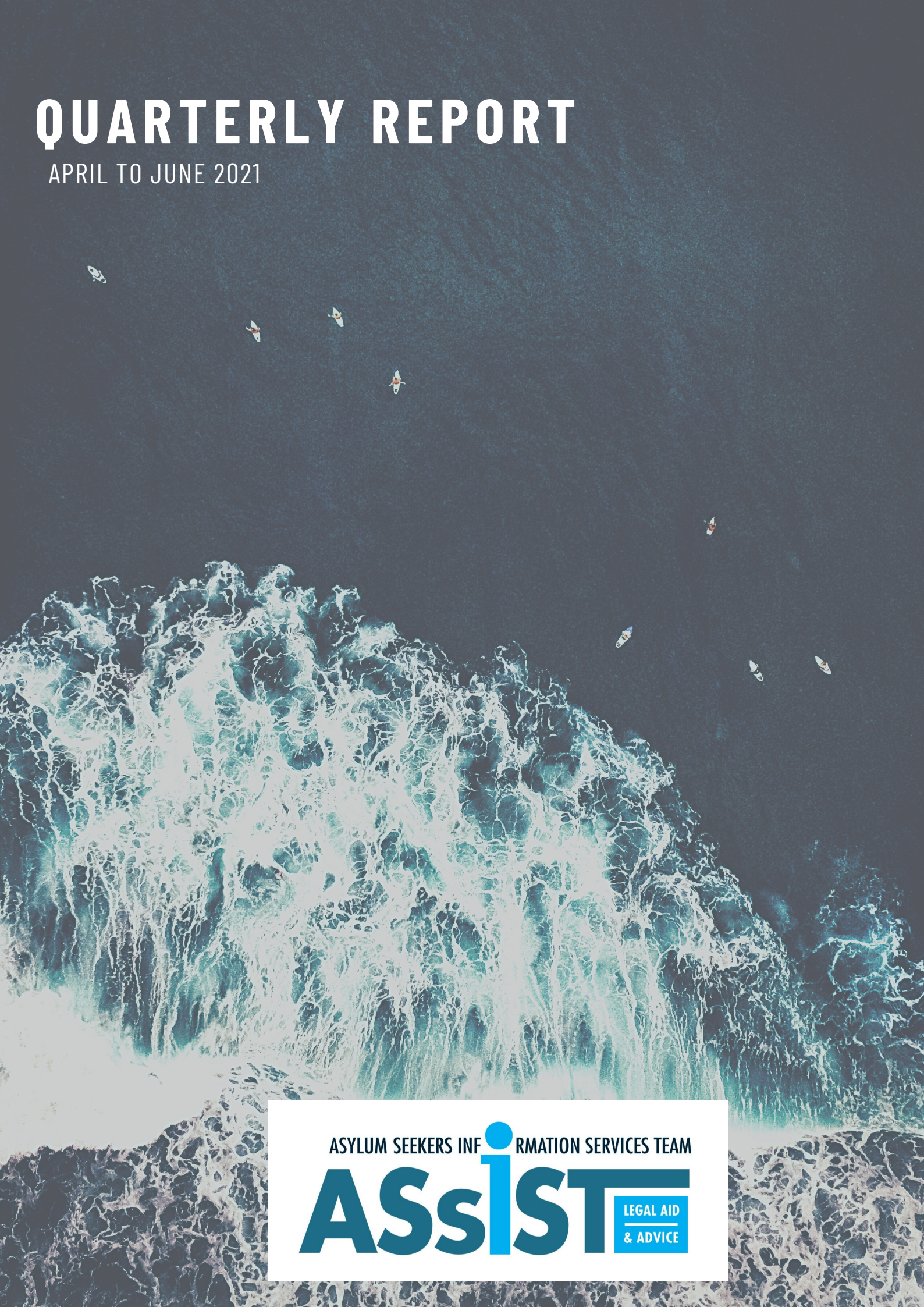


QUARTERLY REPORT

APRIL TO JUNE 2021



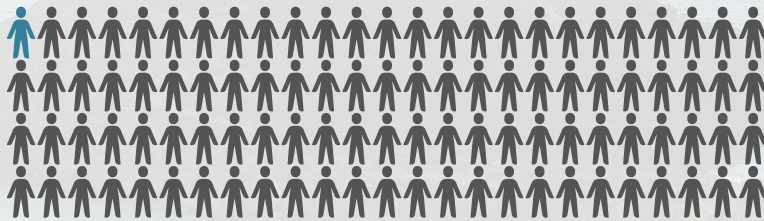
ASYLUM SEEKERS INFORMATION SERVICES TEAM

ASsIST LEGAL AID & ADVICE

A RAPIDLY CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

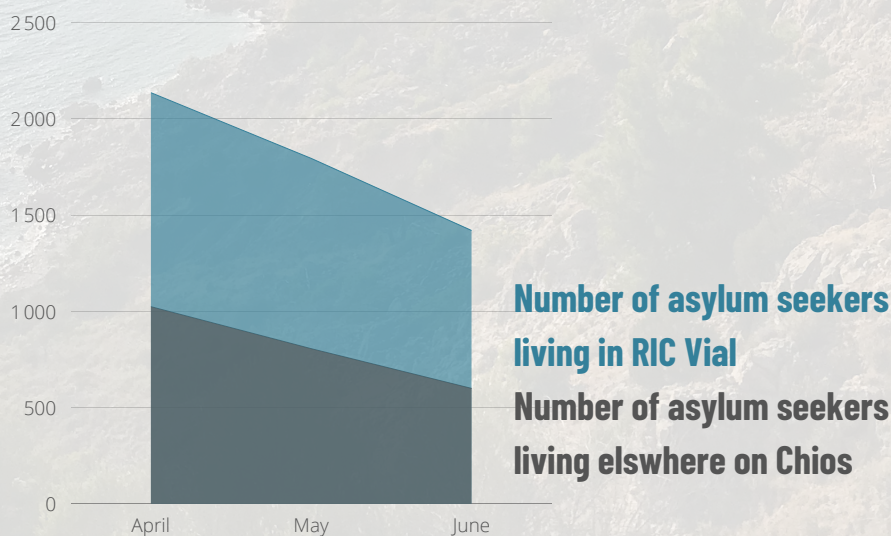
A.Ss.I.S.T. has been looking ahead: adapting and expanding our services, so that we can continue to provide stable and high-quality legal advice where it is needed.

From April to June, we have been operating in an environment of constant change and uncertainty. The legal and operational landscape has transformed during these months. The same is also true of the asylum seeker and beneficiaries of international protection (**BIP**) population on Chios (and the other Aegean Islands). This population are being forced to leave. As a result, many of our clients have re-located from Chios and the already under-serviced urban population in Athens is growing exponentially. We are adapting our services to support them, as well as the clients that remain.

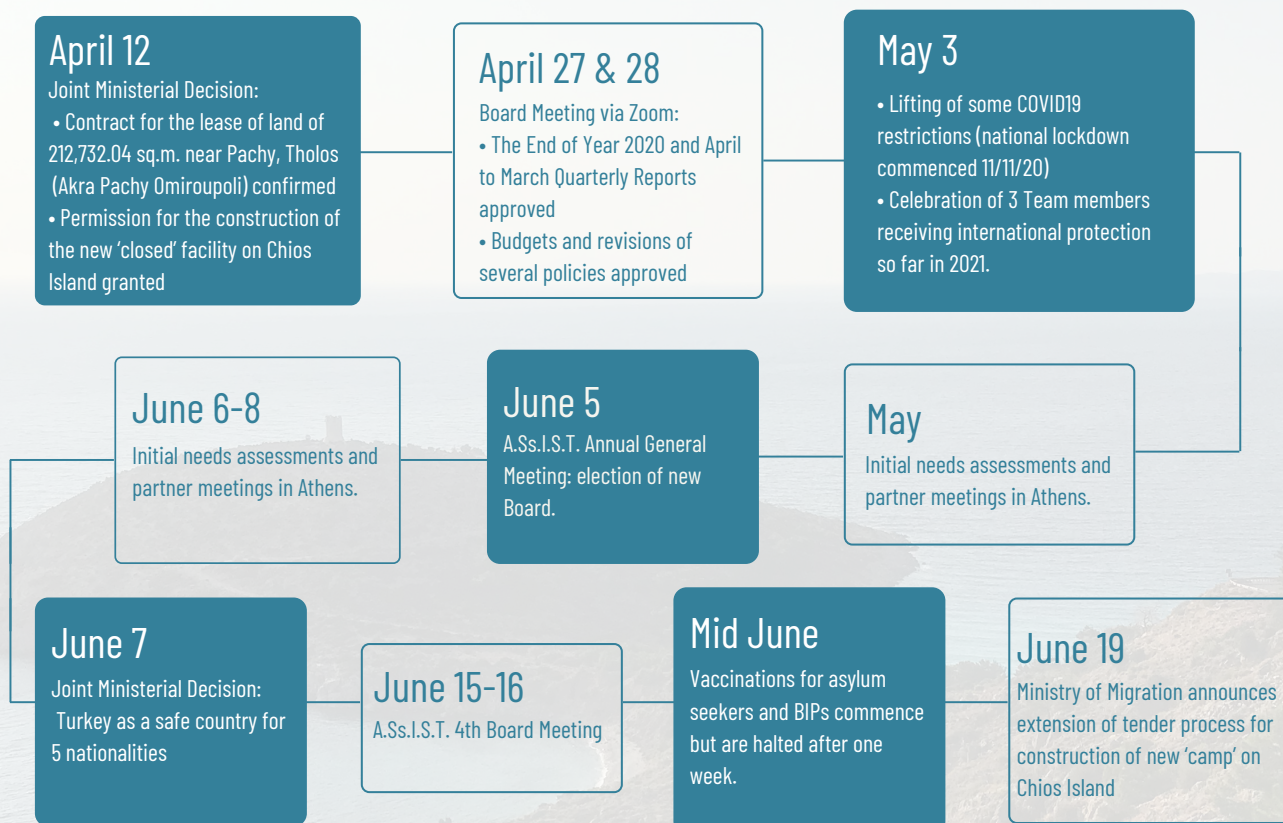


1 new arrival on Chios for every 99 transfers off of the island

At time of writing (in early July 2021), 21 new arrivals were reported. Nine people are said to be in quarantine in Lefkonkia. While there were none lost at sea, the whereabouts of the remaining 13 people is unknown.



On 12 April 2021, the Ministry of Migration posted Joint Ministerial Decision confirming a contract for a lease of land and granting permission for the construction of the new 'closed' facility at Akra Pachy on Chios Island. Yet, the tender period for the new camp/RIC on Chios was extended to 22 July 2021. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the proposed new Camp will not be completed before mid- to end-2022.



Turkey was designated as a "safe third country" for all asylum seekers from Syria, Afghanistan, Somalia, Pakistan and Bangladesh by the Minister of Migration and Asylum and the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs on 7 June 2021 (the June Decision). Asylum seekers from these nationalities represent more than 67% of asylum seekers in the country. It remains unclear how the conclusion that Turkey is safe was reached, and how the specified nationalities were selected. Since 7 June 2021, these nationalities must pass a different "admissibility" interview (solely about Turkey) in order to receive an "on the merits" interview about their country of origin. Those declared inadmissible will be sent back to Turkey, if and when the borders re-open and Turkey accepts them.

A new legislation package was published for public comment by the Ministry of Migration and Asylum in June. The proposed reforms would enable authorities to widen the application of deportation procedures (as well imposing new restrictions on voluntary departures and provisions on the validity of identification cards for asylum seekers). Their potential implications are being studied by our legal team.

The Ministry of Migration and Asylum also announced that cash assistance would cease for all asylum seekers not living in Greek government sponsored accommodation, from the end of this quarter (1 July).

OUR SERVICES

There has been a steady demand for A.Ss.I.S.T. services from April to June 2021. Eight out of the ten arrivals on Chios from Sierra Leone in mid-May sought our legal support for interview preparation. We also undertook a number of remote preparations for clients based on the mainland. The number of appeals submitted decreased while the number of interventions with different authorities increased both in number and time required to resolve diverse client problems. In particular, the procedure for affirming paternity/maternity of minors accompanied by single parents is being questioned by our AGLs as some local authorities are claiming a change in the law, are unable to provide the relevant legislative references and are causing undue delays for clients.

Office Manager's Contact Log

From April to June 2021

1915

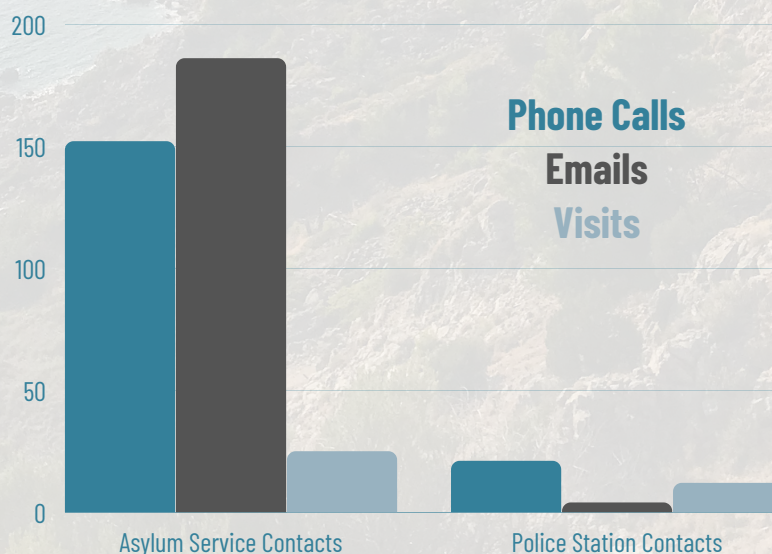
Text Messages Sent

13

Average Daily Contacts

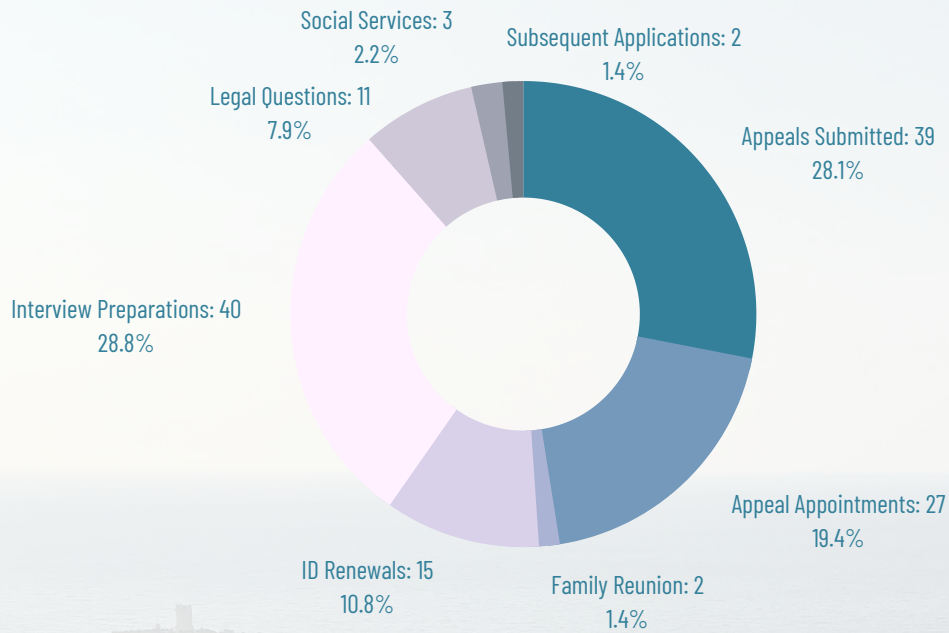
Associate Greek Lawyers' Contact Log

From April to June 2021



Consultation Breakdown

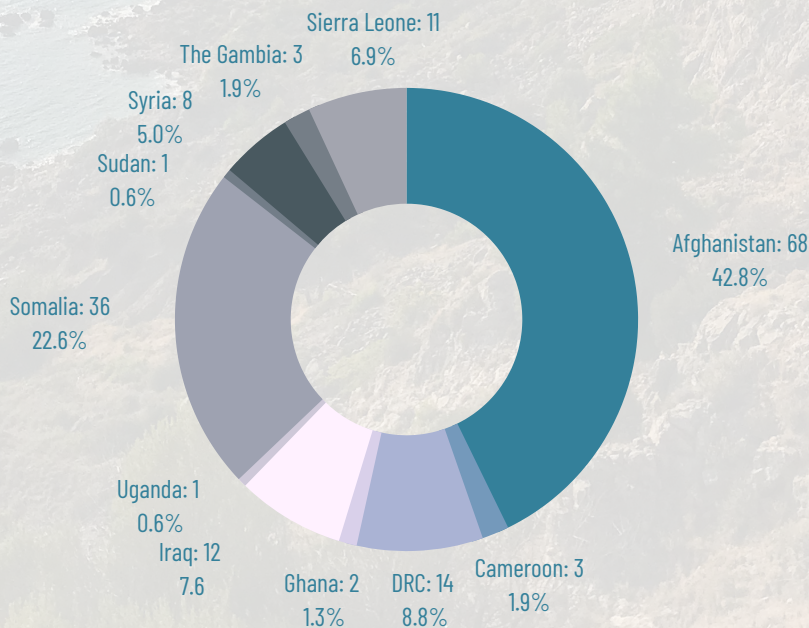
From 139 consultations



It was also agreed that A.Ss.I.S.T. would seek the services of a legal research assistant to document the anomalies and contradictions identified by AGLs in the many recent appeal decisions related to specific nationalities.

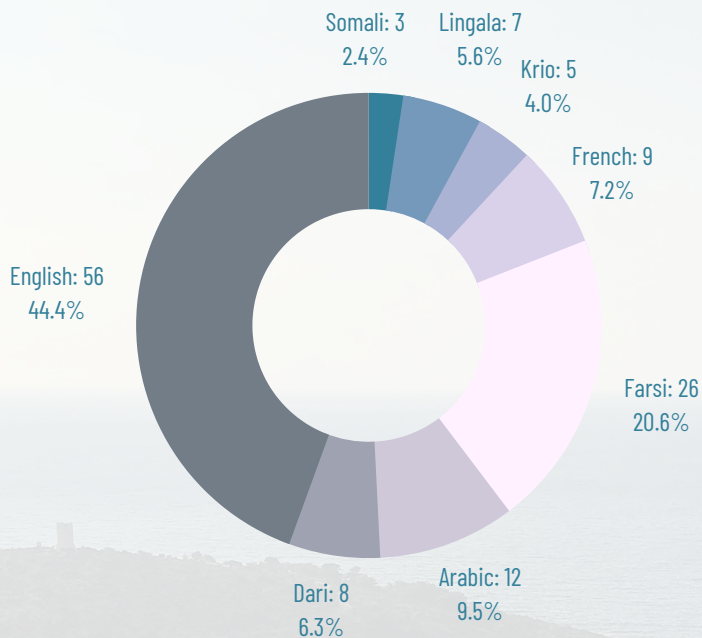
Nationality Breakdown

From a total of 159 clients across all age groups



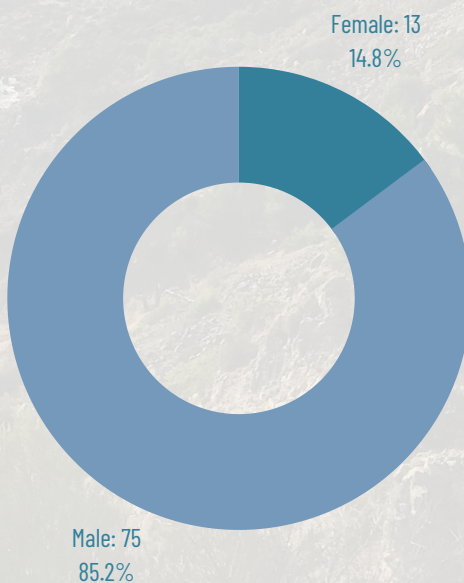
Language Breakdown

From a total of 126 clients that attended consultations



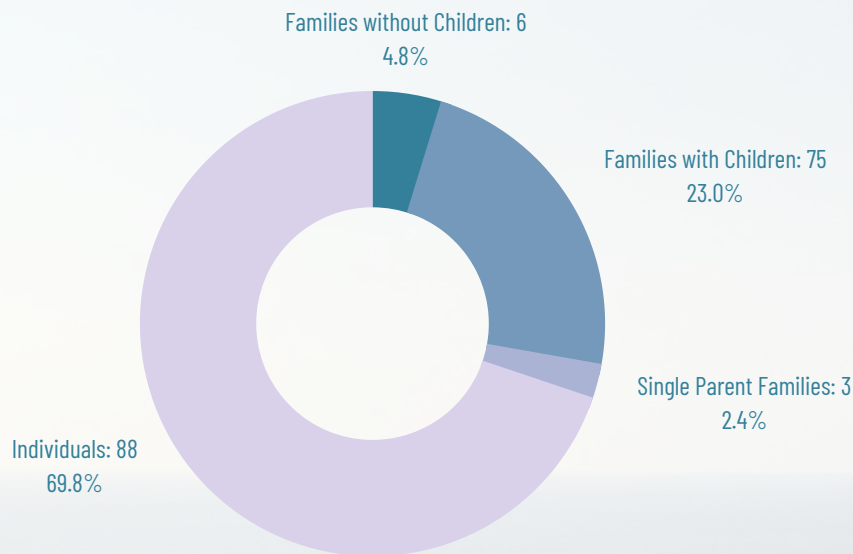
Gender Breakdown

From a total of 88 people attending as individuals



Family Composition Breakdown

From a total of 126 clients that attended consultations



The volunteers on the team made significant improvements to our client records capturing more data and digitalising records for ease of access and shared working space. They re-assessed asylum seekers and BIPS needs both in Chios and undertook assessments of the situation in Athens, workshopped the log frame and other matrixes for the forward organisational plan for July 2021-June 2022 and drafted several grant applications. The website content was updated; social media outlets were more active and on Refugee Day (20 June 2021), A.Ss.I.S.T. launched our Instagram account.

Our Team is multi-national and multi-cultural with a wide range of requisite skills well-honed to provide our services professionally. The Team is also diverse in many other ways: religious affiliations, language skills, sexual orientation and gender identity, and hence in comedy appreciation (sense of humour). The main attribute that all Team members share is commitment to fair process, mutual respect, support and honesty which underpins our client service and continuous learning: the end result is a strong cohesive Team spirit essential to a safe, supportive and healthy working environment for the delivery of essential services.

LOOKING FORWARDS

In response to the restrictions imposed by the pandemic and an ever-changing context in Chios and more widely in Greece, A.Ss.I.S.T. has been delivering services digitally and now proposes to deliver a range of services on the mainland. More people in the growing, under-serviced urban population will receive information, legal and social services directly.

This will optimize the application of our experience and expertise to serve the greatest number of people, while also diversifying the assistance offered to meet the varied and ever-changing needs of our existing client base. We currently have clients all over Greece (including in Crete, Athens and Nea Kavala). A.Ss.I.S.T. will launch a pilot programme in July with a limited number of partner organisations on the mainland, enabling them to refer their clients to A.Ss.I.S.T. for remote interview preparations and remote legal assistance with second instance appeals (appeals after negative decisions post-interview).

The Legal Representative will visit Istanbul in early July 2021 to reconnect with NGOs and others who may be willing to recommence services to deportees from Greece or may be interested in cooperating with A.Ss.I.S.T. to support them.

In the next quarter, we will act as a 'safety net' receiving referrals from NGOs in Athens and elsewhere of the 'overflow' clients to whom services cannot be offered in a timely manner and who might otherwise be refused service. By sharing partner premises to deliver tailored clinics and group information sessions, our services will add value to existing services and complement, without duplication, the work of partner organisations. Our main office will remain in Chios, so we can continue to serve here and meet the needs of new arrivals, whether few or many and keep overhead costs to a minimum. Details of our partners will be released as soon as Memoranda of Understanding are signed.

We look forward to your continued support.

Thank you for taking the time to read this Report.

If you would like to make a donation to ASsIST please visit
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or contact office@assistchios.info