



# ANNUAL REPORT 2025

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ASOCIACIÓN ESPAÑOLA HABIBI CENTER

# Welcome

## & Thank you for reading our Annual Report

Below you will find the index of our 2025 Annual Report. **Click to navigate.**



# The Team

## Meet the people who keep the school running

This year looked a little different for us. With Stephanie based in the US for most of the year completing her master's degree, Camille stepped in to lead the school, supported by Fanny through September. In June, Clara joined the team and has since become an essential part of our core operations.

Although our on-site team is small—usually just two to three long-term staff members—our wider network of volunteers, including remote supporters and visiting workshop facilitators, is wonderfully large and diverse. We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to every one of them for their commitment, generosity, and for being such an important part of our Habibi family.



Fanny



Kamila



Camille



Matthew



Anita



Peter



Clara



Julian



Pouya



Esma



Stephanie



Alfeus



Katrina



Krikor



Rakhie



Jake



Edward



Sarah



Simon



Steven



Nima



Oliver

# The Team

## What Habibi Center represents for them

### **Stephanie (Co-Founder)**

This year, I've taken a step back from on-site activities to focus on the behind-the-scenes work that keeps the Habibi Center thriving — budgeting, fundraising, volunteer recruitment, and supporting and supervising the incredible teams that make everything possible. I've also continued working one-on-one with students online, helping them prepare for B2 exams, build entrepreneurial and academic language skills, navigate research papers, and explore opportunities for further education or career development.

It's been a very different year for both me and the school. This year has been marked less by expansion and more by deepening our impact. I'm deeply grateful to Camille for taking on the significant responsibility of managing the center on-site, which has allowed me the space to focus on my own growth and complete my master's in International Educational Development.

### **Camille (Project Coordinator)**

2025 was a turning point. Stephanie was gone for a bit more than a year to the U.S.A., and I found myself running the school. Not totally on my own though. To get me through this year as smoothly as possible, I had Stef's constant support — a weekly meeting where she would listen, understand, advise, and renew her trust in me every single time. I'd like to thank Stef for everything she did to help me through the year.

A month after Stef left, Fanny came and stayed with us for a year. Having her by my side was very reassuring and gave me some stability. Fanny is very dedicated and meticulous, so I knew the job would be done. It brought some peace of mind. After nine months, Clara joined the adventure. Clara's creativity and confidence, again, helped me see that everything was going to be fine. The Habibi Center isn't only one person or one manager; it's a team of dedicated people who do their best every day to ensure the continuity and stability of the school and therefore the quality of the classes we offer.



# The Team

## What Habibi Center represents for them

### **Fanny (Long Term Volunteer)**

As 2025 is coming to an end, let's take a step back and reflect on this year. Over the months spent at Habibi Center, I learnt a lot teaching-wise, management-wise and above all, human-wise. I met many beautiful human beings: dedicated volunteers committed to giving their time to teach, as well as brave young refugees hungry for knowledge. All together, we met daily in this safe, supportive space that is Habibi Center, and I am amazed by the community that each of us fostered.

Around the month of March, we opened evening classes intended for all students, regardless of their English level, as well as teachers. Maths, science, IT, reading, games, art: these classes enabled teachers and students of all levels to get closer around common interests, strengthening this sense of community. Once more, I would like to thank Stephanie and Camille for enabling me to join the Habibi Family for a year. Although my civic service is now over, I will keep helping the best I can, as I deeply believe in Habibi Center's mission and want to keep acting for it. In 2026, may we empower even more young refugees through education and skills development!



### **Clara (Long Term Volunteer)**

When I first saw the long-term volunteer position on the Civic Service website, I just knew I was meant to become part of the Habibi Center family. I arrived in June this year and received a very warm welcome from the whole team. My induction went really smoothly thanks to Stef, Camille, and especially Fanny. She took every chance she had to share with me all the information and tips she had gathered over her year here, and she was a true pillar during the three months we worked together. When she left, I was more than ready to take over and eager to do my bit!

Working with Stef and Camille is truly fulfilling — they give me the space to learn and grow, to express myself and experiment, all while providing guidance and support. I hold their trust and encouragement very close to my heart. Besides the English classes, the Evening Classes, and the various class-related projects I take part in, I have also joined the Social Media team. I'm really grateful to work with Pouya — his creativity inspires me, and I'm thankful for how he always backs up my crazy ideas!

Thank you 2025, next!



# Intern Volunteers

## What they brought to Habibi



**Nima (Teacher)**

Being part of the team and getting to know a side of the world which I had never experienced was such a great privilege to me. I would say I am very grateful that I had this chance to change this world to a better world. Does not matter how tiny its change has been. It meant a lot to me. Once again, I thank all the people who were with me, trusted me, and supported me in my journey as an intern.



**Kamila (Accounting)**

I am currently interning at Habibi Center, and I am very happy to be part of such a supportive and diverse team. I help manage financial records, organize data, and assist in preparing accurate reports for the organization. This experience has taught me a lot about teamwork, responsibility, and the importance of transparency. I enjoy the work I do and feel proud to contribute to the organization's goals. Working in a multicultural environment has strengthened my communication skills and my ability to collaborate effectively. I am motivated to take on new challenges and learn more about financial and administrative processes. Each task I complete gives me more confidence and a deeper understanding of how NGOs operate. I am eager to continue growing with Habibi Center and to make a meaningful impact through my work.



**Pouya (Social Media and Website)**

Hi, I'm Pouya. It's hard to believe that I've now been an intern at the Habibi Center for three years. From the very beginning, Steph recognized my interest in IT and encouraged me to take on responsibilities that would help me grow. Managing the Center's social media and website has given me the chance to develop real professional skills and to support a place that means a lot to me. I feel incredibly lucky to continue contributing to the Habibi Center and deeply grateful for all the guidance and opportunities I've received along the way.

# University Internships

## University Students In Action

### **Malte (University of Hamburg)**

"My name is Malte, and I recently completed my studies in Vocational Education at the University of Hamburg, specializing in Woodworking and Social Studies. I joined the Habibi Center as part of my internship, looking for an opportunity that would challenge me to teach in a new cultural environment while supporting a meaningful cause. At the center, I taught English classes and an IT Workshop to help the students develop practical IT skills. What motivated me most in this internship was the chance to learn how to adapt teaching methods to the needs of diverse learners. I wanted to understand how to encourage students to take ownership of their learning and feel confident while doing so. Working at the Habibi Center helped me build flexibility, patience, and stronger communication skills—both in and beyond the classroom."

- **Malte**



### **Inga (University of Hamburg)**

"My name is Inga, and I recently graduated from the University of Hamburg, where I studied Vocational Education with a focus on Media Technology and English. I joined the Habibi Center to gain hands-on experience in teaching while contributing to a community that values education and personal development. During my internship, I was teaching English and science/IT classes and supporting students preparing for international English exams such as the Cambridge assessments or GED. I am sure that this experience has helped me strengthen my teaching skills while learning from students who show resilience, curiosity, and kindness every day."

- **Inga**



# University Internships

## University Students In Action

### **Annalisa (University of La Sapienza)**

"I'm Annalisa, a student of Development and International Cooperation Sciences at La Sapienza University in Rome. I found Habibi Center online and was immediately drawn to a small, driven organization that goes beyond institutional boundaries. This experience as a teacher and organizer has been the realization of much of the theory I studied: an opportunity to put knowledge into practice, get to know the reality of humanitarian help, meet people and situations that broadened my perspective and my future opportunities. I was so glad to take part in a community that reflects the values I truly believe in."

- **Annalisa**



### **Gamaliel (University of Lorraine)**

"I'm Gamaliel, during my internship at the Habibi Center in Greece, I had the opportunity to combine volunteering with teaching English while contributing to an educational project with a humanitarian purpose. Throughout this experience, I developed essential interpersonal and communication skills, particularly through daily interaction with people from diverse cultural backgrounds. Beyond teaching English, I also participated in the coordination of educational workshops, which strengthened my organizational and teamwork abilities. This internship was not only a valuable step in my professional development but also a deeply human experience. It allowed me to engage with meaningful community work, improve my leadership and cross-cultural understanding, and gain confidence in my ability to make a positive impact through education."

- **Gamaliel**



# About us

Habibi Center is a non-formal education project established in Greece in August 2016 and officially registered in the National Association Registry in Spain under the name Asociación Española Habibi Center (Nº 616525) in October 2018.

## Mission

Our mission is to support young refugees in Greece through holistic education, life-skills training, and emotional guidance.

We aim to equip them with the tools and values needed for a brighter future while nurturing positivity, hope, and resilience.

By building self-esteem, confidence, and independence, we empower youth to pursue a dignified life and contribute meaningfully to society.

## Vision

Education stands as the cornerstone for societal development, transformation, and progress. Ensuring equal access to resources is paramount in forging a just society.

Empowering the youth is pivotal in constructing a positive tomorrow.

Offering socio-emotional support to vulnerable young individuals is crucial for their seamless integration and active involvement in society.

## Values

**EDUCATION:** Habibi Center embodies a unique educational approach, embracing tolerance, diversity, creativity, and determination in its broadest sense.

**VOLUNTEER:** Volunteering serves as the driving force propelling Habibi Center forward. Without it, the accomplishments thus far would not have been possible.

**COMMUNITY:** Habibi Center is a collective endeavor led, supported, and organized by everyday individuals. United in purpose, we have the power to effect change in our surroundings.

# Project Objectives

## Learning English on an academic level

### Structured and Academically-Based Learning

Learning English on an academic level is essential for our students. It enables young refugees to communicate independently, navigate daily life with confidence, and reduce reliance on interpreters. While communication is the foundation of language, our program adopts a structured, academically oriented approach to help youth reach age-appropriate school levels as quickly as possible and access the same opportunities as their European peers.

Many of our students have experienced multiple displacements and years without formal schooling. As a result, a large number arrive with limited literacy, not only in English but sometimes even in their mother tongue. To address this, our classes are divided by proficiency level, and lessons are tailored to individual needs. The early stages of learning require intensive adaptation and support, making this foundational phase critical. Achieving basic literacy is a prerequisite for entering any formal or non-formal education program, yet the number of illiterate youth in Athens continues to rise.

By meeting students where they are and guiding them step by step, we equip them with the essential tools to rebuild their lives, regain a sense of possibility, and pursue a brighter future.



# Project Objectives

## Learning English on an academic level

### Curriculum and Exams

Once students acquire basic literacy skills, they follow a curriculum designed by the Habibi Center team based on more than nine years of direct experience. This curriculum blends established ESL resources, custom-developed materials, and the creativity of volunteers, ensuring a structured, level-appropriate progression for every learner. A defining feature of our program is preparation for official Cambridge English exams. Since July **2017**, a total of **147** students have taken these exams, achieving:

- **8 students at B2**
- **45 students at B1**
- **63 students at A2**
- **18 students at A1**

While **9** students did not pass, the preparation journey itself significantly strengthened their English proficiency, confidence, and personal development. We are currently awaiting the results for **4** students who sat for the **B1** exam and **1** student who took the **B2** exam in December.

These internationally recognized certifications have supported students' integration into Greek society, provided opportunities to interact with local youth during exam sessions, and allowed them to demonstrate their abilities objectively, regardless of legal status. Many students have used their certificates to strengthen asylum applications, access better employment opportunities, or pursue further studies at colleges and universities requiring higher English proficiency.

Through structured learning and internationally recognized assessments, we open pathways to education, employment, and long-term stability.



# Project Objectives

## Youth Empowerment

### Empower to Grow

While many students initially join to learn English, the heart of our mission is youth empowerment. We aim to support young refugees in becoming confident, independent, and self-reliant individuals ready to actively participate in society. Our program builds both social and professional skills, helping students identify their strengths, confront fears, and cultivate self-esteem. Key components include:

- Values-based sessions that promote resilience and positive decision-making
- Developing social-emotional skills
- Self-discovery of interests, talents, and passions
- Basic computer literacy
- Creating professional CVs
- Coaching for job applications and interviews
- Exploring a variety of career paths
- Skills development for the workforce

These tools are essential for transitioning toward independence and long-term stability.

### A Safe Space

Originally, the Habibi Center was an apartment, but it has since been adapted to become a set of six classrooms functioning as a community center. The educational supplies—simple yet functional—include tables, whiteboards, and a small library. The walls are adorned with motivational quotes, project displays, past art pieces, and a “hall of fame” featuring photos of learners and volunteers. This eclectic, colorful decor creates a relaxed, comfortable atmosphere while preserving the warmth and familiarity of a home.

The Habibi Center operates in the heart of Athens and has remained active since **2017**. Classes run weekdays from **3:30–6:30 p.m.**, allowing students to attend Greek school in the mornings or evenings while participating in our program in the afternoons. The Center serves as a safe space where young people can learn, connect, and envision a hopeful future built on education and community.



# Project Objectives

## Resolutions and Progress

### A Strong Start To 2025

Last year's resolutions (enhancing digital learning, strengthening the intern program, and broadening student support) served as a powerful catalyst for growth. At the start of **2025**, we aimed to continue the progress made in 2024 while adopting new priorities that further enhance the student experience and overall program quality.

#### 1. Strengthen Core 2024 Initiatives

We remain committed to:

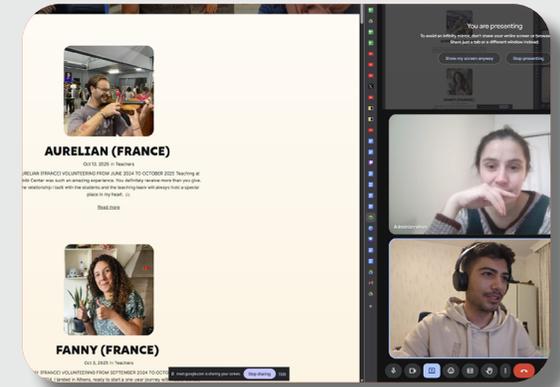
- Expanding Digital Learning opportunities
- Enhancing the Intern Program with more structured training and mentorship
- Broadening Career and Academic Support for both current and former students
- Continuing to Promote Reading through creative literacy initiatives

#### 2. Improve Curriculum and Programs

This year, we expanded our programming by introducing evening classes that offer STEM lessons, reading comprehension tutoring, team-building activities, social-emotional learning, social-skills games, and Zentangle sessions designed to help students unwind and manage anxiety. These additions provide a more holistic learning experience and support both academic growth and emotional wellbeing.

#### 3. Invest in Team Professional Development

To enhance the quality of our programs, we introduced new training modules and encouraged our volunteers to participate in external seminars and workshops, offering financial support when needed. One of these trainings includes the iLearn (Innovative Learning Environment for Refugee Adult Language Needs) Program by Drop In The Ocean. Our commitment to ongoing professional development has strengthened teaching quality, improved consistency, and helped ensure that our team is equipped with the tools and knowledge required to best support our students.



A flyer for the 'iLearn' program. At the top left is the 'iLearn' logo with the tagline 'INNOVATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR REFUGEE ADULT LANGUAGE NEEDS'. To the right is a QR code. Below the logo, it says 'WE HAVE TEAMED UP' and lists three partners: 'Dråpen i Havet', 'ΕΛΙΞ' (with the tagline 'is life experience'), and 'UNIVERSITAS BEGEMNIS'. Below this, it says 'THE TRAINING INCLUDES FOUR CORE MODULES' and lists: 'Culture &amp; Gender', 'Integration &amp; Empowerment', 'Teachers, Curricula &amp; Pedagogy', and 'Connection to Formal Education'. At the bottom, it says 'WHAT YOU WILL GAIN' and lists four bullet points: 'Learn from a multidisciplinary team with expertise in working with displaced populations in Greece', 'Join a European network of vibrant educators across Greece and Norway in Exchanging knowledge, experiences, and best practices in adult education', 'Access ready-to-use materials and practical tools to enhance your teaching, classroom environment, and student experiences', and 'Receive a certificate of participation upon completion'.

# Programs

## Career Day

### Expanding Horizons for Our Students

Career Day aims to help students explore future career possibilities by introducing them to a diverse range of industries and professions. This year, we hosted 18 guest speakers from diverse industries to share their expertise and inspire our students:

- Ballet Teacher & IT Procurement Administrator
- GIS Analyst
- Fashion Designer
- Banking
- Real Estate Agent
- Switchboard Operator / Customer Service
- English Teacher
- Hospitality Industry
- Humanitarian Industry
- Comedian & Artistic Director
- Attorney
- Energy Data Analyst
- Satellite Engineer
- Journalist
- Geologist & Artist
- Erasmus International Projects
- Carpentry
- International Advertisement

The impact of Career Day has been profound. Here is some of the feedback from our students: "It's good to hear people's stories and dreams." "It opens a door and see what there is out there." "I need more education to pursue any career."

Some students said that they didn't realize how many jobs there were in a bank. Marketing, legal, not just working directly with money. One student said that although a person thinks they know what they want to do, when they go to university they sometimes discover something else they prefer. Even if it doesn't pay well. Another student commented that they liked seeing how the career path is not necessarily a straight path. People can change their mind or take a break from study. It doesn't have to be a big rush.

By connecting students with real-world professionals, Career Day broadens their horizons, fuels their ambitions, and equips them to make confident, informed decisions about their futures.



# Programs

## GED

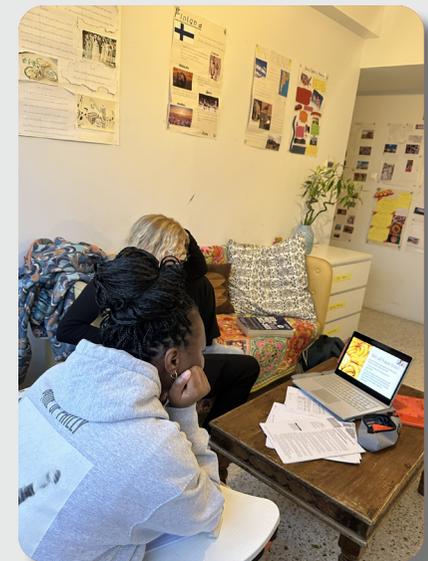
### Unlocking Opportunities

Beyond our core programs, the Habibi Center provides GED (General Educational Development) preparation classes for students who cannot complete the Greek school pathway or who aspire to attend American universities. The four GED exams—Math, Science, Social Studies, and Reasoning Through Language Arts (RLA)—are rigorous, but with personalized lessons for each subject, students gain the tools they need to succeed. Earning a GED opens doors to new educational pathways and stronger career opportunities.

**This year, we are proud to be supporting one student as she prepares for her Mathematics, RLA, and Social Studies exams.**

“I first met Andrely when she was just 16, attending our English classes. After successfully completing her Cambridge B1 exam, she stopped coming to classes and began working. Five years later, our paths crossed again. This time, she reached out with a new goal: earning her GED, starting with support in Mathematics. We coordinated for her to begin working with Matthew, who guided her through months of lessons and practice. As she neared readiness for the Math exam, we started her preparation for the RLA. For a little over a month, I worked side by side with her on an intensive study schedule. Her commitment never wavered. Today, Andrely is fully prepared to take her Maths and RLA exams and is working on Social Studies with Teacher Inga. We are all working hard to get her ready, but she is working the hardest, and her hard work truly shows that there is no stopping her. Whether it’s the GED or future goals like studying International Relations in university, there is no stopping her. I am just glad to be able to support her in her journey to greatness.”- **Stephanie**

Andrely’s journey reflects exactly why the Habibi Center exists: to walk alongside our students not just for a season, but whenever they return—ready to take the next step toward their future.



# Programs

## The Literacy Program

### Focus on Literacy

It is hard to imagine being a refugee teenager—arriving in a foreign country where you don't speak the language and are expected to integrate, attend school, and study subjects like Biology, Politics, and Philosophy, all in a language you can barely use to say hello. The challenge is even greater for those who are illiterate. Many of our students have never attended school in their home countries, and they find themselves navigating these same expectations without the ability to read or write in any language.

For illiterate refugees, the prospects are often bleak. Many are pushed into hard labor jobs, often under illegal conditions and for wages far below the minimum. The inability to read a label, let alone a job contract, makes exploitation and being cheated even more likely. Illiteracy doesn't just limit job opportunities; it deeply affects self-confidence and independence. Someone who cannot read street signs or metro station names will lack the confidence to navigate a city alone, leaving them completely dependent on others. This is why teaching literacy is a cornerstone of what we do at the Habibi Center.

In our literacy classes, students start from the very basics: learning to write the alphabet, combine letters into words, and read simple sentences. It's a joy to witness their determination as they sound out words like 'birthday,' and the moment they succeed, their eyes light up with pride and excitement. Beyond reading and writing, we focus on essential communication skills, such as speaking to a doctor or asking for help in a store. From day one, students acquire practical language abilities to navigate daily life, as English often becomes their primary means of communication.

At the Habibi Center, literacy is more than just learning to read. It's about restoring independence, building confidence, and opening doors to a brighter future.

**This year, 35 students took part in Habibi Center's literacy courses.**



# Programs

## Penpal Program

### A Year of Global Connections and Learning

Our collaboration with Mercy High School in Burlingame, California, had been so successful that we decided to repeat the program with them this year. When classes resumed in September, we got back in touch with them to launch our third edition of the penpal program together, starting in October and running for eight consecutive weeks. Each week, our 10 students introduced a different theme (school, hobbies, important people, future dream job, university plans, etc.) and the 15 students at MHSB responded. As there were more students at MHSB, we paired our most advanced English students with a pair of theirs.

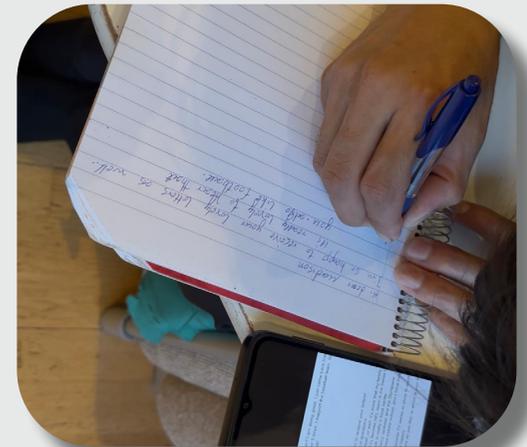
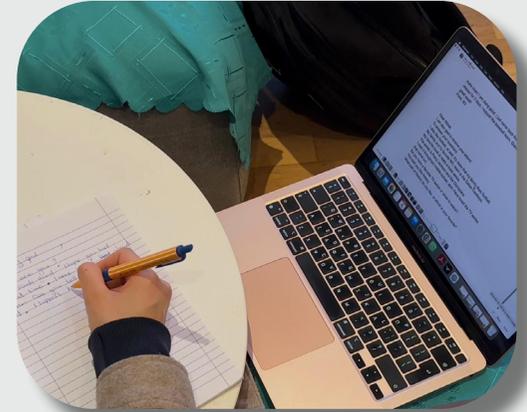
This exchange, which became routine for our students, was very popular with them. It allowed them to discover cultural aspects specific to the United States and to take a more introspective look at themselves, how they want to present themselves to strangers and what they want to highlight about their personality, as well as their future plans. It also greatly helped our students preparing for Cambridge exams to practice their writing skills, and we saw real progress in their letters throughout the program.

"I think having a pen pal is very important for students, because it helps us communicate with someone from another country in English. It improves our writing skills, more confidence, and lets us learn about different goals and different hobbies. Talking with my pen pal has helped me a lot practise and feel more comfortable writing English." - **Yasin**

### Buddies Without Borders

Buddies Without Borders is a program run in partnership with a student club at Design Tech High School in California, USA. It is designed to foster meaningful cross-cultural friendships through weekly conversations between students from diverse backgrounds. Each pairing connects a Habibi Center student with a peer from another culture, creating a space to share experiences, broaden perspectives, and build confidence in communication. Through these weekly calls, our students strengthen their speaking skills with native speakers while forming genuine connections that extend far beyond the classroom.

"Is nice to speak with Adam. Is so nice to speak with other people in other countries." - **Ali**



# Programs

## Spelling Challenge

### Raising Confidence

Every last Friday of the month, all classes at the Habibi Center come together for an exciting spelling challenge. We ensure students of all levels participate because we believe in the power of connection and peer learning. By hosting this recurring event, we aim to improve students' spelling skills while boosting their motivation, focus, and confidence during regular classes.

The challenge is tailored to each student's level. Students spell a word suited to their ability, and if they get it right, they advance to a more challenging word in the next round. To celebrate the diversity of talent, we select a winner from each class, ensuring that every student has the chance to shine, regardless of their English proficiency.

Teachers also join in, making the event a true community celebration and a highlight of the Habibi Center experience.

"A Spelling Bee is a simple and fun contest in many schools. In this contest, a student hears a word and then tries to spell it. If the spelling is correct, the student stays in the game. If it is wrong, the student is out. I think the Spelling Bee is very helpful. It helps me learn new words and remember them better. It also helps me learn a language faster because I practice reading and saying the words many times. For me, the Spelling Bee is fun and interesting. I enjoy joining it, and I feel it is a great way to improve my language skills." - **Iman**



# Programs

## Evening Classes

### Support

#### Evening Programs: Learning, Connection, and Community

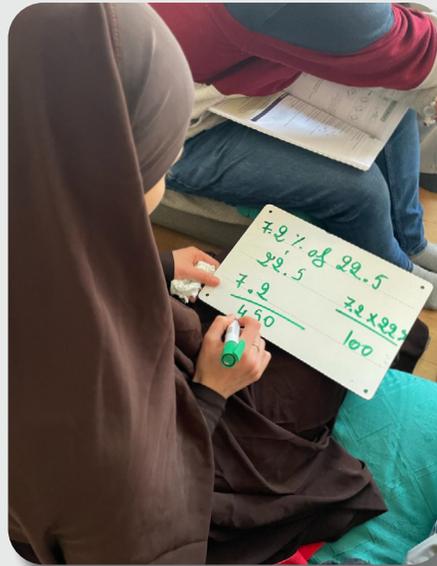
This year, we launched a brand-new series of evening programs at the Habibi Center, held every Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday from 6:30–7:30 pm. These sessions go beyond traditional classroom learning—they create space to learn, connect, unwind, and grow together.

#### Tuesdays — STEM Mini-Sessions

Students dive into science, technology, and math through hands-on experiments, creative challenges, and real-world problem-solving.

#### Wednesdays — Reading Lab

Students select a book and partner with teachers to explore stories, build vocabulary, and strengthen reading comprehension in a supportive, one-on-one environment.



# Programs

## Evening Classes

### Support

#### Thursdays — Community-Building Activities

Through group games and dynamic activities, students practice teamwork, develop social and leadership skills, and strengthen our sense of community and belonging.

#### Fridays — Art & Zentangle

Using calming zentangle techniques, Fridays offer a creative space for students—and teachers—to unwind, de-stress, and express themselves at the end of a long week.

These evenings are more than scheduled lessons; they're moments where students and educators meet as a community. A space where learning meets laughter, where relationships deepen, and where growth truly happens together.



# Programs

## The University Preparation Course

### Preparing Habibi Students for the next step

We launched this program after a student approached us for help, struggling to keep up with the rigor and academic expectations of university-level studies. In response, we created the University Preparation Program to bridge this gap and ensure that no student faces higher education alone.

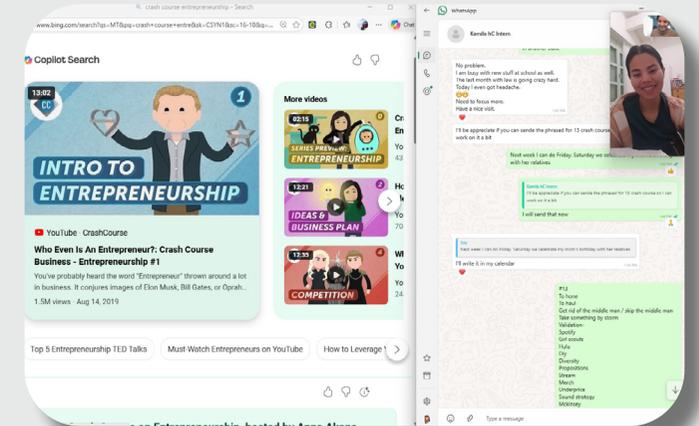
Unlike our other classes, this course is fully personalized and tailored to each learner's academic needs. Through weekly sessions, students strengthen their skills in text comprehension, grammar, presentation delivery, research, and academic writing. The goal is to equip students with the linguistic competence, study strategies, and confidence necessary to succeed in higher education.

We also support learners who must meet specific language or academic qualifications to gain admission to university programs, including preparation for standardized English exams.

This year, we provided online academic support to four students pursuing higher education in Psychology, International Education, Business and Entrepreneurship, and B2 English exam preparation for university entrance requirements.

"One of my favorite days of the week is when I get to have a call with Kamila. We are going through the Crash Course videos on Entrepreneurship, and we review the terms and ideas from each one. We talk about things like a business strategy and business models, elevator pitches, and how words and colors are carefully chosen in marketing because they evoke different feelings. We both learn a lot. It is always a pleasure to speak with someone so bright, so inquisitive, and so diligent in her studies. I finish each call feeling excited for her future. Whatever business she starts, it's going to be a good one."

- **Stephanie**



# Programs

## Teacher Training and Development Program

### Equipping Teachers

In **2023**, after a student requested to be trained as a teacher, the Habibi Center launched the “Teacher Training and Development Program,” a special project designed for volunteers without a teaching background and for advanced students who are interested in becoming a teacher at the Habibi Center. The aim of the program is to equip future teachers with the essential skills and knowledge needed for an effective teaching journey.

The content of the program is based on the book ‘Learning Teaching’ from Jim Scrivener and content from the official **ESL** course. Since some of the content from this literature does not align with the context of teaching at the Habibi Center, we decided to combine it with practical knowledge from our collective teaching experience. The course is divided into **8** units, including classroom management, lesson planning, productive and receptive skills, teaching grammar and classroom activities, and includes class observation time and journaling. The participants are also encouraged to incorporate the new information and tips in their own classes and discuss their progress in the following sessions.

This year, **10** volunteers took part in this course. Here is a snip bit of their experiences in this program:

“I really recommend it to volunteers. I thought Sarah put a lot of effort into it. Each time she taught us that alone was a demonstration. It really changed the way we taught, all of us, it affected how we taught.”

- **John**

“I thought it was really helpful. Sarah said that I was the one that improved the most in the course. I didn’t have any experience when I started so this was great to hear. It was nice and the format was very engaging. One of the most helpful parts was the video she showed in class.” - **Esma**

We would like to thank **Sarah** for the time and dedication she has given to developing this course and for training our volunteers over the past three years. This was her final year leading the program, but we are committed to continuing it next year next year with a new teacher trainer.



### Teachers Training



# Workshops

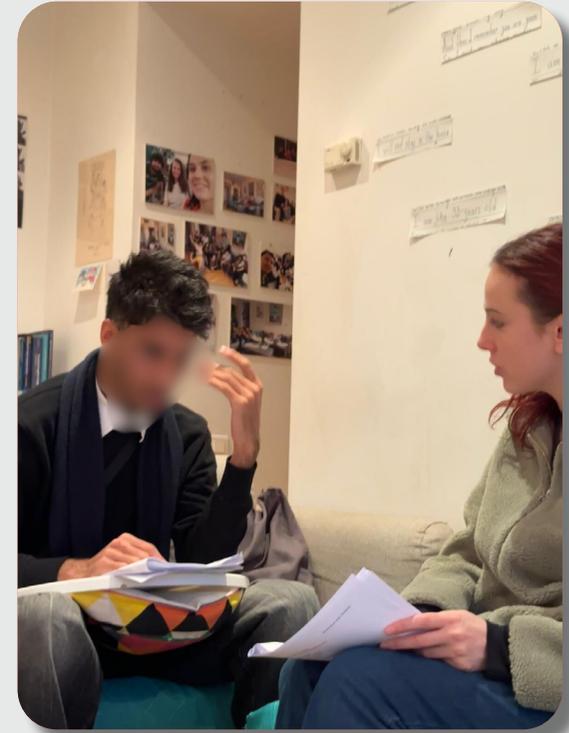
## Adulting

### Mastering Life Skills

Year after year, turning **18** has become an increasingly daunting challenge for unaccompanied minors. Changes in Greek laws have heightened anxiety and uncertainty among students, leaving many unsure about their future after aging out of shelters. In response, the Habibi Center launched the Adulting Workshop in **2024**, a vital program designed to support young refugees as they transition into independent adulthood.

Over four days, this workshop equips participants with essential life skills to foster self-reliance and success. It tackles critical topics such as navigating legal and financial responsibilities, managing time effectively, and accessing educational opportunities for integration. Through hands-on sessions, participants learn to budget, plan meals, cook, and maintain hygiene in their daily routines. The workshop also covers health practices, cleaning techniques, and laundry management—skills that prepare them for the realities of living independently.

**This year, 4 students participated in Adulting workshops.**



# Workshops

## Editors

### Celebrating Creativity and Collaboration

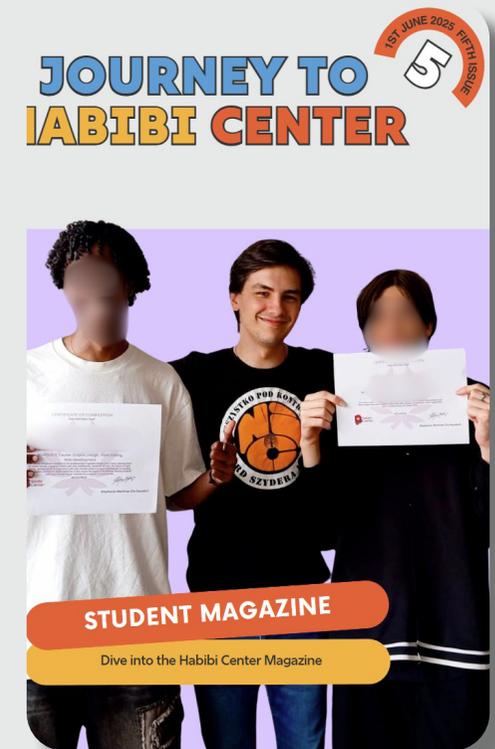
The **Editors Workshop at Habibi Center** is a initiative that nurtures creativity, collaboration, and personal expression. Designed to equip students with writing, editing, and publishing skills, the workshop provides a platform for participants to share their stories, perspectives, and artistic talents. This year, five students proudly published the **fifth issue of our magazine, *Journey to Habibi Center***—a testament to the remarkable voices and talents within our community.

Through this workshop, students not only strengthen essential communication and teamwork skills but also build confidence in expressing themselves. Participants learned to craft compelling narratives, refine their ideas, and collaborate to bring their shared vision to life.

The magazine is more than a collection of stories and artwork—it is a celebration of our students' resilience, creativity, and vibrant community spirit. The Editors Workshop reflects **Habibi Center's commitment to empowering young refugees** by providing meaningful opportunities to learn, connect, and share their journeys with the world.

"I really loved the magazine that we did all together. The most amazing part for me was learning what people from different countries trust and believe in. It was so interesting and beautiful. Your ideas made the magazine even better. I enjoyed working on it with you!" - **Iman**

"Participating in the editors workshop was really good. I learned how to work with Photoshop and tested my skills. It also helped me to be part of a community of very kind and friendly people again! As for the magazine, it was my first time doing something like this and I think we did a great job in conveying the sense of what Habibi Center has done or is going to do. Overall, I was happy to be a part of everything Habibi Center has done or is going to do. These courses and activities were great and very useful for me! Thank you." - **Salim**



[Click here to check out our latest magazine](#)

# Workshops

## Employability

### Building Futures

Many Habibi Center students face the need to secure employment shortly after turning 18 and transitioning into independent living. The workshop is designed to meet this need by:

- **Equipping participants with practical employability skills**
- **Helping them understand the Greek job market and application requirements**
- **Building confidence in presenting themselves professionally**
- **Supporting them in identifying realistic career goals and planning their next steps**

A key element of the workshop's success is the personalised support provided to each participant. Volunteers work with students on a one-to-one basis, creating a safe and supportive space for them to reflect on their strengths, interests, and future aspirations. These individual conversations are essential, as many students are still exploring their identity, goals, and professional direction. By taking the time to understand each young person's story, background, and ambitions, volunteers can guide them toward realistic first job opportunities that align with their long-term plans. This tailored approach ensures that students are not only prepared to apply for jobs, but are encouraged to take their first step into employment with purpose and a clearer sense of direction.

Delivered over four days (12 hours total), the workshop combines guided learning, individual coaching, and hands-on practice to ensure that students leave with fully developed application tools and a clearer understanding of their professional pathways. The programme remains accessible after completion, allowing students to return for CV updates, job search support, or interview preparation as new opportunities arise.

**This year, 8 students participated in this workshop or received assistance with their CVs, LinkedIn, and job search.**



# Workshops

## Interpreters

### Turning Skills into Careers

Our recent Interpreters' Workshop was a great success, equipping students with essential interpretation skills and opening doors to future career opportunities. This year, four students took on the challenge and completed the workshop, gaining valuable insight into the professional world of interpreting.

We were fortunate to welcome guest speakers who joined both online and in-person to share their experiences as interpreters in different contexts. Students learned directly from seasoned professionals, including court interpreters, asylum interview specialists, medical interpreters, and experts in psychological and shelter-based interpretation.

The workshop offered hands-on, practical training, enabling students with strong language abilities to develop the expertise and confidence needed to pursue interpreting as a profession.

"This four-week workshop focused on interpreting and marked my first experience teaching this subject. We covered the basics for interpreters and worked specifically on interpreting in asylum, medical, and psychological contexts.

I really enjoyed teaching the workshop, although I found it challenging to adapt such complex topics and specialized vocabulary to a B1 level. Despite these challenges, it was a very rewarding experience. It was a valuable and enriching experience."

- **Camille, Workshop Trainer**

"The interpreters workshop was a useful and enjoyable learning experience. It helped me a lot to understand the basic skills need for interpreting, also give me the chance to practice these skills in a supportive environment. The workshop was well-organized, and the activities were interesting. And also it helped me to learn more English. Thank you so much for the support" - **Yasin**



# Workshops

## IT

### Mastering Technology, Unlocking Endless Learning Opportunities

Digital skills are no longer optional—they are essential for accessing decent-paying jobs and even for basic online job applications. Beyond workforce integration, these skills empower students to become independent learners, giving them control over their education and future. At the Habibi Center, we offer three levels of IT training:

**Level I:** Students build foundational skills like sending emails, creating documents, and navigating the web.

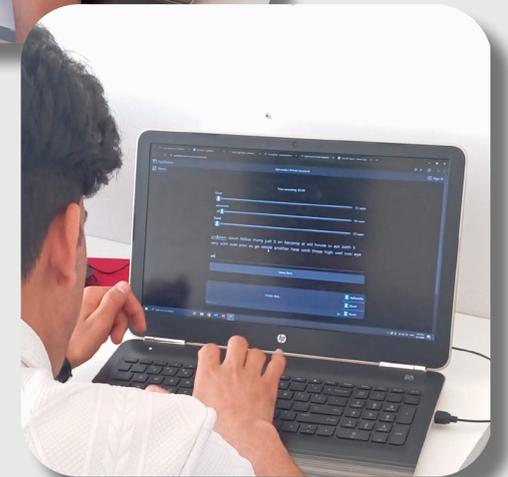
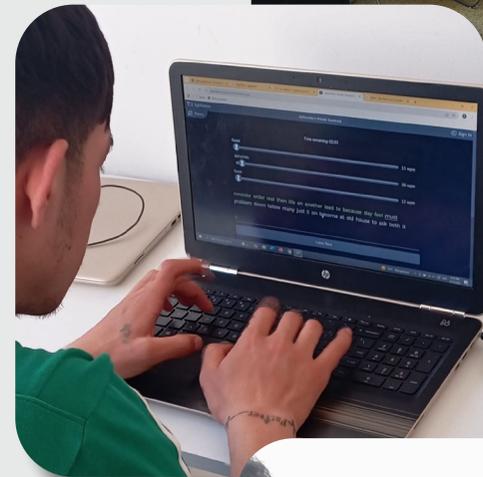
**Level II:** Students gain confidence by solving problems independently through instructional videos and learn to create a website. This level blends guided learning with self-directed tasks, with teachers available for support.

**Level III:** Students select official online courses tailored to their interests and goals, using platforms like Coursera, FutureLearn, and UdeMy. Topics range from IT systems, advanced coding, and social media marketing to business management and accounting. This level emphasizes independent learning and applying skills from earlier levels.

Our IT program remains central to Habibi Center’s mission: empowering students to harness the digital world and take charge of their futures.

This year, Nima and Christian worked to strengthen the curriculum, enhancing the presentations for each section and refining the exercises students complete throughout the program.

**This year, 13 students participated in IT workshops.**



# Special Days at Habibi Center

## From Refugee to Role Model: A Journey of Resilience

### Learning and Celebrating Simultaneously

The Habibi Center had the honor of welcoming Mahdia, an Afghan refugee and Taekwondo athlete from the Refugee Olympic Team. She shared her moving journey — from fleeing her home country to now studying at university in Rome and representing refugees worldwide through sport.

### Her message to our students was simple yet deeply powerful:

“take one day at a time, do your best at your own pace, and never give up — even when you feel you’re not making progress. Mahdia encouraged our students to believe in themselves and reminded us that resilience can take you anywhere.”



REFUGEE  
OLYMPIC TEAM



# Special Days at Habibi Center

## Habibi Center's 9th Anniversary

### Learning and Celebrating Simultaneously

On August 8th, we joyfully celebrated the Habibi Center's 9th Anniversary. The festivities began with **90** minutes of lively team games, filling the school with music, laughter, and friendly competition.

Students danced to **"Dance the Instrument,"** acted fast in **"Memusic"** to match instrument cards, got creative in **"Habibictionary"** by drawing and guessing musical words, and wrapped it all up with a spirited performance of the **"Cup Song."**

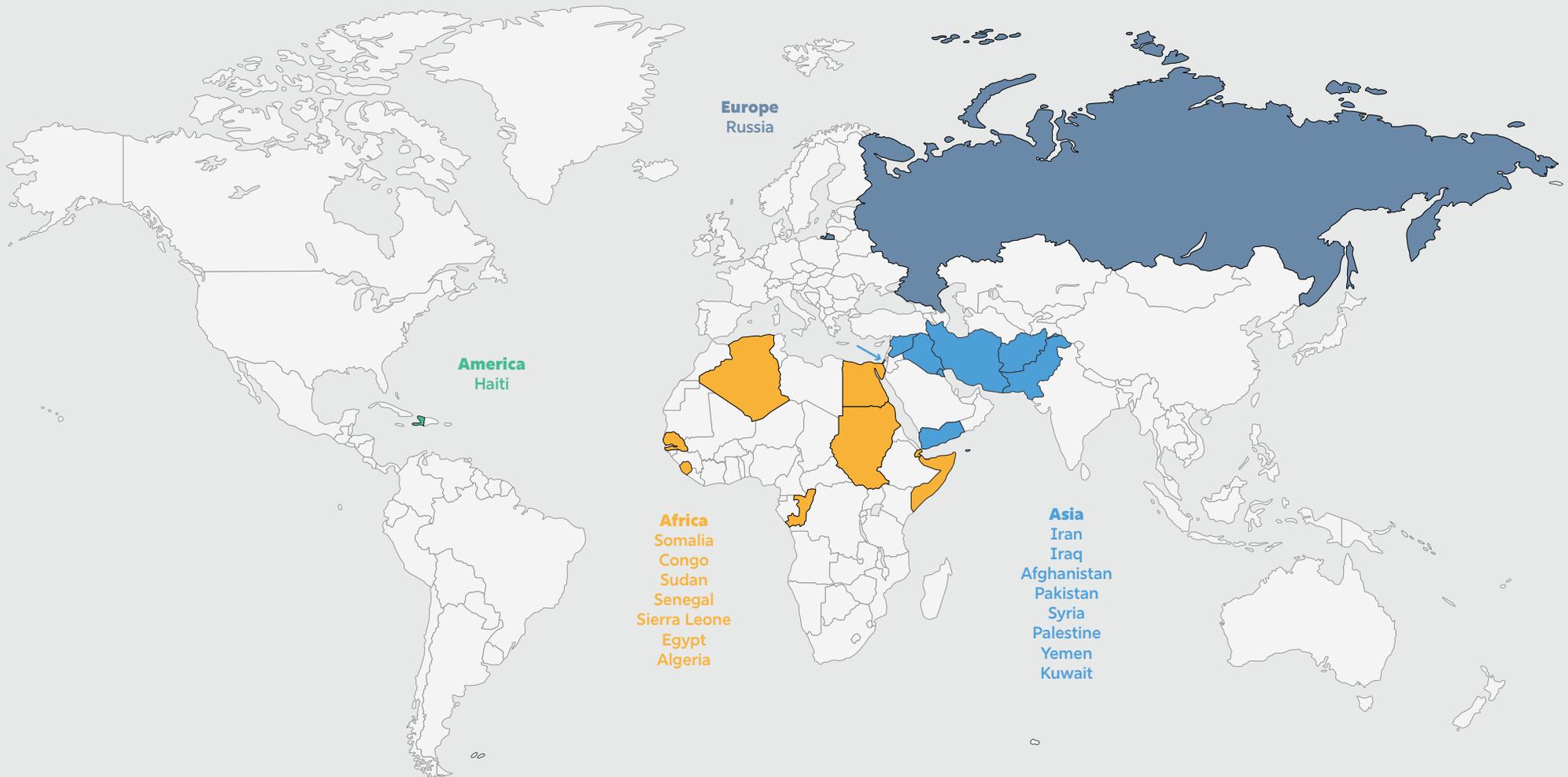
We ended the evening with a wonderful surprise — a performance by the Orquesta de Cámara Solidaria, a **45**-member orchestra that filled the room with energy and excitement. The musicians connected warmly with the students, inviting them to try conducting, explore different instruments, and join in the fun. There was plenty of laughter, dancing, and pure joy — truly our best anniversary celebration yet!

A big thank you to OCAS Orquesta de Cámara Solidaria for making this anniversary truly magical.



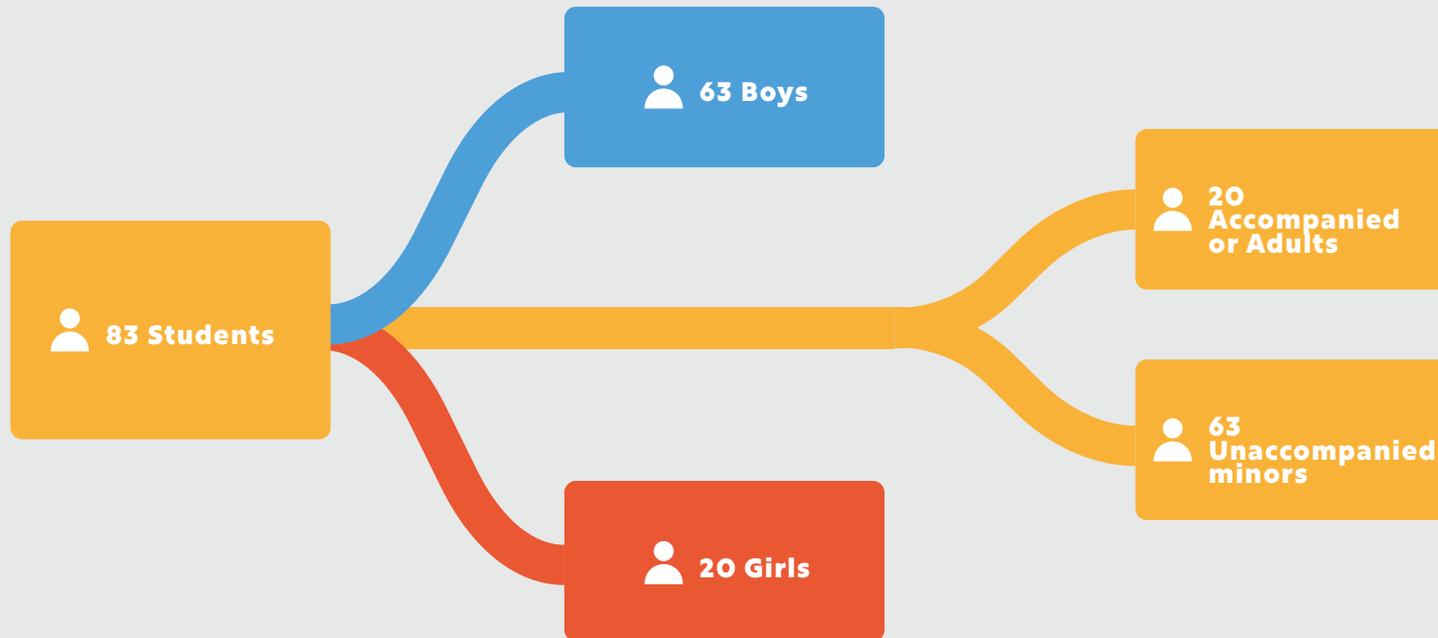
# Statistical Highlights of the Year

Where our Students came from



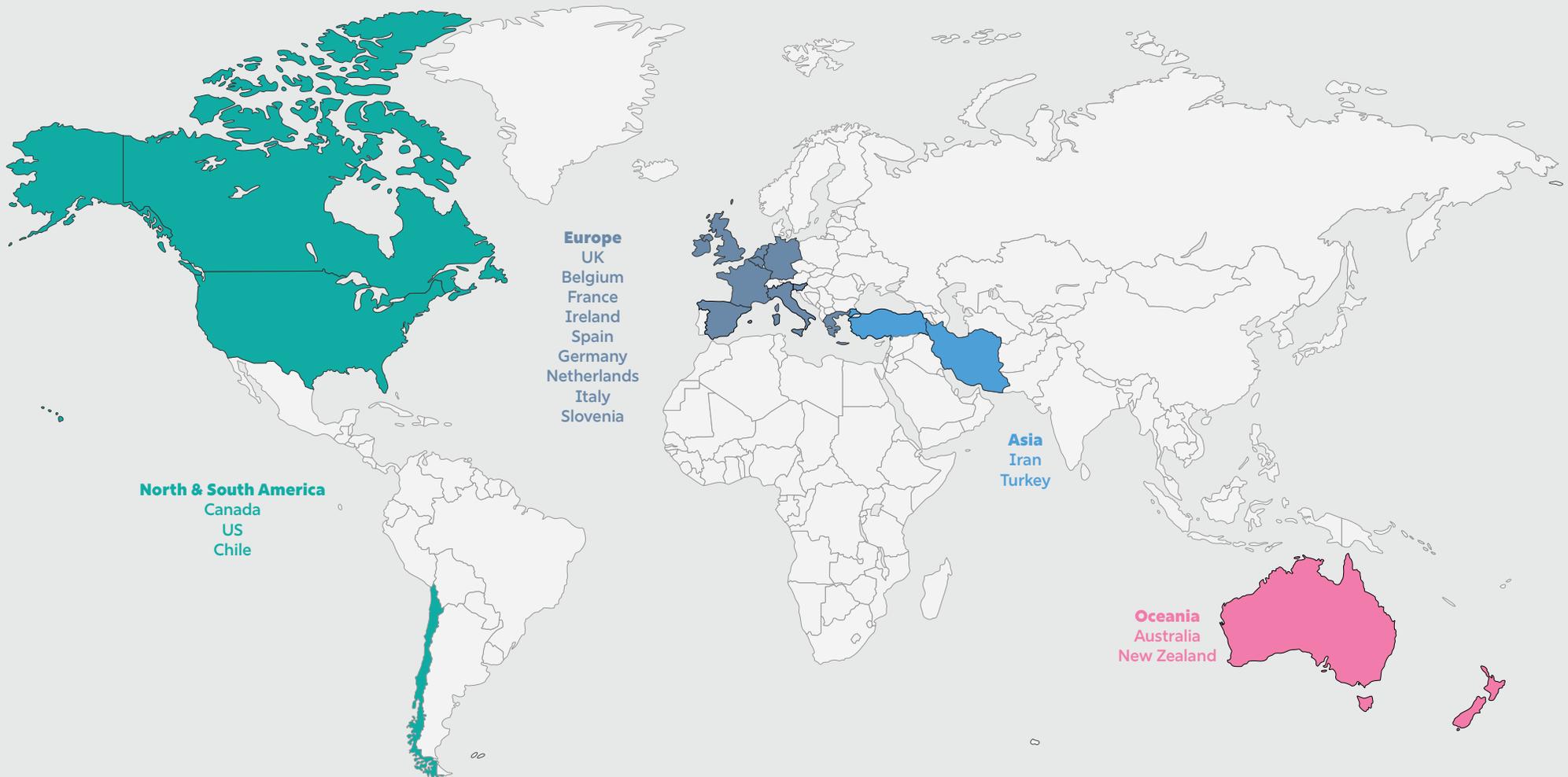
# Statistical Highlights of the Year

In Numbers



# Statistical Highlights of the Year

Where our Teachers came from



# Statistical Highlights of the Year

## Student Achievements

**35** Students **learned to Read and Write**, many of them for the **first time**.

**8** Students were prepared to take **official Cambridge exams**.

**1** Student took the **B2 FCE**

**7** Students took the **B1 PET**

**13** Students this year took IT courses **from pre-level 1 to level 3**

**5** Students **completed pre-level 1**

**1** Student **completed IT level 1**

**5** Students **completed IT level 2**

**2** Students **completed IT level 3**

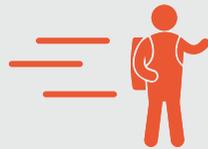


# Statistical Highlights of the Year

## Student Insights

**15** Students **reached adulthood** while being part of the Habibi Center.

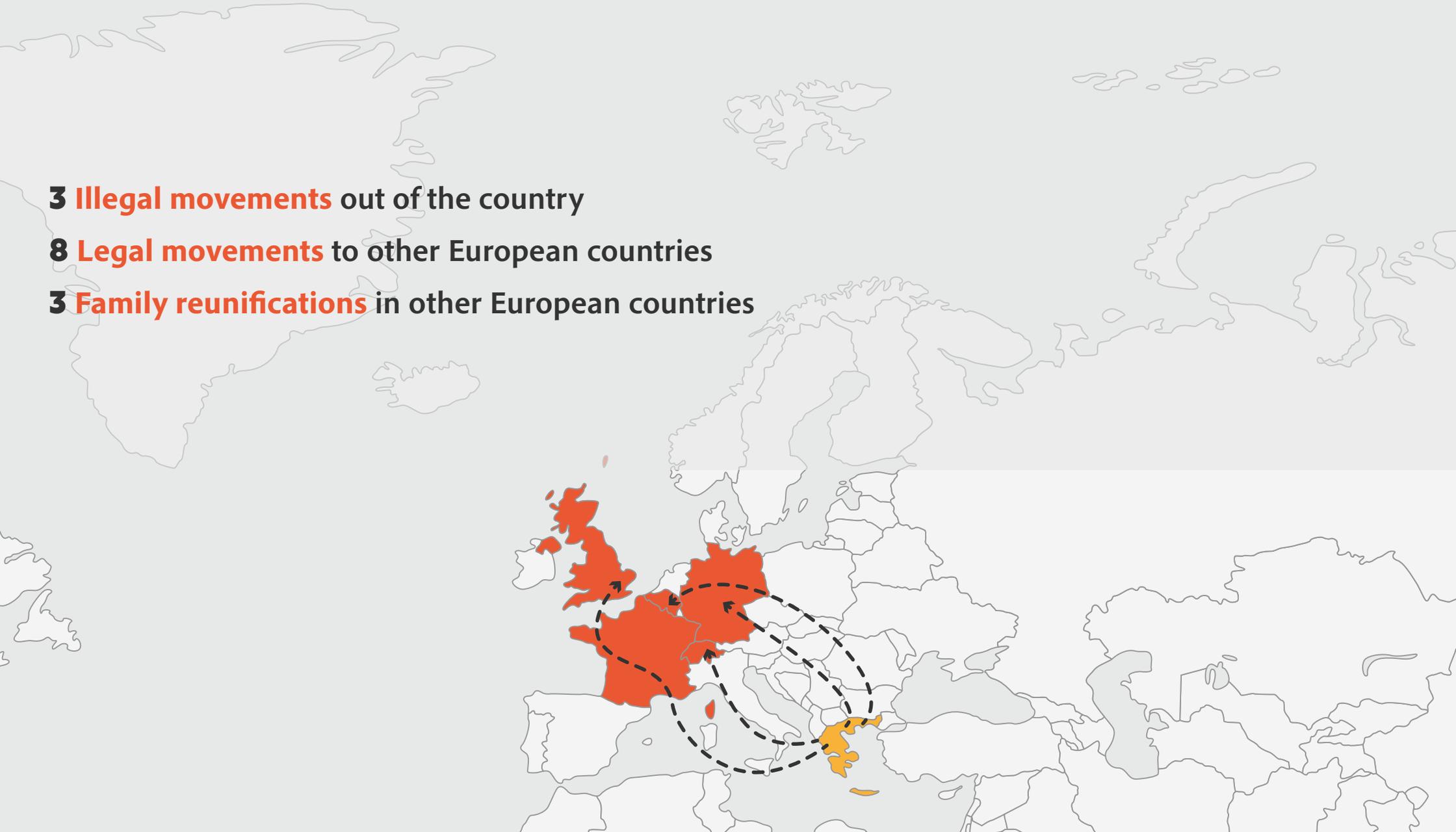
**24** Different shelters **sheltered our 63 unaccompanied students**. Most of them coordinated efforts with Habibi.



# Statistical Highlights of the Year

## Student Movements

- 3 Illegal movements** out of the country
- 8 Legal movements** to other European countries
- 3 Family reunifications** in other European countries



# Statistical Highlights of the Year

Students who left Habibi

**9** Had to focus on their jobs/studies once they became adults

**16** Left for other reasons or were asked to stop



# Statistical Highlights of the Year

## Donations

**18** Private donors made financial contributions **on a monthly basis**

**8** of which are **former volunteers**

**51** Private donors contributed through Teaming **collectively raising €636 in 2025**

**21** of which are **former students**

**2** of which are **current and former volunteers**



**Click Here To Join Teaming - 1€/Monthly Donation**

# Statistical Highlights of the Year

## Donations

**77** Private donors made financial contributions **throughout the year**

This includes **1** student and **22** former or current volunteers

**3** Donors made **material contributions to the Habibi Center**

This includes several books and **4** tablets

**6** Short-term volunteers covered **their own photocopy expenses**

# Statistical Highlights of the Year

## Grants

**4** Groups from Spain, The USA, and UK **supported us financially**

To name a few:

**€450** raised by **500 Acts of Kindness**

**£2000** granted by **ForRefugees**

**€300** granted by **SOS Refugiados Solidario**



# Statistical Highlights of the Year

## Donations and Events

**1** Food fundraiser and **1** auction **organized by HC USA**

Auction fundraiser had around **120** guests and raised over **\$12,000\***

**\$1020** Raised through **Reading Challenges**

These funds will not be paid out until 2026 and are therefore not included in this years financial overview\*



A heartfelt thank you to BODEGA for sponsoring our event and coffee to our guests keeping them warm and energized throughout the evening.

# Statistical Highlights of the Year

## Donations and Events

- 1** Video presentation **at a UK-based company**
- 1** Video presentation and in-person presentation **at a language center in Sweden**
- 1** Community Greek food dinner fundraiser **organized by a former volunteer in the US**
- 4** Presentations in churches in the US



# Statistical Highlights of the Year

## Donations and Events

**\$2045** - Raised through **our Marathon Fundraiser\***

**More than 30** People **donated to our Marathon Fundraiser!**



These funds will not be paid out until 2026 and are therefore not included in this years financial overview\*

# Testimonials

## Our Students

### Rahman

“The Habibi Center has been an amazing place for learning and growing.

The teachers are kind, supportive, and always make sure we understand. I felt respected and encouraged every day. It’s not just about studying — it’s also a place where you feel safe, meet new friends, and build confidence. I’m really thankful for everything I learned there.”

### Safaudin

“Hello to all my dear colleagues at the Habibi Center, I hope you are all well. A special thank you to Ms. Camille who helped me a lot in learning English. And another thank you to the teachers who worked hard for me. They really deserve it. The day I first entered the Habibi Center, I really didn’t think I would be able to learn a language here, but on the contrary, I was amazed by their teaching methods and was able to speak English in a very short time, about four months. And I couldn’t stay there for long. I really miss it there.”



[You can click here to read more testimonials!](#)

# Testimonials

## Our Teachers

### Polonca (Teacher from February to April 2025)

“Teaching is hard work. Being an example, a mentor, a leader, a safe space—it’s all hard work. I’ve learned to prepare better, to understand where my students come from, to figure out how to pass on even a little bit of knowledge in a way that sticks. I’ve learned to balance discipline with passion. And I’ve learned that, well... I’m not great at everything. But more than anything, I’ve learned about attachment. That almost-instant connection. That gut feeling that pulls us together, even across different languages and experiences. Until. Until one of them disappears overnight.

And then comes the void. Managing the void. Sitting with it. Processing it. Moving on. But here’s the thing—I love it. The chaos, the unpredictability, the emotional rollercoaster of it all. The rush of making a breakthrough, the frustration of feeling like I’m failing, when half of my class fails their test, the sheer absurdity of trying to teach the days of the week (in the right order) for the 27th time. It’s raw, it’s real, it’s exhausting, and it’s everything.

I had a gazillion of doubts when I first thought of doing this, going there. So many reasons that sounded like excuses. Today, as I reflect, all I can think of is: Just Do It.

I came to teach life skills and English. But I’m the one learning. And the lessons are so much bigger than language. Do. Go. Be. ”

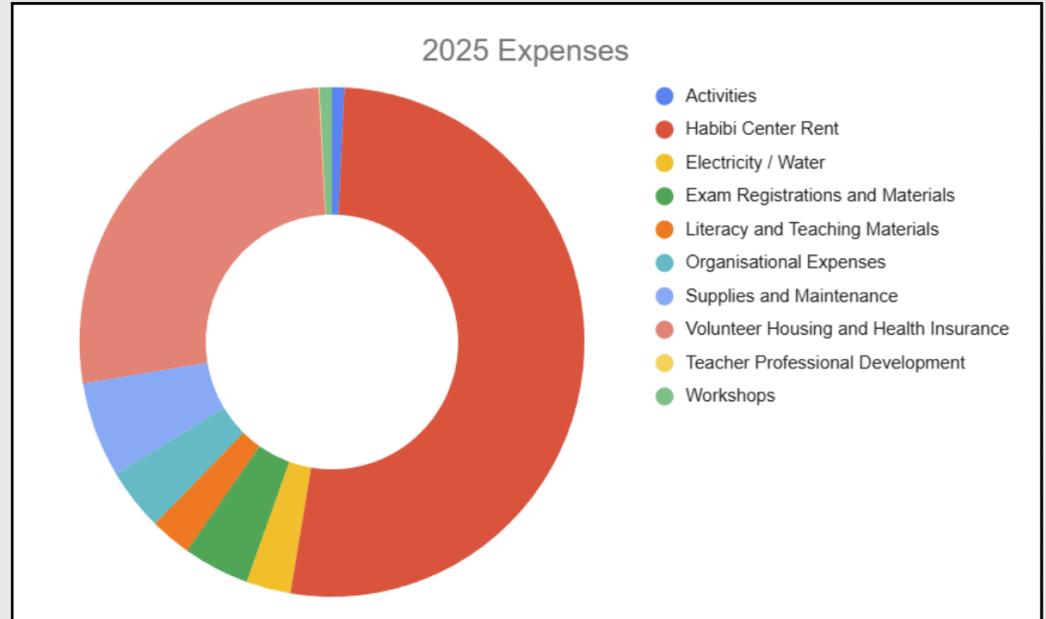


[You can click here to read more testimonials!](#)

# Finances

## Habibi's Expenses.

Total Expenses	
Expense Category	Total
Activities	€240.93
Habibi Center Rent	€15,600.00
Electricity / Water	€858.13
Exam Photocopies and Materials	€260.72
Exam Registrations	€1,015.40
Furniture	€106.99
Fundraising Costs	€75.42
Volunteer Health Insurance	€644.28
IT Teaching	€36.98
Literacy Classes	€151.40
Teaching Materials	€256.80
Organisational Expenses	€1,119.36
Regular Photocopies	€383.75
Supplies and Maintenance	€1,717.70
Volunteer Housing	€7,410.00
Teacher Professional Development	€18.00
Workshops	€202.40
<b>Total</b>	<b>€30,098.26</b>

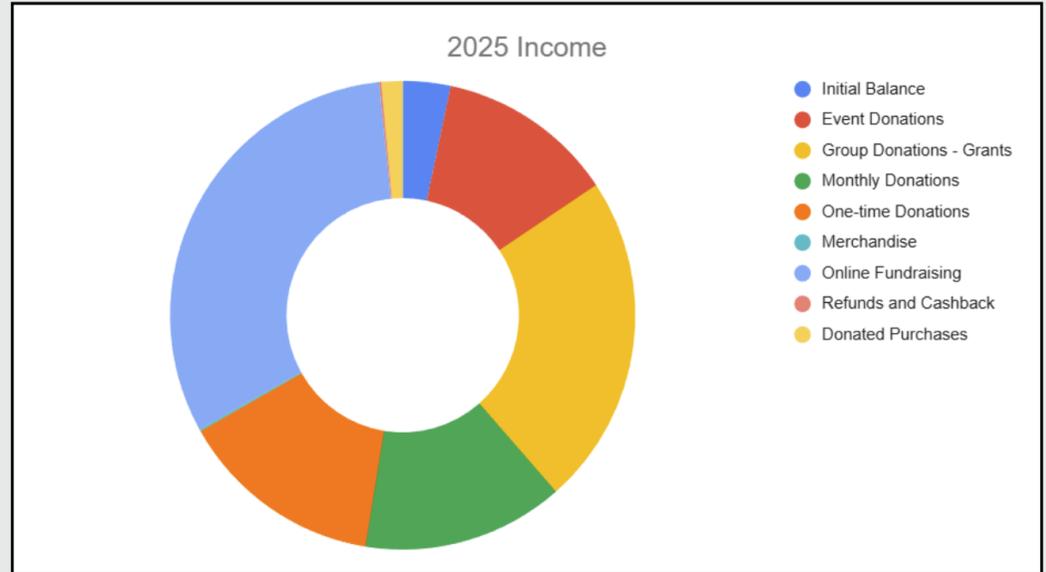


\* Some figures have been combined to improve clarity in the chart.

# Finances

## Habibi's Income.

Total Income	
Income Category	Total
Initial Balance	€1,015.54
Event Donations	€3,768.44
Group Donations - Grants	€7,022.36
Monthly Donations	€4,290.00
One-time Donations	€4,349.83
Merchandise	€48.31
Online Fundraising	€9,633.98
Organisational Expenses (refund)	€39.73
Donated Purchases	€451.79
Wise Balance Cashback	€5.70
<b>Total</b>	<b>€30,625.68</b>



\* Some figures have been combined to improve clarity in the chart.

# To Everyone Reading



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