

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



I HAVE
RIGHTS.



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FOREWORD

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Dear Supporters,

As we reflect on the past year, we are grateful for the commitment and trust of our clients, partners, donors, and team. In 2024, our third year of operation, we continued to defend the rights of those seeking safety, provided legal assistance, and advocated for systemic change. Every legal victory, every testimony heard, and every step towards justice was made possible because of your support.

As we look ahead, the implementation of the European Union's New Pact on Migration and Asylum presents challenges, not only for us at the borders of Europe but across the region. The coming years will define the future of migration policy across Europe. Now, more than ever, we must stand united to defend human rights.

Your support is foundational to our work, and it will be the cornerstone of our resilience in the face of what lies ahead. Together, we can continue to fight for a world where everyone can boldly say, "I Have Rights".

In solidarity and hope,

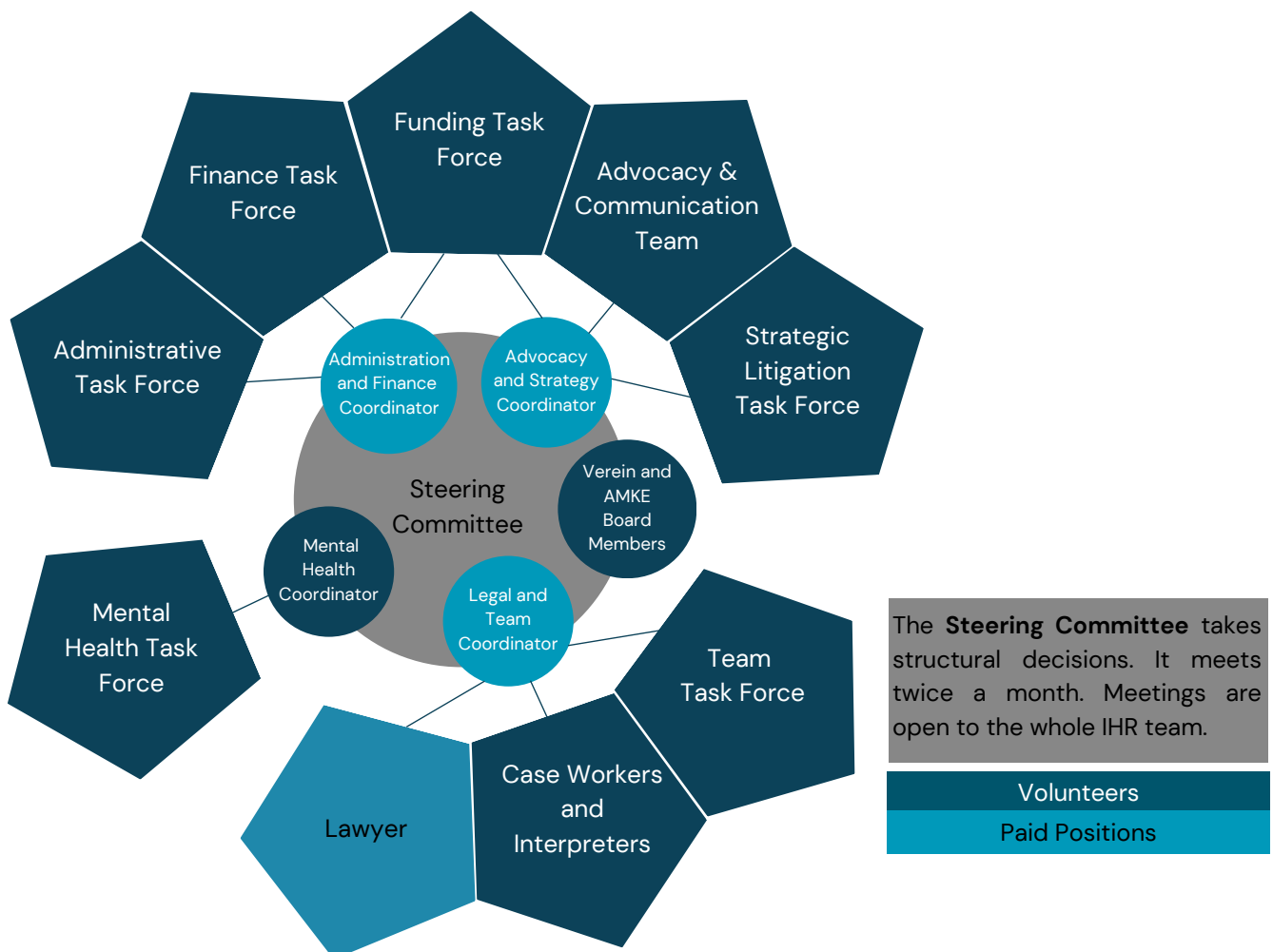
The I Have Rights Team.

STRUCTURE

I Have Rights e.V. (IHR) is a German-Greek human rights organisation based on the island of Samos, Greece. Samos is one of the five hotspot islands in Greece, serving as a key entry point for people seeking safety in Europe.

IHR provides independent and free legal information and representation to people on the move on Samos and supports them in asserting their rights.

IHR has two legal entities: a German (Verein) and a Greek association (AMKE). IHR's paid staff are: a Legal and Team Coordinator, a Greek Lawyer, an Advocacy and Strategy Coordinator, and an Administration and Finance Coordinator. The organisation is structured into various teams, each responsible for different areas of IHR's work.



CASEWORK TEAM

The casework team provides one-to-one legal information and representation to people on the move on Samos. It consists of a **Legal and Team Coordinator**, a **Greek Lawyer**, interpreters and three to four volunteer caseworkers. In 2024, **11 caseworkers** volunteered with the casework team.

INTERPRETATION TEAM

The interpretation team covers **18** languages. The team is comprised of in person and remote colleagues. In 2024, **64** remote interpreters volunteered with the IHR teams to facilitate communication with our clients.

ADVOCACY TEAM

The advocacy team monitors human rights compliance on Samos and calls for structural change. The team consists of an **Advocacy and Strategy Coordinator** and one or two volunteer Advocacy and Communication Officers. In 2024, **three Advocacy and Communications Officers** volunteered with the advocacy team.

STRATEGIC LITIGATION TEAM

The litigation team brings legal challenges to defend the rights of people on the move. The team is made up of an **Advocacy and Strategy Coordinator** and **12** remote volunteers.

MENTAL HEALTH TEAM

The mental health team offers peer-to-peer emotional support to IHR's team on Samos to support them in their work. The team is comprised of the Mental Health Coordinator and volunteers who conduct feedback calls with team members.

TEAM TASK FORCE

The team task force is responsible for the recruitment, onboarding and human resources of IHR, coordinated by the **Legal and Team Coordinator**.

FINANCE COORDINATION

The **Finance and Administration Coordinator** is responsible for the accounting, financial planning and funding. The **Advocacy and Strategy Coordinator** and **board members** support our funding work.

The Steering Committee serves as our primary decision-making body and meets on a bi-weekly basis. It is made up of coordinators and board members.

We prioritise flat hierarchies and consensus-based decision making.

STEERING
COMMITTEE





VISION & VALUES

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We advocate for change in national and European policies to ensure a **fair and humane approach to asylum**. We emphasise the need for **safe migration routes** and a **dignified European asylum system** that: (i) upholds the fundamental rights of individuals seeking safety, and (ii) acknowledges the impacts of the climate crisis, systemic poverty, and economic precarity stemming from the Global North's history of exploitation.

SOLIDARITY

To achieve our goals, we collaborate closely with local civil society, NGOs, and people on the move. We stand in solidarity with people on the move and all marginalised and discriminated individuals and groups, fostering collective action and support.

DIGNITY

Every asylum seeker should have access to independent, individualised and confidential legal counselling. We are independent from political parties, governmental institutions, state actors and religious organisations.

EQUALITY

We support our clients. Our services are free and open to provide equal access to legal support for people on the move on Samos, irrespective of their legal status, origin, religion, social and educational background, gender, sexual orientation, and regardless of our sympathy. We commit to continuously working towards overcoming discriminatory structures in our association. We reflect on our privileges and act accordingly.



CASEWORK TEAM

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Under EU law, asylum seekers are entitled to access legal information. Despite this, in Greece asylum seekers are not entitled to free state legal support at first instance of their asylum claim. To fill this gap we provide specialised legal support to our clients in a safe environment to share their stories, ask individual questions, and learn about their rights.

INFORMATION

People contact us with a wide range of inquiries related to their asylum procedure. The workload for each case varies significantly from person to person. While some questions can be addressed in a one-hour appointment, interview preparations typically require eight hours of clinic work per client.

We run a hotline information service which receives hundreds of messages a day. Additionally, we conduct phone appointments with those who are unable to leave the CCAC.

REPRESENTATION

Alongside providing information to people on the move, our lawyer legally represents some of our clients, enabling us to provide enhanced support tailored to their needs.

The lawyer accompanies clients to their interviews, submits detailed memoranda with evidence supporting their asylum claims, and takes on legal actions such as requesting the removal of geographical restrictions, filing appeals against rejections, and representing clients in hearings before the Appeals Committee.



WORKSHOPS

In 2024, we held **19** legal workshops, at 3 different locations, including **2** for women only.

In collaboration with *Avocats Sans Frontières* and the *Human Rights Legal Project*, two other Samos-based legal projects, we held legal information workshops at community centres on the island.

We aim to engage in community outreach and provide individuals with essential information on the asylum procedure and their rights.

IDENTIFYING SURVIVORS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Our casework team is trained to identify potential survivors of human trafficking. In 2024, we became part of the National Referral Mechanism for the Protection of Human Trafficking Victims.

Our membership enables us to refer potential survivors to the mechanism and advocate for changes in the treatment of survivors in Greece.



**THANK YOU FOR WORKING HARD
FOR OUR RIGHTS**



*A text received from one of our
clients after receiving status.*



**I AM VERY, VERY GRATEFUL TO
YOU, AND IF MY BIG INTERVIEW IS
OVER, I WOULD LIKE TO COME TO
YOU TO THANK YOU FOR
EVERYTHING. YOUR OFFICE IS
WONDERFUL, AND YOU ARE ALSO
WONDERFUL. I AM VERY, VERY
GRATEFUL TO YOU FOR ALL THE
FREE INFORMATION, THE BUS
TICKET, DRINKING WATER, AND
EVERYTHING. THANK YOU FROM
THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART.**



*A text received from one of our
clients after receiving status.*



IMPACT STORY

A young woman sought our support in preparing for her asylum interview. She was a survivor of gender-based violence and human trafficking, which had caused serious mental and physical health challenges.

The casework team informed her of her rights as a survivor of human trafficking and guided her in being referred to Greece's National Referral Mechanism (EMA). During her initial examination at the CCAC, the psychologist noted her experience of gender-based violence but did not classify her as legally vulnerable. Our lawyer raised concerns with the authorities about errors in the psychologist's report, particularly the failure to recognise her vulnerability despite evidence of gender-based violence and trafficking. The psychologist re-examine the case but again failed to address her status as a survivor of human trafficking.

In response, our caseworkers submitted an EMA referral, detailing her experience of human trafficking. Our team collaborated with an interdisciplinary team of professionals to gather evidence and draft an expedited referral. The client was later identified as vulnerable due to her status of survivor of gender-based violence and human trafficking.

The team also prepared her for her asylum interview through in-person appointments, with our lawyer providing support throughout.

Additionally, as her health issues required treatment unavailable on the island, the team advised her on the transfer procedure and urged the CCAC authorities to prioritise her case.

Thanks to her resilience and our efforts, she was granted refugee status and transferred to a location where she could access proper treatment and start rebuilding her life.

2024 IN NUMBERS

We supported **297** new clients, preparing **253** for their asylum interviews



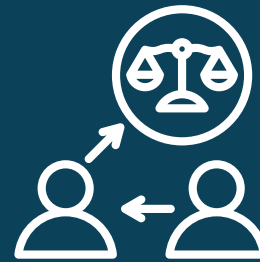
The lawyer accompanied **14** clients to their interviews and submitted **9** appeals



We undertook **10** family reunification cases



The lawyer formally represented **31** new clients



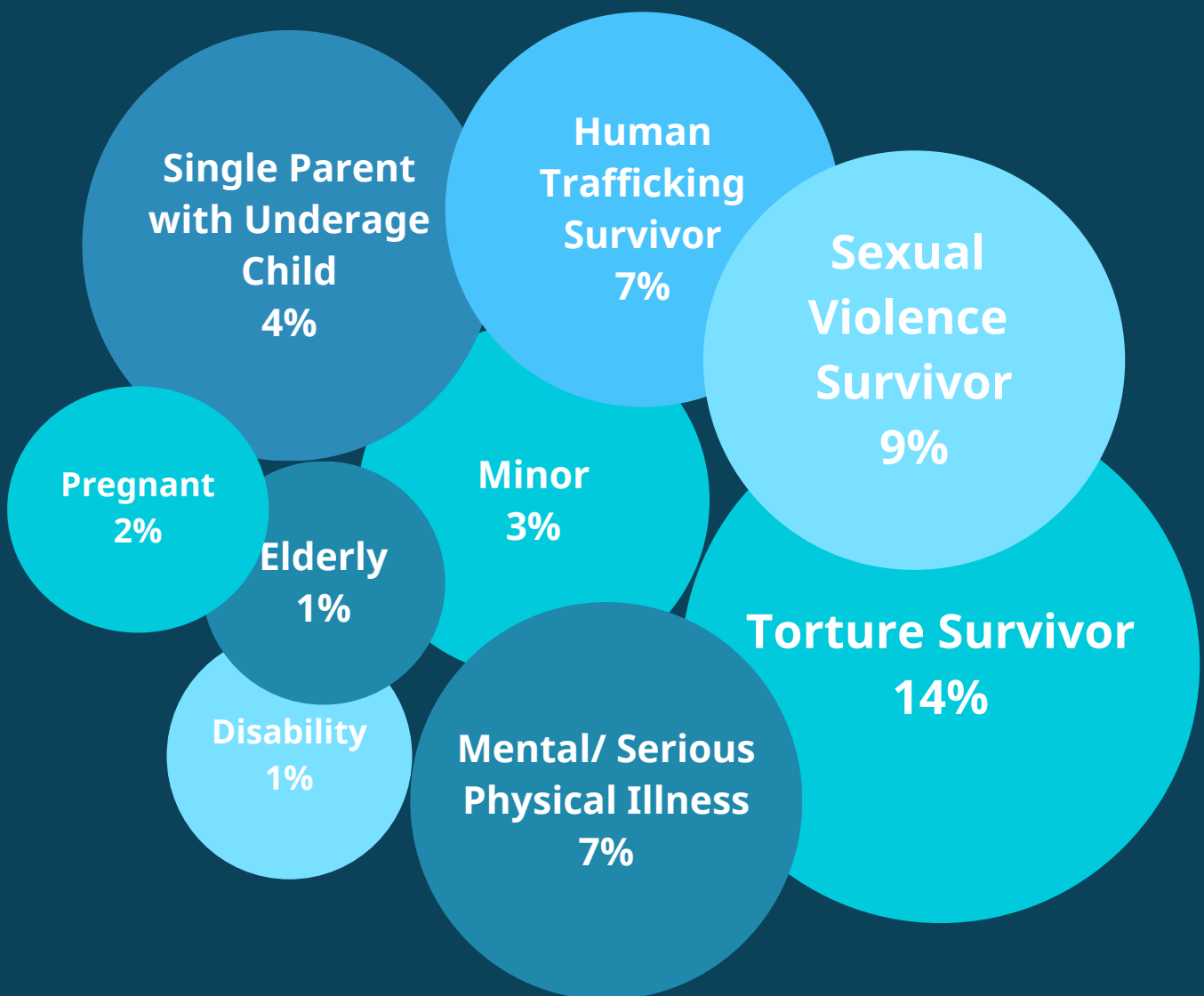
We responded to around **135,000** messages on our hotline



37% of our clients fit the legal definition of **vulnerability**.

9% of clients fit **more than one category of vulnerability**.

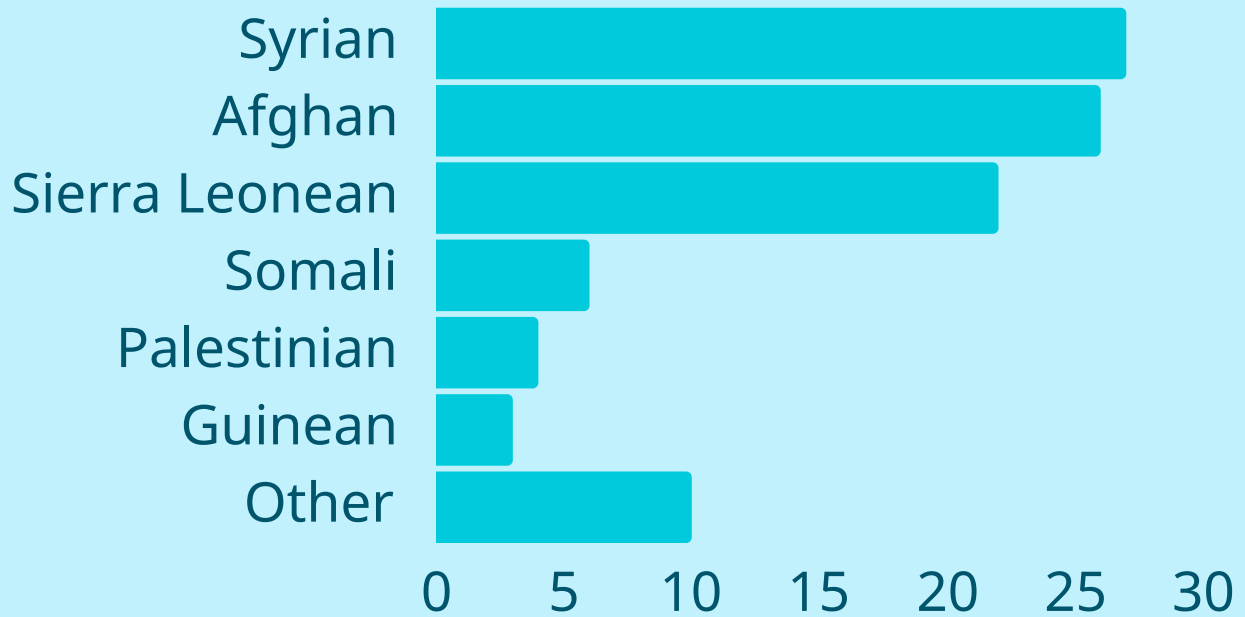
While vulnerable persons are entitled to additional protections in reality **they often not identified and/or not provided with support**.



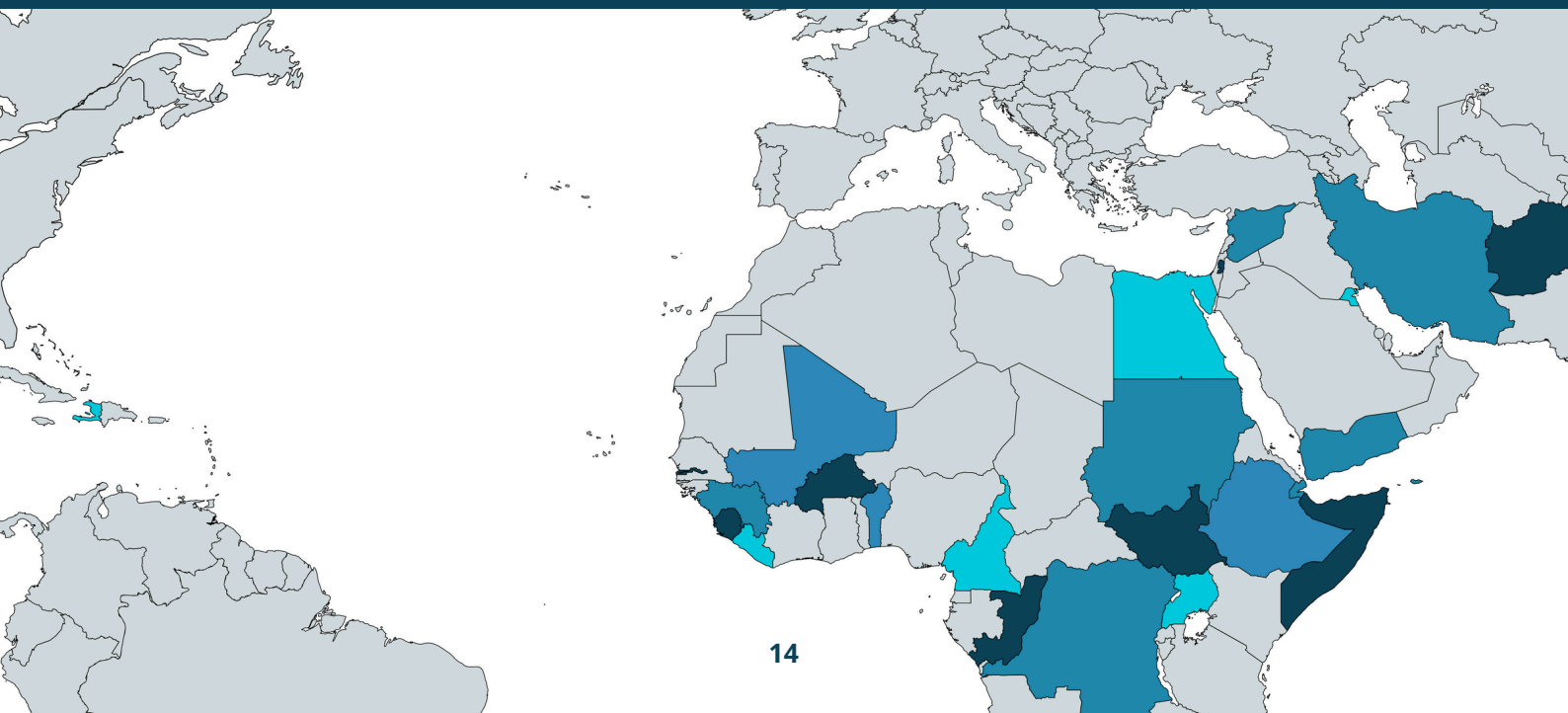
Percentage of IHR's clients presenting a legal vulnerability.

In 2024, **70%** of our clients were men, **30%** were women.

In 2024, we supported people from **23 countries**. We also provided services for statelessness people (**2%** of our clients).



Nationality of our clients in 2024 (in %)



“

**I APPRECIATE AND THANKS TO YOU
FOR GIVING ME OPPORTUNITY SO I
CAN EXPLAIN MY STORY AND FEEL
CONFIDENT. THANK YOU.**

”

A text received a client.

“

**MY SITUATION IN GREECE WAS
VERY SAD AND THERE WAS NO ONE
BUT YOU WHO CARED ABOUT ME OR
MY FILE...THANK YOU, AND THANK
YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST AND
ASKING ABOUT ME...AND
EVERYTHING IS GOING WELL, SO I
WOULD LIKE TO THANK YOU FROM
THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART FOR
YOUR WONDERFUL INTEREST.**

”

A text received from a client.



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ADVOCACY

We **monitor**, **document**, and **denounce** the conditions on Samos for people on the move, focusing on issues such as inhuman conditions in the CCAC and incidents of border violence. We advocate for fair and dignified asylum policies and practices across Europe, aiming to influence systemic change.

In 2024, our efforts gained attention, with our work featured **30** times in both national and international media outlets.

United Nations HUMAN RIGHTS

Greece: UN expert alarmed by failures in identification and protection of victims of trafficking on Samos

La Grecia dopo gli hotspot: i centri chiusi ad accesso controllato

Finanziati con fondi europei, diversi rapporti mettono in luce la condizione di detenzione di fatto

Historic human rights verdict on Samos hotspot

The migrant camp on the Greek island of Samos, surrounded by razor wire | Photo: Still | Rise

Frontex: a public agency incapable of accountability

JOANNE KRUS and GEMMA BIRD 11th April 2024

As the movement of people across the Mediterranean has become securitised, Frontex has come to the fore—not to good effect.



GOALS

Our advocacy work is based on three pillars:

DETENTION

We advocate **against detention in all forms** including the use of closed camps, especially those that are *de facto* detention centres, isolated and excluded from local society like on Samos. We advocate for the **closure of CCACs** and for integration of people into society in **dignified housing**.

PUSHBACKS

We call for the end of pushbacks and border violence. We advocate for safe routes for people to seek safety.

ACCESS TO ASYLUM

We advocate for a **fair asylum procedure**, where people's claims are **thoroughly analysed**. Inherent to this is that people are provided with access to territory, dignified accommodation, access to health care and their essential needs are met.

OUR WORK IN FOCUS

ONLINE EVENTS

In 2024, we organized **three online events** to shed light on the situation in Samos and address several specific issues.

- “Supporting survivors of Human Trafficking on Samos and Lesvos” (in collaboration with Fenix - Humanitarian Legal Aid)
- “The EU’s New Pact: how Samos’ present will become Europe’s future” (in collaboration with the Refugee Law Clinic Dresden)
- “Legal limbo/administrative hell: Spivak’s sanctioned ignorance in the CCAC”



ONLINE TALK

The EU's New Pact on Migration and Asylum:
How Samos present will become Europe's future

02 JULY
5:30 PM, CET



Ella Dodd
Advocacy and Strategy Coordinator at I Have Rights



Amon
Refugee Law Clinic Dresden



WEBINAR

Supporting Survivors of Human Trafficking on Samos and Lesvos

Thursday 22nd Feb 18:30 EEST / 17:30 CET



WEBINAR

Legal limbo or an administrative hell:
Spivak's sanctioned ignorance in the CCAC

27 JUNE
6:30 PM, CET



Ellen Allde
I Have Rights' team member & Teaching Fellow and Doctoral Scholar at Queen Mary School of Law



IN PERSON EVENTS

In 2024, we actively participated in **15 in-person workshops, seminars, and events** across Greece, Germany, and other countries.

For example our Legal and Team Coordinator, attended an event in Berlin which brought together various legal actors to discuss the Common European Asylum System.



LITIGATION

In 2024, the litigation team engaged in **8** litigation initiatives including:

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

In February, the European Court of Human Rights ordered Interim Measures for two of our clients, a mother and a child detained in degrading conditions in the CCAC.

In October, the European Court of Human Rights found that Greece violated the rights of seven unaccompanied children in Samos in 2019 and 2020, subjecting them to inhuman and degrading treatment. The cases were brought by us with *Still I Rise*.

Together with Mobile Info Team and Equal Legal Aid, we presented evidence to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the state of the reception and asylum procedures in Greece.

EUROPEAN UNION

With Avocats Sans Frontières, we filed a complaint to the EU Ombudsman against the EU Asylum Agency (EUAA). We raised serious concerns about human rights violations during asylum interviews on Samos. We also addressed the EUAA's lack of action regarding allegations of human rights violations, including reports of pushbacks. Following this complaint, the EU Ombudsman opened an inquiry into the EUAA.

THE GREEK OMBUDSMAN

Following a complaint by us and two other NGOs in January, the Greek Ombudsman found that the Reception and Identification Service of the Samos CCAC unlawfully restricted lawyers' access to the site.

In September, following a joint complaint by us and two other NGOs the Greek Ombudsman asked authorities to stop coercing people on the move from waiving their right to reception conditions.

IMPACT STORY

SUCCESSFUL COMPLAINTS BEFORE THE UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

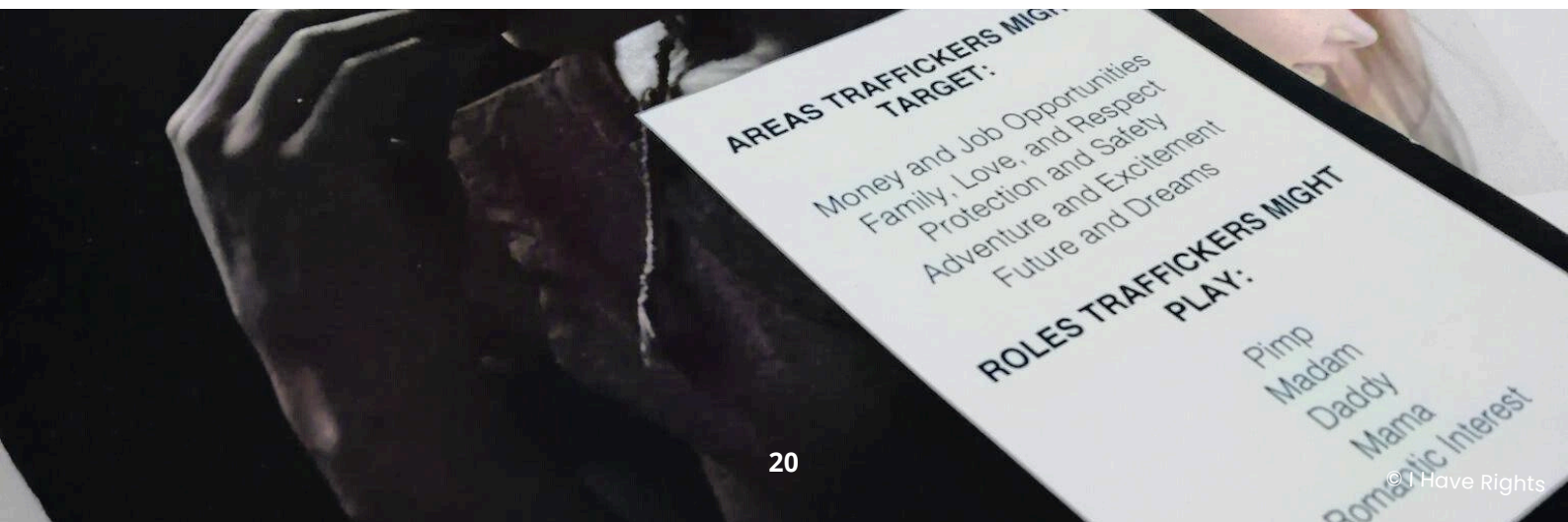
After two years of submitting complaints on behalf of our clients, the UN Special Rapporteur issued a formal letter of allegation to the Greek Government.

In her letter, the Special Rapporteur addressed the Government's "failure to adequately identify possible victims of trafficking, especially women and children, and failure to protect identified victims of trafficking in persons in the island of Samos".

The Special Rapporteur also raised serious concerns about the suitability of the prison-like Samos CCAC for survivors, highlighting that the:

highly securitised environment of the CCAC, coupled with its isolated location, restrictions on movement, and lack of services, is not conducive to psychological, physical or social recovery of victims of trafficking.

As Greece failed to answer the letter, the UN Special Rapporteur published a [press release](#) in December 2024 leading to widespread media coverage of the mistreatment of survivors on Samos.



TECHNOLOGY IN THE SAMOS CCAC

© Romy Van Baarsen

In 2024, with funding from the Digital Freedom Fund, I Have Rights and the Border Violence Monitoring Network worked on a **joint research project** to investigate the use of technology in the Samos CCAC.

The CCAC's technology and surveillance infrastructure includes public and private security personnel, CCTV and drone monitoring, fingerprint scanning and AI algorithmic driven tech to control the movement of people in the facility. Of particular concern are two AI-based IT systems: Centaur and Hyperion which are designed to monitor the centre.

Our research, conducted throughout 2024, identified human rights impacts and legal frameworks to challenge unlawful uses of technology and surveillance systems in the CCAC. In January 2025 we will publish our findings in a comprehensive report, offering key insights and recommendations for advocacy and legal action.





CASEWORK

The team conducted interviews with people on the move, ensuring that people's firsthand experiences and insights informed the project's findings and recommendations.

ADVOCACY

The advocacy team drafted and designed the report. They implemented communication tools to amplify the report's reach and impact.

LITIGATION

The team:

- Reviewed relevant documents, including government papers, reports from international organisations, and academic publications.
- Researched international and national mechanisms to challenge human rights violations.
- Submitted 11 Freedom of Information (FOI) requests to gain access to unpublished documents concerning the deployment of technology in the Samos CCAC.

Building on the findings from these efforts, the litigation team developed a comprehensive litigation strategy for 2025 to address the privacy and human rights concerns identified in the report.

“

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR HELP
AND SUPPORT YOU PROVIDED
BECAUSE I WAS IN SAMOS AND I
COULD RECEIVE A POSITIVE
STATUS BECAUSE OF YOU. I AM
REALLY HAPPY THAT I MET YOU**

*A text received from one of our
clients.*

”

“

**HELLO EVERYONE 🖐️ I WANTED TO
THANK THE LAWYERS AND ALL
THE STAFF AT I HAVE RIGHTS FOR
THE WORK AND DEDICATION AND
UNCONDITIONAL SUPPORT
PROVIDED FOR THE SUCCESSFUL
COMPLETION OF MY CASE THANK
YOU VERY MUCH**

*A text received from one of our
clients.*

”



THANK YOU!

As we look back on the year, we want to extend our sincere gratitude to everyone who has supported our work. We are deeply honoured by the trust our clients have placed in us, and we are fortunate to collaborate with fellow organisations on Samos that share our dedication to advocating for the rights of people on the move.

We would also like to express our profound appreciation to the foundations and individuals whose financial contributions make our efforts possible. Your generosity and solidarity are vital to our mission, and we are incredibly thankful for your ongoing support.





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