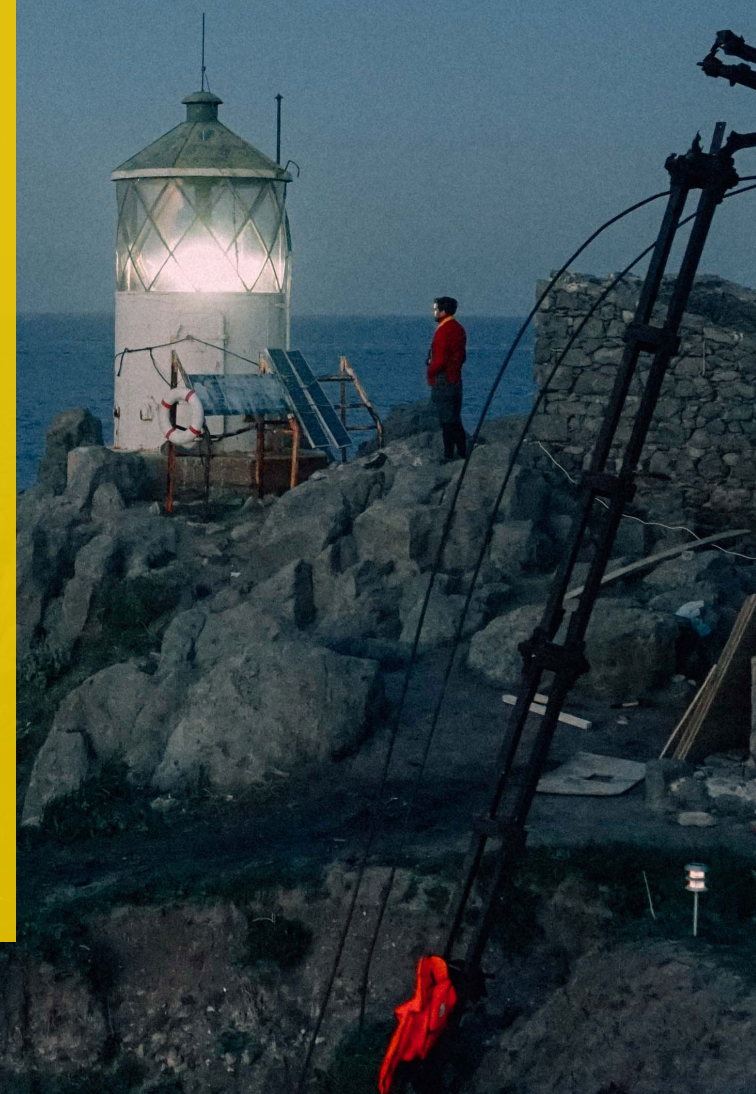


# 2019 ANNUAL REPORT



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# 2019 at A Glance



Today, more than four years after our founders met on the shores of Lesvos, there are over 100,000 refugees and asylum seekers across Greece, awaiting their next steps.

Over 2019, arrivals to Greece significantly increased, with 74,482 arrivals by land and sea, according to [UNHCR data](#) - a reminder that safe passage still does not exist for those fleeing from conflict and persecution in their home countries. This has led to increased pressure on already over-crowded reception facilities on the islands, and increased transfers of people from the islands to camps on the mainland. In our work, we have witnessed these changes both on the shore of Lesbos, and in Ritsona Camp.

Throughout the year, Lighthouse Relief (LHR) continued providing long-term relief on the mainland of Greece through a consistent psychosocial response, supporting the well-being of children and youth in Ritsona Refugee Camp. There, our psychosocial activities reached up to 55% of residents in 2019. In Lesbos, we continued working around the clock to provide emergency aid, giving a dignified first assistance to 54% of arrivals to the island.

2019 was a year of momentous changes. On Lesbos, we responded to the highest numbers of arrivals that our teams have seen in over three years. In Ritsona, our small team of dedicated, long-term volunteers provided high-quality programming with very few resources, while preparing for the largest expansion of the camp.

## 2019 in Numbers



# A Message From Our Board

In 2015, the founders of our organization committed to remaining in Greece for as long as there is a need for supporting refugees arriving to the country. As we look back, we can see that much has changed since our start, although our mission remains the same – to create a dignified humanitarian response that empowers refugees and asylum seekers, while improving conditions for local communities.

In recent years, the ongoing humanitarian situation in Greece has increasingly faded from the headlines, and institutional funding has decreased. The need, however, has not diminished; over 100,000 refugees and asylum seekers remain in Greece, and in 2019, 59,726 people arrived to Greece by sea.

In the start of 2019, this shortfall in funding and global attention left us struggling to sustain our operations. In January, our teams saw cut backs to our programmes, due to a lack of funds, that really put their own resilience to the test - our teams in both locations rose to unprecedented challenges. Bolstered by a strong communications team, we were able to direct much needed funding from our strong base of supporters around the world, including foundations and companies, and this carried us forward into an uncertain 2019.

In the summer months, we witnessed an increase in people arriving on the shores of Lesbos. In August of 2019 alone, our Emergency Response Operation on Lesbos provided an immediate response to 2,843 people, and over 14,500 people throughout the entire year.



In Ritsona Camp, we provided long-term, psychosocial relief to the youngest residents in our Child Friendly and Youth Engagement Spaces. Our teams there also prepared for the largest expansion of the camp, going from 900 to nearly 3,000 residents in 2020.

This was only possible because of our teams of skilled volunteers, as well as our supporters around the world, without whom our work would not be possible. They remind us every day of the continued solidarity and compassion that remains at the core of our work.

It is an honour to serve on the board of Lighthouse Relief - the hard work, love and dedication for the community we serve and for the organization, is present in all we do. It never ceases to amaze me how committed the LHR family is to our goals and values.

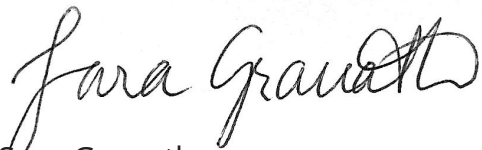
Thank you to all the people who took part in our programmes, we wish you the best!

Thank you to all of you who supported us financially during the year!

Thank you to every single volunteer who for a short or a long time made everything we do possible!

We hope that you continue to be with us on our journey, until the day when hopefully we are no longer needed.

Best regards,



Sara Granath  
Chairperson of the Board, Lighthouse Relief



# Who We Are

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Lighthouse Relief (LHR) is a non-political, non-religious organisation holding the core values of dignity and sustainability. We run programmes that promote a sense of agency and well-being; that welcome and support all refugee communities; and that offer support to local actors.

## Our Mission

To provide immediate crisis response, as well as long-term relief to vulnerable groups including youth and children, in a dignified, respectful and empowering way.

## Our Vision

To put forward a humanitarian response that simultaneously improves conditions for both displaced people and local communities, centering the voices of displaced people in our programming. We are committed to advancing a dignified and empowering humanitarian response for as long as it is needed.

## Our Approach

To be highly adaptable and flexible to constantly changing dynamics, powered by a team of skilled volunteers.





# Ritsona Programmes





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Lighthouse Relief has operated in Ritsona Refugee Camp since April of 2016; since then, our programming in the camp has evolved to respond to different needs as the population of the camp has continued to grow. Today, asylum seekers on the mainland of Greece must wait longer periods until their asylum procedures move forward. Throughout this time of uncertainty, psychosocial support is vital, not only to reinforce resilience, but also to help residents foster tools that can serve their long-term futures.

Throughout 2019, we continued serving children and youth in our safe spaces, starting the year with an extremely small but fiercely dedicated team. We implemented our programmes with the support of 59 short-term volunteers, and 13 Resident Volunteers (RVs).

Through the first months of 2019, our PSS team responded to significant needs and numbers of participants within both spaces despite a lack of financial resources, and low numbers of staff and short-term volunteers. Lighthouse Relief's team in Ritsona surmounted these challenges to build operational capacity, growing their teams by engaging new members, while ensuring that our activities remained sustainable and addressed the diverse needs and interests of this growing population.



## Youth Engagement Space

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The roots of Lighthouse Relief’s safe space for youth started in the winter of 2017 with a collaborative art project called “The Tree of Hope,” carried out with the youth of Ritsona. The project uncovered the need for a space that could provide them with support, as well as a creative outlet to voice their opinions.

Today, the Youth Engagement Space refuses to be reduced to a neat package - part drop-in center, part creative hub, the space offers residents ages 15 and up the chance to engage in creative activities, and to access conversation, support, and informal education. The YES represents both a respite from life in camp, offering the opportunity for residents to engage in creative or leisure activities, or to carry forward their own independent creative projects while learning from their peers, while also providing informal one-to-one support and access to protection services.

## Protection & Referrals

Lighthouse Relief's YES team monitors protection concerns, particularly around mental and behavioural health, working closely with psychologists on site and the youth to reduce stigma around seeking care and support. On multiple occasions, the team engaged with KETHEA, a Greek rehabilitation and social reintegration network, to visit the space and provide workshops. The YES team provides informal one-to-one support for individuals in the space, helping them to find resources for support or working with them to determine the appropriate referral pathways. Outreach is also done daily to monitor vulnerable cases and engage youth in activities.

## Informal Education

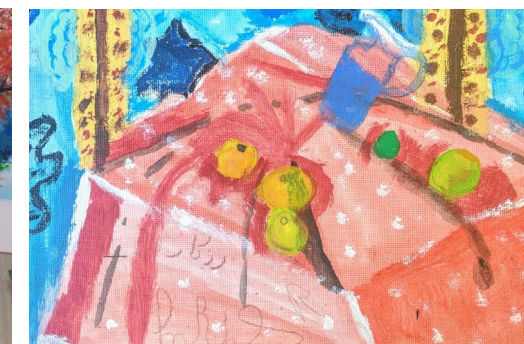
Throughout the year, the YES team provided informal language learning workshops, including beginner and advanced English, as well as beginner and advanced German. English workshops included up to 15 people per class, while German included up to 15 people per class. The classes, which focus on conversation skills, offer a crucial way for residents to prepare for the next steps of their journeys.



## Ritsona Kingdom Journal

The Ritsona Kingdom Journal is a key part of YES programming -- a magazine created and produced by the youth of Ritsona, for the community of Ritsona. In Autumn of 2019, the YES released the ninth edition of The Ritsona Kingdom Journal, marked by a celebration in the space, an occasion for friends and family to witness and celebrate the creativity of the young people of Ritsona.

This edition of the RKJ brought together art, poetry, and prose created by the youth, showcasing not only their talent, but their drive to make their voices heard. Many of the pieces also provide a unique perspective on the challenges of life in displacement, commenting on themes such as integration, discrimination, and the asylum process. We partnered with our friends at [Narratio](#) to publish these pieces on their platform, dedicated to elevating voices in displacement.



## Workshops

Throughout 2019, volunteers and residents spearheaded a wide range of workshops in the YES, covering skills such as videography, photography, art, drama, Muay Thai, and more. In particular, the LHR-led art workshop was very popular, occurring twice a week and always gathering a group of regular participants. The workshop served as a popular, safe space for residents to come together and work quietly together on their own art projects. Outreach was also done on a daily basis to engage youth in the different workshops.

On other occasions, residents themselves have shared their skills during creative workshops, highlighting the power of peer learning. Residents with a background in photography or videography have paired up with our team members to offer workshops, giving a chance for the youth to share their skills and learn from their peers, fostering greater social cohesion and engagement in our programmes.

We also invited special guests to our YES to share their skills with the youth. Employees of Etraveli, one of LHR's partners, visited the YES on numerous occasions to lead the youth in different workshops, including a singing and keyboard workshop, basketball, ping pong, and chess. Through these and similar workshops that we host in the YES, we hope to provide an outlet and a platform for the young people of Ritsona to further develop their talents and interests.



### Arts

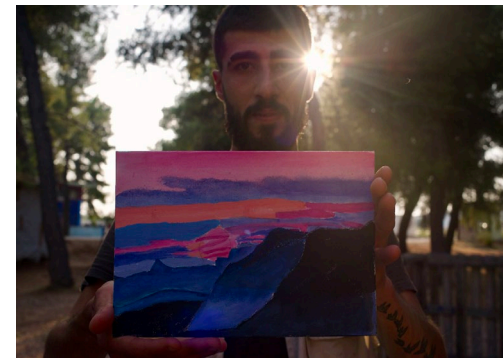
Drawing  
Painting  
Guitar  
Singing  
Photography  
Videography  
Storytelling

### Language

Greek  
English  
Spanish  
German

### Sports

Tennis  
Fitness  
Muay Thai  
Yoga

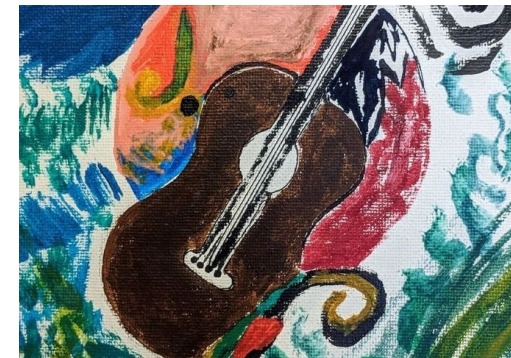


## Girls Programming

Until Autumn 2019, LHR's Ritsona team conducted programming for girls aged 12-18, which took place in an ISObox located near the camp's Female Friendly Space. There, the team engaged girls in activities such as Yoga, Photography, badminton, ball games, henna and nail painting, bracelet making, and art. LHR's girl's specific programming was discontinued in Autumn of 2019 due to lack of staff capacity, low numbers of volunteers and diminished resources.

## Creative Projects

The LHR team has been able to work closely with the youth of Ritsona to produce and film several creative projects that they have spearheaded, including a short film called "[The Dream](#)," written by Lighthouse Relief Resident Volunteer and previous resident of the camp, Adnan. This short film tells the story of two friends on a journey, an unexpected friendship forged in displacement, and the power that our dreams hold. Other films included "[The Twin](#)" a humorous adventure in the silent-film style of Charlie Chaplin.





*Twice a week, in the “art” ISOBox of the YES our CFS manager leads a group of youth in a quiet time of working on art projects, exploring new art techniques such as portraits or still life.*

*Hassan (top left), a frequent visitor to the YES, also regularly participated in these workshops. In the fall of 2019, his art was on display at the YES art party exhibition, an event to bring together and display art created during these workshops.*

*“I am really happy that we work together, especially about painting and art. Painting is a means through which our positive and negative energy and feelings can come out, and we can express them in our paintings.”*

*Agit (painting top right), a talented painter and resident from Afrin, echoed these feelings, “After coming to art workshops in Ritsona, new horizons opened. I found a missing part of myself in painting. When I paint - I find peace, I find calmness.”*

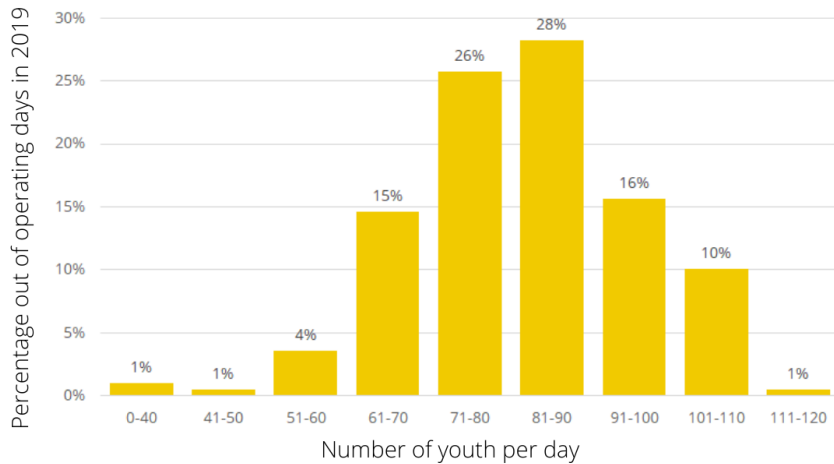
## Impact in Numbers

Over the course of 2019, 175 unique youth attended the YES, which amounts to a fifth of the camp's population. Throughout the year, an average of 107 unique youth visited the Youth Engagement Space every week, with the highest number per week being 132 and the lowest being 64. On average, the YES welcomed 82 youth per day throughout the year.

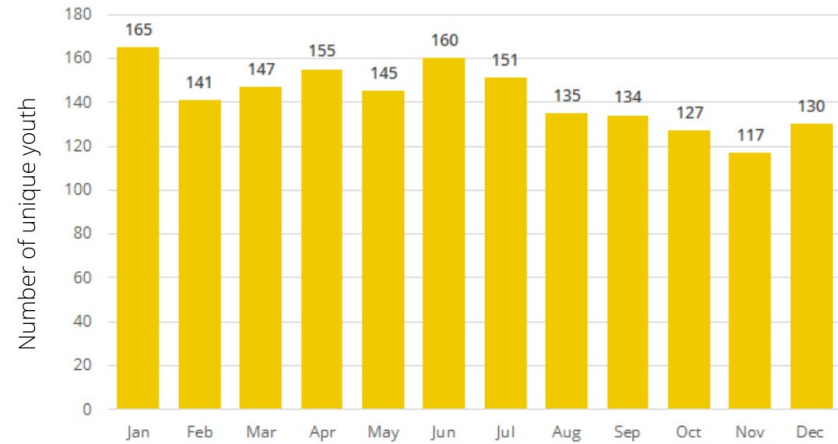
As the image below demonstrates, the space welcomed more than 71 youth per day on 54% of the operating days in 2019. On 28% of operating days of 2019, the YES hosted between 81 and 90 people.

The monthly attendance of the YES was consistent across the months of 2019, with an average of 142 unique youth per month, as illustrated in the graph below.

### Frequency of attendance at the YES



### Monthly attendance of the youth in YES







## Child Friendly Space

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Lighthouse Relief's Child Friendly Space (CFS) in Ritsona Camp is a safe place where children aged 3 to 10 can learn through play and regain a sense of normality in the midst of an emergency setting. Children can play in a safe and supervised environment where they socialise with their peers, create art projects and crafts, sing educational songs and dance, partake in themed activities and learn about hygiene and sanitation.

The purpose of the CFS is to offer psychosocial support services that reinforce the resilience and wellbeing of children. In the CFS, the best interests of the child are the drivers of all our actions - it is their voice that matters the most, and we provide them with a positive space to express themselves.

Through 2019, the CFS team led high quality and varied programming despite often having a small team and facing a lack of volunteers, a gap filled by skilled Resident Volunteers. In the final months of 2019, the team geared up for a significant expansion of Ritsona Camp, planning efficient, safe and creative solutions to accommodate a much larger group of children by dividing age groups on certain days, and utilising our spaces more creatively.

## Daily Activities

Throughout 2019, LHR's CFS team engaged children in structured creative and active play activities. For the youngest residents of Ritsona, activities of our CFS inform their cognitive development, and support their burgeoning sense of self. Activities were carried out by short-term and long-term volunteers, alongside resident volunteers from the community.

A day in the CFS consisted of: free play with a range of core activities, art activities, sports and energizer activities, singing songs and more, depending on the CFS team's capabilities. Each week in the CFS featured a different theme, with themes running the gamut from "Celebrations" to "Family" and "Farm Animals," offering various craft and art activities to the children based on the specific theme. Throughout the year, our activities were also greatly complemented by special guests who delighted the children, including the Wind-Up Penguin Theatre Company and the Flying Seagulls.

Depending on the capacities of the CFS team, regular activities were complemented by activities such as sport or meditation. In the summer of 2019, a CFS volunteer provided meditation and relaxation sessions during CFS programming, leading children 3 to 5 years old in breathing exercises, simple yoga poses and relaxation techniques.



## Child Protection & Referrals

Through 2019, LHR's CFS team coordinated with the protection actor on site, Solidarity Now, to refer vulnerable or concerning cases with whom we work during our programming. Since the CFS engages a high number of children in Ritsona, of a wide range of ages, our team is able to monitor cases and ensure that each child is provided with any necessary support, and is linked up with critical services.

LHR is one of the key actors for child protection referrals and follow up monitoring reports within Ritsona Camp, with the highest amount of timely and initial referrals to Solidarity Now in Ritsona in 2019, according to the Solidarity Now team.

The CFS team coordinates with other actors onsite to ensure vulnerable cases can access cohesive services, and also conducts regular outreach and follow up with vulnerable children and families.



## Community Engagement & Outreach

The CFS team continued regular outreach to the community of Ritsona, in order to follow up with vulnerable children and families, to share positive progress with parents, and gather feedback in order to continuously adapt to the needs of the community.

To foster greater engagement, the CFS team created a celebratory “Photo Booth” on significant holidays inside one of the CFS ISOboxes - young residents entered and sat for their snapshots, which were later printed and placed into a card by our CFS team, gifted to their families.

From the start of 2019 to the end of summer, the CFS team also conducted a weekly “Parents’ Group” meeting, in which parents had the opportunity to relax, engage in art activities, and have tea and biscuits.





*Diana Godoy volunteered with Lighthouse Relief in Ritsona camp for two months, helping to lead children in our CFS through song, dance, games and more.*

*“Each day was a little different, but I quickly understood that the one, most important, constant was to ensure that the children felt safe and happy.”*

*Through her time with us, she quickly perceived how quickly the young residents would pick up on new skills, communicating in different languages from Arabic to Kurdish to Greek.*

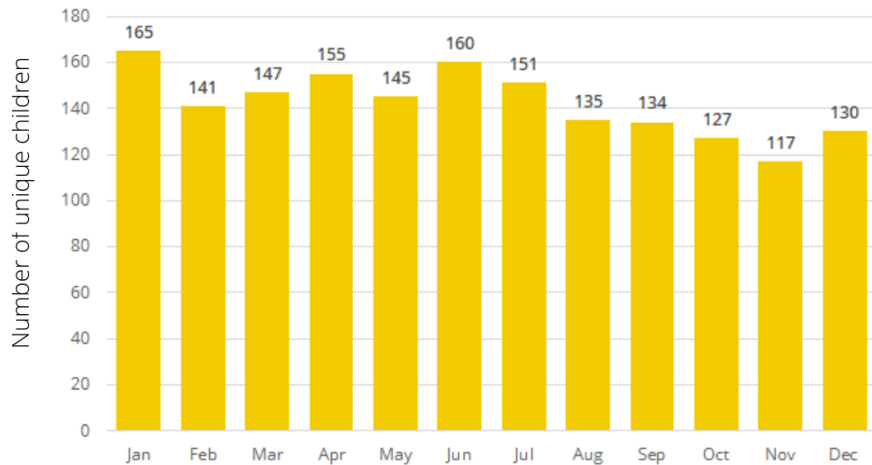
*“I was amazed by how resilient even the youngest children were — and what fast learners! It was always a joy to hear them join in with the nursery rhymes, singing at the top of their lungs, and to watch them playing games like duck duck goose, UNO, and skipping. I feel privileged to have witnessed their extraordinary strength and contagious joy.”*

## Impact in Numbers

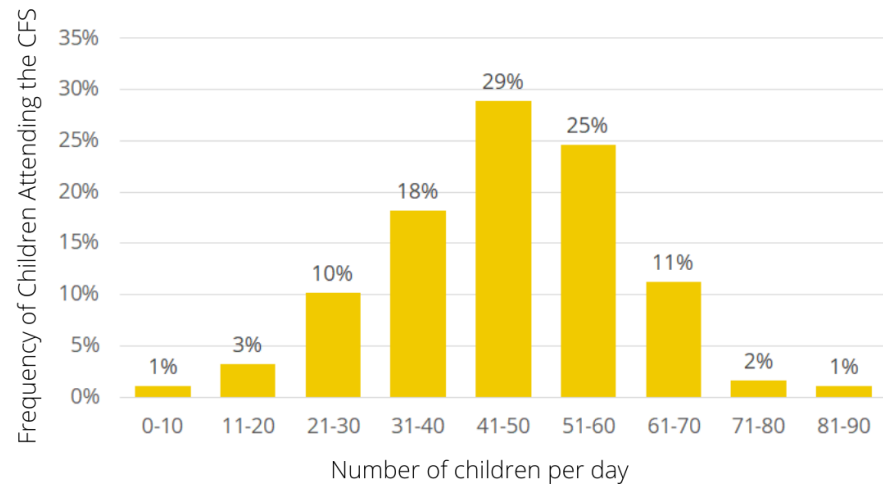
Over 2019, the CFS welcomed an average of 46 children per day, with a range of 54 -112 unique beneficiaries per week. Attendance at the CFS was consistent over the months of 2019, with an average of 131 unique children per month. By the end of 2019, we have registered 320 unique children from the camp who have visited the CFS, which accounts to around a third of Ritsona’s total population. The monthly attendance can be seen in the graph below.

On a daily basis, the CFS had more than 41 children on 67% of our operating days in 2019. The distribution of daily number of children in the CFS is illustrated in the graph below.

**Monthly attendance of children in CFS in 2019**



**Frequency of Children Attending the CFS**





# Sports Programming

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Sports is one of the most crucial psychosocial tools that we can offer young residents of Ritsona Camp - a universal language that bridges differences and allows for relationship and skills building. Through Lighthouse Relief's sports programming, we offer continuous psychosocial support to residents of to children and youth living in Ritsona camp, by providing structured opportunities for social interaction, learning, and play.

Thanks to the support of the SOL Foundation, Lighthouse Relief was able to expand and build the capacity of our Sports Programme in 2019, offering a myriad of sports, including football sessions with a UEFA certified coach, tennis, badminton, basketball, volleyball and table tennis. Our grant from the SOL Foundation also allowed LHR to recruit a Sports Facilitator, a key position in leading activities and improving outreach, monitoring and evaluation. Our UEFA certified football coach, from the nearby town of Chalkida, also fosters a valuable connection to the Greek community and language.

Through 2019, the Child Friendly Space incorporated sports activities into its daily activities. For example, during the summer months, LHR incorporated basketball practice and exercises into CFS programming 1-2 times per week, with a small stand alone hoop for ages 3-5, and a full sized basketball hoop for ages 6-12. The CFS team also supported football sessions with a professional coach, along with tennis sessions.

The Youth Engagement Space also provides a wide range of sports activity, with the goal of engaging youth in constructive activities and sharing the principles of teamwork, discipline, collaboration and problem solving through sports. Visitors to the YES engaged in sports including: badminton, football, basketball, tennis, ping-pong/table tennis, foosball and volleyball.

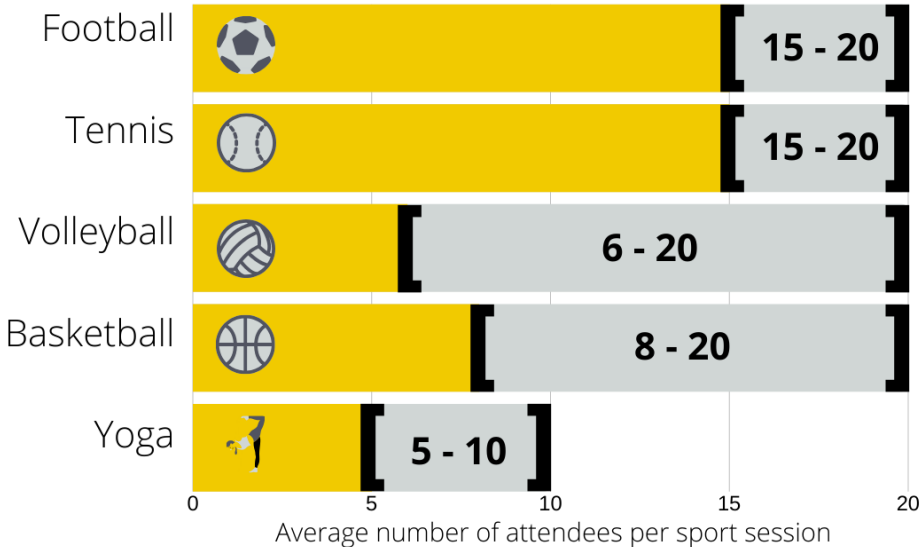
Our most popular sports workshops in 2019 included yoga, dance and meditation for pre-teen girls from 8-12 years of age, led by a CFS Volunteer, our CFS facilitator and our Sports Facilitator - many girls reported sleeping better and exhibited higher emotional regulation due to these sessions.



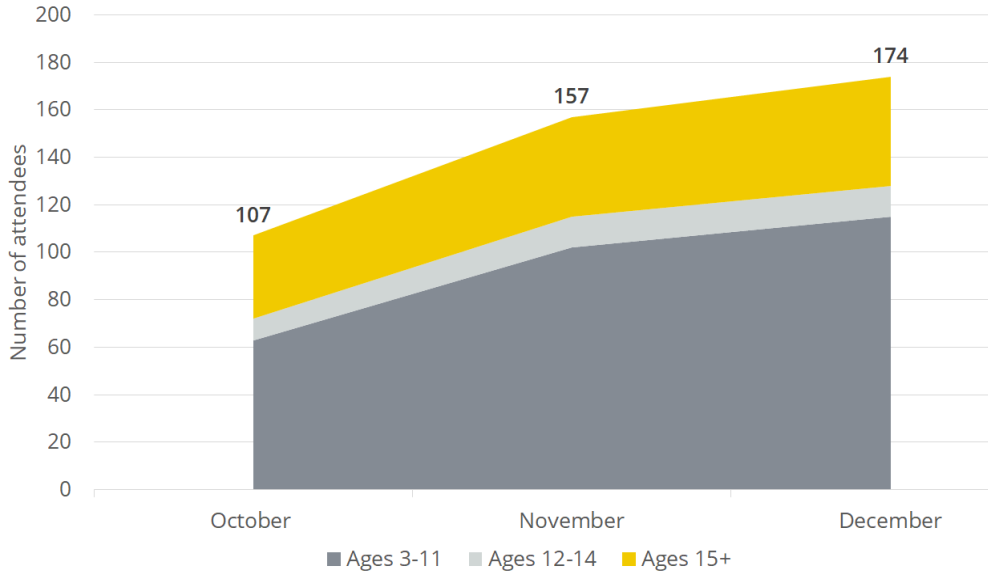


# Impact in Numbers

## Average Attendance Per Sport



## Sports Attendance Per Month





*Wesley O'Brien, a tennis coach from Ireland, began his journey with LHR in 2018, when he contacted our Field Coordinator about establishing a tennis programme in Ritsona Camp. In October 2018, he traveled to Ritsona with 27 tennis rackets and 60 balls and spent one week providing a workshop for the residents.*

*"It was a week full of enthusiastic kids, most who had never played tennis before," he recalled, "I left at the end of that week heartbroken and returned to Ritsona two months later in January 2019 with two brand new tennis nets and more balls and with the residents painted a mini tennis court," Wesley said.*

*In January 2019, he spent four weeks in the camp, teaching tennis skills to enthusiastic residents - youths, boys and girls. "Kids became passionate learners and improved in my four weeks. From a mental well-being and exercise point of view, this activity has been hugely beneficial for the children."*



# Resident Volunteer Programme

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In order to implement our programmes in a sustainable, accountable and culturally sensitive way, Lighthouse Relief works with residents through our Resident Volunteer Programme. Resident Volunteers (RVs) are trained by our programme managers in humanitarian and protection principles, and help us to carry out workshops and activities, also helping us to set up our spaces and make them inviting and safe. Throughout 2019, LHR has trained and worked with 13 Resident Volunteers.

RVs are a crucial part of our programming in both the YES and the CFS. In the YES, RV's help to plan and carry out activities, while providing continuous feedback from the community. As the YES is shaped by those who utilise the space, the RVs ensure that the activities reflect their goals and interests.

In the CFS, RVs also play a key role in preparing and leading activities for the children. Every day, the CFS team gathers feedback from the RVs, along with feedback and suggestions from the wider community. RVs in the CFS have expressed that volunteering allows them to engage with children in an impactful way that also fosters professional development.

Without Lighthouse Relief's Resident Volunteers, we would not have been able to provide CFS programming over the winter months of 2019, during which we had particular difficulties in engaging other skilled, short-term volunteers.



*Şiyar, 20, joined our formidable team of RVs in the Autumn of 2019, supporting our CFS. Conversations with the youngest residents of Ritsona Camp were his favourite part of the role.*

*“The most important thing for me is to talk with the children, and make a conversation, let them say all that they want to say. I also benefit from these discussions,” he said “I ask them how they are doing, what they like, what they don’t like.”*

*When we asked him why he wanted to get involved, he shared that his motivation was helping other people, and that working with children was a source of happiness for him.*

*“You’re giving me the opportunity to help people,” he added. Şiyar and his fellow RVs are the backbone of our psychosocial activities in Ritsona Camp - their dedication and feedback ensure that our programmes are inclusive, and adapt to the needs of the community.*



# Lesvos Programmes



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Through 2019, Lighthouse Relief provided around-the-clock assistance on Lesbos, with our volunteers responding to landings on the north shore, providing comfort and support to those who have just made a very difficult journey.

The short distance from Turkey to Lesbos is treacherous; the north shore is lined with rocky beaches and outcrops that can cause flimsy dinghies to deflate or capsize. Throughout our year on Lesbos, we witnessed and supported many vulnerable individuals making this journey. In 2019, nearly half of the people who undertook this dangerous journey to the north shore were under 18 - many of whom were travelling alone.

Despite the immense risks and uncertainty of the journey, conflict and persecution still force people to flee from home. Without safe pathways to asylum, many are still forced to board unseaworthy vessels in the hopes of finding peace. Too many lives continue to be lost during this search.

In the early hours of February 13, 2019, we responded to the report of a landing near Tsonia. The sea was rough and the weather stormy, but the boat had managed to reach the shore. We were heartbroken to learn, however, that a young girl who was aboard was missing. Refugee Rescue and other actors on the north shore searched tirelessly amidst stormy conditions, to no avail. This tragedy reminded us of the importance of a constant presence on the shore - as long as there is no safe passage to Europe we remain here, in the hope that we will never witness such a tragedy again.

# Emergency Response

From August until December, the number of arrivals to Lesvos increased significantly, posing a challenge for our Emergency Response team, who throughout this period, often responded to multiple simultaneous landings. The highest number we assisted was in August, when 2,843 people arrived.

High numbers of arrivals continued throughout the Autumn. In December, 2,034 people arrived to Lesvos, with our teams often responding to multiple landings every night. Throughout the entire year, our team on Lesvos provided a response in 365 operations.

Each season on Lesvos presents new challenges in providing emergency aid - in the summer, with blistering heat, people arriving may be more prone to dehydration. In the winter, people arrive in freezing temperatures, many soaked, and volunteers must take steps to prevent hypothermia.

Thanks to a strong, dedicated team of volunteers, we were able to provide a swift response to the increase in new arrivals, while devoting resources toward organising significant stocks of non-food items, namely clothes, shoes, hygiene items, that we distributed to new arrivals in Stage 2 transit camp. We bolstered our capacity by hiring a recruitment officer to help with volunteer numbers, while engaging a new Emergency Response Coordinator, as well as a team member focusing on logistics and non-food items.



## Landing Support

Through 2019, our Lesvos landing team assisted at least **307 boats upon arrival**, providing immediate aid. When people disembark from rubber boats onto the shore, we provide them with emergency blankets to prevent hypothermia or heat stroke, as well as dry food and water to restore energy after the arduous journey.

The landing team is on-call for 24 hour shifts and must be ready to immediately respond within five minutes of a landing call. LHR volunteers are notified by UNHCR, the authorities, or LHR spotting volunteers through the North Shore Response group if there is a boat close to the Greek shoreline. Once the team is notified of a landing, they respond with dry food, water, clothing and blankets for the new arrivals, in coordination with other actors.

## Non-Food Item Support

Until January 31, 2020, when Stage 2 Transit Facility was closed down, LHR was one of the main actors in the UNHCR-run transit facility for new arrivals. There, our volunteers provided support to new arrivals, offering dry clothes, hot tea, dry food, and a chance to rest and recover after long journeys. Through 2019, LHR volunteers supported at least **312 groups of arrivals** at Stage 2 transit camp.

In 2019, the transit facility often hosted multiple groups of arrivals simultaneously. Whether for a few hours or overnight, volunteers at Stage 2 provided a warm welcome to people in their first moments on Lesvos.







## Spotting Operations

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Our spotting volunteers continued their crucial work, scanning the Greek coast 21 hours a day, 7 days a week, watching for boats approaching the Greek shoreline. Upon locating a boat in Greek waters, the volunteers informed landing, rescue teams, and all North Shore actors (UNHCR, Hellenic Coast Guard), to mobilise for a fast, safe response.

Through 2019, our spotting volunteers were involved in 128 operations, enabling a fast response for over 5,510 people. In August alone, when arrivals to Lesvos peaked, the spotters were responsible for identifying 54 boats carrying 2,277 people. With 2,843 people arriving throughout the month, the spotting team enabled us to respond to approximately 80% of arrivals



The role of the spotters is crucial, as they have often become first responders themselves. Korakas, a rocky outcrop on which a lighthouse is perched, is one of the most dangerous spots on the north shore. On many occasions, the spotting team there has identified dinghies near the shore, providing them with emergency aid while waiting for the landing team and other actors and authorities to arrive.

*Whenever new arrivals were transferred to Stage 2 transit camp on Lesbos, LHR volunteers sprung to action, greeting them with a smile, and distributing warm blankets, dry clothes and shoes.*

*“While distributing clothes I met a young guy who I tried to find fitting trousers for,” said Olly, an LHR volunteer who shared his experience of caring for a group who had just arrived on the north shore of Lesbos:*

*“He told me he plays the piano, that he is a musician and that he used to make pop music in his country Afghanistan. He showed me a video of himself on stage, his singing was absolutely amazing.”*

*“Sharing a common interest, just music, is enough to eliminate the hardship he went through for a small period of time. Our meeting felt as if we had just met somewhere on the street at home.”*



*One night in late September, Diego, a volunteer with our Emergency Response team, responded to a landing at Cape Korakas. LHR spotting volunteers perched high on the rocky outcrop identified a boat in Greek waters, making its way toward the cape, one of the most dangerous spots in the north.*

*“When we arrived, most of the people were already inside the lighthouse. I still remember the image of everyone just trying to get some heat with emergency blankets, with water and dry food. Everyone was soaking wet.”*

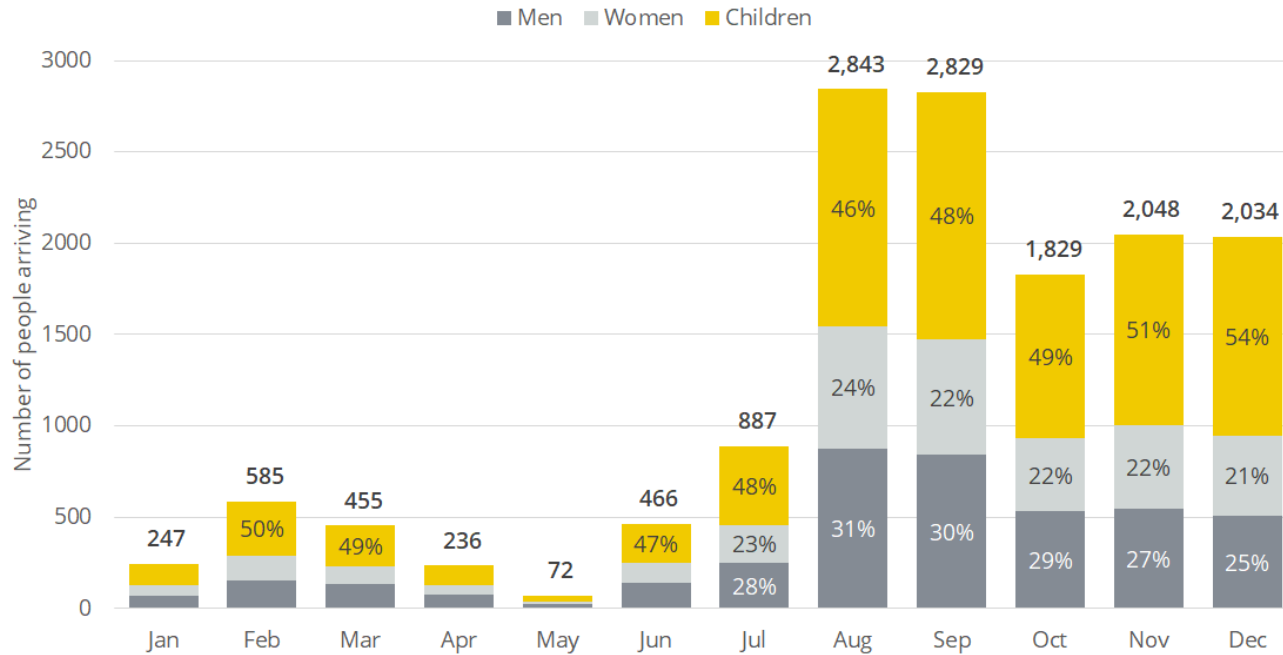
*For four months, Diego supported our operations during one of our busiest seasons in over three years, and witnessed the vulnerable state in which many people arrive.*

*“I remember as if yesterday, how I arrived at the lighthouse, just turned the corner and saw 30, 40 people looking at me - cold, wet, just trying to find a place to be safe.”*

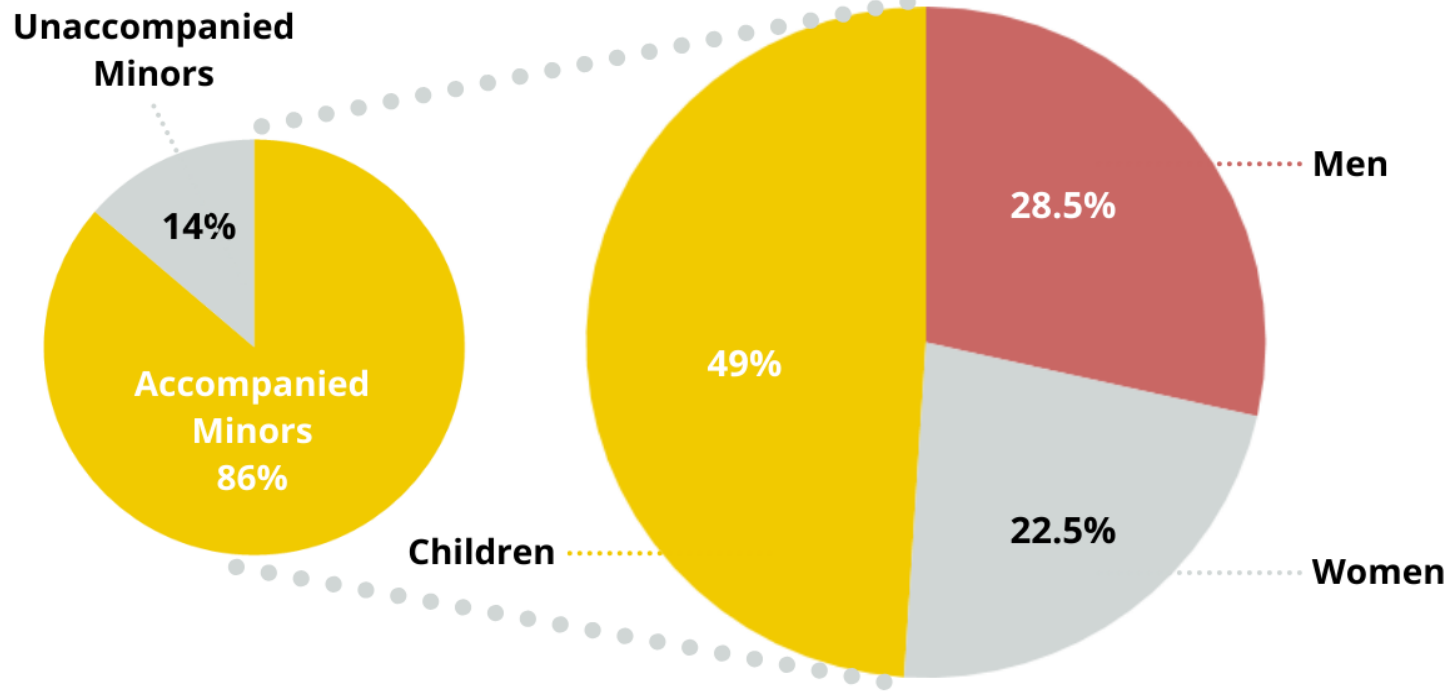
# Impact in Numbers

In 2019, we supported 14,531 people arriving on the north shore of Lesbos, 48% of whom were under 18, 948 of whom were travelling alone.

## New Arrivals to Lesbos Assisted by LHR in 2019



## Breakdown of Arrivals Assisted by LHR in 2019





# ECO Relief

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The ECO Relief Project is a cornerstone of our work on Lesbos; through this project, we aim to restore the beautiful beaches of Lesbos, protecting the unique ecosystem and supporting the local community of the island. The programme's core purpose is to coordinate efforts to clean the north shore of Lesbos, an area that has been marked by sea arrivals for years.

In 2016, we initiated the ECO Relief Project, and throughout the years, we've cleaned the beaches of plastic waste, including dinghies and lifejackets, travelling to remote areas along the shore to ensure they are restored to pristine condition. In 2019, thanks to the support of the European Outdoor Conservation Association (EOCA), the project officially ran for three months, from the 1st of July to the 30th of September.

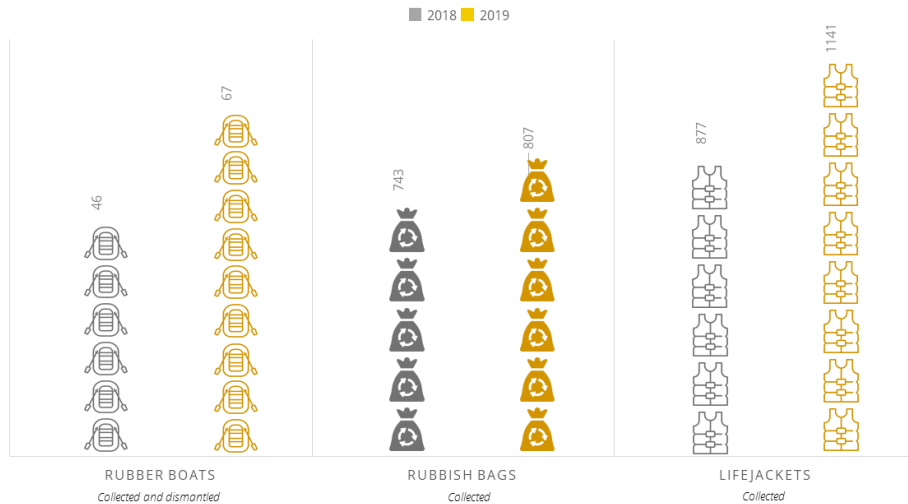
The ECO Relief project allows us to give back to the community members of the north shore, many of whom led the humanitarian response in 2015, when there were thousands of people arriving to Lesbos every day. As arrivals to Greece peaked in 2015 and 2016, an immense amount of ensuing trash and debris was left on the shores: dinghies, life jackets and other waste, detrimental to the local environment and to the local economy. By clearing the beaches, we hope to strengthen local tourism to the area, as well as other economic activities such as fishing. The project also supports global efforts to clean and preserve our oceans, while improving conditions for local birds and other animals.

Overall, from July until the end of September 2019, the ECO Relief project collected 807 bags of rubbish (an estimated 2825 kilos), 1141 lifejackets, 67 dinghies and cleaned an estimated 14 km of the shoreline, with over 700 volunteer hours devoted to the programme.

Through this ECO Relief season, the team also embarked on several projects with the community, including whitewashing the trees of Kagia beach in order to protect them from pests and temperature damage, as well as clearing the land of a local farmer from dinghies that had accumulated for several years.



## ECO Relief Outcomes 2018 & 2019





*“It’s difficult to choose one single moment from all of those we lived together during ECO Relief. It is such a beautiful and important project, and it is also one that allowed us to have so much fun while doing the job.”*

*For three months in the summer of 2019, Luísa Dornelas joined LHR as one of the coordinators for our ECO Relief project.*

*“One of my most cherished memories of it, however, is a week of clean-ups in Ferogia beach. It was an unbelievably dirty beach; I don’t think I had ever seen such a density of trash in a natural place.” she said, describing the plastic waste that had accumulated on one of the beaches lining the north shore.*

*“The setting was still so beautiful though; it really motivated us to work hard. Shortly after the team started cleaning, a local family showed up to enjoy a day at the beach. Giorgios, a Greek father of two, approached us, with a neverending smile. He didn’t speak English. None of us spoke Greek. But somehow, with Google translate and a lot of gesturing, we managed to understand he was thanking us - a lot. For helping clean up his home. He had done it for years but it was too much.”*

*This moment also was the beginning of a collaboration: “We also managed to establish a system with Giorgios where we would collect the waste, load it onto his truck and then he would take care of its disposal.”*

*“When we finished the last day of work on that beach and saw Giorgios and his family playing in a safe place: that is one of the most moving memories I have saved.”*

*For Luísa, and the LHR team, this moment serves as a reminder of why we continue to do this work - every summer, we clean the beaches, to help the local community protect and enjoy their beautiful home.*



## Communications & Partnerships

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At the outset of 2019, Lighthouse Relief encountered a shortfall in funding that made the future of the organisation uncertain. In January of 2019, a previous communications team member returned to the organisation as the Head of Communications, spearheading an ambitious fundraising campaign that was able to pull our programmes through a particularly difficult period, ensuring that we had vital support to sustain us through the next months. This small but robust communications team highlighted our work on the ground, sharing stories of our volunteers, elevating the voices of residents, and raising awareness of the ongoing situation in Greece. Thanks to the support of institutional donors, including the SOL Foundation and EOCA, we were able to continue several cornerstone projects.

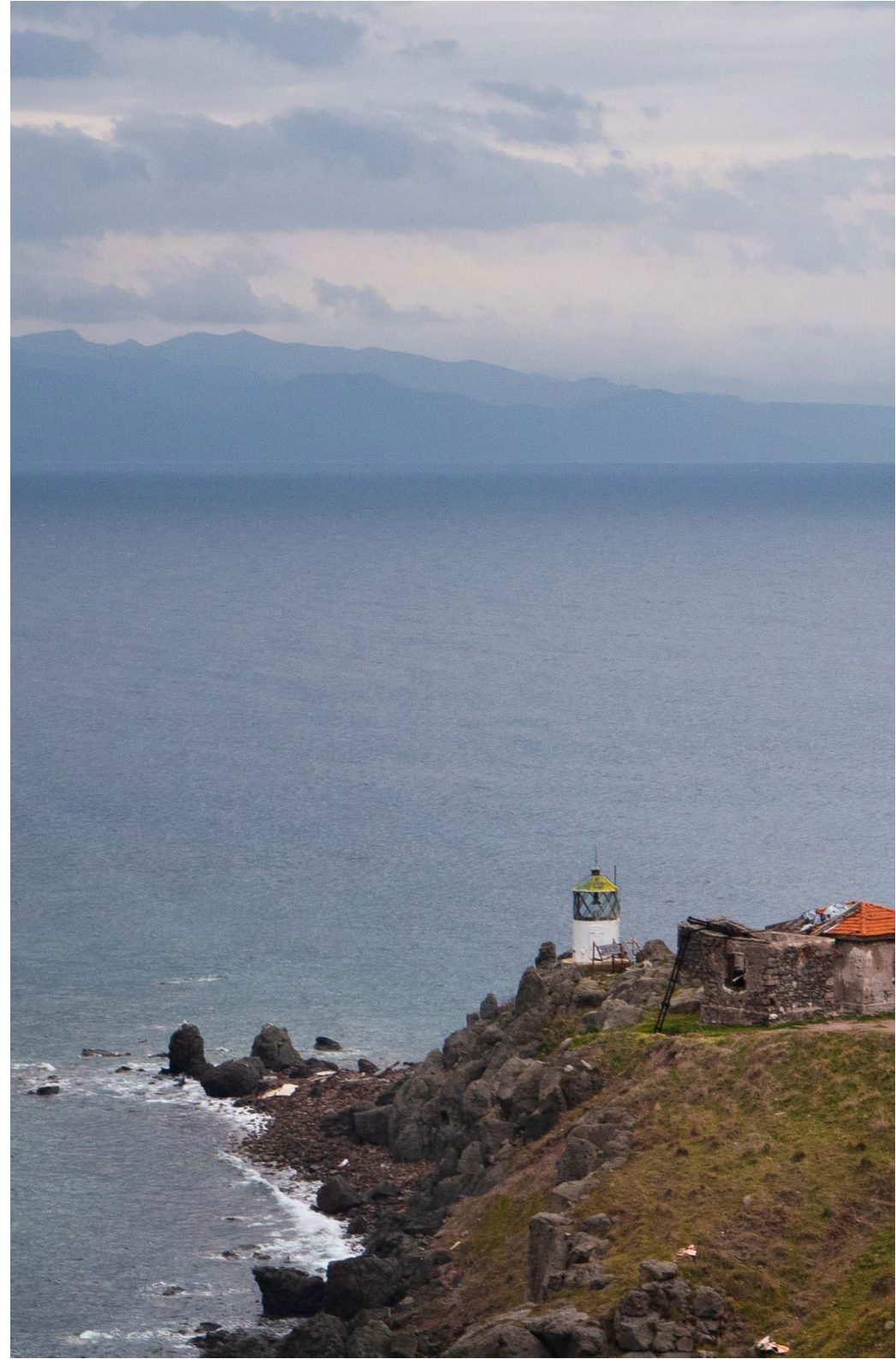
As numbers of arrivals increased precipitously in the summer of 2019, so did the interest from international media outlets. The communications team coordinated multiple interviews with international journalists, with the operational team often representing a source of reliable, consistent information to visiting journalists. LHR was interviewed for outlets including [Deutsche Welle](#), [ZDF](#), and [France 24](#).



Throughout our interactions with journalists, we continued emphasizing the principles driving our work - that despite an uptick in arrivals, we would be there whether two boats arrived or 13. Even long before our presence in Skala Sikamineas, the local community has supported people arriving on the shores - another point that our team has raised throughout media interviews.

In the fall of 2019, the communications team restructured, with a new roving Head of Communications, whose time was initially split between the two programme locations. We were also joined by a new Communications and Campaigns Officer on Lesvos, and planned the recruitment of a Communications and Reporting officer in Ritsona.

A key objective of the communications team throughout 2019 was to continue raising the voices of people in limbo in Ritsona Camp - to that end, the communications team has supported in amplifying several creative projects created and shared by the youth, such as short films created by the participants.





## Accounting & Finances

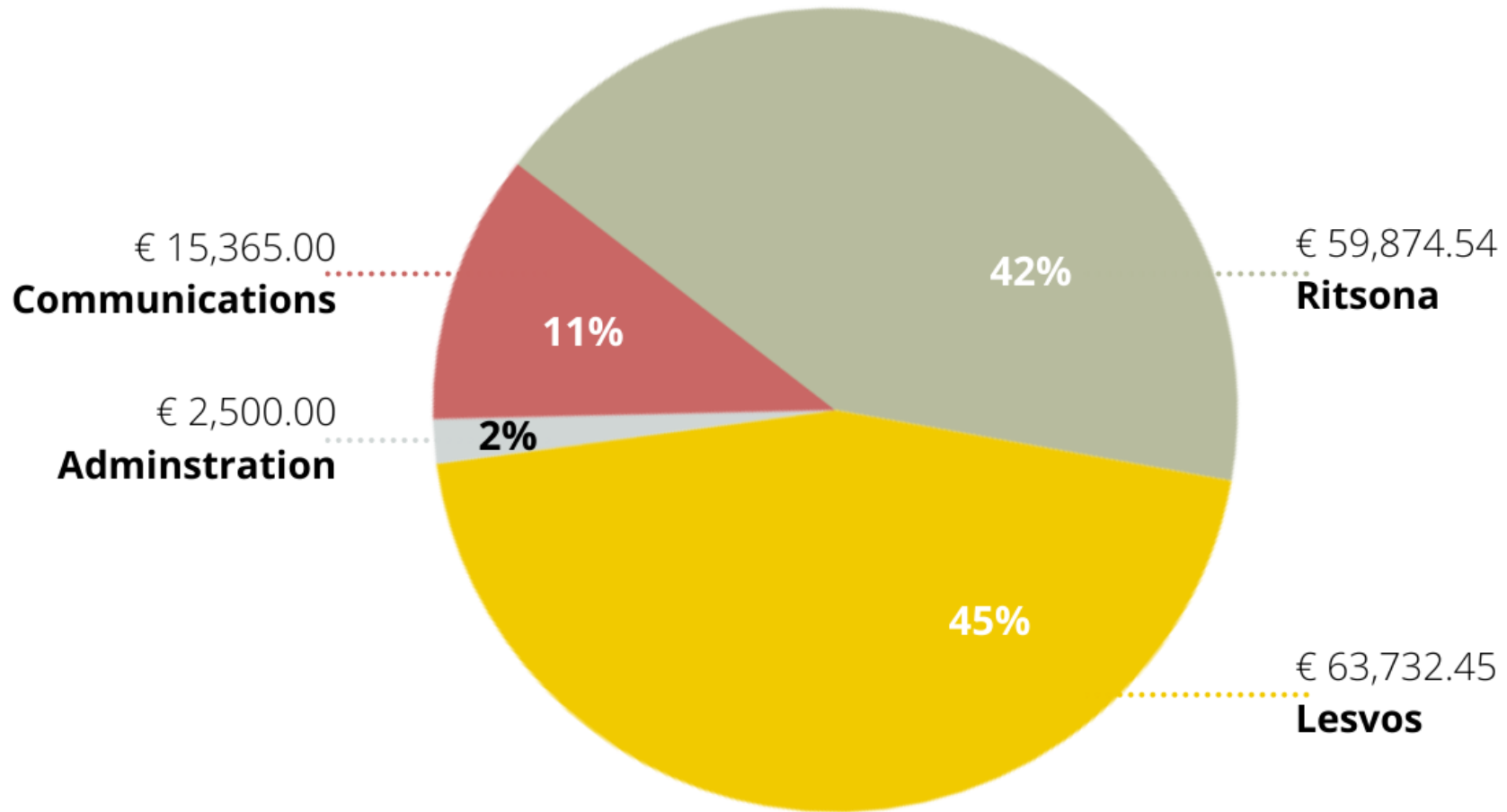
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Lighthouse Relief's programmes on Lesbos and mainland Greece are funded through a combination of private donations and small institutional grants/support.

Our annual income for 2019 included a grant from the SOL Foundation, a grant from Stiftung Fons Margarita, a grant from the European Outdoor Conservation Association (EOCA) for our ECO Relief project on Lesbos, and a donation from corporate donor Etraveli. The remainder has been raised through direct donations or through crowdfunding on the GlobalGiving platform.

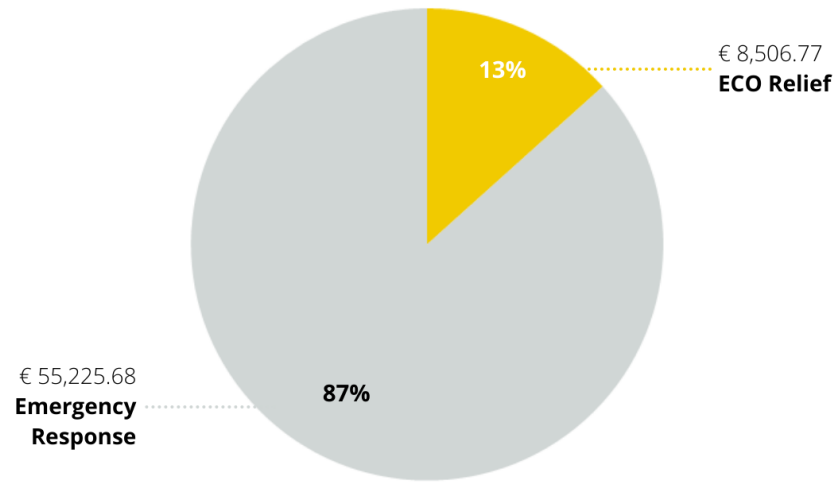
Our income is from donations made by individuals, businesses and organisations who wish to support asylum seekers. We do not receive funding from governments. All our funding agreements state that we are a non-religious, non-political organisation and we ensure that our funders align with our humanitarian objectives.

## Total Spending in 2019



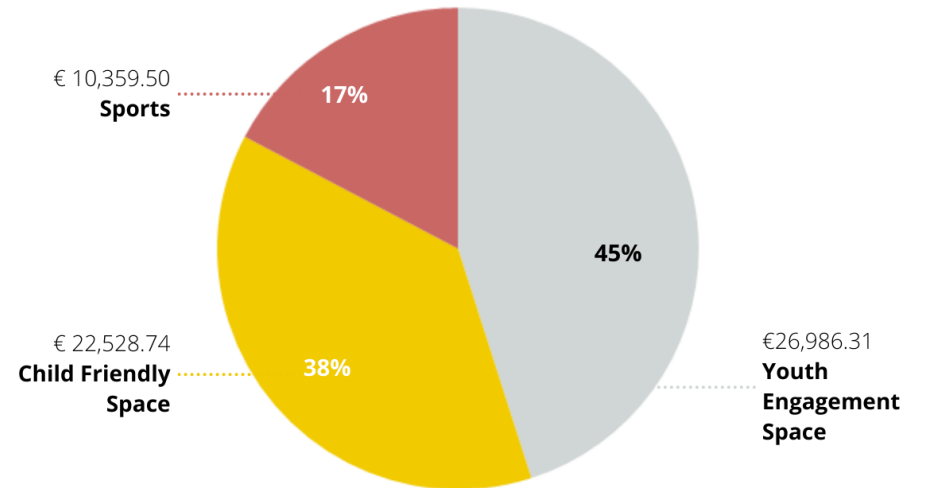
Total spending in 2019 was € 141,471.99

### Programme Spending in Lesvos in 2019



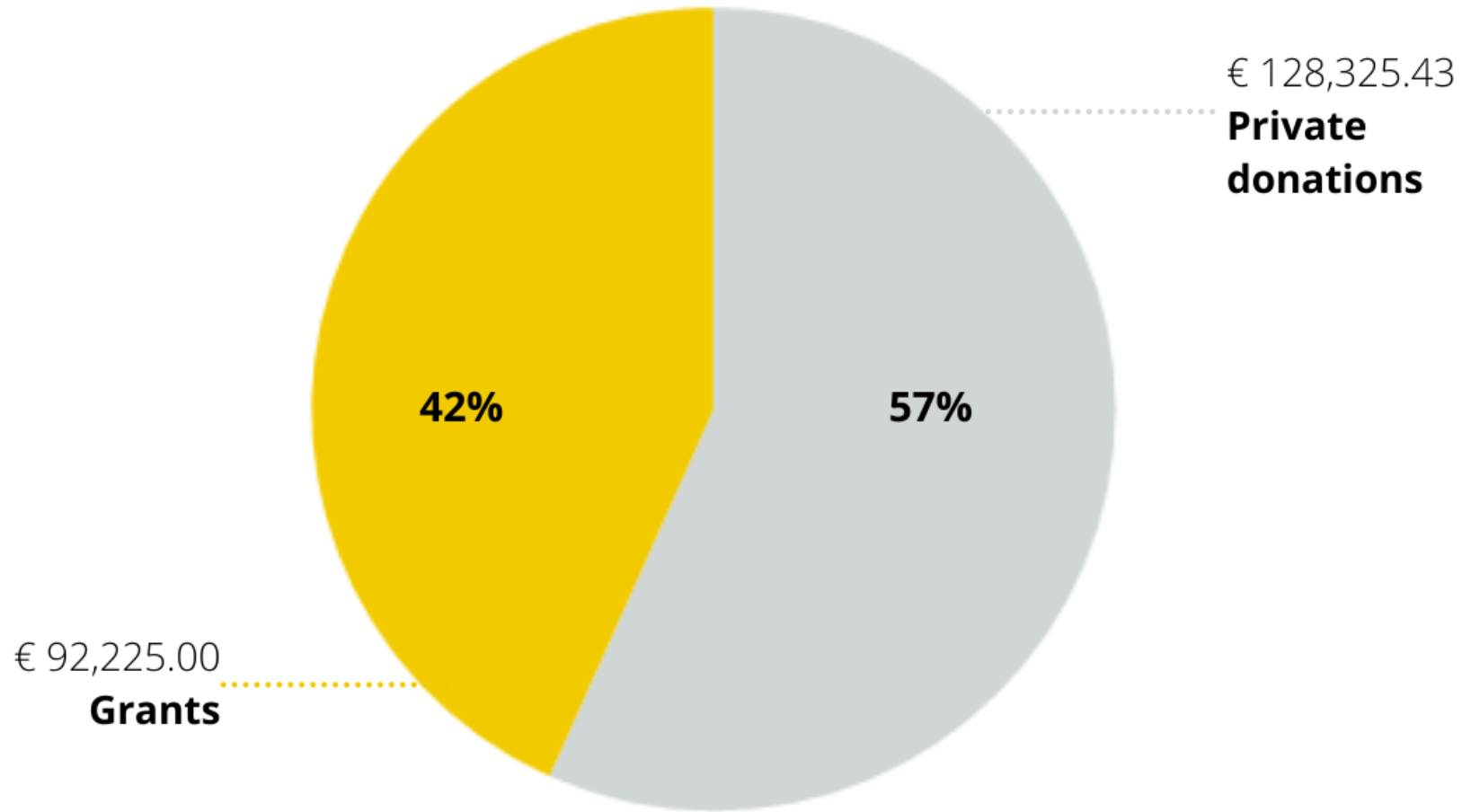
Total spending in Lesvos was € 63,732.45

### Programme Spending in Ritsona in 2019



Total spending in Ritsona was € 59,874.54

## Sources of Income in 2019



Total income of LHR in 2019 was € 220,550.43

## Our Partners in 2019

Donor	Amount	Percentage of income
SOL Foundation	€49,000.00	22%
Etraveli	€20,000.00	9%
Fons Margerita	€14,225.00	6%
EOCA	€9,000.00	4%



**Stiftung Fons Margarita**

# Thank You

We would like to thank all those, near and far, who have played a role in our work.

To the institutional donors who have helped us build capacity and sustainability, and to the private donors worldwide who have come together to carry us through the most difficult moments;

To the volunteers, short-term, long-term, and Resident Volunteers, without whom we would not exist.

Finally, we would like to thank the communities we serve. We are grateful to the residents of Ritsona Camp for the trust they have placed in us; their engagement throughout the years, and the privilege of creating programming for and with them.

We would also like to thank the community of the north shore of Lesbos, who inspired us from the first day we stepped foot in Skala Sikamineas, and who have shown us generosity and compassion on so many occasions.



A person is captured in mid-air, performing a jump rope. They are wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and a white skirt with a bright orange fringe. They are also wearing pink flip-flops. The jump rope is a thick, multi-colored rope. The ground is made of dark, irregular cobblestones. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with sunlight and shadows.

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