



**MIGREAT**

**MiGreat**

**Activity Report**

**2021**



# Introduction

In 2021, MiGreat organised demonstrations and actions across Europe. At the same time, aid projects in Bosnia and Romania were supported financially.

We worked in line with our three key goals:

- Legalise migration opportunities for refugees and economic migrants;
- Stop deterrence policies, designed to damage and discourage (prospective) migrants;
- Provide humanitarian aid to people on the move in or on their way to Europe

# Vision

A world where the place you are born decides the life you will lead is an unjust world. When migration becomes a possibility for people from the global South, it can become an indispensable force in the fight for racial justice and global equality. It can give people the opportunity to increase their income staggeringly, develop new skills and support their communities at home. We want to work towards a world where migration is not a privilege, but a right.

# Mission

MiGreat believes people need to be able to move. Our mission is to challenge the right to exclude and create opportunities for migration, especially from the global South towards the EU. We campaign against the brutal border regime, which is ineffective, harmful and deadly. Alongside campaigning for regular migration opportunities and against violent border policies, we support refugees and migrants transiting towards the EU who are left to fend for themselves.

Borders have become a tool to exclude and segregate based on nationality, skin colour and religion. Predominantly white, rich countries systematically violate human rights in order to keep 'unwanted' people out, or to keep the 'unwanted people' that are in undocumented. Our job is to expose the abuses that happen

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on EU borders, mobilise activists to demand justice and provide meaningful alternatives to anti migration policies.

We have three core goals that are the basis of all our projects and campaigns:

1. Legalise migration opportunities for refugees and economic migrants;
2. Stop deterrence policies, designed to damage and discourage (prospective) migrants;
3. Provide humanitarian aid to people on the move in or on their way to Europe

## General info

### Board

- Roos Ykema: chair
- Hannah Friedrich: treasurer
- Sofie Croonenberg: secretary

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# Protests & advocacy

## Lopend Vuur – Netherlands

In the weeks ahead of the general elections, from 1 to 17 March, people across the Netherlands organised vigils, demonstrations and marches in over 70 cities and villages. The actions had two purposes: on the one hand to show people what is happening on European borders and how their vote can influence migration policies, on the other hand to show politicians how much support there is for humane migration policies. More than 5000 people joined the demonstrations. Four marches, totaling 1000 kilometres, were held from the north, east, west and south of the Netherlands to the Parliament building in Den Haag. On the day before the elections, candidates of 9 political parties promised to commit themselves to humane migration policies. Over 100 local and national media outlets paid attention to the actions.<sup>1</sup> Lopend Vuur was organised in collaboration with Vluchtelingencomité Groningen.

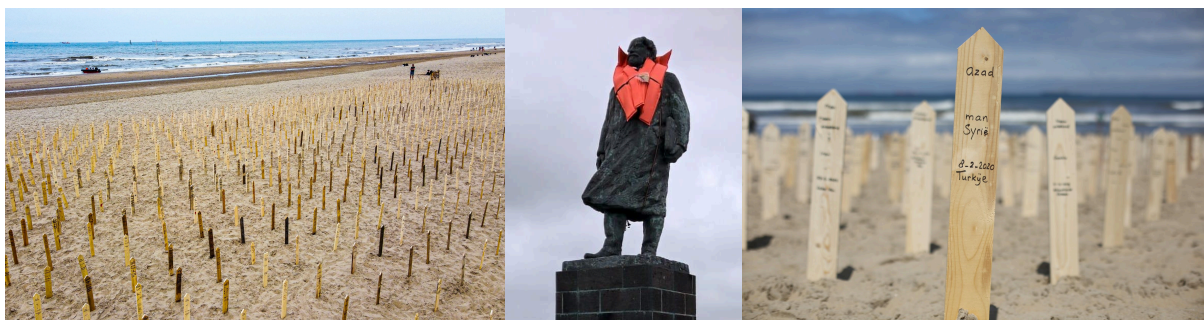


<sup>1</sup> A few examples: [Nederlands Dagblad](#), [XON](#), [Brabants Dagblad](#) & [Eindhoven's Dagblad](#)



## 44.000 NAMES - Europe

On World Refugee Day, 21 June, we commemorated the 44.764 people who died on European borders, and many more who went missing. People and action groups joined from ten European countries. In the Netherlands, local action groups in 40 cities made over 6.000 remembrance signs and together, we built a mass monument on the beach of Scheveningen. Hundreds of individuals joined in making signs for the deceased. Over 20 media outlets paid attention to the action, including the national news and some of the biggest newspapers.<sup>2</sup> Watch the aftermovie [here](#).



Picture: Jaap van den Berg

Picture: Fouad Hallak

In Romania, Greece, the United Kingdom, Portugal, Poland, Belgium, Ireland and Germany, memorial services were held where the names of the deceased were read aloud or written down.



From left to right: actions in the UK; Ioannina, Greece; Timișoara, Romania

Thanks to UNITED Against Refugee Deaths for making and sharing the list of deaths, and to Wij Doen Mee and XY Actiefonds for their donations.

<sup>2</sup> [NOS](#), [Volkskrant](#), [Trouw](#), [AD](#)



## GREEN LIGHT - Europe

In collaboration with VAJN, thousands of people across Europe burned a green light to show solidarity with people on the move on Human Rights Day, December 10th. Civilians living near the Polish-Belarussian border started the movement: they put up a green light around their houses, to signal to people on the move that they could safely ask for help there. Over 100 people from more than 20 countries registered with us; many more simply joined without registering. From big buildings to small rooms: thousands of green lights shone across Europe on December 10th. As a follow-up, Dutch people were asked to send a picture of their green light to politicians, with a plea to fight against death, violence and dangers on EU borders. Over 100 people joined, sending thousands of emails.



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## Other

**Support sans papiers, 23 July:** In solidarity with the undocumented hunger strikers in Belgium, we organised a protest in Amsterdam, demanding that the undocumented get opportunities for regularisation.



**Let them in @ Polish embassy, 28 September:** To protest the life-threatening situation of people stuck on the Polish-Belarusian border, we demonstrated at the Polish embassy.



**Love thy Neighbour, 17 & 18 November:** During the EPP congress, where all christian democratic parties of Europe attend, we planned a 2-day-protest. Due to Covid, the congress was postponed until spring. We have postponed our protest, too.

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# Humanitarian support Balkans

## CCC - Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

CCC is a volunteer group that worked in Sarajevo over winter. Their main focus was to assist people on the move who do not have access to the camps. Camps in Bosnia are overcrowded and access is often restricted to families and children. Single men are left to fend for themselves and need to stay warm in temperatures as low as -20 C.

CCC insulated shelters and squats, provided people with firewood and heaters, food, gas cookers, clothes, shoes, blankets and sleeping mats. They also had a doctor on the team who treated wounds, subscribed medication etc. MiGreat received a fund of €15.000,- from Seenotrettung for CCC, alongside a few smaller donations. CCC used €3.700 for medical equipment and care, €2.430 for building and insulation, €2.200 for sleeping bags, €1.800 for transport, €1.800 for firewood and stoves, €1.400 for shoes, €900 for food, €750 for tools and €600 for power banks. Throughout winter, they managed to assist over 1000 people surviving on the streets of Sarajevo.



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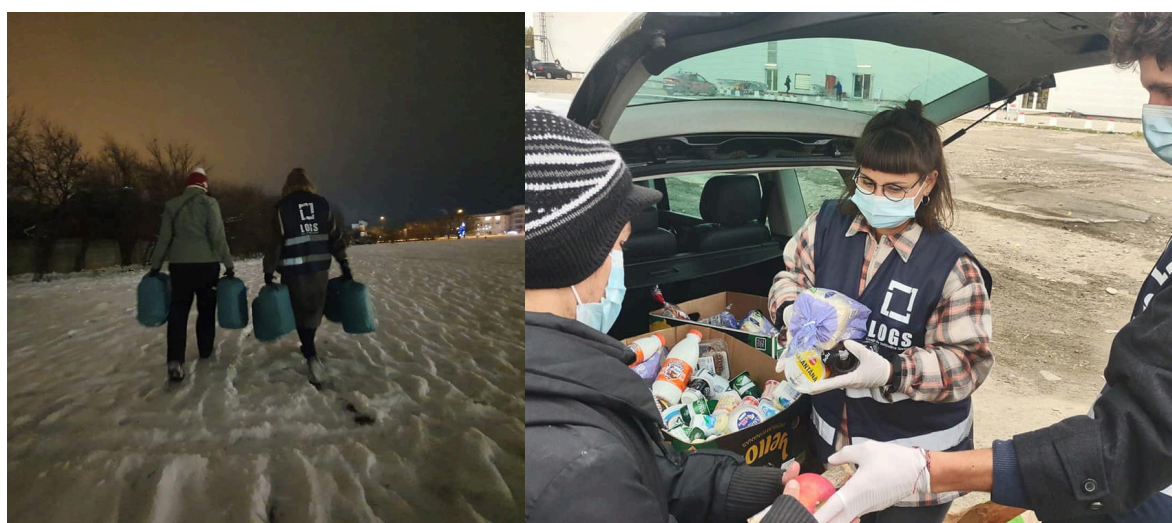
## LOGS - Timișoara, Romania

LOGS is a local grassroots organisation assisting people on the move in Timisoara, Romania. Check out their [Facebook](#) or [website](#) for more info. Romania became an increasingly popular part of the Balkan route in the past two years. LOGS offers a small community centre with showers, scabies treatment, clothes, sleeping bags and food. Most people they assist are sleeping outside. Since autumn, MiGreat makes sure there is a medical volunteer, and therefore the people on the move have access to medical



treatment, too. As of July, MiGreat covers the rent of a volunteer house for €300 a month, which hosts both a medical volunteer and 2-4 allround volunteers, and covers the cost of medical equipment such as bandages and medication since October, which is €350 a month. In total, €2.400 was sent to LOGS in 2021.

LOGS is a wonderful team that manages to provide desperate people not only with medical care, food, clothes and warmth, but also with dignity and kindness.



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## **Rahma – Velika Kladaša, Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Rahma is a grassroots organisation, supporting homeless people on the move in Velika Kladaša and its surroundings. It is largely volunteer-based and run by local people. Kladaša is a Bosnian village just over the border from Croatia, where people are dropped by border police. Many people experience violence, in extreme cases mounting to torture. Others are robbed of clothes, shoes, medication, phone or money during the so-called pushbacks. Rahma supplies people surviving in the village and the nearby forest with food packages and clothes.

MiGreat sent €1.500 to Rahma, which will be used in the coming months for shoes, clothes and food, helping the people on the move make it through the cold winter months.



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## Reach

During and after big actions, thousands of people visited our website. Check it out here! <https://migreat.org>. Social media posts on our international page reached up to 12.000 views per post. Page followers reached over 4.000. The Dutch page reached up to 13.000 views per post, and almost 900 followers.

Media, including newspapers and television, paid significant attention to our actions. How many people were reached through these channels exactly is unclear, but the Dutch national news alone already accounts for 1 million viewers. As hundreds of bigger and smaller media paid attention to actions, at least 2 million people were reached.

To be less dependent on (social) media, we started a newsletter in Dutch. We are also planning to start an English newsletter.

## Finances

MiGreat is an independent organisation that doesn't get any government funding. Most of the donations we receive are from individuals, for example through fundraisers on social media; for specific actions we applied for funding, for example from XY Action Fund and Wij Doen Mee for 44.000 NAMES and from Seenotrettung for CCC in Bosnia. We are volunteer-run and have no office, which means our running costs are very low

- €360 for running costs (mainly website & bank costs)
- €4.300 for protests (mainly flyers, rent of sound system etc)
- €20.100 for aid in Bosnia and Romania (food, clothes, blankets, medical costs, rent for volunteer house etc)

For 2022, €2000 is reserved for 'Love thy Neighbour', the protest that was postponed due to Covid. €1.500 is reserved for Rahma in Bosnia and €3.900 is reserved for LOGS in Romania. Aside from that, we have a €2000 emergency fund for aid in the Balkans. Emergencies can be a rapid influx of people, extreme cold or whatever else may cause urgent needs for people on the move.

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## Thank you!

In 2021, MiGreat started to build up a movement with actions in the Netherlands as well as Europe wide. We shone light on one of the darkest sides of the border: the tens of thousands of deaths that are attributed to Fortress Europe. We also managed to show a different, more hopeful side: from hundreds of cities and villages in dozens of countries, thousands of people raised their voice for humane migration policies.

At the same time, and thanks to many generous donors, we were able to assist small volunteer-run groups, who in turn manage to deliver food, clothes, warmth and medical care to those who need it most in Bosnia and Romania.

We would like to thank all the hard-working volunteers and activists across Europe, who do anything from building a website, designing flyers or distributing food packs to organising or visiting a protest. We would also like to thank all the people and organisations who supported us financially. Without all of you, none of this would be possible! Together we are changing the rules of the game - for humane migration policies and a humane Europe.



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