

αλληλεγγύη

SOLIDARITY
NOW

This is our common ground

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ACTIVITY
REPORT

2013 - 2016



CONTENTS

Letter from the Chairman	04
Solidarity Centers: Open Structures for the Most Vulnerable	06
Athens Solidarity Center	07
Thessaloniki Solidarity Center	08
Our Donations Policy	10
Our Positions	12
Actions on the Migration and Refugee Crisis	13
Housing Program for Vulnerable Groups	16
Other Important Activities	17
Our Team	19
Contact Us - Support our Actions!	20

"We enhance actions of solidarity in a low key manner"

What is unfolding today in front of Greece, Europe, and the whole world is not a refugee crisis. It is a crisis of solidarity. And in this crisis, the only one who managed to be on par is certainly civil society with its pluralism.

The Open Society Foundations (OSF) has been intervening the last 25 years with concrete actions and numerous programs to support migrant and refugee populations in Europe. George Soros, philanthropist and founder of OSF, foresaw the crisis and the humanitarian problem in Greece and in the European continent, stressing that Europe must reclaim its vision of a society based on solidarity.

SolidarityNow was thus established in Greece in 2013, as an OSF initiative. A group of important and eminent people from academia, the science and business world, who led this organization quietly but consistently and with knowledge, now perform valuable work alongside civil society. The vision of our organization can be summarized as follows: to address the impact of the crisis and respond to the urgent needs of the populations most affected.

We support all people in need regardless of nationality, ethnic origin, religion or social status. At the same time, we contribute to the strengthening of civil society, through a donation system, offering financial support to institutions and ideas in order to implement programs in times of crisis.

Since then, we have created two Solidarity Centers in Athens and Thessaloniki, having offered from 2014 to date, free medical, legal and holistic services to more than 40,000 people.

We work with the UNHCR on a hosting program through foster families, providing 700 spots and support through accommodation for approximately 1,300

people in the Attica region and on the islands of Chios and Kos.

We work with reputable civil society organizations, such as Médecins Sans Frontières, Médecins du Monde, the International Rescue Committee, and the Greek Council for Refugees and support programs for the people on the move, monitoring practices and malpractices in border areas and in reception and detention centers.

We support organizations and associations for migrants and refugees, such as the Greek Council for Refugees to strengthen their voices on migration and asylum issues. We support academic initiatives so as to record and document the refugee reality on the Aegean islands.

We support non-governmental organizations such as PRAKSIS and METAction to offer their services so as to respond to the increased flows of refugees on the islands.

With the request of the First Reception Service, SolidarityNow supports mobile units on the islands of Kos and Leros.

We cooperate and support the work of the Asylum Service to speed up asylum procedures for vulnerable groups such as unaccompanied minors. We cooperate with the Municipality of Thessaloniki for a refugee housing program that includes the creation of shelters along with the support of the EEA Norway Grants, the Norwegian Embassy in Greece and the Municipality of Athens so that the Solidarity Center can operate.

Quietly and discretely, but with a sense of duty to cover the lack of a national and European anti-crisis

We support all people in need regardless of nationality, ethnic origin, religion or social status.



plan, SolidarityNow from 2013 to date, has supported with donations exceeding 14 million euros the implementation of over 70 programs.

SolidarityNow has provided over 10 million euros for emergency response programs aimed exclusively at the relief of victims of the migrant/refugee crisis in Greece in 2015.

In a difficult period, the selfless generosity and solidarity that an important part of the Greek society – citizens and organizations – show by welcoming and helping refugees, is impressive. And in order to continue our work and intensify our actions to respond more

effectively to the emergency situation, we need even more organized civil society initiatives and brave donors to join forces with us.

Europe is now facing a moment of truth. Now is the time to redefine the values of solidarity and human rights on which the European project was built.

Stelios Zavvos,
Chairman of SolidarityNow

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF SOLIDARITYNOW IS COMPRISED OF:

Stelios Zavvos, Christos Rozakis, Nikos Alivizatos, Efthimios Vidalis, Aristos Doxiadis, Jenny Cavounidis, Antigone Lyberaki, Manos Matsaganis, Calypso Nomikou, Anna Triandafyllidou.

SOLIDARITY CENTERS: Access for All

SolidarityNow created and operates two Solidarity Centers in Athens and Thessaloniki, based on the idea of an open space, a hub that enhances the participation of different groups of civil society in order to cover the lack of access of the city's most vulnerable populations to holistic services.



At the Solidarity Centers we follow an “open door” policy and we are accessible to all people regardless of nationality, religion, ethnic origin and social status. Our services are free and include: primary medical care, medication, legal assistance and legal advice, employability services through educational programs and links with the labor market, specialized

psychosocial support for vulnerable groups and support to parents, children and adolescents through advisory and training programs. As our actions multiply and we incorporate new and innovative approaches, we hope the Solidarity Centers become an example of best practice and a stable basis for future political reforms.

ATHENS SOLIDARITY CENTER

The Athens Solidarity Center* opened in December 2014 in a deprived area downtown, hosting under one roof different non-governmental organizations to provide, through a well-organized structure, basic services to the most vulnerable population groups.

The Center acts as a hub and offers space to new and existing organizations of civil society in Greece in order to implement their projects, to cooperate, to co-plan and to carry out joint, coherent and innovative actions in order to reduce poverty and facilitate the social integration of vulnerable groups.

Our Partners at the Athens Solidarity Center are the following organizations: PRAKSIS, ARSIS, “Together for Children”, Network for the Rights of the Child. Furthermore, the Solidarity Center hosts the Asylum Agency’s office to facilitate and speed up procedures for refugee asylum seekers - mainly vulnerable groups such as unaccompanied minors and single-parent families.



- The Athens Solidarity Center offers the following services:**
- ▶ Primary health care with the operation of specialized medical clinics.
 - ▶ Employability support through the assistance and support to long-term unemployed persons.
 - ▶ Day Center for Children to enhance the skills of children and their social integration.
 - ▶ Counseling Center for mothers / parents, children / adolescents for psychological support, counseling and guidance.
 - ▶ Helpline for families - children and adolescents “11525”.

Learn more about Athens Solidarity Center
<http://www.solidaritynow.org/our-work-en/centers-en/athens-center-en.html>


 The Athens Solidarity Center operates with the financial support of the EEA Norway Grants, the Embassy of Norway in Greece, the Open Society Foundations, and in collaboration with the Municipality of Athens.

The Centers in Numbers:	
ATHENS SOLIDARITY CENTER (DECEMBER 2014 – DECEMBER 2015)	THESSALONIKI SOLIDARITY CENTER (JANUARY 2014 – OCTOBER 2015)
18,421 total number of beneficiaries of programs	10,787 total number of beneficiaries of programs
30,255 total number of beneficiaries of ASC	3,450 new beneficiaries
70,800 number of services provided	18,700 number of services provided

THESSALONIKI SOLIDARITY CENTER

Since January 2014, the Thessaloniki Solidarity Center (TSC) operates as a civil society hub providing health, legal aid and social support services to underprivileged populations dwelling in the Center of Thessaloniki. The Solidarity Center serves as a one-stop-shop, an integrated effort to execute impactful actions towards poverty alleviation and social integration of those most affected by the crisis.

SolidarityNow is scaling up its ongoing Solidarity Center intervention by transforming the TSC into a “task force” of experts providing a person-oriented, tailor-made support. With a holistic approach and a comprehensive offer of services focused on individual needs, assisting with uplifting persons to overcome the whole spectrum of difficulties and barriers that they face. Having a specialized social service at its core, health, legal and professionals it will shape the personalized intervention that help re-boost the beneficiaries’ lives. Ranging from linguistic support to nutritional care, from legal advice to skills certification, TSC addresses to all those in need, without any criteria but the need per se.

In addition, the new Thessaloniki Solidarity Center will work as an integrated and multi-dimensional hub for grassroots civil society organizations, informal groups, networks of human rights’ advocates and members of ethnic, religious, social, cultural communities. Engaged in the fight to counter the shrinking space for civil society and human rights, TSC will act as a point of reference for informal networks and grassroots NGOs, a human rights’ defenders refuge and humanitarian activists and workers comfort space.

Mapping structural discrimination, research on marginalized population group’s needs and creating joint advocacy networks in Greece and the Balkan region, are core activities of the Thessaloniki Solidarity Center’s mission.

Learn more about the Thessaloniki Solidarity Center:

<http://www.solidaritynow.org/our-work-en/centers-en/thessaloniki-center-en.html>



Our donations Policy

The development of partnerships with civil society and institutions is a fundamental component of the strategy developed by SolidarityNow. Our aim is to maximize the result of our joint efforts for the relief of the most vulnerable population groups affected by the financial and migrant/refugee crises.

The donation policy that we follow enables organizations to actively be supported so that they can implement important actions and further develop their work. SolidarityNow from 2013 until today, has financially supported 40 organizations of civil society, public institutions and other initiatives with donations exceeding 14 million euros to implement 68 projects.

SOLIDARITYNOW IS IMPLEMENTING PROJECTS ALL AROUND GREECE.

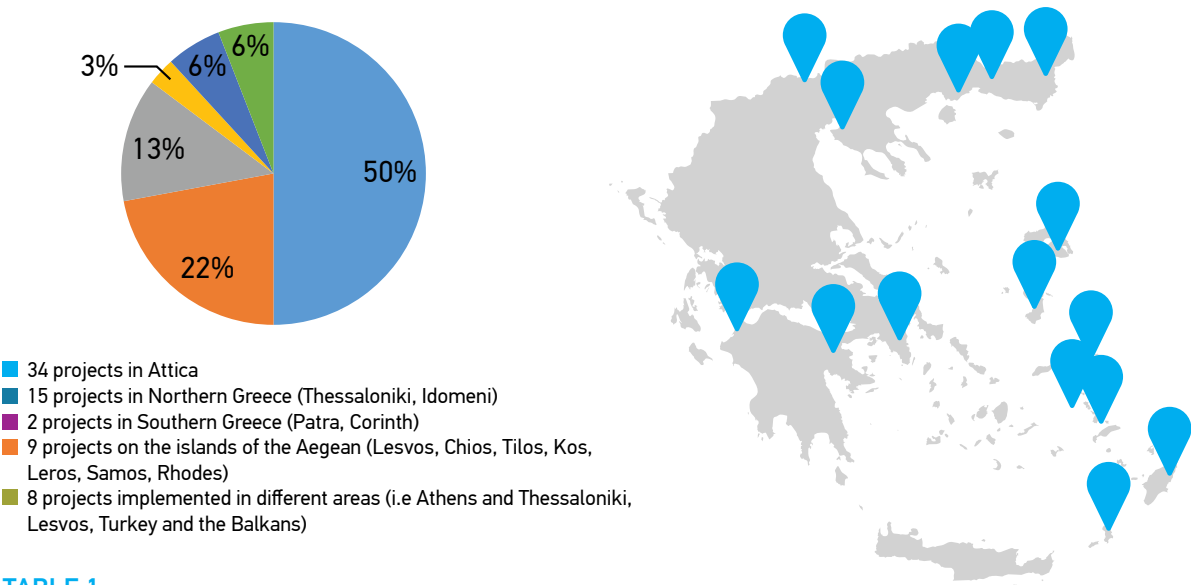
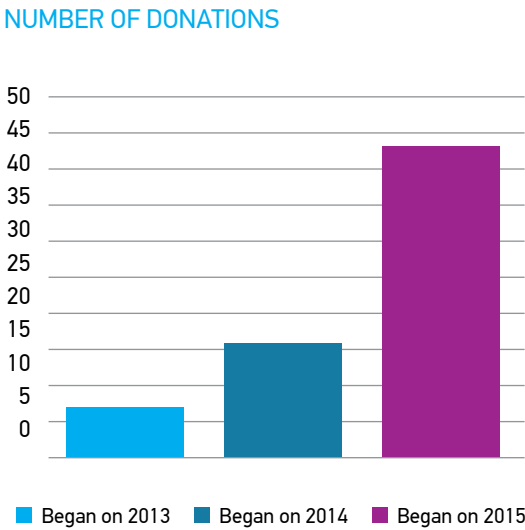


TABLE 1
From 2013 until today, SolidarityNow has supported the implementation of 68 programs in total.

Migration/Refugee: 25	Legal Aid: 6
Human Rights & Diversity: 6	Employability: 5
Health: 8	Children / Youth & Education: 6
Democracy	Women's Empowerment: 4
/ Strengthening Structures: 4	Food Security: 4



THE BASIC PILLARS OF OUR WORK ARE:

- Human Rights and Social Justice.**
Our main priority is the defense of rights on all levels and the active support of legally marginalized population groups or those deprived of their basic rights.
- Protection of the rights of vulnerable groups.**
We work constantly to strengthen social inclusion and we aim to support targeted policies and services, tailored to the needs of these groups –such as the Roma- which historically have been victims of marginalization, both on a national and a European level.

- Connecting young people with educational programs and the labor market.**
High unemployment in the country, combined with the phenomenon of migration of qualified scientific personnel, hinder efforts to recover from the crisis and the vision for building a just society with balanced development for all.
- Advocacy at national and international level.**
We strive to promote our priorities in decision-making centers by continuing and expanding the support received from the Open Society Foundations (OSF) on issues of advocacy and human rights. We act in order to empower our voice on human rights issues, social inclusion and cohesion on a national and international level.



Our positions

At SolidarityNow our intention is to continually expand our help and our cooperation with civil society, individuals and institutions, developing synergies and supporting initiatives to implement best practices across the spectrum of Greek society.

We believe and support the development of a common advocacy and awareness front for local communities, for the empowerment of civil society groups and local governance, for the defense of freedoms and fundamental rights for all, the access to medicine, by promoting social cohesion and social inclusion of minority and vulnerable groups such as Roma.

In responding to the increased needs of populations caused by the financial crisis and the effects of the humanitarian crisis through the explosion of the migration phenomenon, SolidarityNow has adopted concrete stances regarding decision-making and the creation of initiatives. More specifically, SolidarityNow supports:

- ▶ to place again under control of the EU the external borders in order to reduce refugee flows to manageable levels
- ▶ to harmonize asylum policies in all Member States (identifying asylum-making criteria, access to employment, social benefits, etc.) so as to create a single asylum service
- ▶ to establish a generous numerical target for the refugees - about 1 million per year - and commit to maintaining this objective until all those who qualify are admitted
- ▶ to create secure, external examination and control centers in neighboring states and elsewhere, and at the same time, those who qualify for asylum to have them wait for their turn at the temporary accommodation points. Those who leave for Europe missing their turn, will be excluded from the asylum procedure
- ▶ the resettlement of refugees in Europe will take place on a voluntary basis through matching the aspirations of asylum seekers with the acceptance of host countries

Further, in the context of relocating 20,000 refugees in Greece and in respect of human rights, we propose the distribution of the asylum seekers to the 325 municipalities of the country (150 persons or 30 families in each municipality). The government, local authorities and civil society organizations should cooperate to:

1. Ensure accommodation through subsidizing rents so that landlords offer their apartments to the refugees
2. Issue work permits on time
3. Create language and professional training courses
4. Provide some financial assistance for the first 6-12 months and,
5. Ensure that members of the local community are encouraged to become the «link» or the family counselor in order to help with social inclusion.

We believe that Europe needs secure entry points for refugees, as well as decent conditions which respect the specificities of populations. For at least 1 million people every year, a legal and safe relocation to Europe should be ensured through the resettlement centers in Turkey or in the “first asylum” countries. But now, we see that many population groups are marginalized and being discriminated by countries in the EU.

By implementing the above, Greece will contribute decisively to solving a problem that is not only its own but also European. It will strengthen its voice and its credibility. This effort is also a great opportunity for the country to remain in the European system, while also showing solidarity. Furthermore, it offers a great opportunity to turn this crisis into an opportunity.



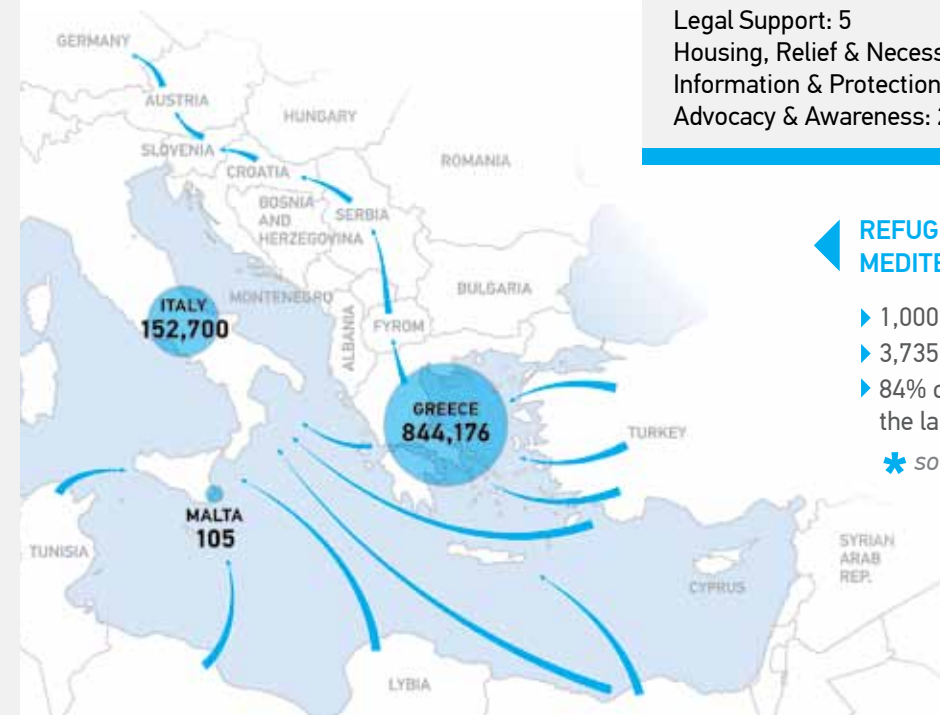
Actions for the refugee and migrant crisis

Considering the urgent needs of displaced people as they arrive in Greece, SolidarityNow supports the implementation of programs with donations exceeding 10 million euros. The projects and actions have been chosen to offer assistance to these populations through emergency services, holistic and long-term services.

The programs give priority to the immediate relief of refugees and migrant populations - access to medical care with mobile teams, speeding up the asylum process for unaccompanied children. Simultaneously, the programs support advocacy and awareness-raising activities in an effort to promote and support an effective response to needs, as they arise. And finally, they balance support between civil society organizations and state actors in order to strengthen the necessary infrastructure as a whole, so that it is able to respond to the humanitarian crisis in practice.

TABLE 2
SolidarityNow supports 25 programs in total to meet the needs of the people on the move.

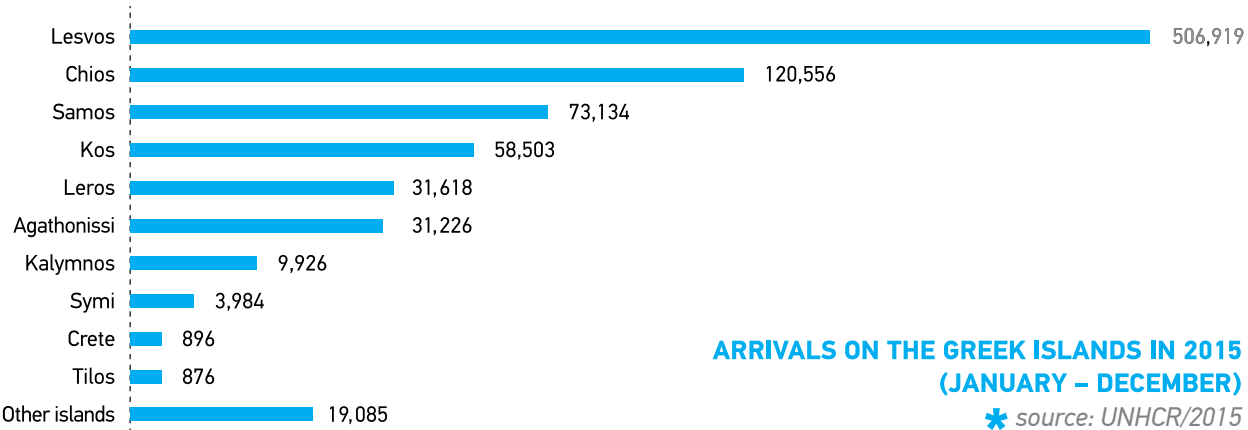
Health: 6
Legal Support: 5
Housing, Relief & Necessities: 10
Information & Protection: 2
Advocacy & Awareness: 2



REFUGEE/MIGRANT FLOWS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN DURING 2015

- ▶ 1,000,573 arrivals by sea
- ▶ 3,735 dead/missing
- ▶ 84% of arrivals originate from the 10 countries with the largest number of refugees worldwide

* source: UNHCR/2015



ARRIVALS ON THE GREEK ISLANDS IN 2015
(JANUARY – DECEMBER)
* source: UNHCR/2015



Health

6 programs | €1,549,821

Ensuring medical examinations and access to primary health care at the entry/ exit points and temporary accommodation sites for migrant populations but also for migrant communities embedded in society with emphasis on vulnerable groups and children.

Legal Aid

5 programs | €927,765

Given the need for humanitarian aid, SolidarityNow works steadily in order to ensure access to international protection for mobile populations arriving in Greece, through free legal assistance and representation and through strengthening the knowledge of local authorities and the relevant actors on the rights of refugees, representing people on the move in asylum committees and courts of first degree, and providing legal advice to detained asylum seekers and refugees.

Housing, Relief and Necessities

10 programs | €1,295,937

Proper and decent housing for all is a prerequisite to ensure human dignity for those affected by the refugee crisis. Through a "housing system" in the greater Athens area and islands, SolidarityNow and its partners provide shelter and necessities to unaccompanied minors, young asylum seekers, families and vulnerable women, while also encouraging the creation of new structures to address the problem of residence and social integration of populations.

Information and Protection

2 programs | €719,722

Providing necessary and timely information is crucial for the protection of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants arriving in the country. SolidarityNow supports the National Asylum Service, as well as projects that aim to fill the gap of information and protection in Lesvos and the urban environment. At the same time, it supports research that helps civil society to be prepared for the upcoming phases of the refugee crisis.

Advocacy & Awareness

2 programs | €168,875

Enabling wider partnerships, encouraging awareness and consensus. Strengthening advocacy and open discussions while promoting positive change at a national and international level. Creating alliances and networks to support good practice and new laws.

See the programs we support:

<http://www.solidaritynow.org/our-work-en/grants-en.html>

Housing program for vulnerable groups

Supporting solidarity in practice, SolidarityNow is developing a pilot program for hosting refugees and asylum seekers who are denied the fundamental human right to housing. With the support of the UNHCR, the “SolidarityNow! Housing scheme”, envisages the creation of 700 accommodation places for asylum seekers and refugees in households in Attica and Thessaloniki, while offering free access to psychosocial and legal support services.

The main purpose of the initiative is to provide relief to the people on the move through Greece and who are living under inhumane conditions, by offering accommodation to families, further strengthening the solidarity shown by the Greek society in this humanitarian crisis. Families and individuals will open up their houses for vulnerable people of the mass migration

phenomenon in Europe. Apart from covering immediate needs, the experience of coexisting, co-living and the opening of communication channels are the most beneficial aspects of the overall experience.

Building on the spontaneous expression of solidarity and the timeless ideals of Greek society for hosting, this initiative does not only focus on the urgent need for housing, but also aims to enhance solidarity and the cooperation between the Greek society and the people on the move. Serving as a good practice, actions under the project can contribute to the active limitation of the developing nationalist, racist and xenophobic political narrative. For this reason, SolidarityNow activates broad alliances, organizations and networks of people so as to develop a collective effort to offer hospitality positions, but also to strengthen a joint advocacy and the human rights front.



Other important activities

SolidarityNow supports, since its establishment until today, a variety of actions that cover a wide social spectrum, through an open and ongoing dialogue with civil society for the needs of the most vulnerable population groups in need of reinforcement, assistance and empowerment.

Whether through open, public calls for proposals, or proposals and ideas from other organizations’ and citizens’ initiatives -and their further assessment by a panel of independent evaluators and specialists- SolidarityNow has supported the implementation of 43 different activities and programs relating to: health, legal aid, human rights/ diversity, democracy/strengthening structures, employability, children/ youth - education, women’s empowerment, food security.

TABLE 3
SolidarityNow has supported the implementation of 43 programs in a wider social spectrum.

Health: 8
Legal Aid: 6
Human Rights/Diversity: 6
Children/Youth & Education: 6
Employability: 5
Democracy/Strengthening Structures: 4
Women’s Empowerment: 4
Food Security: 4

Health**8 programs | €1,227,003**

The urgent humanitarian crisis in the country led to the exclusion of population groups from the national health system. Ensuring access to primary health care, including mental health for the disadvantaged, irrespective of their ethnic origin, is the first step to create a safety net for those at risk for marginalization and social isolation.

Legal Aid**6 programs | €672,407**

Access to justice is a fundamental right, which is threatened by the austerity measures implemented to address the socio-economic crisis. Free, confidential and independent legal advice on issues related to consumer rights and legal representation enhance citizens' rights and help them realize when their own rights have been violated so that they appeal and reclaim them.

Human Rights/Diversity**6 programs | €191,171**

We believe that everyone should be protected and respected in order to achieve a decent level of social cohesion. The empowerment of those who are fighting for equal rights at all levels, is our main priority. Through information campaigns, the empowerment of special groups and support to those whose rights are violated, SolidarityNow intervenes to protect all those who defend human rights and fight for freedom of expression.

Democracy/Strengthening Structures (Capacity building)**4 programs | €438,605**

Building a fair, open society at this crucial time when civil society's space in the European Union, is a major concern for SolidarityNow. SolidarityNow supports projects that strengthen civil society to address the modern challenges and promote dialogue on democracy and political freedoms, including the main priorities of SolidarityNow.

Employability**5 programs | €568,584**

During the economic crisis, unemployment is constantly increasing, thereby affecting more young people and people facing multiple marginalizations. SolidarityNow supports projects that strengthen the professional skills of the unemployed and simultaneously creates the appropriate background for improved access and links with the labor market.

Children/Youth & Education**6 programs | €345,766**

For children who experience the consequences of the humanitarian crisis, education is an essential link with life. The continuation of the learning process during these difficult times provides a sense of normalcy that can help children overcome trauma and hardships. SolidarityNow supports actions to help children and young people build their lives again by expanding their knowledge, skills and education.

Women's Empowerment**4 programs | €130,414**

Responding to the need of women for psychological support, counseling and guidance, is a field in which SolidarityNow intervenes and develops actions with its partners.

Food Security**4 programs | €268,598**

Support vulnerable individuals and families to prevent malnutrition and to address hunger, through different actions tailored to the specific needs of each population group (food vouchers, Social Grocery, food distributions).

See the programs we support:

<http://www.solidaritynow.org/our-work-en/grants-en.html>



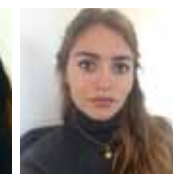
Our team



Aggeliki
Papadopoulou



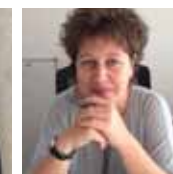
Alexandra
Zavvos



Arianna
Tsolakoglou



Dora
Komninou



Elli
Xenou



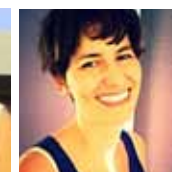
Epaminondas
Farmakis



Stamatis
Kythreotis



Eleni
Takou



Georgia
Papathanasiou



Ioakeim
Vravas



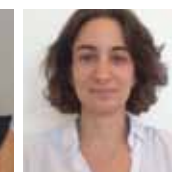
Ioanna
Fourkiotou



Iorgos
Karagiannis



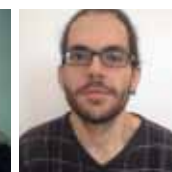
Sophia
Ioannou



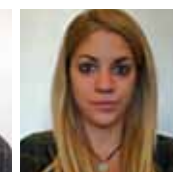
Valia
Andrakakou



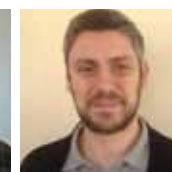
Vaso
Katsomaliari



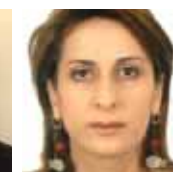
Panagiotis
Bourgazas



Georgia
Karkatzouli



Panagiotis
Manolakos



Rania
Papadopoulou

SolidarityNow's team consists of:

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Eleni Takou, Deputy Head,
Advocacy/Integration and Implementation
Alexandra Zavvos, Program Officer
Vaso Katsomaliari, Program Officer

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OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT

Dora Komninou, Head

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

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Georgia Karkatzouli, Reception
Panagiotis Manolakos, Reception

THESSALONIKI SOLIDARITY CENTER

Ioanna Fourkiotou, Program Coordinator
Aggeliki Papadopoulou, Program Assistant

AUDITING

With the initiative of SolidarityNow, independent auditing by KPMG is carried out. The results are published on our website.



When system fails, it is the people who must hold up OUR WORLD

For us every donation makes a difference!
Help us make a better world.

**Contact us and learn how you can
support our actions!**



CONTACT DETAILS

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