



GIVING A VOICE TO THE AFFECTED AND THOSE WHO HELP

CONACTION CONFERENCE

2ND – 3RD OF OCTOBER 2017

A PUBLIC PLATFORM FOR GRASSROOTS INITIATIVES
PROVIDING HUMANITARIAN AID TO REFUGEES
IN GREECE AND TURKEY.





WELCOME TO THE CONACTION CONFERENCE!

Contact

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Conference Venue

Estrel Berlin – Hotel & Congress Center

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estrel.com

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CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Monday, 2nd of October

15:00

Registration start

16:00

Conference start

Welcoming words

[Daniel Tietze](#) – Secretary of State for Integration, Berlin Senate

[Eberhard Schultz](#) – Human Rights Lawyer, benefactor and chairman of Eberhard-Schultz-Foundation for social human rights and participation. The charity was founded in 2011 in Berlin and is aiming at the complete implementation of social human rights and societal participation, especially in Germany

[ConAction Team](#): Dagmar Albrecht and Johanna Scherf - Project Coordination

[Houssam Al Deen](#) – Journalist, Co-founder of Salam Kultur- und Sportclub Berlin

Introduction of Organisations

Assignment into workshops for the following day.

Participants will be able to choose which workshop they are planning to attend the next day.

Meet and Greet Session

18:30 - 19:30

Dinner

20:00

Storytelling Arena with Rachel Clarke

A multi-lingual Storytelling: Syrian Series. Journalists, poets and people from all walks of life tell their true life tales from before and after 2011. Stories are told in Tandem - Arabic-English and Arabic-German.

Get to know each other, exchange and network, with music.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Tuesday, 3rd of October

09:30	Welcoming & Coffee	
10:00	Introduction & Information	about the Workshops and their facilitators
11:00 - 12:30	Workshop Session Information	
	Delegates from invited organisations will give input about their work, followed by a question and answer session. Participants will have the chance to inform themselves directly about the situation in	Greece and Turkey. This is a space to exchange information, ask questions and get an impression of the field work of the organisation. This is also a time to reflect upon the last two years.
12:30 - 14:30	Lunch	
14:30 - 16:00	Workshop Session Interaction	
	Participants will meet again in the same groups, to discuss current urgent issues and challenges and exchange best practice examples. The workshop group is asked to formulate relevant demands	and come up with messages from their workshop for the whole group of the conference and for the Special Issue Conference Newspaper.
16:00 -16:30	Coffee	
17:00 - 18:30	Market Place	News Desk
	Exhibition of Workshop results	Special Issue Conference Newspaper
	Each group will bring their pin boards with the workshop results into the main conference room. In form of a Market Place, their messages will be displayed. Participants are invited to stroll around the Market Place, discuss and inform themselves about the other workshop results.	At the same time, ten designated reporters from each workshop will gather on the stage at a special News Desk. A News Team will live report the messages and demands from each workshop and collate it to formulate a Special Issue Conference Newspaper. This paper will be sent to relevant influencers, academics and researchers, politicians and the media.
18:30 - 19:30	Dinner	
20:00 - 22:00	Fish Bowl Discussion: "Where to from here?"	
	with journalists, politicians and key stakeholders.	
	Evaluation of the workshop outcomes	

WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

Organisations have been allocated to the workshops depending on their field of action. A trained workshop facilitator will be allocated to each workshop session to structure the outcome and help to present it at the Market Place. There will be ten parallel workshops with the following topics:



COMMUNITY CENTERS

One Happy Family Community Center Lesvos
Small Projects Istanbul
swisscross.help
Three Musketeers Reutlingen



INDIVIDUAL CASE WORK

Helping Hands 4 Greece
People4People
The Voice of Thousands



SEA CROSSINGS & BOAT LANDINGS

Proactiva Open Arms
Refugee4Refugees
Sea Watch
The Hope Project
Watch the Med Alarmphone



LEGAL SUPPORT

KuB Berlin
Pro Asyl
Refugee Law Clinics Abroad
Refugee Support Aegean



CAMP MANAGEMENT

A Drop in the Ocean
German Alliance
Lesvos Solidarity
Northern Lights Aid



COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION

Antigone
Campfire Innovation
RefuComm
Refugee Rights Data Project
re:view



SMALL INCOME PROJECTS

Boundless
Drop Earrings Not Bombs
Gyalpa
I AM YOU
mimycr
Naomi
ReVi



HEALTH CARE

Avicenna
ResCO International
SAO Association



SCHOOL & EDUCATION

Balkan Route Stuttgart
Be Aware And Share
Imece Inisiyatifi Cesme



BRIDGES FROM GERMANY

50 aus Idomeni
Grenzenlose Wärme
Heimatstern
Intereuropean Human Aid Association
Potsdam-Konvoi

ILLUSTRATION OF THE WORKSHOP SESSIONS



NEWS TEAM

- **Anna Antonakis-Nashif** (Chief Editor)

studied political science at the Freie Universität Berlin and IEP Strasbourg and holds a PhD at the FU Berlin. She engages with Intersectional (gender) theory and Public, counterpublic sphere theories, Feminist Security Studies, Tunisian Society, media and Politics and comparative approaches in politics. From 2013 to 2016, she was granted a fellowship in the project

“Elite Change and New Social Mobilization in the Arab World” at the Institute for Foreign and Security Studies SWP in Berlin. She is also engaged in networks of cultural politics in Tunis and Berlin.

FISH BOWL DISCUSSION

“Where to from here?”

The ConAction Fish Bowl Discussion will bring activists of various small humanitarian initiatives working in Germany, Greece and Turkey together with academic and political representatives as well as journalists. Together, we aim to think together, reflect on the main issues which have come up during the conference and develop strategies to improve the catastrophic humanitarian conditions for refugees waiting in Greece and Turkey. Our guests:

- **Efi Latsoudi**

One of the founders of an open, self-organised Pikpa camp for vulnerable refugees who arrive on Lesbos. She has been awarded UNHCR’s Nansen award for her humanitarian efforts.

- **Karl Kopp**

Director of European Affairs, he represents Pro Asyl in the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE). He is responsible for media relations in the European context and for Pro Asyl’s Europe-wide connections with human rights and refugee organisations.

- **Houssam Al Deen**

Journalist from Damascus, Co-founder of Salam Kultur -und Sportclub Berlin

- **Ghias Aljundi**

Human rights advocate currently based in London, with 20 years of experience working for international organisations concerning freedom of expression issues in the Middle East and North Africa. Himself a former refugee, he has been volunteering on the Greek islands since October 2015.

- **Annalena Baerbock**

Member of the German Parliament for the Alliance 90/The Greens and Member of the Committee on the Affairs of the European Union

- **Annika Klose**

Head of Jusos (the youth organization of the SPD) who recently helped for two weeks on board of the Sea Eye



STORYTELLING ARENA

www.storytellingarena.com | www.facebook.com/StorytellingBerlin

2nd of October 2017, 20:00 - 21:00

The Storytelling Arena is a storytelling organisation, based in Berlin, which specialises in intercultural storytelling told in tandem in several languages. We run themed events several times a month in one of our regular venues, but also often as guest performances at arts festivals and conferences. Our focus is on autobiographical stories on current political themes. Our international audiences tell their stories, on the theme of the event, in what we call the Safe Haven Open mic.



In 2015, during our Zeitgeist Berlin Series 2015, professional German and English language storytellers performed tales on current themes from Berlin life. The Arena was set up by Scottish-German storyteller Rachel Clarke.

Since January 2016, we have been running the Storytelling Arena – Syrian Series (2016-17), where authors, poets and journalists from Syria, now living in exile in Berlin have become story-tellers. Our constantly sold-out events have drawn an audience of Syrians or Arabs,

and Germans or Europeans in equal numbers. Our themes have been Strong Syrian Women, Life in Syria before the war, the Arab Spring, Syrians in Berlin (Comedy Story Night), Syrian Love Stories among others.

We always adapt our performances to the audience at each specific event, and are preparing a programme which will contribute thematically to this ConAction Conference.



ABOUT CONACTION

The ConAction Team is a group within the NGO Joliba in cooperation with the Bildungswerk Berlin of the Heinrich-Böll-Foundation and the Rosa-Luxemburg-Foundation. Some of us have been supporting refugees in Greece or Turkey ourselves, all of us refuse to be bystanders and aim to intervene in the current politics depriving refugees of their human rights within and at the external borders of Europe.

“EU member states need to communicate the necessity of acting in a way that enhances, rather than undermines, the commitment of their citizens to assist those in need.”* – Steffen Angenendt, Senior associate at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs in Berlin

In face of the devastating humanitarian situation for refugees, despite the enormous engagement of people who came to help, we found ourselves confronted with the urgent need for action on a pan-European level.

We noticed that a whole system of international grassroots NGOs has been established with all the difficulties (and freedom) that volunteer work consists of, to fill the gaps left by the deficient supply from the EU or local governments.

Our questions to long-term volunteers and grassroots NGOs about what would help their work and public visibility resulted in the planning of this conference. ConAction is a movement to combine our strengths for dignified conditions for refugees in Turkey, Greece and the rest of Europe.

It depends on the contributions from each of us.

Let's create a whole that is even more powerful than the sum of its parts.

* see online: transatlanticacademy.org/node/773

BACKGROUND

Since 2015, more than one million people have risked their lives crossing the Mediterranean Sea to the coastlines of Greece and Turkey. At present, there are still more than 60,000 refugees stranded in Greece and more than three million in Turkey, of which nearly half are children.

From the start of the current mass migration, refugees have to live under disastrous humanitarian conditions. Last winter was the second in which an alarming number of people had to survive in inadequate camps of tents - highlighting the failure to address this humanitarian crisis with European competency. Binding agreements, such as the Relocation Program and the Reunification of Separated Families Program, are only partly implemented and connected to long administrative processes. Basic humanitarian care for refugees in Turkey and Greece is mainly provided by private initiatives and small NGOs that receive little or no support from the EU or local governments.

Together with representatives of the civil society, the public and the political sphere, strategies and action plans will be developed. Participants are invited to inform themselves about the current refugee situation and receive up-to-date and first-hand factual information.

MISSION

Up to 200 representatives from voluntary organisations working with migrants and refugees, representatives of European politics, journalists as well as concerned and interested individuals will meet in Berlin to make a difference.

Information & Exchange

We aim to provide an opportunity for delegates to get up to date on the current refugee situation by facilitating an open exchange between organisations on site in Greece and Turkey, German initiatives and political representatives.

Political Empowerment

For the first time, delegates will be able to jointly express and position themselves as an independent political player.

Networking & Coordination

We aim to create a networking platform for Greek, Turkish and German volunteers to interact with opinion formers and politicians. To help develop a pan-European framework allowing the implementation of a coherent action plan. Also, we aim to develop strategies that will enable further effective coordination of Greek, Turkish and German efforts.

Call to Action & Special Issue Conference Newspaper

We aim to publish a Special Issue Conference Newspaper to document demands and suggestions of the participants. The paper will be sent to relevant influencers, academics and researchers, European politicians and the media.

WELCOMING WORDS

from the ConAction Team

Dear participants,

Welcome to the ConAction Conference. ConAction is meant as an international networking platform, to actually meet and speak with those who also refused to be silent. We want to acknowledge your work by providing a space to share your experiences, for international cooperation and to develop constructive strategies and alliances.

By bringing all of you together – right at the beginning of a new legislative term in Germany – we want to enable us to send a united message to the world before the next winter. What we all have in common is, that we refuse to accept to live in a European society, which does not even respect the values it has signed up for.

Families torn apart, depressing camps of tents, panic-stricken screams from overcrowded rubber boats - it's enough! Within the last two years, the violation of human rights in Europe towards refugees became alarmingly obvious. At the same time, people from all over the world rose up to supply food, water and clothes, to assist people getting off the boats, cleaning the beaches and refusing to be bystanders at the external borders of Europe, filling gaps of a policy lacking the will to help. We filled and still are filling those appalling gaps.

Now is the time to become visible and network, cooperate and to unite – you deserve to be seen and listened to for taking a stand for humanity and solidarity!

Thank you for your amazing contributions, for setting examples – and for being part of this conference. We hope, this conference serves as a possibility for practical networking - that it will be rewarding for you and an empowerment for your valuable work. We strongly hope that the media and politicians will listen better if more than one voice speaks up.

We feel honoured to welcome every one of you here today. Every contribution is valuable and necessary – as it arises from your own personal experiences! Still, we wish we would live in a world where this conference would not have been necessary.

A warm welcome from the ConAction Team!



MESSAGES OF GREETING

Carolyn Gammon (Board of Directors, Joliba, Interkulturelles Netzwerk), **Katharina Oguntoye** (Managing Director, Joliba, Interkulturelles Netzwerk)

In our many years of work with refugees and helpers we have been impressed again and again by the readiness on both sides to overcome seemingly insurmountable practical and emotional challenges. The ConAction Conference here in Berlin is meant to shine a spotlight on this vital work that often goes unnoticed by society at large. It is meant to bring together local and international volunteers and refugees who have been working tirelessly at great personal cost - to honor their work, make it visible, share stories and take assessment of the current situation to better shape the future. Welcome to Berlin! Thank you for your wonderful work! Thank you for coming and sharing.

Houssam Al Deen (Journalist from Damascus, now living in Berlin)



Imagine you wake up one morning and you find yourself without a nation. Left your house, your work, ran away with your family from violence. All of that because you dared to protest against corruption, violence, dictatorship.

These people just ask to be treated as human beings with dignity. That's it, not more, not less. After meeting a lot of people in different camps at the Syrian border, it was a very depressing feeling. It's very difficult to describe the conditions in these camps. You are living in a tent under snow, rain, in cold weather without any privacy. But that is nothing when you hear a child ask its parents: "What are we doing here? For how long, when are we going back, I miss my school, I would like to play with my friends. Why is my friend injured, why was my other friend killed?" A lot of questions. What can a parent say to those questions? They don't have the answers. They feel so weak, so helpless in front of their children. The parents start to question themselves, and whether they made the right decision... But they didn't do anything wrong. They are simply asking for freedom to say what they believe and to live without constant fear for themselves and their children.

And the situation within the family may become tense, especially for the father who is used to providing for his family. Sometimes he gets quiet and depressed because he is not used to being like this without a job and feeling helpless without a sense of independence. And who pays the price? The children and his wife.

The big question that is on everyone's mind is what the future will look like. How long will they live in transit or in a camp? At what point will they stop surviving and truly start living?

MESSAGES OF GREETING

They are not only concerned about their individual futures, but the future of their homelands. They sit and wonder if they will ever truly be able to feel at home again. This is the daily reality of being a refugee in 2017.

I'm a Syrian, I haven't seen my family for years. I'm not the worst case, but I don't see the light at the end of the tunnel. Every day I watch the destruction of my homeland stone by stone. The people are getting tired of the lame condemnation and useless reactions by great powers.

The only reaction seems to be a series of conferences, meetings, and verbal/ written condemnation, but nothing tangible or effective is happening. No one's life is changing as a result, nor is their situation improving. So we must ask ourselves, beyond condemnation, what can we really do to help? How much money can we invest and where is it most needed? Can we save everyone? No. But if we focus on result-oriented action then maybe we can make a real difference for a few. All these people want is to build a good future for their children. They don't want their children to suffer like they did, nor be a victim. They just want a decent future for their kids, because they deserve it.

Dr. Bärbel Kofler (Federal Government Commissioner for Human Rights Policy and Humanitarian Aid at the Federal Foreign Office and Member of the German Parliament)



An active and strong civil society is the prerequisite for a constructive relationship between a state and its society. In many cases, non-governmental organisations raise awareness of deficits and injustice, giving marginalised groups a voice and taking up their concerns.

By doing so, they play an important role in the long-term stability of a society. To this end, it is essential that civil society can discuss and exchange ideas – both at national and international levels – in order to be able to develop common positions and joint strategies. Germany supports the engagement of civil society and human rights defenders, and is committed to creating and maintaining scope for their work. Civil society and human rights go hand in hand: civil society's endeavours play a significant role in the protection and promotion of human rights. Conversely, only when human rights are widely guaranteed, civil society can unfold its full potential.

MESSAGES OF GREETING

Daniel Tietze (Secretary of State for Integration,
Berlin Senate)



People supporting refugees in Berlin are repeatedly forced to deal with topics such as the relocation or reunification of family members still staying in Greece or Turkey with their families.

The complexity of the matter is costing energy and voluntary resources. We consider it helpful to give the people living in Berlin the chance to inform themselves directly about the situation on site, ask questions, be heard and receive bundled knowledge in order to be empowered in their voluntary work as well as here in Germany. Especially in times when European ideals are questioned by many, I consider it important to enter into dialogue with countries on the European borders with democratic-minded civil societies. A conference such as the one planned is highly suitable to do so.

I support the aims of the conference and wish the organisers every success.

Ska Keller (President and migration policy spokesperson for
the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament)



From the start of the high influx of refugees, NGOs, private initiatives and volunteers have played an essential and commendable role in the protection of refugees. Often, with little or no help from public authorities they have provided basic humanitarian care for refugees and alleviated the worst effects of the humanitarian crisis that European leaders have failed to address. They continue to rescue refugees from drowning, despite an insane smear campaign denouncing them as henchmen of ruthless smugglers and traffickers. Their tireless efforts to help refugees are a shining example for the solidarity with people in need of protection - a solidarity so many governments are lacking. While political leaders in Europe are unable to live up to their commitment to relocate 160.000 refugees from Greece and Italy and forge ahead instead with sealing off Europe against migrants and refugees, NGOs have established a true culture of solidarity with refugees.

MESSAGES OF GREETING

We need your commitment to solidarity both on the ground and in society. This conference is a great opportunity to get in touch with each other, to strengthen your collaboration and to jointly position yourself as an independent political force for solidarity with refugees. I hope to see many fruitful initiatives coming out of this conference!

Inga Börjesson (Director, Bildungswerk Berlin of Heinrich-Böll-Foundation)



In the last few months, the public attention has been on dramas and scandals around the refugee routes in the central Mediterranean. The intolerable living situation of many refugees in Greece and Turkey has almost been forgotten. In Turkey, there are about 3 million refugees, most of whom have no access to elementary human rights such as housing, education or basic health care. In Greece, too, there is a minimum of infrastructure for people seeking protection. Private initiatives, volunteers and NGOs have been engaged in both countries for years to support the refugees in humanitarian, legal and political terms. German government policy is largely responsible for the fact that so

many of these refugees are stuck, families torn apart, and their barely existent right to asylum. Instead of defending human rights and the right to asylum, the government along with other EU countries, fortifies fortress Europe. But also in Germany, there are many support groups for refugees and many refugees have organized themselves to fight for their rights. As in Greece and Turkey, this work is a sign of humanity and solidarity.

This conference provides the opportunity to share experiences and work out common approaches to solutions and political demands for a human rights oriented refugee policy. I'm looking forward to it! I would like to end my greeting with a quote by Heinrich Böll, whose 100th birthday we are celebrating this year. "When it turns really cold, will we have the courage to make firewood out of furniture; when we can no longer take the every day for granted, will we involve the refugees?"

(From: Poetry of the Everyday, 1964, 1 (Source: Heinrich Böll: Works, Cologne edition, vol. 14, pp. 131 f.))

The congress participants have answered Böll's question positively with their work.

MESSAGES OF GREETING

Wenke Christoph (Senior Advisor Europe,
Rosa-Luxemburg-Foundation)



**ROSA
LUXEMBURG
STIFTUNG**

“No one leaves home unless home is the mouth of a shark.” This line, by British Somali poet Warsan Shire, has become a powerful symbol of the thousands of people on the move fleeing war, persecution or desperate poverty. More than two years ago borders were opened for refugees in Europe, providing hope and support for a couple of months.

This “long summer of migration” lasted until the closing of the Balkan route corridor and the EU-Turkey deal in March 2016. However, people are still desperately trying to cross the Mediterranean – and many die doing so. Thousands of people remain stuck in Turkish and Greek refugee camps, often without access to basic social rights. The EU and German government promised relocation and resettlement schemes and instead spend their funds on further militarizing and externalizing the EU borders.

But what remains as well are the numerous groups and individuals that are organizing and providing support for refugees and migrants – be it on Europe’s borders in Turkey or Greece, along the migration routes or here in Germany.

Activists, volunteers and support groups have been crucial not only in providing humanitarian help, but also powerful in their broad support for humanitarian and solidary migration and refugee policies. In these times, when racist and anti-refugee rhetoric is on the rise again in many European countries, it is of utmost importance to organize, to learn from each other, to cooperate across borders.

Therefore, Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung is very proud to support this conference. I hope that you will find the opportunity to build new initiatives and collaborations and to further develop practices and political demands for solidarity with people on the move. I wish you a successful conference!

THERE WERE 17,007 SEA ARRIVALS IN GREECE IN 2017

(SOURCE:
UNHCR, 10TH OF SEPTEMBER 2017)



PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS

We are honoured to welcome so many international refugee volunteer organisations in Berlin.

On the following pages, we will introduce you to the participating organisations. Representatives of the different groups will inform about their projects in the workshops.

They are grassroots non-profit organisations with humanitarian and social projects to support refugees in Greece and/or Turkey working with volunteers from all over the world.

In May 2016, thousands of refugees gathered in the informal camp in Idomeni, Greece. Some people in Osnabrück urgently felt the need to help in this situation.



The European Relocation-Program seemed to be the easiest way to bring refugees to Osnabrück as procedures were already in place and the financing was clear. The only problem was, that Germany did not comply with the program. In the relocation program, European countries have to announce on a monthly basis how many refugees they agree to host. For a long time, Germany did not put out any monthly pledges. We successfully campaigned for our city council to publicly support the relocation of 50 people to Osnabrück. A few other city councils did the same.

Finally, in November 2016 German participation in the program began. However, this was with very few monthly pledges and remained on a very low scale up to now – thus intentionally slowing down the relocation of refugees. We hope, that all our open letters, our discussions with the Members of Parliament and our petition to the Minister of Internal Affairs contributed a bit to keep up the pressure on our politicians, but we are far from being happy about the result. Now we are concentrating on promoting a community-based European concept to distribute refugees. It is based on the idea, that communities can apply directly at the European Commission to host refugees, for financial help for their integration and for economic investment in favor of the whole community.

A DROP IN THE OCEAN

www.drapenihavet.no/en



A Drop in the Ocean is a Norwegian NGO established in 2015 as an immediate response to the influx of refugees arriving by boat to the Greek islands. The organisation organises volunteers to work in different refugee camps, and since 2015, more than 4000 people from all over the world have volunteered with A Drop in the Ocean in Greece.



At its three locations, Athens, Chios and Nea Kavala in Northern Greece, A Drop in the Ocean runs different projects aimed at making everyday life better for refugees in the camps. These range from food distributions and clothing exchanges to community centres and pre-integration activities for refugees that have been given relocation to other countries. The current situation for refugees in Greece is

difficult and unpredictable as the major organisations have started to withdraw their operations. This is a result of changes in EU funding due to the Greek government taking over management of the camps on July 31, 2017. The transition seems poorly planned, and the refugees are in danger of losing vital support. Since A Drop in the Ocean does not rely on EU or government funding, the organisation will continue to run its operations in Greece.

The Antigone Information and Documentation Centre on Racism, Ecology, Peace and Non-Violence is a non-profit organization established in 1993 with a main office in Thessaloniki and a branch in Athens. Since the very beginning, Antigone develops various activities addressing society at large - and especially its vulnerable groups - on the fields of anti-racism, ecology, peace and non-violence.



The main aim of the organization is the promotion of equal opportunities for all without discriminations of sex, race, national origin, social/economic/educational status, disability, age, religion, etc. In response to the recent growing refugee and migrant populations arriving in Greece on their way to Europe, Antigone's activities are focusing in a two-fold philosophy and practice:

- psycho-social support of the populations held in refugee camps with a view to dealing with their trauma, releasing stress and finding a creative way of expression
- restriction of institutionalization & improvement of the integration processes in the fields

of housing, education, language and social learning and vocational training, via activities, workshops and events carried out in public city spaces

Parallel to these activities Antigone targets the local society's awareness through awareness raising and active participation via workshops and seminars addressed to schools - students, teachers & parents - as well as to volunteers and professionals working with refugees, in an effort to create the basis of an intercultural society and to create common spaces of action and co-living.

We are a small group of doctors and other NGOs supporting refugees during their stay outside their native countries. We have helped in Greece, Turkey, Serbia, Iraq and the refugees from Myanmar in Bangladesh.



We provide medical aid and – with the help of our international and local friends and helpers – for general supplies that are vital and bring relief as well as for education. In particular, we support the self-organization of those who are placed under disability, to facilitate a life in dignity.

Balkan Route Stuttgart is a charitable non-profit association, founded in March 2016 by Serkan Eren. The association provides humanitarian aid to refugees in Greece and Turkey.



The idea for Balkan Route Stuttgart was developed in October 2015. Following assistance interventions in Idomeni and on the Greek Island of Chios, the main focus was shifted towards the West coast of Turkey. In the meantime, the association consists of numerous members and many splendid people provide hands-on support. Our goal is to stand by and assist people fleeing their homes and to alleviate their needs.

Also, we want to encourage others to volunteer on the ground and prepare them for their tasks in the best possible way. We aim to function as a link between Greece, Turkey and Stuttgart. Together with others, we want to provide constant assistance and practice solidarity in the long term, where help is urgently needed. Since May 2016, we support the initiative Imece Inisiyatifi Cesme in Western Turkey, sending them teams on behalf of the Balkan Route Stuttgart.

BE AWARE AND SHARE

www.baas-schweiz.ch

be
aware
and
share.

Be Aware And Share (BAAS) is an independent, non-profit aid organization. We support people in need, create cross-cultural relations and contribute to integration across society. BAAS has been active in various field projects supporting refugees since 2015 and raises awareness for the ongoing suffering at the edges of Europe.



BAAS is currently operating the project “Refugee Education Chios” on the Greek island of Chios, acting as the main provider of access to education for 250-300 refugees between the ages of 6 and 22 with two schools and a youth centre. Our work upholds the human right to education and offers a safe space with learning opportunities and daily structure, aiming to minimize exposure to the immense risks that these children and youth face under camp conditions. The activities of BAAS prepare children for the integration into a public school system at a later stage and contribute to the maintenance of their self-confidence, mental health and outlook on the future.

Our team of international volunteers on site aims to counter the dire effects of long and insecure waiting periods of several months under deplorable conditions, while volunteers in Switzerland continuously raise awareness of the ongoing mistreatment and negligent response to the needs of our fellow humans arriving in Greece. Since access to public education will remain highly restricted on the Greek islands for an indefinite period of time, BAAS continues to address this fundamental gap and helps prevent the loss of a promising young generation to insecurity, rejection and mental health risks.



CAMPFIRE INNOVATION

www.campfireinnovation.org

Campfire Innovation is an organisation uniting the grassroots and volunteer community for more efficient and dignified aid to refugees. We support: (a) collaboration between grassroots teams as a way to develop a cohesive, innovative and effective response to the challenges of migration and (b) the development of an ecosystem of support channeling resources to the grassroots communities to accelerate their work and impact.



With 65+ million people currently displaced around the world and 250 million expected by 2050, it's time to be smarter. Grassroots, volunteer groups and civil society initiatives have been at the forefront of refugee response; providing food, shelter, healthcare and education for over 1 million refugees that have landed in Greece since 2015. Our team is comprised of experienced volunteers, combining insights from working directly with: refugees, the media and community organizations by fostering international relations, entrepreneurship and smarter aid. Over the past year, we have been active across Greece, identifying the most impactful and innovative initiatives and building programs that allow them to do more and help more refugees.

What we do is: (a) Increase Collaboration. Since 2016, we have created organizational frameworks to share resources and increase the ability to respond to the needs of refugees, including building a network of over 50 organizations across Greece and hosting monthly Smart Aid Gatherings, a networking event in Athens to strengthen the sense of community. (b) Provide Access to Resources. We connect grassroots organizations to partners offering pro bono services, volunteer experts and tech equipment donations to increase their capacity. (c) By overcoming practical bottlenecks we are giving smaller initiatives the ability to grow. (d) Being the Voice of the Grassroots Community. We create opportunities to make the importance of grassroots and civil society response visible.

The foundation for our association was laid on 5 September 2015, when refugees started arriving at the Munich central station. We help people who have had to leave their homes and, while outside their country, face severe hardships.



We have travelled over 135,000 kilometers and. With over 320 volunteers we have distributed 100 tons of food, 35 tons of winter clothes, and roughly 1 ton of medicines. At the onset of winter, we built a mobile kitchen and within six weeks distributed approx. 96,000 servings of hot soup to refugees in Greece, making the cold a little more bearable for them. What initially began as an effort to combat the symptoms has developed into a program to fight the causes of the misery.

Since mid-February, we have been helping Syrian refugees in Turkey to make a new start in life, create a basic foundation for them and help them to develop their own perspective, thus enabling them to rebuild their home country. This is our overriding mission. We call our concept "Rebuild the Future Now" or RFN. It entails constructing small villages each with accommodation for up to 1,500 residents, featuring a complete infrastructure from kindergarten to vocational school, from sewage treatment plant to workplaces, from integrative school to corner shops and a sports ground.

Grenzenlose Wärme (Boundless Warmth) is a refugee relief work organisation founded by social work students from Dortmund, Germany in October 2016. Our goal is to improve the lives of refugees in countries like Greece and support people and local organisations already working in this field.



When a fellow student decided to go to Greece and asked us for some donations in a group chat, around 16 others joined her and in just six weeks we managed to organise our first trip to Thessaloniki, in December 2016 / January 2017 with 14 students participating and five more supporting from Germany. A second trip followed in April 2017 also to Thessaloniki.

Besides purchasing and distributing essentials like food and toiletries in refugee camps and housing we focus on helping other organisations with manpower.

Tasks like organising warehouses, cooking large meals and cleaning newly built living spaces are on our agenda while visiting Greece.

There is a lot of good work being done right now in helping those who had to flee their war-torn countries, although there is room for improvement especially by the governments, and we are just trying to do our part and constantly striving to improve our work.

Gyalpa e.V. supports the education of refugees, including university students as well as in the areas of art and culture.



Gyalpa conducts projects with women, children and youth in areas such as basic sustenance, education, psychosocial support through art, counseling for studies and vocational trainings, sports, and conflict management.

Heimatstern was founded in February 2016 when a number of well-networked and dedicated people who had already been active in refugee aid joined forces. It is our aim to fully pass on any donations we get to people in need.



All our work is done on a voluntary basis. Heimatstern is fully funded by private sponsors. No public funds. Our team is people-focused, regardless of their origin, religion or gender. Over time, our range of activities has grown and exceeds regular refugee aid by far.

We have sent ten 40-ton-trucks, filled to the brim with humanitarian supplies, to Northern Greece. We have also supplied hospitals in Greece with pharmaceuticals, medical consumables, medical appliances and larger devices. Additionally, we have equipped, organized and operated aid transports to Croatia, Serbia, Romania, France, Italy, Latvia, Ukraine and Turkey. We also have a development cooperation with a local partner association in Uganda.

The ability to provide immediate and straightforward un-bureaucratic relief in emergency situations is our core strength. Nonetheless, our mind is still set on long-term humanitarian aid projects as well. Material donations even of large quantities can be accepted without any problem to distribute them to where they are needed most. We check, assort and repackage all material donations we receive to ensure that helpers on-site can act without unnecessary loss of time. We're looking for partners in Greece who need a sustainable source for material donations of all kind.

HELPING HANDS 4 GREECE

www.helpinghands4greece.wordpress.com



“Helping Hands 4 Greece – bringing ideas to life” is a private project – based on the founder’s personal efforts and those of the other volunteers – to support refugees in Greece and improve their living conditions by detecting problems onsite and by working together to find suitable solutions. We implement our programs in a goal-oriented manner, and above all in a continuous and future-oriented manner. Specific issues involve the financing of transports, housing, etc. The project needs support and people who know voluntary work. It is dependent on assistance and financing.



Forgotten by the media world, thousands of refugees from Syria, Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq and other countries still live in Greece and its islands after Idomeni was evacuated. Although little by little camps are shutting down, there are still many things missing: a well-organized infrastructure, permanent life-enhancing projects and future perspectives, especially for people seeking asylum in Greece. Refugees from Syria and Iraq are being relocated to other European countries very slowly. At least 20.000 people are still waiting for their relocation, and the German government is reducing the number of family reunifications. The task is to prepare the refugees for this life. For the others, who can’t go forward or backward,

we need to develop positive prospects for their lives in Greece. Within this context, we provide case management (especially for unaccompanied minors, single women, LGBT, and youth between 18-25 years) with a ‘Buddy’/ Mentoring program as well as social/psychological/legal professional support. We are also running a “Safehouse”, where refugees can be housed permanently or temporarily (e.g. in case of emergencies). Additionally, we are also conducting several learning and education projects like German classes (according to the curriculum of the official German Integration Program), Greek lessons, English classes, etc. as well as CV-Workshops and presentations about life in Europe.

I AM YOU is a grassroots organisation based in Greece, who believes in the power of people, and that there is a better way to provide aid. Our mission is to better serve displaced populations and fight prejudice, by putting our common humanity first.



I AM YOU began as a volunteer emergency response to the humanitarian crisis unfolding on the shores of Lesbos, Greece in the fall of 2015.

"We were shocked by the lack of official forces. There were no official rescue teams, no coast guard, or fire brigade. Only volunteers."

Damian Ardestani – Founder

Over the past year and a half, I AM YOU have continued to grow and expand our knowledge base through our work within Ritsona and Oinofyta refugee camps. I AM YOU is currently supporting the camp population through five different projects:

Non-formal education, providing support for people to nurture their ambitions, talents, and skills through learning.

Lifelines, providing access to vital services, such as medical, dental, and pharmacy services, where the support given by our cultural mediators is unique in its way.

Welcome Project, a small social enterprise, where women are supported in their empowerment and gain the opportunity to come out of the limbo, gain financially, and increase societal inclusion for the camp community.

Recreational youth activities, providing a space for the youth where they have access to support in developing their creativity, and to recreate.

Child protection, through providing a safe space for children in Oinofyta, where they can play and have fun with responsible adults around them.

Imece Inisiyatifi is a small association, originally founded as a students' initiative in 2014 with the aim of supporting underprivileged locals who are impacted by the social, economic, and political consequences of capitalism. From April 2016 onwards, Imece Inisiyatifi has been registered in Turkey as an NGO.



Photo by Kenneth Hidvoet

Since autumn 2015, Imece Inisiyatifi has provided basic goods necessary to thousands of refugees, who attempted to make their way from Cesme to the Greek island of Chios (EU) and to those who settled for an unpredictable time in Turkey. Many are living in makeshift tents in the countryside deprived of basic human necessities and secure working conditions. Nowadays, Imece Inisiyatifi is focusing more on sustainable long-term support with education, empowerment and financial independence to facilitate a better future for these refugees. Besides supporting 15.000 refugees

in the Izmir region monthly with basic necessities, hygienic and baby supplies, the focus has shifted towards education projects to facilitate a better future in their new living environment. The Imece Inisiyatifi projects include: The Mobile Education Project for 3-12 years olds in unofficial camp sites, a sewing workshop and an education village, the latter projects aiming both at empowerment and securing a livelihood for single refugee women.

IHA is a small German volunteer organisation founded in September 2015. Our mission is to provide effective humanitarian aid in a flexible and unbureaucratic way. We've been active in various countries along the Balkan route and have a continuous presence in Greece since early 2016.



The IHA team in Northern Greece is doing warehouse work, logistics and distribution of food and Non-Food Items (NFIs) in various camps and urban sites in the region. We've also recently started a community project at one site, running workshops, educational and social activities. IHA is cooperating with various other volunteer teams and grassroots NGOs on a number of projects. We see great value in cooperative efforts and are always open to new initiatives.

Looking ahead, we see a big challenge in the increasing number of refugees who aren't eligible for relocation or reunification and are seeking asylum in Greece. Social and economic integration into Greek society is becoming a key issue for which there currently doesn't seem to be a credible plan at the institutional level. We're particularly interested in innovative approaches to address these issues at a grassroots level.

KuB is a contact point and advice centre for refugees and migrants and a non-profit association based in Berlin-Kreuzberg. KuB was established in 1983.



We support refugees and migrants from all over the world. We offer free advice services on asylum rights and rights of residence. We also provide assistance with mental health and social problems. We believe that everybody is entitled to a safe residency permit status as well as political, social and economic equality. We want to support refugees and migrants who are seeking advice, so that they can live in Germany independently and take responsibility for their life here.

Examples of what we offer to refugees and migrants are: consultations on the right of residence, psychological support and German language classes. We work with integrated methods. Our social work is centred on the person. The people we advise are independent, able to take responsibility for themselves and develop strategies for their own lives.

We support and advise them. Refugees and migrants often live on the margins of German society. Their situations are often precarious. We think that we need to change this situation.

The team of KuB is committed to ensuring:

- the understanding between the people in Berlin
- the reduction of prejudice and discrimination
- the integration of refugees and migrants into the Berlin society.

We are committed to these aims in our private, social and political life. We fight against racism and other forms of discrimination, such as anti-Semitism, age discrimination, sexism and homophobia. We want to achieve these aims through the range of our activities. All the services that KuB offers are free of charge.

Lesvos Solidarity, known as “Pikpa camp”, is an open refugee camp in Mytilini, Lesvos (Greece), providing humanitarian support to the most vulnerable refugees including families with children, pregnant women, refugees with disabilities, refugees who suffer from serious medical conditions and victims of shipwrecks who lost loved ones at sea. The main objective of Lesvos Solidarity is to stand in solidarity with the refugees and people in need. Pikpa’s team is fighting against the detention of refugees and violation of their rights.



Lesvos Solidarity offers on site medical care, psychosocial assistance, legal support, food, clothes and hygiene-kits and also provides referrals for medical care off site (such as in hospitals, private clinics). The organization also runs activities for children, language classes, and social support. Although Lesvos Solidarity supports refugees with administering the asylum process, it does not conduct any registration-related work. Additionally, a small team within Lesvos Solidarity supports the refugees on the Southern shoreline of Lesvos when they arrive on the island after crossing the Aegean Sea from Turkey. Lesvos Solidarity also develops actions of solidarity and public awareness for both refugees and locals. To foster solidarity and understanding it has developed and expanded several integration and educational programs for both refugees

and the local community. This has resulted in the creation of the Support Centre “Mosaik” in the center of Mytilini, Lesvos, where language and art classes are offered, as well as workshops developing the vocational skills of both refugees and locals. In October 2017, in cooperation with a group of Greek parents “small Dounias” we are starting an open-air kindergarten for local and refugee kids.

One of the key integration and educational projects Lesvos Solidarity has developed is the Workshop Safe Passage-Bag. This is an upcycling project where bags are being created by refugees and locals living in Mytilini. The bags are created with the lifejackets left on the shorelines in Lesvos, and used by refugees that have crossed the Aegean Sea from Turkey.

mimycri is a non-for-profit organization based in Berlin. Together with newcomers we turn broken rubber boats into bags and backpacks. We upcycle rejected material, create a collaboration space and make history tangible with our products.



The idea originates on the Greek island Chios, where the co-founders of mimycri volunteered several weeks in winter 2015/16. This experience has given Nora and Vera the motivation to create something positive back in Germany to showcase a positive response to a societal challenge and to raise awareness for the current global context of migration.

mimycri is a non-profit association based in Berlin. We care for:

- Mutual learning through working together: mimycri is about learning about and from each other. We want to create possibilities for people who have just arrived in Germany through societal and economic participation.

- Upcycling of existing and otherwise discarded material: mimycri gives new value and meaning to material that is otherwise considered as waste. Each mimycri piece fulfils the functions of saving history and at the same time embodying a new beginning.

- Creation of touch points with the topic of migration, labelling and societal integration: mimycri creates physical “touch points” through an everyday object. The mimycri pieces create an innovative way to interact and discuss the topic in different spaces and contexts – media, politics, society.

Founded in 2011, the Ecumenical Workshop for Refugees Naomi is a nonprofit organization located in the city center of Thessaloniki on 29A, Ptolemaion Street, housed in a building with other organizations with which Naomi cooperates. In the meantime and thanks to a program supported by the Protestant churches of Germany and private donors, today Naomi has 5 employees and many Greek and German volunteers.



Our organization mainly aims to provide emergency help to vulnerable people; either medical help or traveling expenses (tickets) to travel to the asylum offices or for those who are traveling for family reunification.

Moreover, Naomi concentrates on measures that have to be taken in order to support social integration and finding work for refugees. For that purpose, Naomi offers German language courses for those who will go to German-speaking countries through the Dublin Family Reunification Program, as preparation for life in a new country.

Naomi offers also a sewing workshop with 5 classes and a weekly sewing program for women located in the Camp of Diavata near Thessaloniki. More than 60 people weekly take part with great enthusiasm and success. The course's aim to train people for industrial sewing and efforts are made to help them find a job in the Greek labor market, especially those who apply for asylum in Greece and must support themselves and their families.

NORTHERN LIGHTS AID

www.world.northernlightsaid.org



Northern Lights Aid (NLA) is a non-profit, volunteer-operated NGO registered in Norway and operating in Greece. Since its establishment, in January 2016, NLA has been active in several different locations in Greece, working alongside other organizations, international actors and Greek officials to aid those in need.



Northern Lights Aid was established with the mission to provide compassionate, human solutions to fill the needs of those seeking hope after being displaced by war, conflict, persecution, or famine. From the shores of the island of Lesbos, to the unofficial camp of Hara near Idomeni, or in the government-run camps of Thessaloniki and Kavala, NLA has moved its operations according to changes in the political climate, working tirelessly to respond to the emerging needs of people who came to Europe seeking hope.

In 2016, NLA assisted and supported thousands of families and individuals, without discrimination and regardless of politics or their legal status. Doing so, NLA established a bridge between international organizations, official actors and people in need of humane and compassionate solutions. Currently established in the city of Kavala, Northern Lights Aid is now working with the refugee and local community to establish sustainable, long-term projects, including a clothing store and community centre, which will be open to all people in need. NLA is continuously working to provide educational, social, physical and integrative activities for both children and adults.



ONE HAPPY FAMILY COMMUNITY CENTER LESVOS

www.ohf-lesvos.org/en

The One Happy Family Community Center works WITH the people and not FOR them. Including refugees into all the different parts of the project (kitchen, cinema, school, radio studio, etc.) is one of our basic principles. They are not working only as “helpers” or translators, but also take on responsibilities and design new projects by themselves.



People on the Greek islands are living in inhumane conditions with a huge lack of medical, psychological and legal support. Asylum-procedures are complicated and arbitrary: authorities often change the rules and humanitarian aid organisations drag people into a vortex of dependency instead of enabling them. People feel left alone, helpless and hopeless. This is the reason why swisscross.help, which later changed into One Happy Family (OHF) decided to create a Community Center WITH the people and not FOR them. The OHF is built with the refugees together and they also took responsibilities in designing the center, how it operates, as well organizing the daily duties for running the center.

With 19 projects, One Happy Family and NATAN-IHA (which is running the school) have created a variety of activities, creative-spaces to cover the individual needs. One of the main goals of the center is to create an atmosphere that is as normal as possible. People can get involved, be creative, do sports, just hang around or buy items they need with the local currency (swisscross-drachma). The drachma takes away the feeling of begging and gives everybody the possibility to pay for whatever they need. People gain back the freedom of choice and the possibility to contribute.

The team behind people4people aims to protect the lives, health and dignity of people fleeing from war-torn countries and to alleviate their suffering. We support medical cases. We actively help and advise people on family reunification. We have been actively fundraising and helping refugees in Greece, along the Balkan route, or in their country of origin.



We carefully assess each individual situation and search to obtain the best solution. As an example, in the case of 13-year-old Abed, who suffers from cancer, we were able to fly him out of Syria for medical treatment in Germany. Moreover, we made sure that his parents and non-adult siblings followed shortly after. We succeeded in ensuring a church asylum for a young educated Afghan man whose asylum was rejected in Norway and was about to be deported to his home country. We are especially proud to highlight that we could win as our patron, Mr. Omid Nouripour, member of German Parliament representing the Green Party.

Quote Omid Nouripour: “The immense suffering of refugees steers some to a loud cynicism, others get out there and dedicate themselves to help. And those among others are members from people4people with their dedication and competency. I do support people4people and so can you!”

For our NGO it gets more and more difficult to successfully accomplish vulnerable cases despite a vast network - press, journalists, media and direct contacts to politicians. The biggest challenge is generating donations, as overall those are slowing down. Without donations efficient help is limited.



POTSDAM-KONVOI

www.potsdam-konvoi.de

Out of solidarity with refugees stuck in Greece and Serbia the initiative supports the refugees' self-organization and gives them direct aid to improve their humanitarian situation. In Germany, it is advocating the refugees accelerated admission, relocation and safe passage.



Potsdam-Konvoi uses its experiences gained from operations in Greece to enable people to do voluntary work by promoting and supporting volunteers, as well as fundraising and financially supporting acts of solidarity. Potsdam-Konvoi is doing political and educational work to accelerate relocation and family reunion. It is also campaigning against the criminalization of non-governmental sea rescue services in the Mediterranean. In addition, it is active against deportations at the local level. For example, at the request of Potsdam-Konvoi,

the Potsdam city parliament have made decisions to help further family reunions. Families, divided between Greece and Germany, are helped to find one another and their reunion and relocation from Greece is fostered.

In order to win donations as well to raise awareness of its work, Potsdam-Konvoi runs education programs and improves public relations by means of lectures, info stations, flash-mobs, demonstrations, vigils, public actions, as well as networking activities.

Proactiva Open Arms is a non-governmental, non-profit organization whose main mission is to rescue refugees from the sea that arrive to Europe fleeing wars, persecution or poverty. Born from a rescue and first aid at sea company with extensive experience in the Spanish coasts.



We specialize in surveillance and rescue missions of boats carrying people who need help in the Aegean and Central Mediterranean Sea, as well as raising awareness of all the injustices that are happening which have been untold. It all started with some pictures of children that drowned on a beach. We thought: if we dedicate ourselves to this and we do it on our beaches, why are they dying there and why is nobody helping them?

In the beginning of September, we decided to move to the Island of Lesbos to help the refugees that arrive to the Greek coast. Our team covers 17 km of the Lesbos coast by land and sea, helping the coming refugees (20 boats per day) to disembark safely.

After the agreement between EU and Turkey, we are also in the Mediterranean Sea with a rescue and surveillance boat. We do not want to lose one more life to the sea, neither do we want to allow the sea to silence the injustices that happen there.

Pro Asyl is an independent voice raised for human rights and refugee protection in Germany and Europe. It was founded in 1986 by members of refugee councils, churches, trade unions, welfare and human rights organisations. They wanted to counteract the right-wing, racist incitement to ill feeling against asylum seekers and to campaign for the protection of victims of persecution. These concerns are just as urgent today. Pro Asyl's work is financed solely by membership fees, donations and grants from foundations. Thanks to their support we are politically and financially independent.



Pro Asyl advocates for the rights of refugees in Germany and in Europe. We help them to apply for asylum. We investigate human rights violations. And we campaign for an open society in which refugees receive protection.

- Assistance in individual cases
- Documenting human rights violations
- Standing up for refugee protection

Pro Asyl is a public-benefit association that finances assistance for refugees and secures the independent work of Pro Asyl. The Pro Asyl Advisory Council has existed since 1986. It is made up of members of refugee councils, churches, trade unions, human rights organisations and welfare associations for the protection of refugees and persecuted persons.

It founded the support association in 1988. The Pro Asyl Foundation enables those supporting the work for refugees to place it on a sustainable basis through endowing it with substantial gifts or legacies.

Refugee councils are our cooperation partners at the level of the German federal states. They accompany initiatives at the local level and keep in contact with the persons concerned. Beyond the work in our own organisational structures, Pro Asyl cooperates with other human and civil rights organizations, playing an active part in networks and coalitions at the German and European level.

RefuComm is a grassroots, entirely volunteer-run organisation providing information to displaced people in Greece and Italy about their rights and about legal procedures. The information is provided in several languages both in document and film format. We have various channels for information provision such as a website, a YouTube channel, several Facebook pages and most recently via micro SD cards; our chatbot is coming soon.



There are thousands of displaced people in Greece and Italy – they have an overwhelming demand for information to understand what is happening to them. We have been working to gain information for refugees for the past two years in Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Germany, Holland, the Greek Islands and mainland Greece. We are aware that asylum seekers are struggling to understand the processes which can result in them often being deported after receiving a negative decision. Unaccompanied minors in particular are responsible for their own asylum applications and struggle to understand what they need to access their rights. Displaced people are struggling to integrate into a destabilised and bureaucratic economy and society. Survival becomes paramount.

We source information: checking dates, legality and rumour to produce, translate and distribute accurate information for refugees. The information we provide is focused on the bureaucratic processes in Europe. We create documents, videos and audio files to get information to refugees in a format that works for them. Many refugees cannot read and this is particularly true for minors. We train volunteers so that they have a rudimentary but accurate understanding of the processes so that they can share this with refugees.

Since May 2017 the legal information team of Refugee Law Clinics Abroad has been working in Chios in order to provide legal support.



On Chios, as well as the four other EU hotspots in Greece, there are currently many asylum seekers who will be returned to Turkey, according to the EU-Turkey-Deal. People arriving usually do not know how the asylum procedure in the hotspot works, which procedural rights they have and how, for example, they can be reunited with family members who are already in other EU countries. Our legal information and support is essential. The legal procedures are so complex that it is in many cases de facto impossible for refugees without legal support, especially, for example, in applying for family reunification.

Our team consists of one lawyer (legal coordinator) permanently working in Chios and four legal volunteers at a time. All legal volunteers have experience in legal counselling for asylum seekers and are selected and prepared for the work in Chios with our obligatory legal training prior to their departure.

Our activities focus on the provision of information on the hotspot asylum procedure, in particular procedural rights and pre-litigation, as well as support for the filing of an application for family reunion under the Dublin III Regulation.

REFUGEE RIGHTS DATA PROJECT

www.refugeerights.org.uk



Refugee Rights Data Project (RRDP) is a non-governmental human rights organisation and UK registered charity. We aim, through independent field research, to fill information gaps relating to refugees and displaced people in Europe as well as to advocate for firm policy action that upholds their human rights.



While aid agencies and independent volunteers have stepped in to provide crucial short-term care for displaced people across Europe, the humanitarian crisis unfolding across the continent needs to be addressed in an effective long-term manner. This can only be done through meaningful policy development, which honours the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Through our independent research and advocacy work, we encourage decision-makers and influencers to engage with and gain insight into the daily reality faced by displaced people seeking sanctuary in Europe.

By anchoring our work in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations we believe that groups and influencers across party lines and affiliations will take on board the serious nature of our findings. Through our non-partisan approach to these sensitive issues, it is our hope that a constructive and non-polarising climate will take root. Moreover, our research can help to inform a nuanced, non-polarising and constructive public debate. This will in turn generate a response to refugees and displaced people across host societies in Europe based on solidarity and mutual understanding.

Refugee Support Aegean (RSA) is a non-profit organization focusing on strategic litigations in support of refugees, monitoring human rights violations as well as the provision of legal, social and humanitarian support in individual cases. Members of the organization are based on the islands and in the mainland and are visiting different parts of Greece in order to document the situation there.



Photo by Salina Straux

One of our aims is to pursue the protection of refugees and their rights with a focus on vulnerable groups such as unaccompanied minors and victims of torture, violence or abuse. Furthermore, we provide legal, social, psychological and humanitarian assistance particularly to refugees, international protection seekers and other vulnerable persons and also victims of human rights violations and victims of shipwrecks.

In our work we promote and defend the “principle of non-discrimination”, the prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment, the right to a fair asylum procedure, the principle of non-refoulement, and in general individual rights and freedoms. We are developing actions in order to inform and raise public awareness to combat racism and xenophobia and at the same time promote non-violence and human rights protection.

REFUGEE4REFUGEES

www.refugee4refugees.org



Since April 2017, Refugee4Refugees has supported refugees in their desperate journey towards Europe. We are at the forefront of this humanitarian crisis, based on the northern shores of Lesvos, Greece.



Refugee4Refugee founder Omar Alshakal sought to create a non-political organisation that addresses the needs and concerns of refugees, while also encouraging fellow asylum seekers to get involved and take the lead in relief efforts. Omar is a Syrian refugee and brings a unique perspective as someone who arrived in Europe in 2014, after swimming for 14 hours from Turkey to Greece.

The 23-year-old started the charity to tackle these challenges head on. As a former life-guard, he saw an opportunity to improve boat spotting and landing support on Lesvos.

Refugee4Refugees then transports arrivals to a temporary UNHCR camp where people can receive food, water, clothing, shoes and medical attention.

ResCO (Rescue Coordination Online) is an international network, which has been operating from a base on Facebook up until now. Since 2017 it is registered as an organization in Germany. Just like many other initiatives, it originated in the course of the refugee crisis out of the centre of a large international volunteer movement.



ResCO international consists of a volunteer-network with helpers from almost all European countries, as well as Syria, Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Afghanistan, Iraq, Israel, Palestine, the USA, Latin America and Australia. The members belong to diverse professional groups: doctors, teachers, nurses, entrepreneurs, civil servants, artists, students, translators, writers, employees etc. They all work without pay and contribute to our network through a variety of skills and abilities. The purpose of the association is to promote assistance to refugees.

The help is concrete and direct and includes, among other things (a) organization of transports of relief goods such as clothing or medical material by the members of the association, (b) intervention of the members of

the association with the authorities at home and abroad to support family reunification (c) taking over the communication between hospitals at home and abroad and doctors in refugee camps in cases of inadequate medical care for refugees, (d) providing contacts with volunteers who have key qualifications in the medical, organizational or legal field, or who, in turn, address persons with the necessary qualifications, (e) improving infrastructure in refugee camps to provide necessary items used in everyday life, (f) organizational and financial support of the work of members and other volunteers in Greece, Turkey and other countries where refugees are accommodated and cared for, also in Germany.

ReVi (REFUGEE VOLUNTEERS OF IZMIR)

www.revifamily.org

ReVi

We're a group of Syrian, Turkish and international volunteers helping families by providing job opportunities, education and emergency aid in Izmir, Turkey. ReVi was created in January 2016 and since then has helped over 500 families. Over 200 volunteers have joined our activities.



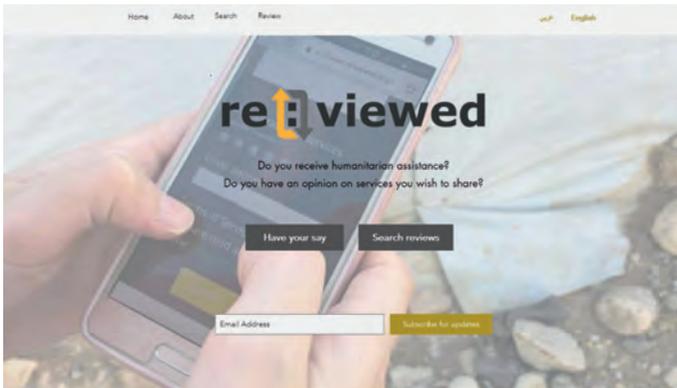
We are working with Syrian families on a long-term perspective. We get to know them well and our help is specific to each family's needs. We first assess each situation to determine if anyone in the family is working, whether the children are attending school, or if there is a medical condition that needs our attention. We bring assistance as soon as possible and stay in contact with the family throughout.

We also run two kindergarten schools for over 100 children. With five Syrian teachers from the community, we have classes from Monday to Friday. We teach Arabic, Turkish, Math, Arts, Dance and provide plenty of play time. The teachers work closely with the families to help them get registered into Turkish Schools as soon as possible.

We have a couple of programs to employ women who can knit or make bracelets. We pay them weekly enough to cover their rent, which can be a much needed complement to the family's income.

In the summer, we organize outdoor activities on a regular basis. While the children play, the parents socialize with each other and with our volunteers, forming one big happy family and diverse community. On Sundays, we visit families for dinner. This program began as a way to financially help people in need, but quickly became a social activity.

re:viewed is a dedicated to review services and service providers space for people who receive humanitarian assistance. We believe that transparent and anonymous feedback can strengthen accountability practices in the humanitarian sector, incentivize feedback, sensitize and engage the public and inform funding decisions.



We are starting this pilot program with a handful of grassroots organisations in Athens, which communicate the opportunity to provide feedback to their users. Our initial site is deliberately rudimentary, so that we are able to develop it given the results of our pilot period, taking into account the preferences of users and communication needs of partner organisations.

We are coming to ConAction to increase our partnerships in the hope of growing a grassroots momentum around accountability. We want re:viewed to support you in raising aware-

ness, advocacy and fundraising, and to level the playing field providing transparency to the work being carried out on the ground – but we are also seeking your participation in order to make a statement to those less inclined to welcome the concept. If you can play a part in debunking the premise of passivity and powerlessness of those affected by crisis, so can anyone.

If you would like to partner with us, help advise on operations and our plans for the site, volunteer your time and skills, or just have a chat – we would love to connect. Looking forward to meeting you!

Salam consists of Syrians and Germans and works as a non-profit organisation. The Salam network offers assistance to Syrian refugees in Berlin concerning their daily life in Germany. After the war, deprivation and their escape from a war-torn country, we would like to welcome refugee families here in Berlin and help them during their first months in Germany.



We accompany families to government offices, we assist them with the search for a doctor, legal advice or also with the registration of the children in the kindergarten, school or training as well as job and flat search. Our network includes people in Berlin with special expertise in different fields, for example doctors and translators. This is intended to make it easier for refugee families to enter the local culture. In the beginning, there usually is a lack of general orientation about the practicalities of living in a new country as well as language problems.

We offer various activities and events to meet our Syrian "New Berliners" and to help fellow citizens. Intercultural exchange meetings take place to foster learning together and to encourage sustainable relations with each other. We offer artistic and cultural projects for meaningful activities against often a long senseless waiting period. We organise language tandem lessons with German native speakers. Various sports and leisure activities are organised with several cooperation partners.

SAO Association is a fully female run organization that concentrates its forces, resources and efforts in support of displaced women and their children and families in Greece.



We run three main programmes:

- Bashira, a Community- and Empowerment-Centre on Lesbos
- Amina, a Community- and Empowerment-Centre in Athens (fall 2017)
- Back on track, a university scholarship fund for young refugee women

Bashira and Amina are daycentres and houses of solidarity and security where we assist refugee women in taking their fate back into their own hands. Bashira mainly focuses, in collaboration with MSF, OXFAM etc., on supporting especially vulnerable women in health, legal and psychological matters. Amina will receive women who are staying permanently or for longer periods in Greece and aims to create a bridge of communication with their new countries of residence through integration assistance.

We are on-site with Tereza Lyssiotis, SAO Field Director Greece, Sonia Andreu, SAO Programme Manager on Lesbos, professional social workers as well as competent female volunteers. Raquel Herzog, SAO Founder and Delegate, acts as a link between those in the field and the board in Switzerland, the organisation's administration, information and fundraising hub. SAO provides its donors, members and supporters with complete traceability of its funds and first-hand information on its activities.

In July 2017 Sea-Watch returned to the Aegean on a monitoring mission with its flagship the Sea-Watch 1. Rather than search and rescue, the priority for Sea-Watch during this mission is to fix the eyes of the media back onto the Greece-Turkey route, which is still being used by refugees to escape to Europe. With the EU-Turkey deal, things have become neither better nor safer for refugees and migrants.



The dangerous sea journey undertaken by refugees and the humanitarian situation on the Greek islands are objects of constant criticism due to catastrophic loss of life and inhumane conditions. The lack of attention from the EU to this miserable humanitarian situation urgently needs to change.

The Sea-Watch 1 is fully equipped with maritime communication technology and is the only NGO ship sailing along the coasts of the Greek islands in order to monitor and document the brutal reality at sea and on land. The established network of our partners including The Hope Project, Watch The Med, Refugee Rescue/'Mo Chara' or ProActiva offers brilliant collaboration to support the Sea-Watch monitoring mission in the Aegean.



SMALL PROJECTS ISTANBUL

www.smallprojectsistanbul.org

Small Projects Istanbul (SPI) is a grassroots NGO operating in Istanbul, Turkey to support those displaced by conflict in the Middle East and Northern Africa Region. Through skills and development training, livelihood support, as well as supplemental education and language programs, SPI offers practical support and a sense of belonging for Syrian families rebuilding their lives in Istanbul and beyond.



Small Projects Istanbul emerged as a result of founder Karyn Thomas' work with displaced Iraqi and Palestinian families in Damascus between 2008 and 2012. As conflict broke out, Karyn witnessed the ways in which the lives of Syrians were turned upside down. She used her resources and relationships to connect families in need to medical support as well as education and other opportunities. These 'small projects' grew and took new shape as Karyn moved to Istanbul and the war gained intensity.

Since its 2013 launch as a grassroots organization in Istanbul, SPI has grown in scale from the initial community gatherings, lessons in the

park, and back-to-school scholarships. SPI's international team of volunteers now offers 40+ programs a week that aim to improve the skills of women and their children toward brighter futures in which they will be the decision makers. Childcare is provided as well as language and psychosocial support to allow children to better cope and integrate into mainstream schools. Meanwhile, mothers take part in the Women's Skills Development Program. Here they learn entrepreneurial, financial and small business skills in conjunction with their craft collective (of which Drop Earrings Not Bombs is part). Through this support, women are able to profit, selling their handmade range of clothing and accessories worldwide.

The private initiative, founded by Rahel and Michael Räber, supports refugees in Greece and Turkey. Since August 2015, they support and empower refugees wherever needed the most urgently, together with hundreds of volunteers.



When faced with all the stranded destitute and homeless refugees in Athens in 2015, Michael and Rahel started to help. Since then, our guiding principle has been to fill gaps in humanitarian aid. In September 2015, we went to Lesbos to support with the rescue of boat people at the shores. Until the end of July 2016, together with many other organisations, we secured a 24-hour coverage at the shores. From March until May 2016, swisscross.help engaged in Idomeni, at the Greek border to Macedonia, with diverse humanitarian assistances. Among other things, we distributed about 14.000 pairs of shoes to those stuck at the closed border.

Since the end of May 2016, swisscross.help supported about 500 refugees in camp Karamanlis and since the end of July 2016, another 500 in camp Frakapor. Both camps are in the agglomeration of Thessaloniki. In August 2016, swisscross.help started to supply refugees stuck in the region of Izmir, Turkey, with food items. We initiated and still support a Community Center in Thessaloniki, which is now run by Three Peas, and the One Happy Family Community Center on Lesbos. In the Community Centers, people are provided with supplementary food items and with a space to learn, relax, start activities and break their routine. We consistently take all decisions from the refugees' viewpoint, not according to administrative aspects. Therefore, we are quick, effective and efficient.

THE HOPE PROJECT

www.facebook.com/HopeProjectKempsons

The Hope project is founded on the principles of dignity, compassion and safety for all. We aim to provide aid and support for people fleeing conflict or persecution arriving on the island of Lesbos.



Originally from the UK we moved as a family to the island of Lesbos, Greece in 2000, and live in an area called Eftalou. Since early 2015, we have been rescuing and providing aid to refugees arriving on the north coast of Lesbos. In the beginning, it was just the three of us doing the best we could, but later that year we had volunteers from all around the world coming to help us. They estimate that in 2015/2016 600.000 refugees arrived on the northern shores of Lesbos. Although the numbers have dropped, boats are still arriving and we continue to help.

We strive to support refugees both directly and through support of other groups working in different areas on the island. The needs and the situation are constantly changing, boats arrive every day and the number of refugees stuck here in poor and overcrowded conditions grows daily.

Our core work continues to be with refugees arriving on the coast of Lesbos, primarily in the north of the island. This involves us along with volunteers monitoring the sea for refugee boats and then providing aid for them when they land on the shore. We also work closely with other groups on projects for the long-term support of refugees.

THE VOICE OF THOUSANDS

www.tvot.info



The Voice of Thousands (TVOT) focuses on three core areas: 1. Advice and support for individual cases concerning family reunification and humanitarian visas. 2. Punctual support of projects in favor of refugees. 3. Political lobbying of Swiss federal policy and bringing these issues to the attention of the public.



The Voice of Thousands (TVOT) has approximately 50 members, led by Bettina Konetschnig and Michael "Grosi" Grossenbacher. With their now expansive network, TVOT can count on the support of numerous other NGOs and volunteers throughout Europe and the Middle East. At the center of the work are individual cases, in urgent need of medical or humanitarian assistance. In cooperation with immigration authorities, policy makers and major NGOs, we are working to provide people with access to life-saving treatments or entry to Europe for particularly vulnerable refugees.

TVOT works closely with Swiss members of parliament and is lobbying for refugees. In 2016, our NGO organized a trip with parliamentarians to various refugee camps in Greece. Thanks to an established political network, TVOT can also count on the support of politicians in individual cases.

Towards the end of 2016 with Project Lifejacket, we were able to get our message out to the public. We portrayed nine refugees and illustrated their life story on lifejackets (project-lifejacket.com). The project reached several million people worldwide.

We are Claudia, Betül and Markus. We are the “Three Musketeers.” We have made it to our mission to help people from crises areas caused by war, flood or earthquakes. Because of the current situation in Syria and Northern Iraq, we are currently focusing our activities on people who had to flee war and persecution from this region towards Europe. Our humanitarian aid projects are currently stretching from the Syrian border through Turkey and along the so-called ‘Balkan route.’



The Three Musketeers Reutlingen is a small relief organization that makes a difference. We call it the “Three musketeers” because when we started, we were a threesome who put our heart and soul into this cause! We have set ourselves the goal of helping refugees directly on site where help is urgently needed. Our primary goal is to provide people with the essentials, such as water, oil, bread, rice, hygienic items, clothing and footwear. We are focused on the Adana & Rehanli regions close to the Syrian border and the Izmir region on the Turkish West coast. Along the Balkan route,

we concentrate our work on a region on the Serbian/Hungarian border in the city of Subotica. Here an average of 300-400 people are hiding in the woods, hoping for an opportunity to cross the border to Hungary. Currently there are about 3.5 million refugees living in Turkey. Only a small fraction of them live in well-organized and structured camps. Most of the refugees live in numerous small, unstructured camps which are not supported by any of the well-known large organizations. We want to help these people with what is needed most.

WATCH THE MED ALARMPHONE

watchthemed.net



Since 2014, the Watch The Med Alarmphone runs a self-organized 24/7 hotline for migrants in distress in the Mediterranean Sea. We do not have rescue assets ourselves, but we inform the responsible coast guards and monitor their rescue operations. We try to oppose the European border regime and its deadly consequences by pressuring state actors to carry out rescue operations and by monitoring human rights violations against refugees at sea.



We are a network of around 150 activists from Europe, North Africa and Turkey and we organize the Alarmphone in 8-hour shifts. I try to take 3 shifts per month, during the day or at night. We can expect calls from the Aegean, the central Mediterranean, north of Libya, as well as from people attempting to cross from Morocco to Spain in the western Mediterranean. When we get a distress call, we inform the responsible coast guards and monitor the operation to ensure that the rescue is carried out. Still, we all agree that rescue at sea cannot be the solution: Only alternative, safe and legal ways of entering Europe will stop people dying at sea, a huge catastrophe, which is created by the European border regime. For the Freedom of Movement for everyone!

From October 2014 until the beginning of this year, we already assisted more than 1.400 refugee boats in distress crossing from Turkey to Greece. Regarding the Aegean, the most pressing issue we see now are pushbacks carried out by the Greek coastguard. In addition, many boats are intercepted by the Turkish Coast Guard already in Turkish waters. Maintaining a civil monitoring structure is thus very important.

**THESE MORE THAN 40
PARTICIPATING NGOS
SYMBOLIZE THE IMPRESSIVE
WORK OF SO MANY MORE
ORGANISATIONS AND CIVIL
SOCIETY ENGAGING IN
REFUGEE SUPPORT ON THE
GROUND AT THE EUROPEAN
BORDERS.**

BAZAAR

Several organisations have started small income projects in which groups of refugees in Greece or Turkey produce handcrafted items.

A selection of these products will be displayed at the conference and the participants are encouraged to purchase them and therefore support the projects directly.



BOUNDLESS

www.boundless-textiles.org

Boundless is a small label for textiles and accessories and is part of our sewing project in our Community Center in Izmir. With this project, we would like to give women the opportunity to regain their dignity and give them a chance to be able to stand on their own feet and to shape their own life independently.



For most of the women living in Izmir, who lost their husbands during the war, life is very hard and heavy. Many women live in confined spaces in one or two rooms, together with often 4-5 children, to overpriced rents. For many of the women the way to prostitution is usually pre-programmed. By producing and selling bags and backpacks, we can help these women on their way into a dignified and independent life and give them such a chance.

We carefully choose the materials we use and make sure they are natural, so all products are 100% cotton. Currently, we have three women and a tailor at our Community Center Tiafi in Izmir. While the women are working, their children are taught in our school or supervised in our children's day-care center. On top of that, our tea and soup kitchen provides a safe space for interaction and getting connected to others.

DROP EARRINGS NOT BOMBS

www.dropearringsnotbombs.org



Drop Earrings Not Bombs is a craft collective situated inside Small Projects Istanbul (SPI), a Turkish NGO attending the ConAction Conference, which focuses on creating community, developing skills, mentoring youth and providing livelihood support to displaced Syrians making a new home in the Fatih district of Istanbul. Displaced Syrian women design and handcraft each pair as an expression of their individual experience, heritage, and spirit.



Through participation in Small Project Istanbul's Women's Skills Development Program, craft collective members have access to Turkish and English language support to ease the difficulties of social integration. Additionally, basic business skills alongside computer classes are fostering the empowerment of the group, towards a future where their lives are in their own hands. In the short term, the project allows the collective to earn a living, supporting their families.

Each pair is a display of creativity and design; a story told through the eyes of the person behind it. Making the earrings provides space for community building, artistic expression and enables the women to rediscover their self-value.

Handcrafted in Istanbul.

Fostering empowerment |
Celebrating creativity

Gyalpa stands for fair business! We buy handmade products directly from the people who make them. Currently, we are working with Syrian, Palestinian, Turkish and Egyptian women, to bring their beautiful original handmade products to Europe.



Our goal is to empower and support women by giving them a fair marketplace to sell their products. In paying fair prices for their products, we hope to pave their way towards a life of financial independence. Gyalpa is a for-profit organisation, with social responsibility. All profits are distributed directly to carefully selected NGOs, producers in war-torn countries, or to refugee-camps in Turkey, Jordan or Lebanon.

We started Gyalpa because we believe that work and a salary can provide a better future. But we also know that it is far too dangerous and not possible for producers in some countries to sell their products locally. Gyalpa's goal is to give them access to Euro-pean markets,

enabling them to support their families, without threats to their personal security. We work closely with our producers to create products we know are sellable. That way, we can order large volumes, providing them with even more financial security. Today Syria, tomorrow, the world.

We work as cost-efficient as possible. Most of our German co-workers are volunteers. You can be sure, in buying products from Gyalpa, you are making a difference to someone who needs it, and you are buying something uniquely handmade. We also run a non-profit NGO named Gyalpa e.V. which supports cultural and educational projects for women and children.

Imece Inisiyatifi is a small association, originally founded as a students' initiative in 2014 with the aim to support underprivileged locals who are impacted by the social, economic, and political consequences of capitalism. Since April 2016, Imece Inisiyatifi is registered in Turkey as an NGO.



In order to facilitate a regular and above-average income for single refugee women, Imece Inisiyatifi has started a sewing and tailoring project consisting of two branches. Firstly, a tailor workshop in Izmir, where refugee tailors can use the sewing machines and materials. Furthermore, trainings are offered in this workshop to women who have little experience in sewing. Secondly, refugee mothers who have to take care of their children receive donated sewing machines and materials to work from home.

The main goal is to empower single refugee women and pave a way for them to become more economically independent from external support. Some women, who previously were living on the streets are now able to afford the rent for housing.

At the moment, the main products are the supportBags in different designs which are mainly sold within Europe. There are plans to expand the designs and offer a more diverse range of products in the near future.



LESVOS SOLIDARITY / SAFE PASSAGE BAGS

www.facebook.com/SafePassageBags

One of the key integration and educational projects Lesvos Solidarity has developed is the Workshop Safe Passage-Bag. This is an upcycling project where bags are being created by refugees and locals living in Mytilini. The bags are created with the lifejackets left on the shorelines in Lesvos, and used by refugees that have crossed the Aegean Sea from Turkey.



Bags made from lifejackets designed and created by refugees on Lesvos. Each bag is unique in its colour-way. We have 9 different designs and more in development.

„Dear friends,

this SAFE PASSAGE bag was made from people all over the world, with all kinds of sentiments. We did it all together with hardship and alleviation. It was a life jacket in the Aegean Sea... enjoy it, it was made in Lesvos!”

*The team of Lesvos Solidarity,
Open Solidarity Refugee Camp*

Naomi offers also a sewing workshop with 5 classes and a weekly sewing program for women located in the Camp of Diavata near Thessaloniki. All items are made by refugees and mostly women, who were trained in special courses in Naomi and who try to find a way to support their families.



A small production of high quality items like aprons, sacks and bags and the famous “Remember Idomeni” jackets are a way for Naomi to support and financially help refugees. More than 60 people weekly take part with great enthusiasm and success. The courses aim to train people for industrial sewing and efforts are made to help them find a job in the Greek labor market, especially those who apply for Asylum in Greece and must support themselves and their families. Also working and designing together is a great satisfaction for these women. Each piece is unique.

ReVi supports 30+ women in Izmir through our knitted products or seed bead bracelet programs. The income generated supports the women who produce the handcrafts.



The idea is to help these families to complement their income for a small amount of work per week from home. So they can still devote most of their time to take care of their children. Each woman can make up to 10 bracelets per week. What we pay is enough to cover their monthly rent. This program is extremely important to these families because jobs are very uncertain in Turkey. The husbands usually need to change jobs without much notice, and

sometimes don't get paid for weeks. So, we have heard from many families how crucial our programs were in helping them during those difficult times. Our plan is to transition some of the families into creating their own brand and set of products. We would help them with sales, but slowly they would take more control of their business: they'd buy the materials, take photos for the online store, package and take orders to the post office.



**ONE OF 113 HUMAN BEINGS
WORLDWIDE IS AFFECTED BY
DISPLACEMENT OR FORCED
TO BECOME A REFUGEE.
ON AVERAGE, EVERY THREE
SECONDS SOMEONE IN THE
WORLD IS FORCED TO FLEE.**

ACCORDING TO THE UN REFUGEE AID ORGANISATION

ART EXHIBITION

WHERE WORDS FAIL,
ART SPEAKS.

THROUGH REFUGEE EYES

Abdulazez Dukhan

Abdulazez Dukhan is a 19-year-old digital artist from Syria, who taught himself photography on his flight. He fled Syria three years ago and was stuck in Greece for one year and three months. Putting the individual into the spotlight. He documented the devastating humanitarian conditions, as well as the resilience in the refugee camps. Some months ago, he was relocated to Belgium.



„My name is Abdulazez Dukhan. I am 19 years old and I am from Syria. I left my country three years ago. I have lived five months in a Greek refugee camp during 2016 and there I started my trip with photography. I became a documentarian and I discovered that I am in love with photography. I used to live in Homs city, Syria, with my family and friends. Telling the truth was the first right we lost in the war. I began teaching myself photography during our escape. On February 26, 2016, I arrived in Greece with my family.

The border was shut 12 days later, and I officially became a refugee resident in a tent camp. More than one year has passed now. Through Refugee Eyes was created to pass the stories on to you of life in various refugee camps. Looking through a lens, we are sincerely hoping that you will look at reality with us: our hopes, our smiles, our suffering, our lives, it is all here, told as truthfully as possible. We need you here with us – eyes wide open.“

MY JOURNEY TO EUROPE IN PICTURES

Kawa Haji Majid

Kawa Haji Majid, born in 1983 in Al Haseke, Syria, studied at the Institute of Fine Arts and worked in the field of decoration and painting. He left Syria in 2013, went to Iraq, then to Turkey and was stranded in Greece in 2016. His family has recently been re-located to Spain. Kawa's art documents his flight and takes the viewer on a journey from Turkish prisons, on a rubber boat crossing the Aegean Sea, into Greek military camps.



„A few years ago, I was living a normal life dedicated to art. But when people chose to bring their opinions down to the streets, the government met our olive branches with bullets. For my family, there was no future in Syria. Against my will, I had to leave my country and friends, hoping for a safer place to live. In Iraq, we were in a camp with 50.000 refugees. Living conditions were horrible, with no education or medical treatment for my children and with ISIS coming closer. We struggled two days through the mountains to reach Turkey. I had to throw my luggage away to carry an old lady.

Upon arrival, the Turkish army transported us into a gymnasium. We were not allowed to go outside, we slept on the floor, the police even walked on people. It was like a prison. With 60 people, we went on a boat which had capacity for only 30. We thought we would die in the vast sea, that no one would hear our screams. On March 19, we reached Chios – but the same day, the borders were closed. We had to stay for months in the Katsikas military camp. This is my story and the story of thousands of Syrians.”

THE COLDEST SUMMER – THREE REFUGEES’ STORIES

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STORIES AS A COMIC

Dimitra Adamopoulou, Thanasis Petrou, Giorgos Tragakis,
Electra Alexandropoulou, Mihalis Panayiotakis, Kostis Tsitselikis

“The coldest summer” is a graphic novel documenting the difficult journey to Europe faced by refugees. The illustrations are based on interviews with Syrian and Afghan refugees. They tell the story of why the protagonists had to leave their home countries, about their journey marked by human trafficking, the difficulties of crossing the Aegean Sea, and the brutality of European authorities.



A working mother, a working father and two children are depicted who are forced to struggle to survive. They were forced to leave their homeland because it had become too dangerous. They abandoned the life they knew as it had become unbearable. They left their families behind in pursuit of a life where they can think beyond the next day or month. They wish to plan a future in peace: to work, study and live among us with equal access to democracy, social rights and culture.

The stories are based on the autobiographical narratives of refugees in Athens and in Berlin. They are stories heard by chance. They were turned into comics in order to make them accessible but at the same time to retain narrative detail. The protagonists of the stories are people who could have been members of our family, our friends or our neighbours. They are, beyond doubt, people who, some day, will be recognised as fellow human beings in our societies. Let us welcome them.

LIVE PAINTING WORKSHOP DIPTYCHON 'FAMILY PORTRAITS'

Valentina Sartori

Valentina Sartori is an Italian artist who draws her own family members and other families, in order to trace the uniqueness and the peculiarity in every one of them.



Family Portraits is a performative and collective painting project originated and designed by Valentina Sartori. In jointly composing their own portraits through speedy drawings, through conversation, experiences can be visualised and translated into images.

The project 'Diptychon' (from ancient Greek 'two-fold') explores how relationships can be visualized between people who share experiences without knowing each other. What has been seen through the eyes of the helper? Which shared visions of the future do they see? The shared working experience allows communication independent of language. Family Portraits aims to share the views of the people arriving from conflict zones. The exhibition will include pieces from the series 'RE-BILD Family portrait from wandering worlds'.

On both days of the conference, a workshop will be offered followed by an exhibition. At the workshop participants will be invited to be drawn in profile, to portray a situation 'eye-to-eye' and to engage themselves in coloring the painting.

Paintings can then be purchased for a donation, two thirds of the proceeds will go to *Flüchtlingspaten Syrien*, the Syrian Refugee Sponsors.

(This organisation is presented on the next page)



FLÜCHTLINGSPATEN SYRIEN (SYRIAN REFUGEE SPONSORS)

www.fluechtlingspaten-syrien.de



Thousands have lost their lives attempting the dangerous journey from Syria in the Mediterranean; now that route is mostly closed, and many family members have been left behind – often children, elderly and sick people. Back home, they are subject to incredible danger and violence. Their only hope: their families who made it to safety will be able to extract them through legal channels.

Certain German state programs make this possible, but only when high-earning German citizens can guarantee to pay for the cost of living and rent for five years in lieu of state funding. That is too great an obligation for many to take on the risk.

This is where we, Flüchtlingspaten Syrien (Syrian Refugee Sponsors) comes into play. We are coordinating sponsorships. For just 10€ a month, you can contribute to sponsoring the retrieval of family members. Every cent goes

directly, without any deductions, into the sponsorship pool. With these funds, we can directly support the direct family of Syrian refugees in Berlin (e.g., by financing the safe air journey to Germany, acquisition and financing of housing, living expenses, and language and integration courses. With over 50 volunteers, we also provide our own language support to help those arriving be able to quickly finance their own lives and not require any government support.

The more sponsors we can find, the more people we can help. With just 160 initial sponsors (those who put their names on the official paperwork as sponsor) and over 4,000 financial sponsors (those who sign up for a monthly pledge of support), we are currently assisting 197 people relocate from Syria to Germany.

The more people who sign up to pledge a small amount (less than one lunch out a month), the more people we can help get out legally and safely from Syria to Germany.

**“NO ONE LEAVES HOME
WITHOUT HARDSHIP, OF THIS
I AM FIRMLY CONVINCED.”**



**FRIEDERIKE KEMPTER, GERMAN ACTRESS
("7 DAYS ... IN A REFUGEE CAMP")**

REVIEW OF THE SOLIDARITY CONCERT FOR THE CONACTION CONFERENCE

2nd of September 2017, at Heilig-Kreuz-Kirche, Berlin

One month before the conference took place, our team decided to take on a challenge of a cultural kind. Our team organized a solidarity concert not only to raise funds for the conference but also awareness for our cause. By inviting Berlin dwellers to a concert showcasing various musical styles performed by artists with different social and ethnical backgrounds.

While working for the conference, we also did our part in fostering underground music culture. After cooperating with Asyl in der Kirche (church asylum), we managed to get our hands on a very special and unique location: Heilig-Kreuz-Kirche. Having the event take place in a former church was more than we had hoped for – amazing acoustics and an impressively beautiful event space with an atmosphere so dense you could almost cut it.

We showcased German artists, namely handpan and didgeridoo duo Yatao and singer/songwriter Freya van Husen. We had visitors from New Zealand, Rob Longstaff and Alex Heymell as well as singer EJ Kempson from the UK, daughter to the well-known Kempson family who lives on Lesvos providing support to refugees there. In addition, the Israel-born Or Sarfati and the Berlin Ethnic Music Ensemble performed classical Oriental and Arabic music on original instruments.

Also, we incorporated RefuEat into the program. RefuEat has been working with refugees since September 2016, providing employment for those far from home and food for those in Berlin, in our case the most delicious Falafels.

We again would like to extend our warmest thank you to all of those who came to listen, to play and to support. It was an evening full of thoughts and hope for all of those who care about what happens at the European borders. This conference is after all not possible without you.



SPECIAL ISSUE CONFERENCE NEWSPAPER

As a documentation of the ConAction Conference the special issue newspaper will be created from all of us. After the event, we will finalize the newspaper and upload it on our website:

www.conaction-conference.com

We will send it to relevant influencers, academics and researchers, the media and European politicians and the European Commission. We encourage you to do the same in your countries.

Let's make our voices be heard together!

KEEP IN TOUCH!

We hope that the conference will be a good opportunity for networking and empowerment for the great work you do. Join our closed facebook group to connect with the participants of the conference:

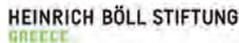
ConAction Network

facebook.com/groups/357278351370051



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**“EVERYONE HAS THE RIGHT
TO SEEK AND TO ENJOY
IN OTHER COUNTRIES
ASYLUM FROM PERSECUTION.”**

UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, ARTICLE 14



WWW.CONACTION-CONFERENCE.COM