**European Lawyers in LESVOS**

The European Lawyers in Lesvos ("ELIL") is a charitable, non-profit organisation registered in Germany and Greece.

Our team of Greek asylum lawyers and volunteer European asylum lawyers provide independent, free legal assistance to asylum seekers on the Greek island of Lesvos.

ELIL was inspired by belief in the fundamental importance of upholding the rule of law, protecting human rights and ensuring meaningful access to legal assistance.

It was founded by the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE) and the German Bar Association (DAV) in 2016.

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**Key Figures**

- **3** Number of years of operation  
- **4683** Cases  
- Nearly **10,000** people assisted  
- Over **39000** voluntary hours contributed  
- **183** Volunteer lawyers
Providing free legal assistance to Asylum Seekers

There are currently over 19,000 asylum seekers on the Greek island of Lesvos, the vast majority of whom have fled Afghanistan, Syria or Iraq. They have come to Lesvos in search of safety and protection from war and persecution.

The asylum process they go through is a complex and ever-changing legal procedure that is difficult to navigate. Despite this, there is no state-provided legal aid available to asylum seekers before their all-important asylum interview, and the majority of them attend the interview without having spoken to a lawyer.

Without access to legal assistance, asylum seekers do not know their rights or understand the process and the criteria applied when their asylum applications are assessed.

Almost all the asylum seekers on Lesvos live in Moria Camp, the largest camp in Europe, currently operating at over five times its intended capacity in rapidly worsening conditions. Meanwhile, hundreds continue to arrive on Lesvos every week, despite the hostile weather.

ELIL is the largest provider of legal assistance to asylum seekers on the island and the only one that focuses on providing one-on-one legal consultations to prepare people for their asylum interview.

We are the primary provider of legal assistance to unaccompanied minors who have been incorrectly registered as adults, and asylum seekers in detention.

We also help reunite families by assisting with family reunification applications under the Dublin Regulation.