



# MIGREAT

## YEAR REPORT 2024



<b>Introduction</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>General info</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>What we stand for</b>	<b>3</b>
Problem statement	3
Vision	4
Mission	4
<b>Organisation</b>	<b>5</b>
Team	5
Working groups	6
Organisational structure	6
Team events & education	7
<b>Campaigns &amp; events</b>	<b>7</b>
Derdelanders	7
Ombudsman	8
Move demo	8
Stop deportations	9
Other	10
Demos	10
Legal	11
Events	12
<b>Communication</b>	<b>13</b>
Social media	13
Newsletter	14
Public relations	14
Website	15
<b>Aid</b>	<b>15</b>
Ter Apel	15
Sienos Grupe, Lithuania	15
Kompas 071, Bosnia & Herzegovina	16
Sleeping bags	16
<b>Finance &amp; fundraising</b>	<b>17</b>
Expenses	18
<b>Contact</b>	<b>19</b>

# Introduction

Welcome to MiGreat's annual year report for 2024! Here you will find an overview of our organisation's vision, mission and strategy, organisational growth, campaigns and events, communication, aid and finance.

We updated our vision, mission and strategy, worked on organizational structure, and welcomed more volunteers into our team.

In 2024, we managed to organise, support and speak at dozens of actions, events, workshops and protests. We organised big and small demos, released footage of police brutality against protesters and against deportees. We achieved a victory at the Ombudsman – who would have thought it's not okay to take away tents from homeless people? We fought alongside third country nationals from Ukraine, who eventually managed to (temporarily) keep their residency rights. We took direct action and actually stopped deportations.

We reached the media 88 times, even internationally in the Guardian, Middle East Eye and Syrian media. We published 508 posts on social media, reaching hundreds of thousands of people.

We collected containers full of sleeping bags, tents and tarp, keeping people on the move warm in Greece, Bosnia, Italy and France. We financially supported grassroots groups working in Lithuania and Bosnia.

We are fighting and we are winning. It is not enough, as long as people are killed from Gaza to Europe's borders or as homeless people on our streets. But we remain hopeful of the power of people, even under an explicit anti migrant government. Of the desire people have to live and to be free – to set themselves free. These walls, too, will fall.

## General info

### Board

- Jieling: chair
- Sofie: treasurer
- Kate: secretary

Registration no. KVK: 76116549

IBAN: NL17BUNQ2040897801

BIC: BUNQNL2A

Website: <https://migreat.org/>



Protest derdelanders from Ukraine

## What we stand for

### Problem statement

The world we live in today is fundamentally unjust. Passports and borders create and justify racial and class segregation, upholding rampant global inequality and facilitating exclusion. Someone's nationality decides almost every aspect of life – from wage, access to education, health care and work to life expectancy.

People who denounce the place assigned to them at birth and cross borders irregularly to the global North risk their lives – at least 66.519 people have been killed on the European borders since 1993.<sup>1</sup> They also risk their health and wellbeing, facing tough journeys and police brutality, and segregation and

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<sup>1</sup> United Against Refugee Deaths, List of Deaths <https://unitedagainstreugeedeaths.eu/>



exploitation upon arrival. We work towards a world where migration is not deterred, but free.

All over the world, migration policies create and strengthen dominance, power imbalances, discrimination and racism. Therefore, the struggle for freedom of movement is an integral part of the fight against racism, colonialism and capitalism, amongst others. We actively support the liberation of Palestine. We are not free until we are all free.

### **Vision**

At MiGreat, we envision a world where all human beings can move freely and have equal rights wherever they are. Fortified borders and discrimination based on passport & migratory status will cease to exist. All we are asking is for people to be truly free and equal.

### **Mission**

We are working on changing the power structures that systematically oppress and exploit people, mainly from the global South. Our actions aim to shrink the borders into non-existence<sup>2</sup>, to make movement free and end segregation between nationals and non-nationals.

*Freedom of movement.* We take action to make it easier for people to move. This includes the removal or relaxing of visa requirements, the increase of opportunities to migrate as well as the facilitation of irregular migration and resistance against forced migration.

*Equal treatment.* Free migration will only help to achieve true equality if migrants have equal rights compared to locals. This includes social rights, such as access to housing, health care, shelter, education, equal labour rights and political rights such as voting. The goal is to abolish any legal difference in terms of rights between nationals and non-nationals.

Our political work is currently focused on the Netherlands and migration into the EU. We also support organisations working on the EU borders.

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<sup>2</sup> Bradley, G. M., & De Noronha, L. (2022). *Against Borders: The Case for Abolition*. Verso Books.

# Organisation

## Team

We started and ended the year with 2 paid staff members, 1,5 fte. We currently have 3 board members, 7 interns joined us over the course of 2024, and we have 25 dedicated volunteers.



MiGreat's 5 year anniversary party

Our director Roos works 4,5 days a week, overseeing all our projects, activities and team members. She is coordinating the campaign team, the events and aid, functions as the press person, speaks at events and demos, and does some fundraising, volunteer coordination, communication and ad hoc tasks as well.

Our administration & communication coordinator Anne works 3 days a week, she takes care of financial administration, coordinates the team working on social media, newsletter, website and other communications, does volunteer coordination and administration, and a little campaigning, fundraising and event management here and there.

We started the year with 3 board members. Sadly, Hannah left the team in May, and she was replaced by Eunice. Due to health issues, sadly Eunice had to step down after a few months, so we will look for a new board member in January. We are very lucky to still have Sofie and Liz on the board with us, supervising our strategy and financial situation, always being there to advise us and support the team when needed.

Over the course of 2024, we had 7 interns who joined us over the course of 1 to 4 months, 2 to 5 days a week. They brought much time, energy and experience to their internships and played an important role for our social media, campaigns and actions.

We started with 12 and ended the year with 25 dedicated volunteers. They work in one or multiple working groups, are available for advice or support on a more ad hoc basis, or join temporary working groups such as the organisation of the national demo. Some work a few hours a month, others work almost every day, some are with us for a few months and others for years. We never cease to be amazed by all the amazing people who are willing to give their time and energy to MiGreat!



Food prep for MiGreat's 5 year anniversary party

## **Working groups**

We started the year with the content team, action / campaign team, and dedicated working groups for specific actions. This year, we started up a fundraising working group, organisational working group and multiple deportation groups: the support, actions and workshop working groups. We also created temporary working groups for the derdelanders campaign, move demo and the lowlands sleeping bags collection.

## **Organisational structure**

As we grew very quickly (again), we reached the limits of how much we can do with two paid people and an ever growing team of volunteers. Therefore, in

September we started up a working group focused on organisational structure. This group worked on an organogram and role descriptions for all the teams, creating more clarity on tasks and responsibilities. The goal is to reduce the workload of all the team members, clearly assign responsibility, keep team members engaged longer, make it easier for new people to join and make volunteering for the organisation more accessible for people with less time. We also worked on creating more volunteer coordination and lead roles, to share responsibilities with a bigger group of people. This new structure will be implemented from the beginning of 2025.

### **Team events & education**

This year, we started doing monthly-ish dinners, drinks and other team activities. We also celebrated our 5 year anniversary with a dinner party, with both current and former team members and supporters. We joined the Organizing for Power training, to learn about strategy and organizing, and Stroomversnellers facilitated a Strategy Day for us in September.

## **Campaigns & events**

In 2024, we were involved in Palestine protests, protests with third country nationals who fled Ukraine (referred to as 'derdelanders' in the Netherlands), the national MOVE demo and we started up a campaign against deportations. We spoke at protests and events, organised workshops and took direct action. We supported people living in camps to organise protests, speak to local politicians and to file a lawsuit against COA.

### **Derdelanders**

On 4 March 2024, third country nationals who fled Ukraine (hereafter: derdelanders) lost their residency rights. Although court cases were still pending, a few municipalities immediately sent police into the shelters to kick people out on the streets. Together with derdelanders, we set up a petition, organised protests and managed to get a lot of media attention when the first municipality started violent evictions. We organised a demo in Dordrecht, where a big group of people was made homeless, and in Amsterdam, for people from across the country. Luckily, the courts decided that the EU's Court of Justice had to assess

whether it was allowed to remove residency rights from third country nationals, meaning people regained their right to residency, shelter and work temporarily.

## Ombudsman

In the summer and autumn of 2022, we handed out tents to people sleeping rough in Ter Apel. This led to a battle with the local authorities: the tents were constantly confiscated, our director received a letter where she was informed she risked 3 months imprisonment for handing out tents, multiple emergency decrees were created to legalize the confiscation of tents and the criminalization of us humanitarians. Of course we kept handing out tents and spoke out critically on (social) media. But we also filed a complaint with the police and the municipality, together with Doorbraak and PILP.

RTV Noord

### Ombudsman: 'Overheid handelde onbehoorlijk en ongepast' in Ter Apel

Overheidsinstanties hebben 'onbehoorlijk en ongepast gehandeld' tijdens de crisissituatie in de zomer van 2022 bij het aanmeldcentrum in Ter...

25 apr 2024



NOS

### Ombudsman: mensen die buitenslapers Ter Apel hielpen onbehoorlijk behandeld

In plaats van de hulp te accepteren, werden tenten en hulpmiddelen afgepakt. Ook werd er gedreigd met strafrechtelijk ingrijpen.

25 apr 2024



AD.nl

### Chaos Ter Apel afgestraft door Ombudsman in fel rapport: 'Nieuw dieptepunt dreigt'

Overheidsinstanties hebben 'onbehoorlijk en ongepast gehandeld' tijdens de crisissituatie in de zomer van 2022 bij het aanmeldcentrum in Ter...

25 apr 2024



Media attention for the Ombudsman report

In March 2024, we finally got a [report](#) from the Ombudsman. It was highly critical of the fact that the authorities had not offered help to people themselves (we could not agree more), and of the fact that, on top of that, the organisations and people who did help were intimidated and even criminalized. The municipality, police and the public prosecutor all agreed that they did not handle the situation well and would have to act differently in future cases. This was a big win, not just for us but also for homeless people and their supporters across the country. Confiscating tents is shockingly a common repressive policy municipalities use against the homeless.

## Move demo

On 15 June, we organised the second MOVE demo, once again in Amsterdam. There were speeches and performances on the Dam, a march through the city centre, and a performance by Kush band to finish it off with a dance. To celebrate the existence and resistance of (illegalised) migrants across the world.



Annual MOVE demo

Almost 100 organisations from a wide range of social justice issues signed the accompanying [manifesto](#), many organisations and individuals shared the call to protest on social media and around 1500 people attended the protest.

## Stop deportations

In May, we kicked off the stop deportations campaign with Joost (not his real name). With support of 2 passengers, Joost managed to stop his deportation and continue his asylum procedure in the Netherlands. One of the passengers filmed inside the plane, collecting proof of the police violence. We published the video, which led to media attention and [parliamentary questions](#). We are still working on complaints against the involved authorities regarding this deportation.



## Beelden van hardhandige uitzetting Syriër op Schiphol: 'Hij is getraumatiseerd'

Door RTL Nieuws · 19 juni 2024 · Aangepast: 19 juni 2024



News article about violent deportation attempt

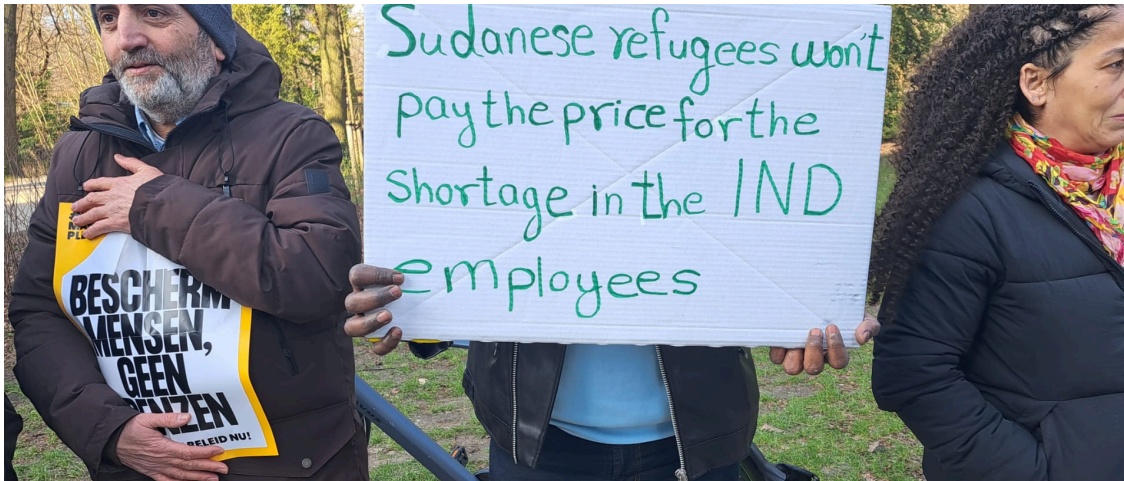
Since then, people regularly contact us if they are at risk. We advise them on what they can do to keep themselves safe. We are working on setting up a hotline, which we hope to launch early in 2025. In many cases, especially if people have a Dublin claim, they manage to keep themselves out of the hands of the authorities. We also gave a workshop to people with Dublin claims.

We started giving workshops, training people who would like to take direct action. Around 100 people attended these workshops, and often joined solidarity networks and chats where people share help requests. We want to keep growing the movement around this and create a broad base of people willing to take action against deportations. We supported people who organized actions against 6 deportation flights.

### **Other**

#### *Demos*

We organised a protest at the IND office in Amsterdam. We also organised a protest in Den Haag, in collaboration with Sudanese Refugees Organisation, about the 'decision-making freeze', which meant that Sudanese and Palestinian asylum seekers had to wait 6 months longer to receive a decision on their asylum application.



Demo against longer waiting times for Sudanese & Palestinian asylum seekers

We supported protests organised by people living in camps in Goes and Nijmegen, protests for Kinderpardon, protests and events to raise awareness and / or funds for Sudan, Congo, Egypt, Palestine and Syria, and the protest against the Arms Fair, as well as the protest against shutting down shelters for undocumented people (LVV). We supported demos organised by pro Palestine groups, sit-ins, boycott actions at Albert Heijn and shared evidence of police violence during protests.

We gave speeches at protests of Geef haat geen macht (2x), organised by Platform Stop Racisme, as well as at the anti military blockades at De Kazerne (2x), a protest against the Egyptian regime, and of course at the actions organised by us.



Blockade of military base

### *Legal*

We sent an official letter, threatening to sue the Dutch state for trying to use emergency laws to cut down on refugee protection. We did this with the law firm Bureau Brandeis and Here To Support, Stil Utrecht, Stichting Gast, Sawa Collective, New Women Connectors and a petition by De Goede Zaak. Eventually, the government cancelled their plans to use emergency law to break down refugee's rights.

Starting in 2023, we received questions and pictures about fines COA was handing out to residents for 'violation of the house rules'. The punishment is often 1-4 weeks of money allowance being withheld, and the reasons for withholding money ranged from calling for help because someone had a medical emergency to sharing info with us about police violence, to complaining about living conditions. In 2023, a few of these cases led to law suits, but the courts all went with the state. In 2024 we found a new lawyer willing to do procedures, and he filed 2 appeals. The first court case was cancelled, because COA decided to cancel the fine the day before (scared to lose this case maybe?). The second one is still pending.

### *Events*

We gave or contributed to workshops, debates and lectures at 2dh5 festival, De Beweging conference, No Border Camp, Geef Tegengas action camp, Anarchist Bookfair, Bijl congress, GroenLinks Dordrecht, Activist Lab Oxfam, Filmfestival Assen, Utrecht University, Bijl Amsterdam, Movies That Matter, the National Education Union in the UK, Sudan event Paradiso, and Spui25.



Discussion panel on social change

## Communication

In 2024 we continued with the structure we built in 2023 and strengthened the base of the team. Our social media team has become quite independent and reliable. This year we focused a bit less on our website and sending out press releases or opinion pieces because of other priorities in the organisation.

Our communication goals were to raise awareness about the racist and inhumane migration policies, border violence and neocolonialism and to spread information about our mission: freedom of movement, border abolition and equal treatment of migrants and citizens. Apart from informing through hot takes, the goal was also to mobilise people, for example to resist segregation, join protests or volunteer.

Besides that, fundraising has become a bigger focus in our communication, having it more incorporated and less on the background by being honest about the financial need of our organisation. We also started our stop deportations campaign which has been a big part in our communication by informing people and calling out to resist and stand up.

### Social media

For our social media channels we have implemented more structure and consistency. We have a dedicated team of volunteers that work on new posts on a weekly basis. Even though we have had some changes in the team, the basis is stable.

In April we decided to align our Dutch and English Instagram accounts, posting at least 3 times a week. That mainly resulted in a big increase in the engagement (+172%) and following (+162%) of the English account compared to 2023. The Dutch account grew in engagement (+54%) and following (+117%) as well.



Social media voting advice



We have focused our social media posts on hot takes, actions, fundraising and organisational posts. We have also had a lot of collaboration posts which were always high in engagement. When we exclude those, our most engaged Dutch post on Instagram was "[Ongevraagd stemadvies EU verkiezingen](#)" and our most engaged English post was "[Deportation Joost\\*](#)".

In 2024 we have posted more consistently on LinkedIn and have increased our following with 32% ending the year with 1220 followers. The engagement however was quite low. Our Facebook accounts, Dutch and English, have both decreased intensely in terms of engagement. The little engagement we have is also not always positive since there unfortunately is a lot of hate and racism on this platform.

This year we also started our TikTok account. We have experimented sporadically with some videos, resulting in a total of 12 posts and 101 followers. One [video](#) stood out and got quite some engagement. It got almost 9K views and 175 times of engagement.

## Newsletter

With our committed content creator volunteer we sent out a newsletter every three weeks. This resulted in 19 newsletters in total. The newsletters were mainly focused on informing subscribers about our activities and doing specific calls to donate or join actions. The open rate is still +45% and similar to 2023 so people still like reading the newsletter to stay up to date.

## Public relations

Just like in 2023, we sent out 11 press releases in 2024. They had an average open rate of 40% which is a bit lower than the year before. However, we got 88 (!) publications, compared to 29 last year, at Hart van Nederland, Volkskrant, NOS and more. We're especially proud of our international publications in [Syrian media](#) about the deportation of Joost\* and



The Guardian article

[The Guardian](#) about Bulgaria forcing out of Syrian asylum seekers after the fall of Assad. Roos has been a guest at podcasts [Damn Honey](#), [Wie dan wel](#) and three episodes at [It Could Happen Here](#). And she was interviewed by [De Nieuws BV](#), [Omroep Zwart](#) and [Radio 1](#).

## **Website**

This year we have not had our website as a main priority of communication. Despite that, we still increased our website visitors. We updated our [donation page](#), making it more easy and accessible to donate. We have had 14.644 NL visitors this year, which is 73% more than 2023. And we have had 3.962 EN visitors, which is +112% compared to 2023.

## **Aid**

At the start of 2024, we ended our project in Ter Apel as there had not been a humanitarian emergency for a while. We financially supported Sienos Grup, an organisation working on the borders and in detention centres in Lithuania, and Compass71, running a community centre in Sarajevo, Bosnia. We collected sleeping bags, tents and other camping gear, and distributed them across Europe.

### **Ter Apel**

We stopped working in Ter Apel at the beginning of the year. Yet, on 16 September, people were out on the field again, and the shelter stated that single men would be left outside (sexist much?). The volunteers immediately went to the camp and organised emergency supplies - water, food, ponchos. The volunteers kept a little emergency supply so they are able to keep people dry and fed in case of emergencies.

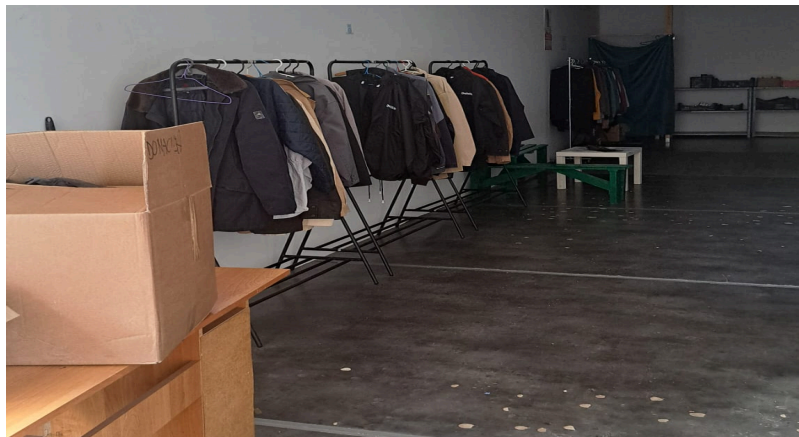
### **Sienos Grupe, Lithuania**

Sienos Grupe assists people who move from Belarus into Lithuania, and who need emergency supplies (food, water, clothes, medical care) while they cross the forest. They also support people who are stuck in detention centres. We supported Sienos with a monthly donation until October, in total €4900. We stopped funding, because their focus has shifted from emergency aid to advocacy and integration.



### **Kompass 071, Bosnia & Herzegovina**

Kompass is a community centre in Sarajevo. Kompass supplies people with clothes, food, and tea. We supported them with a monthly donation from the beginning of this year. We supported them with a total of €5900. We are now reducing the donations on a monthly basis due to lower numbers of people crossing through Bosnia.



The free shop at Kompass' community centre in Sarajevo

### **Sleeping bags**

We collected 4000 sleeping bags, as well as smaller quantities of tarp, tents, blankets, clothes, pots, pans and gas burners, at Down The Rabbit Hole and Lowlands festival. These items are much needed wherever people are sleeping rough. One container of sleeping bags went to northern Italy, from where the items were spread across grassroot organisations assisting homeless people in Italy and Bosnia. Another went to Christian Refugee Relief, a Dutch NGO that manages a warehouse in Athens, with supplies for grassroot organisations across Greece. The third container, with sleeping bags as well as tents and other camping material, went to MRS in Dunkerque, an organisation providing people sleeping rough with clothes, camping gear and other essentials.

We are very happy to receive such high quality camping gear, which is so much needed wherever people are homeless. Collecting containers full of goods with a small team was a tough but very rewarding experience we hope to repeat in the coming years.



Sleeping bag collection Lowlands

## **Finance & fundraising**

MiGreat is an independent organisation that does not get any government funding. This means we are mainly funded by individual donations and also get support from non-governmental funds.

We spend most of our money on organising campaigns, delivering aid and some running costs. This year, financial stability has been a bigger priority and so we managed to reduce some of our costs. We have been doing our own financial administration on a monthly basis. Also, our director reduced her working hours to reduce costs a bit, we quit the project in Ter Apel and reduced the support to organisations working on the EU borders.

### **Fundraising**

In 2024, we started up a designated working group for fundraising. This has made it possible to improve the amount of monthly supporters, to organise fundraising events and apply for funds.

We received €14K through one time donations, through calls on social media, newsletter and other communication. The amount of recurring/monthly donations grew by 29,5% with a total of €22K. We started the year with 45 recurring donors and ended it with 91, doubling the number of monthly supporters.

We also focused on fundraising events and activities this year, this resulted in about €11K. We are super happy with the support of Sebbiebikes, who raised €3600 for us during his bike trip to India, we raised €3600 during the Dam tot Damloop, speaking at events or giving workshops resulted in almost €3300.



Protest sign at IND office

In terms of funds, we have received €5K from the Safe Passage Fund for our deportations campaign. For the national demo we received €3575 from Oxfam and €2000 from FNV. It has been hard to find funds that seem like a good match, as most grants are more interested in funding aid or awareness, but less interested in direct action.

This year, we wanted to learn and test different fundraising strategies. What we have learned is that we have a support base of people who strongly believe in our work and mission, and are willing to offer long term support as a monthly donor, or donate one-off or join fundraising events. Grants are still an important source of money as well, but also create issues if we speak out fiercely about Palestine or get involved in direct action.

## **Expenses**

In terms of expenses we have spent money on emergency aid, campaigns, communication and running costs. The emergency aid consists of financial support to the organisations we supported on the European borders, our Ter Apel project and our sleeping bag project – in total, we spent €20.7K on aid. The campaigns were the MOVE campaign that included the national demonstration,

the deportation campaign, and small actions and the communication. Most of the wages and volunteer stipends we pay also are attributed to campaigns. We spent €67.4K on this. Our running costs this year came to about €16K. This includes our banking, website, office and accountant costs for the financial year report and overhead.

In 2024, we spent more money than we received and burnt about €38K, but compared to 2023 we lowered our burn by 56%. This means we moved a lot closer to our goal of financial stability this year.

MIGREAT 2024 - INCOME & EXPENSES			
INCOME		EXPENSES	
Flexible donations	€ 14.150,07	Emergency aid	€ 20.100,89
Donations with purpose	€ 15.079,29	Campaigns	€ 67.370,50
Donations recurring	€ 22.071,60	Running costs	€ 16.555,37
Funds	€ 5.000,00		
Other	€ 9.307,09		
<b>Total income 2024</b>	<b>€ 65.608,05</b>	<b>Total costs 2024</b>	<b>€ 104.026,76</b>
		<b>Burn</b>	<b>-€ 38.418,71</b>

## Contact

Please get in touch with us for any questions regarding MiGreat on [info@migreat.org](mailto:info@migreat.org). Thanks!