



Annual Report 2022

31.01.2023



*Picture from Yorgos Konstantinou

Some thoughts

Alice Kleinschmidt, legal representative and coordinator of borderline lesovs



First of all I would like to thank all of you for your support and trust to our organisation. We feel honored and appreciate all the common efforts to try to make things a little better for the refugees stranded in Lesbos.

On a political level the situation has become much worse than it ever was. A black whole has been created, so that information about the reality cannot flow. Journalists are banned from the camps. Camps are being built much more isolated and surrounded by barbed wire and walls. Refugees arriving with a dinghy boat from Turkey are being made invisible as if they would have never existed. Only a few make it to claim for asylum. We see people being kidnapped in front of our eyes, only to be informed later that they were found drifting in a floating device in Turkish waters again. While all official channels of the Greek government but also European Commission state on TV that human rights will never be compromised. Well, this is just a big lie.

We can do something and we have to do something to stand with the refugees here in Lesbos. We hear so many tragic stories. Still we cannot give what is needed most, a recognition as a refugee, in many cases follows only after months if not years of uncertainty.

We can be a transit support towards a better life. But we see how difficult it is to build a long term solution here. We can give some rest from the hard camp life. And it keeps us going that we see the humans in front of us and they see us, and we know we are one kind and we need to fight for their rights, no one else is listening. There are things that can be done. Helping out financially, providing an apartment, helping to finally leave the island. All together this is the least we can do for people on the move that have been ripped off of all their control about their life.

Selected facts 2022

12756

Refugees arrived via sea to Greece in 2022 and were able to make an asylum claim
More than a third of them in Lesbos

Xxx?

Refugees were not able to make an asylum claim even though they had reached the Greek territory or Greek waters

It is said that around double of the people that have arrived meaning 24.000 have been pushed back by Greek special forces and an even higher amount have been stopped by the Turkish coast guard before reaching Greek waters

360

Refugees are officially dead or missing while crossing into Greece

6022

Refugees arrived via the landborder (Evros region) to Greece and were able to make an asylum claim



6 years

Is the „record“ time that at least one family we know has spent in the camps of Lesbos due to asylum procedure limbo

0 €

Is the amount of money you get once you are a recognized refugee in Greece. There are no social benefits as in other countries

2000

Refugees are residing on Lesbos by end of December

25%

Of them are children

80%

Of them reside in the new camp called “Mavrovuni” ↑

93%

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

30

Dead bodies were washed up/found on the shores of Lesbos this year among them a 2 month and 10 month old baby

Sources and more information:

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

<https://left.eu/issues/publications/black-book-of-pushbacks-2022/>

<https://aegeanboatreport.com/2023/01/16/its-time-to-take-out-the-trash/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2022/nov/30/destitution-is-almost-inevitable-afghan-refugees-in-greece-left-homeless-by-failed-system>

#0 Our team and resources 2022 – who we are

Our core team in 2022 consisted of 6 people

- Three receptionists / social consultants, one of them Farsi/English speaking and one of them Greek/English speaking and one Greek/English/Lingala speaking. All three are responsible for the Information Point at the Welcome Office – accompanying people to public services and trying to solve any issues coming up. Lamprini and Hamid are also managing the visits to our apartments within the housing project.
- One part time Greek/English teacher -we were still individually helping some children and adults with English or Greek classes through the year (but stopped in September because there are enough other educational activities on the island).
- One part time facility manager responsible for the warehouse in the north and getting ready the boxes to be picked up etc. (one time per week few hours)
- One coordinator responsible for the projects, advocacy, administration, fundraising, supplies, communication and supervision
- We rent two spaces, our big welcome office with more than 200 squaremeters, that is open for other initiatives to be used, we have a clothes distribution there, plenty of meeting rooms, classrooms etc. / and we have a warehouse up north with still a big stock of clothes for distribution to new arrivals
- Among the initiatives using our office space throughout the year are: Women in Solidarity House, Mare Liberum e.V., Anti-Rassist Librabry, LGBTIQ+ refugee solidarity group, UNHCR, Refocus Media Lab, Mums without borders and many individual workshops/projects
- Additionally we hired two radio managers for our cooperation partner Radio Helsinki to start a radio show from Lesbos to the world
- Of course within our work we share and care about the resources already on the island and we cooperate and communicate with many actors and individuals along the way



1 Welcome Office

Our Welcome Office is situated very central in Mytilini close to the port. We offer information and counselling mainly in the areas of „administrative support“ which means how to get a tax number, how to register at public services, how to open a bank account but also general information about the asylum procedures, how to get a job or rent an apartment. We also help with translation of documents in Greek, buying ferry or airplane tickets and when it is needed we accompany to other offices for assisting or for referring to other organizations. We try to be a smiling information point that makes the difficult circumstances for the refugees on Lesbos a little bit easier and we try to support with the integration towards the local community. We receive plenty of requests for financial support to issue travel documents, to buy extra food or to be able to pay bills once moved out of the camp. We are an open space for many people, individuals or initiatives that do not have the means to rent their own space. Especially we would like to encourage self organized groups to be active. We often function as a connection point for volunteers, journalists, researchers and politicians that want to learn about the situation on the island. We are the heart for all the following projects, the base and the physical manifestation of being there in solidarity with the refugees and migrants in Lesbos.

2812

Total visits to our social counselling desks



Throughout the year we could arrange services for a total of

461 individuals we made:

91 Tax numbers to be issued

404 Keynumbers

226 Unemployment Cards

31 Renewals of

unemployment cards

14 Applications for unemployment subsidy

223 Bank accounts

28 Applications for Renewals of Resident permits and Travel Documents

33 Tax declarations + 8

Referrals to other Accountants

74.220 €

We spend for this project in 2022 mainly in salaries and little in rent and infrastructure

other SERVICES provided:

Freedom pass applications+ power pass applications, payment rent and sending money through paypal, Issue and print vaccination certificates

Download and installing online banking applications,transfer money ,unblock etc, accept in the tax system and print house contracts, translate school papers written in Greek to parents or court papers, Accompany to the bank to help pay for subsequent applications,travel documents fees ,to port police for stolen asylum cards,to police station,Alpha Bank ,Piraeus, Tax office, Ika ,Kep, for fixing problems that came up with their papers.

Electronical applications through migration.gov page for certificates for various reasons and many emails and calls to Asylum office in Pagani for resolving problems; Register and cancel contracts in private electricity and phone companies, Helping parents to register, or transfer to kindergarten and primary schools, Create new email addresses, CVs and cover letters, unblock packages from greek customs, Cooperate with Helios, Unhcr, Dadp office in the camp, and many ngos to explain procedures, make appointments etc.

Last but not least we have an open ear to all problems people face and want to share

2 Housing

29.320 €

Were spent for this part in 2022

Our housing project is mainly there for families with children, as our cooperation partner is an association for children in need. We see the huge change in the families, a little bit of the pressure falls off their shoulders while being able to have a glimpse of a normal life once they move from the camp into an apartment.

With the help of our housing manager we do not only provide an apartment but also a **food box** two times per week (through other organisations), **monthly bus card** (by us), the service to pass from the office to get **clothes** and other things they need, **registration for the children to the school**, manage the problems/ fix the damages in the houses, and where it needs referrals for **legal support** and **medical support**.

This year we provided apartments for **18 families** and one house for LGBTQ+ refugees. Besides the families, we supported **3 single individuals** because of mental health issues. Also, we supported 3 emergency cases that needed help in paying either their electricity bills or their rent after years in Lesbos, they were not able to survive on their own, Among them two families with children, one of them single mother of 3.

We rented up to 8 apartments at a time. Currently being 6. the average of time families spent at them was 4,5 months. We started with different stages at the asylum procedures, hosting as well recognised refugees, as also rejected ones. After the summer though we saw a much bigger need for the many rejected families having spent up to 6 years, in another 4 years in the camps with their small children. For recognised refugees there are other possibilities to leave the camp, not though for the rejected families. End of December all of the families at the houses are facing several rejections of their asylum claim.

It is a shame to witness how European migration policies can destroy a whole family. Through our housing project we cannot support them all, stranded here and living in unbearable conditions, but some. Our waiting list has already since October 2022 more than 15 urgent cases on it. Every time we have to keep them waiting, especially during winter is heartbreaking.

88 individuals supported

- **We provided an apartment for 18 families**
 - **And for 3 singles**
- The average size of our families were 4,2 members, means we have families of 6 but also of 2 with a single parent. Most of our families were 4 members or more, meaning ranging from 1 to 5 children per family
- The children ages ranged from 2 month up teenagers, most of the children that we are hosting are below 8 years old.
- Amongst our families were 3 single parents, two male and one female.

500

Refugee children are living in Lesbos

~450

Of them in the the Camp "Mavrovouni"

48

Children were supported through our housing program

all

Of the children have access to the public school currently

3 direct support

22.450 €

We spend for this part in 2022

Direct support means, to consider directly what the people visiting our office, or contacting us via phone, need. This can be a referral to another organisation, but often it is about money. Refugees need money for paying for extra food they do not get in the camp, for travel document 90 euros per person, for a ferry ticket or a flight to leave the island. Also for making a subsequent application for an rejected asylum claim costs 100 Euros per person. We have seen families that do not have money to buy a phone or a sim card to be in touch with their beloved ones. Many have lost all they had on their journey here. Some need a bag to carry their things. Material for the school, some money for a school trip. Most of the families approach us to help them paying either for the fees to make travel documents or to help them paying for the ferry ticket to pick up their documents in Athens or Thessaloniki, because they are not able to receive them in Lesbos. After getting the recognition as a refugee, the people are supposed to leave the camp immediately, meaning they often have no money to move on forward. To pay a first rent in a new home, or to travel onwards.

More than 70 families supported

- 29 individuals supported with **flight tickets** to leave Greece = **7 families** supported
- **20 families supported for travel documents** = 90 individuals
- 12 persons supported for **subsequent application** = **3 families**
- Approx. **50 families** supported with **food** ranging from 20€ to 50€ each
- **4 cellphones** and sim cards provided
- Uncounted support for specific requests, shoes, toys, education material

4000

Refugees left the island in 2022

XXX

We assume most of them have left to other European countries after



#4 proti stassi - „first stop“

The project Proti Stassi evolved around an old cheese factory that we rented for the first reception of people arriving in the north shore of Lesbos in 2016. Since the political climate changed, actors like us, supporting the new arrivals, are not wanted if not criminalised by the authorities. Current access to the new arrivals is impossible. Since March 2020 we can only provide supplies for the newcomers through other groups. Usually the clothes then will go to everyone that needs them in the camp. We have a free shop at our office, where people can pick up the clothes and we gave away 75% of our clothes through 2022. Missing items on the island are always pants and shoes. Especially for men, because those parts are rarely donated or never enough. We witnessed quite some arrivals this year, at least 15, but as you can be arrested for only handing out a bottle of water to the people, our hands are tight. We try to monitor the happenings. We see masked men driving around without license plates, like a mafia that is out hunting for the poor people arriving. We have seen and heard first hand the most horrifying stories of violence upon arrival. Families getting separated and so on. We, apart from observation, try to hand out all the clothes we had from 2021. More than 500 boxes, we were able to give out to self-organized teams, other organisations that work in the camp and individuals that we provided with some bags of what they ordered besides our free shop. The perspective for the warehouse in 2023 was to empty it all, but the new camp that is being built, is geographically quite close, and new arrivals have increased the last 3 months, to more than 500 per months. So we are still thinking over if the space might be useful for the future.

8.000 €

We spend for this part in 2022



129

Boats reached the shore of Lesbos through 2022 and were officially registered

4645

Humans arrived in Lesbos 2022

17 visits from small scale initiatives to pick up clothes, with approximately 250 boxes given out

20 transports to our office with approx. 150 boxes given out (picture below)

#5 self organized project support

This year we focussed on engaging and encouraging refugee initiatives themselves, or initiatives that have a high participation of members from the refugee community themselves. It is extremely important to not rule over the people we are here for but support them in their struggle and in their ideas for the better.

We have to overcome the thinking of „we will show them how“ - because this is extremely discriminating if not racist. The reason refugees arriving in Lesbos are miserable is the European migration policy to hold them here like prisoners and not provide safe ways to come to Europe. The main thing that people arriving here want is control over their life. A life they wish to spent in dignity and in safety. So the least we can do is to give some control over their life which was taken by the policies back to them. Many of these groups already work here for years and have made their living and struggling with or without support. We are very proud to be part of the struggle. The groups range from fighting for women rights, to giving out food, to artistic expressions in form of theatre, to educational activities, raising their voices and organizing free clothes markets, workshops, discussion rounds and so much more. Initiatives that we supported through the year were:

NoBorderKitchenLesvos, WomenInSolidarityHouse (WISH), Boat Theatre Group, LGBTIQ Solidarity Group Lesbos, Moria White Helmets, Moria Academia and a new project of Radio Helsinki. There is a completely different working if you work with the people and not for them. It is a shame that this is not the normal but the exceptional in the humanitarian sector.

Projects and initiatives we have supported in 2022

Moria Academia	1.390 Euro
Women in Solidarity House	7.550 Euro
Lesvos LGBTIQ+ refugee solidarity	13.710 Euro
No Border Kitchen Lesbos	4.490 Euro
Moria White Helmets	6.410 Euro
Radio Helsinki – voices of Mytilini	9.575 Euro
Boat Theater Group	2.310 Euro

7

groups supported

45.450 €

We spend for this part in 2022

#6 advocacy, networking, coordination

This part is on one hand the so called back office, organisational development, managing and so on. We need to do administration, fundraising, writing reports, connect to all actors, go to meetings, and then if there are things we cannot change on a local level we need to speak out about it. In the past we were more concentrated on what to do here, but the situation has changed a lot, and there are many obstacles towards being able to supporting refugees especially new arrivals. We started to be more active, giving interviews, writing articles, making podcasts, meeting politicians and students groups. This takes time and efforts. Same is to running the accounting of an organisation, organise legal framework of our activities, working on the tax declarations, hiring people, organise office meetings, decision makings about the support we give.

Some of the highlights: We were part of a big event in Berlin, live and online. We hosted two seminars, one with social work as human right profession student group and professors, and one with activists for peace from a church background.

Working with other initiatives takes as well a good amount of time of coordination and following up with 7 other groups.

The costs include one full time salary, payments to accountants, lawyers, or insurance. bank fees, and coordination phone bills.

23.280 €

We spend for this part in 2022



Finances– Income and Expenses by projects

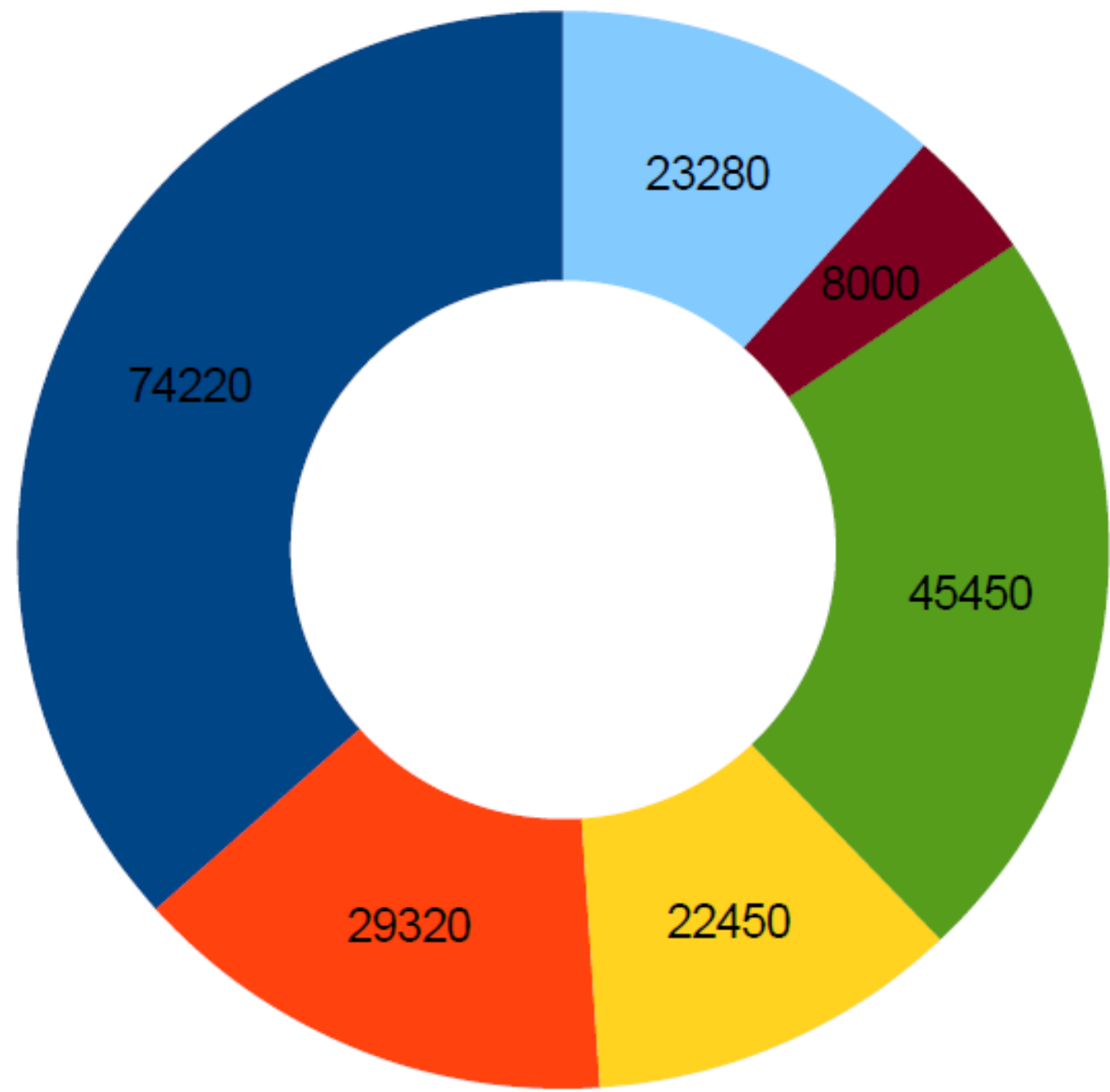
INCOME	2022
1. Kerk in Actie, NL	50.000,00 €
2. Freundeskr. f. Kinder in Not e.V, DE	38.000,00 €
3. Medico International, DE	34.250,00 €
4. Safe Passage Foundation, DE	16.000,00 €
5. Doro Blancke Foundation,AU	11.400,00 €
6. Radio Helsinki,AU	10.124,32 €
7. Ursula-Wandres-Stiftung, DE	10.000,00 €
8. Prism The Gift Fund (Choose Love), UK	5.600,00 €
9. Lush RETAIL LIMITED, UK	4.533,49 €
10. Mare Liberum e. V., DE	4.200,00 €
11. Support International e. V. , DE	3.559,60 €
12. Verein Feministisches Streikhaus, DE	3.000,00 €
13. Other Associations (amounts below 2000)	4.733,43 €
14. Private Donation	30.219,30 €
Gesamt	225.620,14 €

Expenses by project	In Euro
1. Welcome Office	74.220,00 €
2. Self Organized Projects	45.450,00 €
3. Housing	29.320,00 €
4. Coordination/Admin/Advocacy	23.280,00 €
5. Financial Support	22.450,00 €
6. Proti Stassi	8.000,00 €
Gesamt	202.720,00 €

Finances— Expenses by projects

202.720 €

*rounded up -We spend in total in 2022



- Welcome Office
- Housing
- Financial Support
- Self Organized Initiatives
- Proti Stassi
- Coordination

Finances – Expenses by categories

CATEGORY	Amount
Staff Salaries	76.733,00€
Rent	38.411,00€
Passports/ferry or flight tickets	22.063,00€
Food and direct supplies	21.492,00€
Electricity, water and telephon bills and heating petrol	14.828,00€
Insurances/Accounting/legal fees/audit	9.392,00€
Petrol and car maintenance, rental etc	6.847,00€
Bustickets	6.230,00€
Supplies for office and activities	4.565,00€
Meetings, Events	1.662,00€
Bank fees	503,00€
GESAMT	€202.726

202.726 €

We spend in total in 2022

Photo Gallery impressions 1



Photo Gallery impressions 2

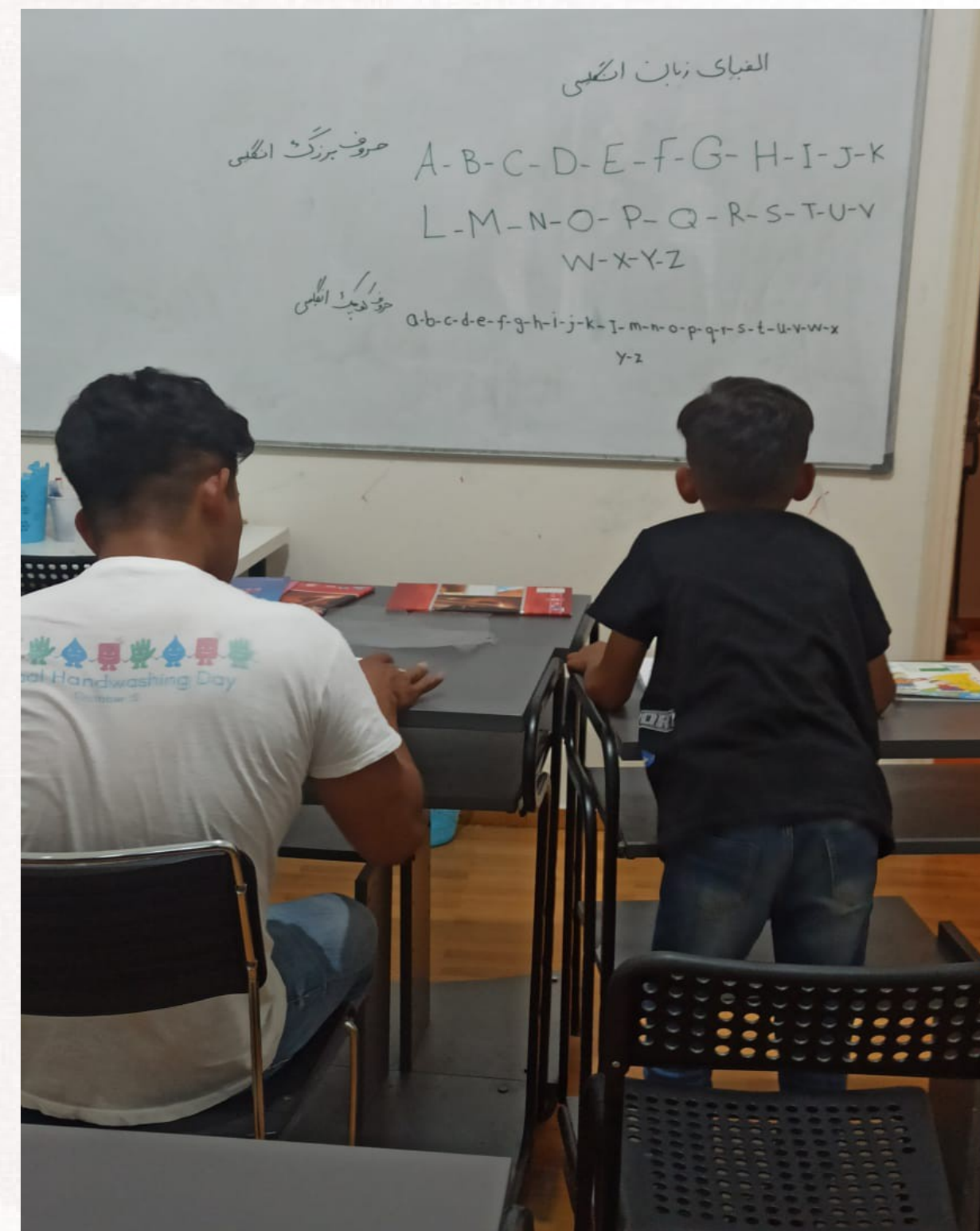


Photo Gallery housing

