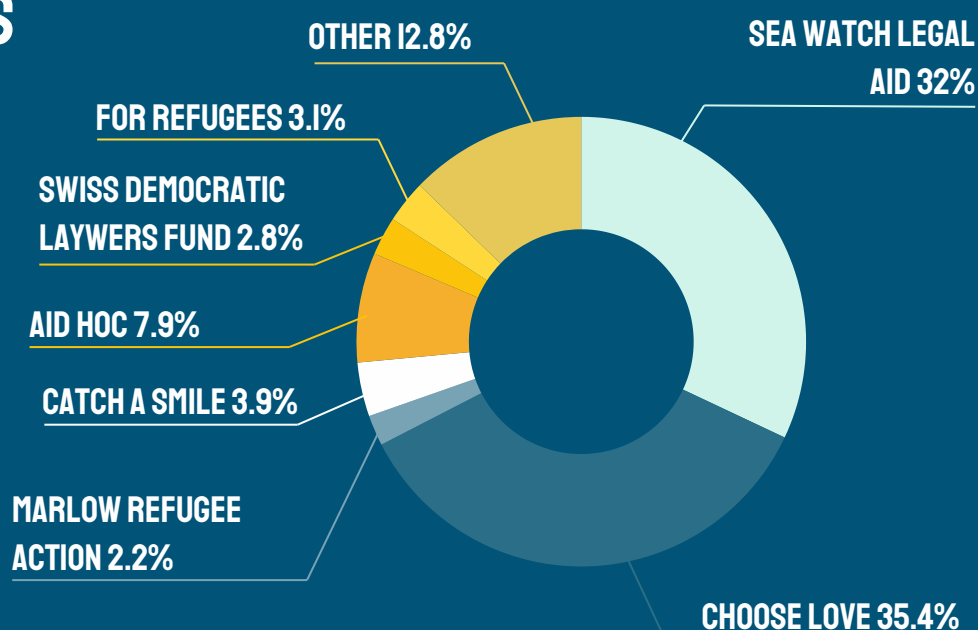
EXPENDITURE INCREASE

INCOME 2023

| DONORS | 2023 | 2022 | % CHANGE |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------|
| SEA WATCH LEGAL AID | €49,490 | €63,716 | -22% |
| CHOOSE LOVE | €54,771 | €44,472 | +23% |
| MARLOW REFUGEE ACTION | €3,403 | €3,377 | +1% |
| CATCH A SMILE | €6,000 | €1,500 | +300% |
| TRUE CHANGE GLOBAL FUND | €0 | €1,013 | -100% |
| AIDHOC | €12,200 | €30,800 | -60% |
| IPAM | €0 | €4,000 | -100% |
| SWISS DEMOCRATIC LAWYERS FUND | €4,270 | €0 | +100% |
| FOR REFUGEES | €4,755 | €0 | +100% |
| OTHER (INDIVIDUAL PRIVATE DONATIONS) | €19,727 | €1,550 | +1173% |
| TOTAL = | €154,615 | €150,428 | +3% |

TABLE 3. INCOME BREAKDOWN BY DONOR, 2022 AND 2023

TOTAL DONORS INCOME 2023





INCOME ANALYSIS

The Human Rights Legal Project is an independent, non-profit organisation that is politically and financially independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion. All of our income has come via donations from individuals and grantmakers without exception. We monitor our income to ensure it is in line with our ethics and principles.

In 2022 we saw considerable growth, seeing an almost doubling of income. The majority of this increase came from Sea Watch Legal Aid which covered court costs for our clients, including court fees and travel costs. We had also seen the introduction of new donor streams which helped to increase and diversify income. These were important growth indicators from our 2020 inception.

As demonstrated in the above Table 2, overall growth in 2023 was minimal, seeing only a 3% increase from 2022. This is due to a multitude of factors ranging from loss of core donors to a fundamental shift in a new donor relationship.

This is against a backdrop of increasing financial constraints for donors and civil society groups operating in Greece, and HRLP was no exception. In August 2023 one of our core, and seed, funders AidHoc announced that their organisation was in the process of closing. Despite providing us with a considerable notice period we were unable to replace this loss of funds within the needed time frame. We thus had to reallocate funds from our secured donor streams to cover core operational costs. Unfortunately, towards the end of 2023 we also were made aware that financial support from Sea Watch Legal Fund was under evaluation due to a fall in their own sources of funding (this applied to all of their grantees). Like AidHoc, this meant we needed to reallocate other secured funding streams in order to cover priority costs.

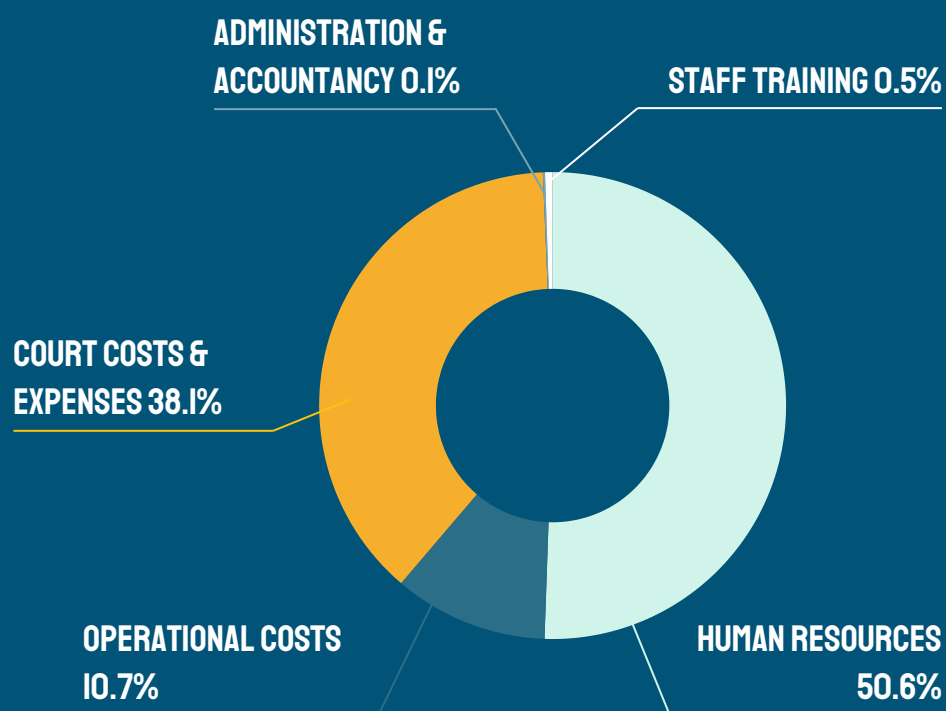
However, we did gain two new funding partnerships with the Swiss Democratic Lawyers Fund and For Refugees. We also saw funding increases from some established grant givers. In addition to these funders, we opted to run a winter fundraising campaign aimed at the general public in order to recuperate the recent funding losses. The campaign hit its intended target and was seen as a success.

EXPENDITURE 2023

| TYPES OF EXPENDITURE | 2023 | 2022 | % CHANGE |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|
| HR | €81,176 | €57,660 | +41% |
| OPERATIONAL COSTS | €17,164 | €11,713 | +46% |
| COURT COSTS AND EXPENSES | €61,160 | €63,590 | -3.8% |
| ADMINISTRATION AND ACCOUNTANCY | €240 | €690 | -65% |
| STAFF TRAINING | €837 | €796 | +5% |
| TOTAL = | €160,577 | €134,449 | +16% |

TABLE 4. EXPENDITURE BREAKDOWN BY COST CATEGORY, 2022 AND 2023

TOTAL EXPENDITURE 2023





EXPENDITURE ANALYSIS

Despite only seeing a 3% increase concerning income in 2023, we managed to see a 16% increase in expenditure overall. A significant percentage of this expenditure, specifically €15,980, was residual income from 2022 that had been intentionally allocated to the 2023 budget. This amount was spread across general HR and operational costs per our 2023 forecast.

In addition to this 2022 re-allocation, we saw further increases with HR and Operational costs. Within HR there were a few significant changes that led to this increase. Firstly, throughout 2023 we saw a reduction in employment gaps; we had managed to reduce personnel gaps between recruitment thus leading to an increase in expenditure in HR. However, it should be noted that this expenditure was firmly within budget and that in 2022 we spent less than our budgeted HR allocation (due to employment gaps and staggered start times for newly introduced roles).

We also recruited a new consultancy role into the team, focused on strategic litigation on a EU level. This recruitment was part of planned initiatives for 2023 and our larger strategic objective to raise awareness of our work to an EU level, and beyond. This role remained for all of 2023 and has been secured for the majority of 2024.

Lastly, concerning increased HR costs we made a decision in early 2023 to respond to the severity of national inflation levels and increase staff compensations. Despite a precarious funding environment we unanimously made the decision to raise compensations in line with the Greek national minimum wage increase.

Within the operational budget category we also saw a distinct increase of 46% from 2022. The majority of this increase was due to intentions to improve our accessibility and practice. In 2023 we invested funds into the development of our website in the attempt to increase organisational visibility and thus improve accessibility to our services and support. We also opted to invest in the spatial aspect of our practice. We decided to invest in a new office space that aligned with our trauma informed notions of how to create a mindful legal space.

Further discussions concerning organisational improvements led us to the discussion of improving conditions for staff. We opted to reconsider our relocation benefits and invest in upgrading our provisions centering the need for stability, security, privacy and comfort during the working tenure on Samos.

2024 LOOKING FORWARD

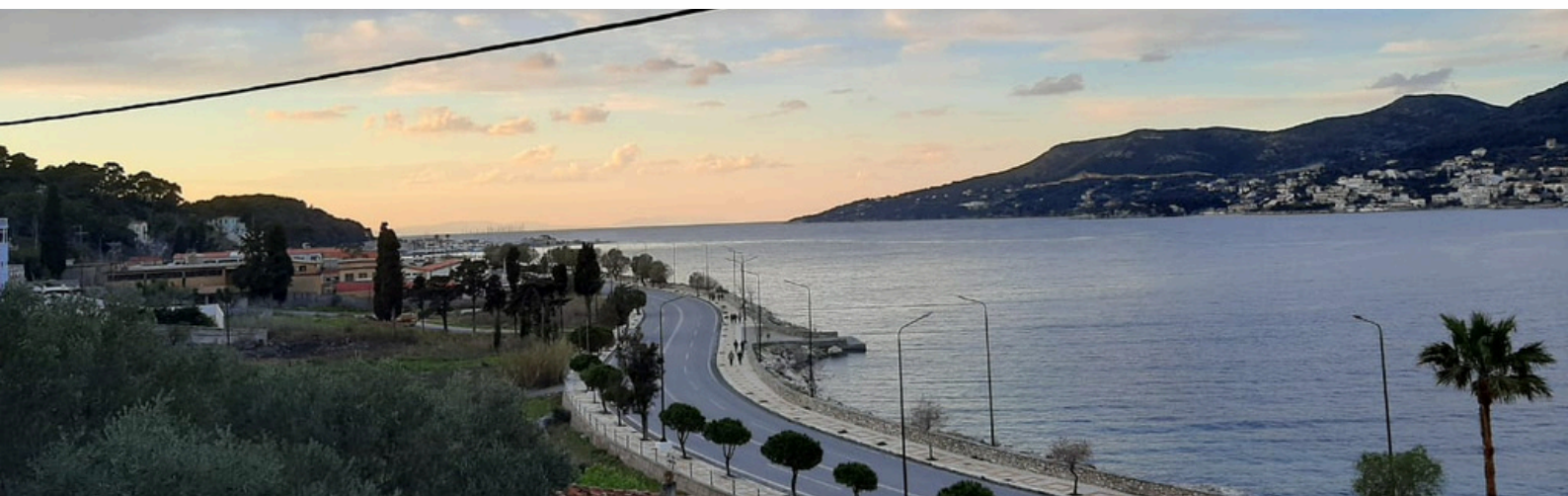
OUR PRIORITIES FOR NEXT YEAR

== STRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT

- Stabilise our structure by diversifying our sources of funding
- Consolidate our work by including people in our team who specialise in fundraising, communications and developing our partnerships
- Improve our visibility: develop our communication tools and increase engagement with our audiences
- Strengthen our advocacy efforts

== PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

- On criminalisation of migration:
 - Pylos 9 trial
 - Homayoun's trial
 - Focus on criminalisation cases in Samos
 - Develop legal analysis based on the data gathered over the past three years
- On border violence:
 - Strategic litigation concerning pushback cases between 2020 and 2023



LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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23

SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL OUR DONORS FOR THEIR CONTINUED SUPPORT:

Sea Watch Legal Aid Fund, Choose Love, Aid Hoc, Catch A smile, Maalofa Foundation, For Refugees, Marlow Refugee Action, Les Juristes Démocrates de Suisse, and all individual donors.

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