



February 2026

MONTHLY REPORT





The word 'paréa' in Greek means "company, circle of friends": **everyone is welcome in Paréa!** Located within walking distance from the CCAC (*Closed and Controlled Access Camp*) on Lesvos, our community center **Paréa Lesvos** offers a safe space where people on the move, locals and internationals can meet and spend time in a peaceful and welcoming environment.

Paréa is run by **Europe Cares** responsible for the safety, major facility costs, maintenance and development of the center. It is also a **home** to another 8 **civil society organisations**: **Artists Giving Back, Collective Aid, Makerspace Lesvos, Médecins Sans Frontières Brussels, Refocus Media Labs, Refugee Relief Doro Blancke, TerraPsy, Yoga and Sport with Refugees**. In a time of high political uncertainty and constant withdrawal of support and international attention from Lesvos, our network of partner organisations joined forces to offer people on the move a **wide range of services** including food and NFI distributions, medical, legal and psychosocial support, education and social care activities. But first and foremost, we offer a **sense of community and belonging**.

We are **one community in solidarity**. *Will you join us?*



Number of arrivals February



Population in the CCAC



Lesvos Updates

In February, Lesvos recorded **311 new arrivals**. Despite this, the number of people living in the **Lesvos Closed Controlled Access Center (CCAC)** has decreased. By the end of February, **1,060 people*** were recorded in the camp by the Greek Ministry of Migration and Asylum. During the same period, there have been **81 transfers from Lesvos to the mainland** - which is a **significant rise** compared to the previous months. These transfers likely account for the declining population in the Lesvos camp despite the new arrivals.

As of the 17th of February, the main nationalities represented in the CCAC were Afghanistan, Sudan, Eritrea, Sierra Leone, and Somalia. The proportion of children in the camp is also rising, **increasing from 16.8% in early January to 29% in February** - highlighting a shifting demographic in the population.

2026 has already been described by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) as **'the deadliest start to a year in the Mediterranean'** since the organisation started recording data on deaths and disappearances along this migration route in 2014. Between the **1st of January and 15th of February**, the IOM's Missing Migrants Project has documented **more than 547 people who have died or disappeared** while making the sea crossing in the Mediterranean. This is more than double the 245 deaths and disappearances documented during the same period in 2025. These significantly high numbers are not just statistics - they highlight the **life threatening conditions at sea** and **the extreme risks people are forced to take to seek safety**. IOM Director General Amy Pope underlines the critical need for 'states to tackle the "preventable failures" that were turning the Mediterranean into a "graveyard"'. The continued rise in numbers of deaths and disappearances need to be a clear indication that **more safe and regular pathways are essential to prevent these losses**.

Across the Aegean, shipwrecks have become a frequent occurrence - with devastating consequences for people on the move. This month, **one of the 'deadliest migrant accidents'**** since the Pylos shipwreck in 2023 occurred on the night of **February 3rd off the coast off Chios**. A Greek Coast Guard vessel collided with a dinghy carrying around 39 refugees. The collision resulted in **15 people dying and around 24 people severely injured**, receiving widespread media attention and criticism from NGOs. There have been **conflicting accounts** of what led to the fatal collision. The Greek Coast Guard reported that the dinghy ignored multiple warnings to stop and unexpectedly changed course which resulted in the crash. However, multiple survivors testified that they heard no clear warnings, emergency beacon, and that the dinghy did not change direction. Additionally, autopsy reports brought to light have shown that **14 of the 15 people killed during the collision died of critical head injuries** - raising further questions about the narrative that the deaths were due to drowning. A criminal investigation into this crash is currently underway. However, **a Moroccan passenger has been arrested and charged with smuggling and causing the collision** - despite many witnesses stating they did not recognise the passenger as the driver or were not sure. Similar to the trial criminalising 24 humanitarians for migrant smuggling on Lesvos in January, this case mirrors a repeated pattern of people on the move **being blamed and criminalised** for deaths at sea while there is a **continued lack of accountability taken by governments**. Instead there is a bigger focus on ways to prevent people on the move from arriving in the EU rather than addressing the risks they face trying to seek safety.

Addressing the violence people on the move face crossing making dangerous sea crossings needs to be prioritized. **Rescue at sea is a legal obligation** under international maritime law and must be upheld. Safe pathways for people to access their right to asylum needs to be implemented to prevent these deaths.

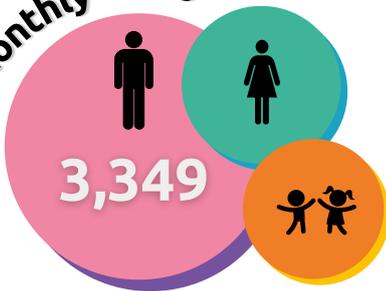
*<https://migration.gov.gr/en/statistika/>

**<https://www.infomigrants.net/>



February in numbers

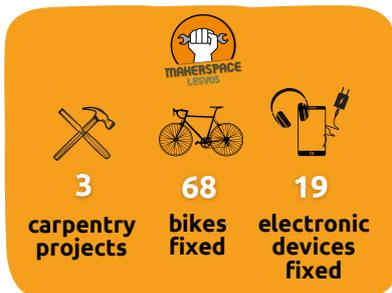
Monthly visits



Average daily visitors



Basic Needs



Social Activities



Support Sessions



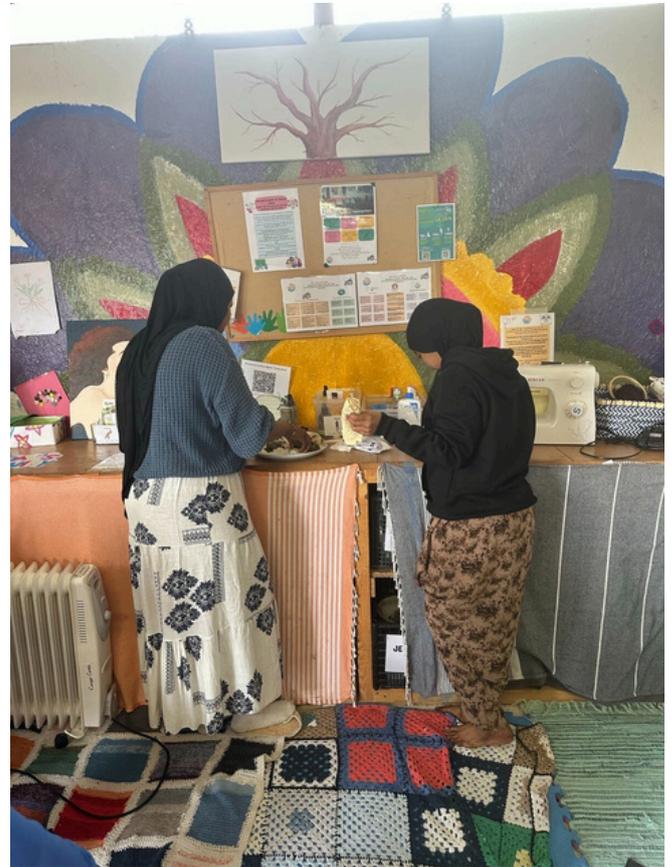


Highlight of the month

On the 13th February, the Women's Space hosted their monthly cooking workshop, **filling the Paréa grounds with the hearty smell of Cassava leaf stew**. With the support of **16 visitors**, Paréa's cosy container was transformed into a **bustling kitchen** full of laughter, dancing and culinary magic!

This delicious dish, consisting of rice, tender chicken and the earthy flavours of cassava leaf, was **thoroughly enjoyed by the Women's Space visitors and volunteers**. As we sat down to eat together after an hour of cooking, many of the women **complemented our head chef** and community volunteer, **Memunatu**, on her incredible cooking skills.

After going back for second (and sometimes even third) portions of food, the cooking workshop came to a close, with **many full bellies and even fuller hearts**.



Faces of Paréa

“ My favorite space is women's space. (...) Paréa is a beautiful space for everyone and for me. I chose Women Space because it's a lovely space. And it gives me a lot of joy because it has all that I want to do in this space. And I feel so, so proud to be here. (...) Sometimes I speak with the women in the camp that they should be in the Women's Space because it's so amazing for women. I am so proud because some women came here because I spoke with them. They see the reality of Paréa because it's so amazing because it's made with lovely people. ”



Memunatu from Sierra Leone



In the Spotlight

Meet our partner Collective Aid



In Paréa, Collective Aid provides support to asylum seekers and refugees through their **clothing and hygiene free shop**. After a recent delivery, they have recently **added jackets to their clothing distribution service**, which was welcomed by visitors, especially in the **volatile weather conditions we saw throughout February**. They are continuously trying to ensure that people can **access their services as soon as possible when they arrive on the island**, whilst providing a **fair service**, and adapt their services accordingly to achieve this.

Collective Aid's efforts in Paréa support a **wide range of people**, including families with young children and men who are often overlooked in crisis responses. In addition to their work on Lesbos, Collective Aid operates **across Europe, providing essential services and raising awareness** about the situation of **people on the move**.

Welcome to our space: *The Café!*

As many of our visitors have welcomed Ramadan, we are pleased that the café has continued distributing food which **many visitors are taking back to the camp for once they break fast**. To make this easier to carry, the Cafe started a plastic bag drive.

At Paréa Lesbos, we've also seen first-hand how **powerful** music can be in **bringing people together and celebrating different cultures**. With that in mind, the café has introduced a **"music box"**, where visitors can request songs to add to a new collective playlist. Our visitors are what make Paréa such a **vibrant and joyful space**, and we're really looking forward to dancing along to their recommendations in the months ahead.





Would you like to join our community?
Contact us at contact@europecares.org



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