

A photograph of three people from behind, standing on a green artificial turf field and holding yellow and blue volleyballs high above their heads. They are positioned in front of a black safety net. The person on the left wears a grey hoodie and dark pants. The person in the middle wears a white patterned hoodie and white pants. The person on the right wears a black jacket, black leggings, and a blue backpack. In the background, there are tall reeds and a clear blue sky.

YOGA  
AND  
SPORT  
WITH REFUGEES

# MONTHLY REPORT

FEBRUARY  
2023

# POLITICAL UPDATE

## PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

### GREECE

This month was a hard one, with many tragedies and bad news for displaced people. It started off with the terrible earthquake at the Syrian-Turkish border costing way too many lives. This also became a new point of discussion between humanitarians and politics. According to [this article](#), the Greek politics talked about their "fear of a new migration wave" related to the earthquake. The victims of the earth quake are in our thoughts.

Furthermore there was reports of 18 dead afghans found in a truck on the Bulgarian border, of [4 migrants missing off a shipwreck on Samos](#) as well as of deaths due to [a boat that capsized off the coast of Leros](#).

Furthermore, [15 EU countries](#) gathered to find a new way to stop smugglers in Europe. The conference was held in Athens on the last week of February. The focus of the conference was very political and did not focus much on granting internationally displaced people humane living conditions and an arrival with dignity. We ask state members to consider them as human being and not political subjects.

### FRANCE

*"The french double-game"*, this is how the Lybian Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) called the immigration management by the french government at the EU meeting in Bruxelles.

The balance between "humanity" and "firmness", as they said in [Le Monde](#), overshadow politics which are played out on endangering people crossing the sea. MSF denounce these politics and especially the french one.

### #EUROPEMUSTACT

We need to highlight the tragedy that happened end of February on the Italian coast. [67 people on the move died](#) crossing the sea due to the lack of safe passage ways.

We call for Europe to act and know that we must find a way in order to end illegal push backs, to work in solidarity and to stand for human rights and with internationally displaced people!

# MESSAGE FROM THE COMMUNITY



**AZIM**  
Coaches Coordinator Athens



## What does YSR community mean to you?

*"My involvement was short but I had a life-changing experience. Since I started being with the YSR community I figured out that I have a real desire for sports and through sports being able to build a healthy community. I am happy that I could explore and learn more about sport, solidarity, compassion, unity, and inclusiveness."*

*"I would underestimate how much YSR means to me if I say the only purpose of YSR would be helping out others. YSR is the most diverse community that someone could find themselves in and I am sad that I am not having the chance to be involved in YSR anymore but I am happy for the person who is gonna replace me."*

***"Happier, healthier, and stronger together with Sport!"***

**We are super happy that we had the chance to work with Azim, he will be missed in the Athens team. Yet we are excited for his future and wish him the best in Edinburgh. We know that he will continue doing sport and inspire more people on his way!!**

# PARIS

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## In Paris

We were happy that some days the sun shone through, as the weather always has a big impact on the participants of our classes. We hope to see more participants as the weather gets better. French people have been protesting and going on strikes regularly to protest the new retirement law that the government wants to pass. This law would postpone retirement, decrease pensions, and make people more vulnerable, especially women.

## In the project

The activities and classes went on through the whole month, even though we experienced some challenges with the weather. The coaches were motivated and we even had some new members joining our running activity!

It was a busy month in our project, as we are trying to make new partnership with others NGOs to increase attendance in our classes.

We had two events this month, including one with the American School. We had a football and fitness class and they donated shoes to the project - thank you!

The second event happened with a new partner: Madera. Madera is an organization which helps displaced people in Paris find jobs outside of the city in various fields such as agriculture or construction. We started collaborating with Madera by doing a boxing class together. After the class, we listened to music, danced and shared cakes and drinks. It was a really nice event and we hope to do another one soon.



Sunday run!



Boxing event with Madera

## Coaches

4 Coaches

- Yadullah (yoga and fitness)
- Rahmat (boxing)
- Mohammad (fitness)
- Rahman (running)

## Coordinator

1 Coordinator

- Yadullah

## Volunteers

2 Volunteers

- Lola
- Léa



# ATHENS



## In Athens

The month of February was marked by widespread strikes by the artist community in Athens. The government has decided to downgrade the art schools degrees for these to be equivalent to a high school diploma, effectively putting them at a disadvantage when it comes to salaries and job hunting. In response and as a form of protest, artistic shows and concerts in support of artists where to be seen everywhere around the city.

## In the project

Throughout the month of February, we witnessed a big increase in attendance, both in the bodybuilding space and in the classes. Our classes with minors from IOM are now given twice a week in the gym by our two amazing volunteers Tom and Stijn. We also went to minors' shelters with coaches to teach: kickboxing in the Red Cross, and Zumba with Faros. The Zumba classes with Nasrin will now be given weekly in Faros!

Natalia, a yoga teacher from Thessaloniki came for one month to take over Marialena's classes and we restarted the volleyball team!

Noémie and Simon restarted the community café, which will now take place every week in the amazing space of Khora kitchen.

When it comes to trainings, both the coordinators and the team of interns are doing Intervention trainings with BRF; the whole team did psychodrama given by IRC; and Claire gave a safeguarding training, which led to interesting and important discussions for the group. Lastly, we held our first teachers' meeting to which the volunteers were invited - we hope that through these joined meetings we'll be able to create more of a community feeling between coaches and volunteers - to strengthen the bond we had a nice dinner in Herat restaurant together!



Kickboxig class with Jamshid



Zumba class in Faros

## Coaches

16 Coaches

- Ste
- Nefeli
- Delphine
- David
- Jamshid
- Chris
- Yasin

- Ruvi
- Claude
- Medine
- Abbas
- Fareydon
- Rozalia
- Nasrin
- Fareydon
- Natalia

## Coordinators

3 Coordinators

- Katerina
- Azim
- Delphine

## Volunteers

11 Volunteers

- Rozalia
- Kamand
- Stijn
- Tom
- Raphael
- Natalia
- Venantia

- Ricardo
- Perine
- Valentine
- Simon
- Matthieu
- Noémie
- Giorgos
- Maurine
- Benoit

# LESVOS

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## On Lesbos

This month, there were two major shipwrecks on the coast of Lesbos, where at least 5 refugees died. The cold weather also resulted in the deaths of people hiding in the forest from the authorities on arrival to the island, from fear of being pushed back into the sea. Transfers to the mainland have slowed down, but there are always new arrivals on the island.

Unfortunately, the camp have begun strictly enforcing a policy which does not allow minors to leave the camp without a parent. This has affected some of our athletes and we are trying to find safe solutions.

## In the project

February is a short month, but it was jam-packed with events. We participated in the Mytilene Half-Marathon, and took home 8 medals!

We organized a Challenge Day at the gym, where more than 80 people came by to test their strength and skills. If you want to know how you would fare out against our students, the longest plank was 11 minutes and the longest wall squat was 13 minutes - on one leg!

We held a volleyball competition at Parea Lesbos. It was fantastic to see the guys who always come to training beating Coach Matins team in the final.

Football Team A played their first match against a local Greek team and beat them 5-2. Thank you as always to Mr. Spanos who made this possible.

We now have women's classes every day at the gym from 5:00 to 6:30pm. The classes are really full and the women are enjoying it a lot. At the moment, the women coaches are mostly non-refugee members of the team, but it is our goal in March to empower more refugee women to take the lead.

Our van was unfortunately vandalized this month, with rocks thrown through the windscreen and side windows. We are working to get it fixed but it is a slow process.

Our volunteer team is really big now, and includes two interns who will be working on the Coach Support Program and External Communications.



YSR Mytilene Half Marathon Team



Football Team 1

## Coaches

12 Coaches

- Matin
- Leire
- Mahsa
- Maeve
- Hassan
- Ali N.
- Mohammad
- Amanullah
- Estelle
- Anna
- Nematullah
- Laila

## Coordinators

3 Coordinators

- Maeve
- Arjan
- Reza

## Volunteers

10 Volunteers

- Pascal
- Amrei
- Rania
- Laura
- Amanda
- Haidar
- Hassan
- Pierrot
- Anna
- Lucy

# HSR IOANNINA

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## In Ioannina

It seems like spring is coming to Ioannina. We had a cold and foggy start of the month but then the sun came out more and more often. More sun means more outside activities and more people joining the classes.

## In the project

We have three new coaches in the team. Mustafa and Abdirahman are our new football coaches and Shafiq brings a new sport to Ioannina: Muay Thai! We often have to explain what exactly it is, but little by little more students are coming. The three of them are very motivated and love sports - we are very happy to welcome them to the team!

Besides Muay Thai, we added the mixed yoga classes to the schedule this month as well. Our Volunteer Yusuf is glad to share his passion and it's great to see how people are exploring new sports.

## Women participation

The highlight this month was our women's party. We decorated the gym and prepared tea and cake. 70 women and children came. We talked and laughed, but most of all we danced a lot. We learned Afghan, Somali, Arabic and Kurdish dances.

After that we also had a women's community meeting to find out how to make the gym more women friendly.



Parkour group



Coaches and volunteer meeting

## Coaches

8 Coaches

- Parinaz
- Sanjide
- Sina
- Shafiq
- Drio
- Abdirahman
- Mustafa

## Coordinator

1 Coordinator

- Lena

## Volunteers

4 Volunteers

- Sanjide
- Kavin
- Valentine
- Yusuf

# THE PROJECTS IN NUMBERS



## # of Visits

(deviation to previous month)

Total	3728
Lesvos	1520 (+382)
Athens	1601 (+548)
Ioannina	456 (+33)
Paris	205 (-15)

## # of Activities

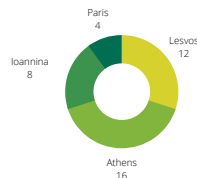
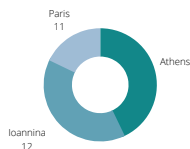
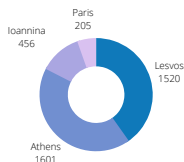
(deviation to previous month)

Total	40
Lesvos	12 (+1)
Athens	12 (+0)
Ioannina	11 (+2)
Paris	5 (+0)

## # of Coaches

(deviation to previous month)

Total	40
Lesvos	12 (-1)
Athens	16(+0)
Ioannina	8(+2)
Paris	4 (+0)



## Observations

This month we noticed a big increase in attendance especially in Lesvos and Athens. Overall, we proposed three new activities over the locations and worked with one new coach.

## % Adults / % Minor

Average	74 %	26 %
Lesvos	79 %	21 %
Athens	78 %	22 %
Ioannina	70 %	30 %
Paris	70 %	30 %

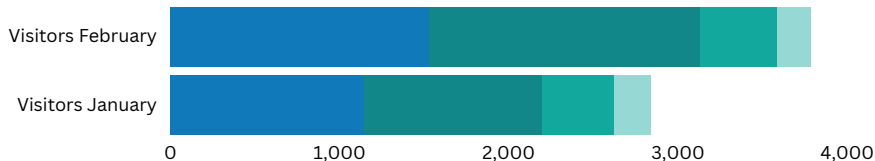


## % Male / % Female

Average	81 %	18 %
Lesvos	81 %	19 %
Athens	71 %	29 %
Ioannina	85 %	15 %
Paris	90 %	10 %



■ Lesvos ■ Athens ■ Ioannina ■ Paris





# GENERAL FINANCES



We are 100% funded through independent donations

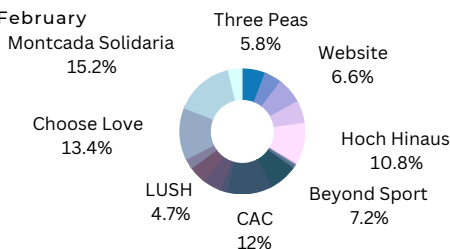
## General Fundraising updates

Our fundraising team has been working hard to submit many applications. We also received the outcome of some previous applications, with some successes and some rejections. In addition to this, one of our interns, Périne, has taken the first steps in our corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategy, talking with Decathlon and Adidas. We are now in the process of developing our volunteer fundraising training and brainstorming innovative ideas.

Indeed, whereas this month we received 4.500 euros from Choose Love towards our project on Lesvos for the first three months of 2023, they also notified us that they will no longer be able to support our project after this time.

## Total donations received per foundation in February

- Choose Love 1.500
- Three Peas 650
- Shower Power 500
- Mediterranean Woman Fund 417
- Let's Keep the Ball Flying 300

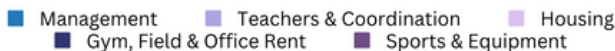


## General Explanation of expenses

As usual, our coaches and coordinators support were our largest expense this month. This is even more true because, in addition to their salaries, we have invested in their professional development this month, with many taking language classes funded by YSR.

Additionally, our sport & equipment costs this month reflect the events we organized or participated to, for example, the registration fee for our team to run in the Athens 5k or half marathon in March!

General: 4,441 (+581)  
Total expenses: 13,851 (+1,465)  
Lesvos: 4,349 (+1041)  
Athens: 4,343 (+1,234)  
Ioannina: 719 (-197)  
Paris: 495 (+195)



Actual Expenses



# MEDIA & EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION



## News

[Closed Camp Campaign](#) - YSR supported Refocus Media Labs in their closed camp campaign this month to challenge the construction of Vastria, the new Closed Controlled Access Camp (CCAS) in the middle of a fire-prone protected forest next to a landfill over 30km away from critical services.

#nomorecamps

[Sister Month Campaign](#) - time went into planning for new campaigns including the launch of the Sister Month Campaign on International Day for Women's Rights on the 8th March 2023!

The campaign will focus on the amazing and inspiring community of women of YSR! Community members and students will bring their female family and friends to join classes in the gym. Our social media will deep dive into the stories of some of the incredible women and girls are already have supporting us across our gym locations!

## [2022 Annual Report and Impact Video](#)

This month has also been spent finalising YSR'S 2022 Impact reports as well as the strategy for the coming year! Want to see the numbers behind our projects and what YSR has been up to last year? Curious to know where donations have gone?



[CLICK HERE TO WATCH THE VIDEO!](#)

## Instagram

Global	131 (+69)
Lesvos	4,300(+28)
Athens	1,508(+33)
Ioannina	1,082(+12)
Paris	480(+22)

## Facebook

Global	-
Lesvos	3,776(+3)
Athens	882(+22)
Ioannina	65 (+0)
Paris	-

## TikTok

France	1633 (-17)
Greece	28(+2)

## Global Platforms

LinkedIn	402(+19)
Twitter	36 (+3)
YouTube	46 (+5)

# #FREEMORTAZA



#FREEMORTAZA is a movement which emerged after the arrest of French-Afghan journalist Mortaza Behboudi by the Taliban. Imprisoned in Kabul for doing his journalistic work, Mortaza has been in the hands of the Taliban since January 7. "I am proud to be an Afghan and I will continue to fight for these stories to be heard", this is what he said to the Unesco and this is also the reason why he is in danger right now. This suppression of freedom of speech and the terror of the Taliban is unacceptable. As friends of Mortaza, but also in support of the mobilization of international solidarity organizations for freedom, we are denouncing the kidnapping.

## Who is Mortaza Behboudi?

Mortaza Behboudi, born in Afghanistan in 1994, first fled the Taliban regime at the age of two with his parents. From an early age, he started taking photographs and reporting to earn money. He returned to Afghanistan in 2012 to study political science. Mortaza will never stop being proud of his Afghan identity, despite the repressive regime in place, which he does not support. In 2015, he requested asylum in France in the face of the deteriorating status of journalists in his country. He was supported by the French House of Journalists and naturalised in France in 2020. He has continued to report on the situation of refugees, and on the Moria camp in Lesbos. His work cost him his freedom last January.



## How can you help?

You can sign the [petition](#) launched by *Reporters Without Borders*, which has already collected almost 8,700 signatures to alert the public. A hashtag #FREEMORTAZA is currently being used on many social networks to share the information. There are many sources of news that can help you stay aware. We advise you to take a look at the *Reporters Without Borders* website and to follow [@freemortaza](#) on Instagram. Let's stick together, show solidarity and fight together for his release.

YSR Community stands for  
#FREEMORTAZA

Together we can make a difference and stand up against injustice! Support the freedom of expression of a journalist who has been imprisoned for documenting the inhumane situation of displaced people around the world. We are always #strongertogether and will fight in order to #FREEMORTAZA!



## WITH THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS



HABIBI.WORKS



Zaporeak



One Happy Family



forRefugees

