

OCTOBER 2022

THE SAMOS LEGAL CENTRE NEWSLETTER



Welcome to the 13th edition of the Samos Legal Centre Newsletter! This month, despite the onset of winter in Samos, arrivals on the island have continued, and the team has been organising group information sessions to ensure that as many people as possible are informed of their rights. Read more below.

Positive decision for a stateless applicant

This month, D* was granted refugee status in Samos. At his first appointments he was nervous and did not want to share information about his case. With time, he gained confidence and told the reasons why he left his country, and thus prepared for his asylum interview.



On the day of his interview, his lawyer sat down with him and encouraged him to provide as much information as possible. She highlighted the difficulties faced by asylum seekers from Sudan, particularly applicants like D*, whose status as a member of a minority tribe prevented him from obtaining Sudanese identity documents, leaving him stateless. ASF France applied to have his nationality officially changed to "stateless" and it was on this basis that D* received international protection from Greece.

"I came to you because other Sudanese people told me that you helped them a lot and that you had good results. As your lawyer accompanied me to the interview, I was not afraid, but I was very nervous before. Afterwards she told me to relax, that I had done really well and that I should wait now. That's what I did, I waited for a long time. When I got the decision, I was so happy. Now I'm going to try to learn Greek, that's my plan, to learn Greek and integrate here."

D*'s case highlights the importance of legal aid to enable asylum seekers to defend themselves throughout their procedure, and to ensure that the asylum service takes into account all aspects of the person's country of origin. In the absence of state-provided legal aid for the preparation of interviews in Greece, ASF France is committed to providing this essential support.

Workshops



In October, the team organised collective information sessions in the various community centres on the island. The cooperation with ASF France's partners in Samos makes it possible to respond to the different needs of the beneficiaries and to offer a global approach to legal aid.

During the workshops, ASF France and I HAVE RIGHTS presented the different stages of the asylum procedure and answered questions related to interviews and transfers. The Human Rights Legal Project discussed how to report cases of police and state violence, and answered questions about "refoulements" and detention.

In October, more than 35 asylum seekers received information at these sessions.

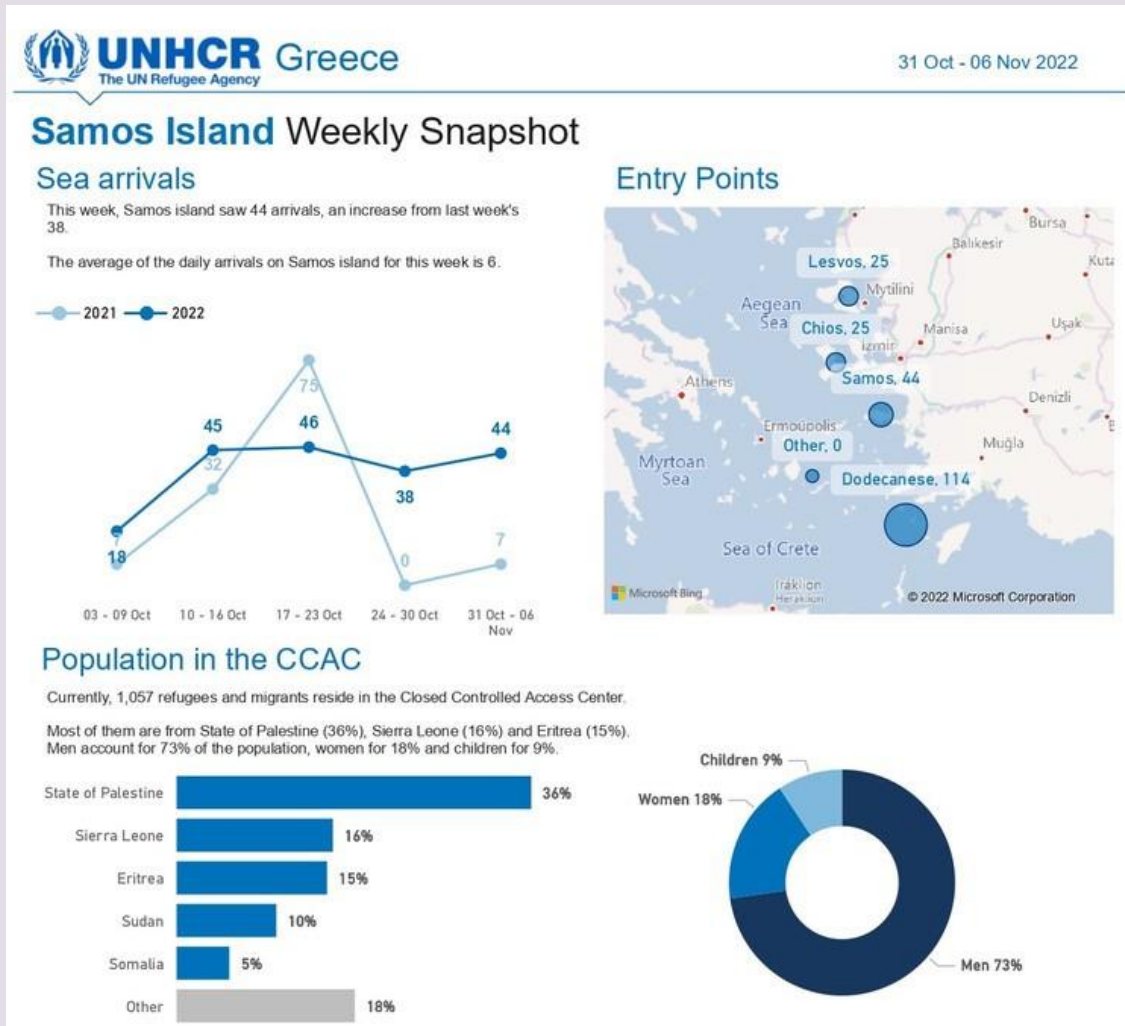
6 Number of the month



6 asylum seekers were accompanied during their interviews this month by the ASF France team. During these interviews, which can last between 3 and 6 hours, the lawyers ensure that the procedure followed is correct and that the applicant's answers are well recorded and understood. The lawyers ask additional questions to clarify information and ensure that all aspects of the person's story are covered.

47 interview preparations were conducted by Samos Legal Centre volunteer lawyers this month for 36 asylum seekers, and 30 applications were sent to the authorities to defend the applicants. The team welcomed 35 new beneficiaries in October and 67 sessions were conducted to manage beneficiaries' asylum applications.

Population data



According to UNHCR data for the period 31 October to 6 November, 1199 refugees and migrants are residing on the island of Samos, of which 1057 are living in the "closed controlled access centre".

Men represent 71% of the population, women 18% and children 9%. The majority of the population comes from Palestine, Sierra Leona, Eritrea and Sudan.