



BOXTRIBUTE

ANNUAL REPORT

1ST JANUARY 2022- 31ST DECEMBER 2022

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GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ANBI - A tax classification for an organisation designating it as a public benefit organisation (*Algemeen Nut Beogende Instelling*) under the purview the Dutch tax authorities.

DiH - Drapen i Havet (Drop in the Ocean), a Norwegian registered NGO that has been active in Greece since 2015.

IOM - International Organisation for Migration, a UN agency focused on the management of migration.

M&E - Monitoring and Evaluation. Frequently used term in the humanitarian field to cover the activities needed to assess the impact, efficiency, and effectiveness of an intervention across multiple dimensions.

MOPS - *Miejskim Ośrodkiem Pomocy* (Municipal Aid Centre). The social support programme for the city of Krakow, Poland.

NGO - Non Governmental organisation.

PTF - The Prototype Fund, a funding program of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF or *Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung*) that is managed and evaluated by the Open Knowledge Foundation Germany.

DIRECTOR'S LETTER

BY ROANNA KONG

2022 was a pivotal year for Boxtribute, marked by significant achievements, real challenges, and key lessons. We played a vital role in mobilising large-scale aid following the Ukraine invasion, establishing crucial support infrastructure for refugees arriving in Poland. At the same time, we upheld our long-standing commitment to asylum seekers in the Mediterranean, ensuring aid reached them even as their plight was overshadowed by global events.

Beginning the year with strong fundraising momentum was a key highlight, allowing us to collaborate more closely with our partners and explore new methods of delivering aid to unsettled populations through mobile distributions. These groups are hard to reach and often face unique challenges compared to settled populations. Another key moment was being able to pay a field visit to the Free Shop Lebanon, one of our flagship partners that uses the Boxtribute system and local staff to deliver aid with dignity to over 2,500 families.

Still, the year was not without its share of setbacks. The absence of ANBI status limited our ability to harness the outpouring of public support for Ukraine due to gift tax obligations. Resolving the ANBI approval process became a major project in itself, diverting a significant amount of my personal time away from operations. Compounding this, COVID-19 disruptions further strained our team's capacity. I credit Boxtribute's focus on the mental health and wellbeing of the team as a key factor in the resilience of our long-term members, whose dedication brought them back to the work time and again.

The Ukraine crisis also saw many well-meaning but inexperienced actors, including commercial companies, entering the relief space. Unfortunately, many of these initiatives failed to provide lasting solutions for those they aimed to help, becoming abandoned projects. This continues to underscore the importance of localization and working within the ecosystem of local civil society organisations in relief work. It has also made it clear that Boxtribute's decision to invest first in relationships with those on the ground is the right one for our mission to ensure our impact is sustainable.

With ANBI approval on the horizon for 2023, we look forward to the possibilities it will create in strengthening our partnerships and working collaboratively with them to develop innovative solutions that address the realities on the ground. The year has demonstrated the importance of collaboration, localization, and connection in our work. As we move forward, we remain committed to learning from our challenges, celebrating our successes, and continuing to make a positive difference in the lives of those we serve.

IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

With Boxtribute, aid collection is more transparent, distributions are quicker, safer, and able to offer vulnerable people freedom of choice. We advise local charities and aid groups on their programs with invaluable free consultation. The below stories demonstrate our impact in more detail.

#1 KRAKOW FREE SHOP WITH DRAPEN I HAVET AND INTERNATIONAL BUND POLSKA

One of Boxtribute's most notable contributions in 2022 was our involvement in *Szafa Dobra*. Partnering with Polish NGO *International Bund Polska (IB Polska)* and Norwegian NGO *Dråpen i Havet (DiH)*, *Szafa Dobra* is one of the largest support centres offering dignified, choice-based relief to Ukrainian refugees in Krakow. Operating out of a decommissioned shopping mall slated for demolition, *DiH* and *IB Polska* worked with multiple other partners and agencies to set up a relief centre for those fleeing the crisis. In the first days of the war response, over 1,500 people were lining up for support every day. Our partners had to quickly organize and coordinate teams of almost 100 volunteers who had no formal training.



After a month of presence to establish a consistent set of relief operations, this work was fully handed over in March to *IB Polska*, who took the project forward by integrating it with MOPS, the municipal support program. The project now covers Krakow residents eligible for municipal support as well as refugees, and has provided dignified aid through their free shop to more than 86,000 people. *Szafa Dobra* has truly become a flagship example of how to run aid operations in a crisis, while setting an example of how to transition such projects into initiatives that support integration and accessibility for all.

#2 MOBILISING MASSIVE AID COLLECTION THROUGH GRASSROOTS EFFORTS

Boxtribute's partners demonstrated the power of community-driven humanitarian action, collecting an astounding 2.2 million items for those in need. A standout example was *Grenzenlose Wärme*, a fully volunteer-run organisation with just 17 members, who gathered 896,524 items. Their efforts peaked in March in response to the Ukraine crisis, with 2,179 boxes* of hygiene products and 639 boxes* of food supplies collected. Beyond these essentials, they were also able to deliver 74 hospital beds, as well as specialized medical equipment such as X-ray and ultrasound machines. This work, facilitated by Boxtribute's system, saved many lives, and showcases how even small organisations can make a significant impact in the humanitarian supply chain by turning community goodwill into tangible support for those in crisis.

*We use boxes as an approximation of volume since items can be misleading for small objects like toothbrushes.



A team event for *Grenzenlose Wärme* volunteers, with board members Sebastian Heinze (top row center in white) and Kathi Bach (bottom row center).

IMPACT LEARNINGS

#1 WORK WITH AN EXISTING PRESENCE TO MAXIMISE IMPACT

During the Ukraine crisis, the team recognized that there was room for improvement in making an impact. While the *Szafa Dobra* project saw significant success, it was largely due to our already established connection with *DiH*. Due to the chaotic nature of disaster response, aid relief organisations often lack the capacity to implement new systems unless there are trained coordinators already in place. Should the donor community and aid workers understand the advantages of having a pre-established solution in place for disaster response, while prioritising community-first solutions alongside the actual intervention itself, we might be able to make a bigger impact in the future.



DiH coordinators providing training on logistics and warehouse management at *Szafa Dobra*, in partnership with local NGO *IB Polska*.



At *Szafa Dobra*: Boxttribute sorted and registered items on the left, unsorted donations on the right

#2 ASSESS LEGAL REGULATION BEFORE TRYING SOMETHING NEW

While seeking ANBI status, we encountered challenges due to specific regulations within Dutch law, where only activities involving direct interaction with end beneficiaries are considered charitable. Since Boxtribute users are often not the end beneficiaries, but a critical gateway through which end beneficiaries get the aid they need, our prior year's application for ANBI status was rejected. Fortunately, with the generous support of Keith Wallace, Solicitor for Reed Smith LLP, we were able to fully resolve the matter. To demonstrate our qualifications we were recommended to change our articles of association to focus more clearly on the beneficiary impact we aim to create, and provide the authorities with a more extensive series of documents, including our organisational strategy, governance policies, and a comprehensive matrix showing recommendations of support from our partners, indicating our direct contributions to core causes recognized as charitable under Dutch law.

#3 GOOD INTENTIONS CAN BE SUBVERTED BY THE LACK OF SUSTAINABILITY

While the influx of technology corporations offering solutions for humanitarian aid has offered more resources and a more efficient way of delivering aid, it has also introduced challenges. Big corporations are often able to offer assistance rapidly. However, in the absence of long-term commitment and a deeper understanding of underlying humanitarian issues, this sometimes introduces systems that cannot be adequately maintained, or fail to address the root causes of problems. Devoting time to working on inadequate and non-sustainable systems often has the unintended effect of actually delaying aid delivery. The adoption of solutions that are not fit for purpose can also block future digital progress. If grassroots organisations invest in a system that fails to meet their needs and ends up costing them time and resources, they might be hesitant to try other solutions in the future, fearing further wasting of resources.



2022 FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

OPERATIONAL SPEND: 25,523 EUR

- Of which **9,000** EUR was for technical maintenance. This amount was generously subsidized by our volunteer software developers, who contributed hundreds of hours pro bono to maintaining the application.
- Of which **6,210** was for new project development, which is the work involved in creating new project proposals. This includes the projects that were separately funded by the Prototype Fund.
- Of which **2,070** EUR was spent on institutional fundraising
- Of which **2,685** EUR was spent on accounting and bank fees
- Of which **425** EUR was regranted to *Collective Aid* as part of a joint project.

INCOMING FUNDING: 20,437 EUR

- Of which **14,398** EUR was institutional donations, of which the largest donor was Founder's Pledge (**10,000** EUR).
- Of which **5,034** EUR was partner contributions to our operations through service subscriptions
- Of which **1,430** EUR was individual donations, of which the largest donor was Chin Yan Wong (**1,000** EUR).

Special Thanks

We would like to thank The Prototype Fund for their direct sponsorship of Boxtribute team members for a total of **87,780** EUR in 2022 across three separate projects: *Boxtribute API*, *Mobile Distributions*, and *Boxtribute 2.0*. The Prototype also funded a team member on the Boxtribute API project for **15,960** EUR in 2021.

We are also most grateful for the support of Keith Wallace from Reed Smith LLP, who provided us with comprehensive pro-bono advice on qualifying for ANBI status under Dutch and European case law. The advice provided had an equivalent billable value of **52,601** GBP (~**61,701** EUR).*

Official financial statements are publicly available on our website. We are happy to answer any and all questions regarding our accounts at billing@boxtribute.org

*12,642 GBP (~14,517 EUR) was allocated to the 2023 annual accounts



CONTEXT IN THE FIELD

At the start of 2022, the issue that dominated the concerns of the international community was how to regain a semblance of normality after COVID-19 lockdowns. Within the grassroots sector, teams focused on re-expanding distributions after social distancing, including providing better coverage to transient beneficiaries who have been historically underserved by traditional distribution methods. At Boxtribute, we looked at exploring methods to better reach beneficiaries that were not easily serviced by our flagship “free shop” dignified distribution process, which is designed for a settled group of long-term residents able to make regular trips to a free shop to choose their needs. One of our projects, which was supported by *The Prototype Fund*, involved working to develop a mobile distribution solution that could be a better fit for transient beneficiaries, such as asylum seekers travelling along the Balkan route, who often stayed in one location for only a few days.

These expectations were thrown into disarray in February with the Russian incursion into Ukraine. The invasion generated a wave of international support: EU nations activated policies that provided safe passage and temporary asylum for Ukrainians fleeing the crisis, and an outpouring of funds from US private and public institutions alike.

Feb 2022: Before the invasion



■ Russian military control
■ Limited Russian military control

Mar 2022: Russia's rapid advance



■ Russian-backed separatist-held areas
□ Russia annexed Crimea in 2014

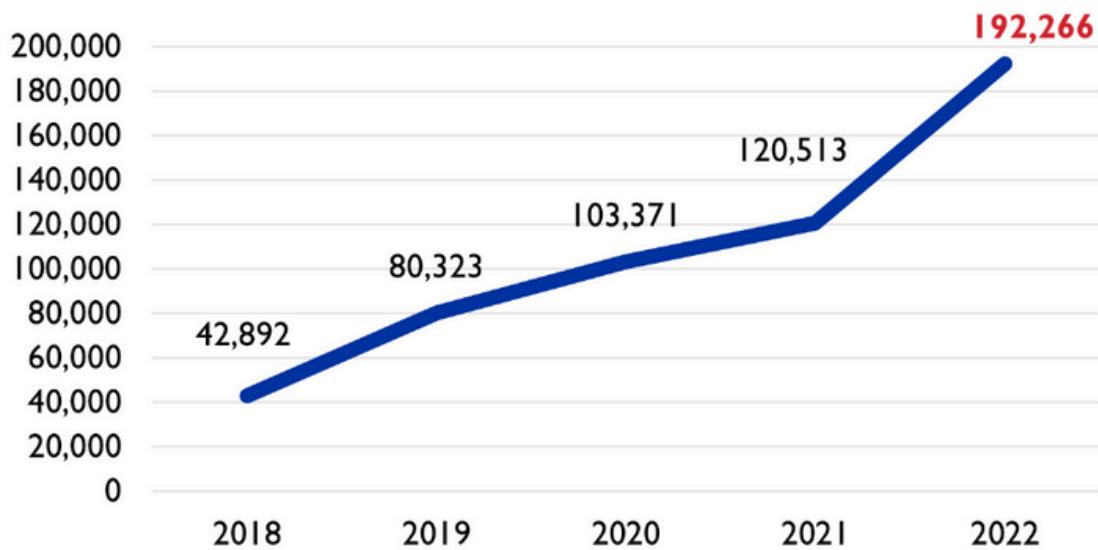
SOURCE: THE INSTITUTE OF WAR (as published by Paul Kirby, BBC, 2023)

There were many challenges during this time, however, one in particular was though many people of means mobilised quickly to support the transfer of aid, a lot of these people did not have any prior experience in the field or working with humanitarian projects. This meant that time and energy was wasted in reinventing the wheel, and that existing solutions with proven track record - such as Boxtribute - were not fully utilised.

Citizens inside the European Union also faced many of their own challenges, including price spikes for both food and energy, and the intermittent start and stops of restoring public life as EU governments accepted the endemic nature of COVID-19. Summer also brought the highest recorded temperatures in history, and an estimated 61,672 heat-related deaths, with Italy experiencing both the highest number of deaths (18,010) and the highest mortality rates in the continent. Countries that suffered the top mortality rates were all located in the Mediterranean.

Meanwhile, overshadowed by other events, the refugee crisis intensified. The Western Balkans experienced the highest number of arrivals in history, with Serbia comprising a key route. Afghans, most of them fleeing Taliban occupation, continued to be the most common population in this group.

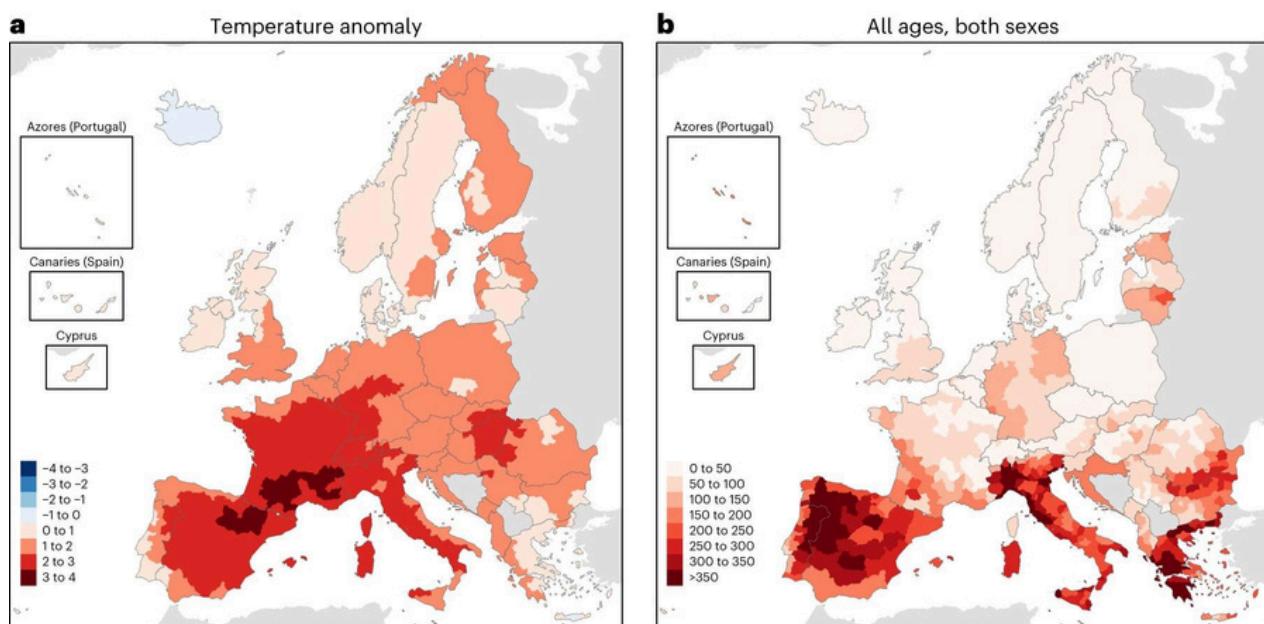
MIGRANT ARRIVALS IN THE WESTERN BALKANS, 2018-2022



SOURCE: IOM DISPLACEMENT TRACKING MATRIX, 2023

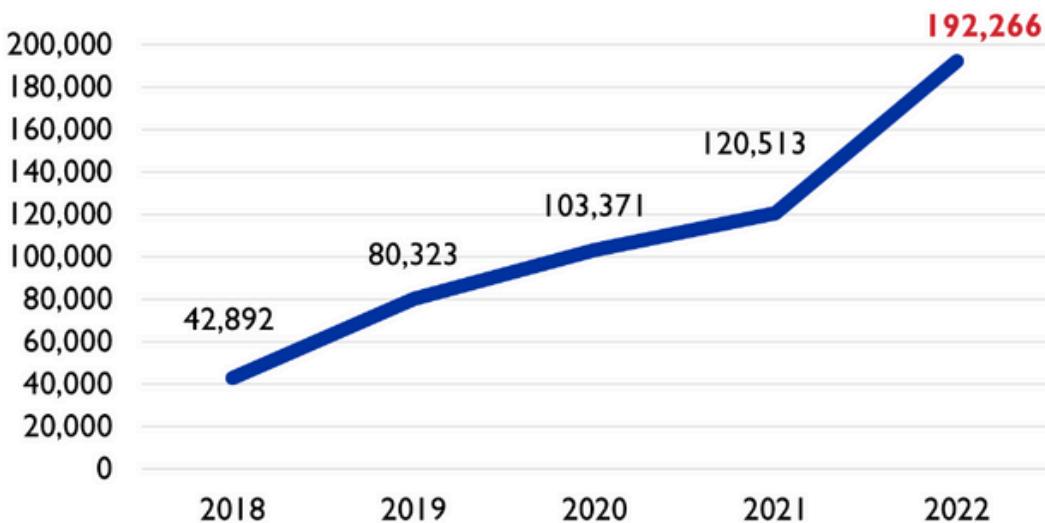
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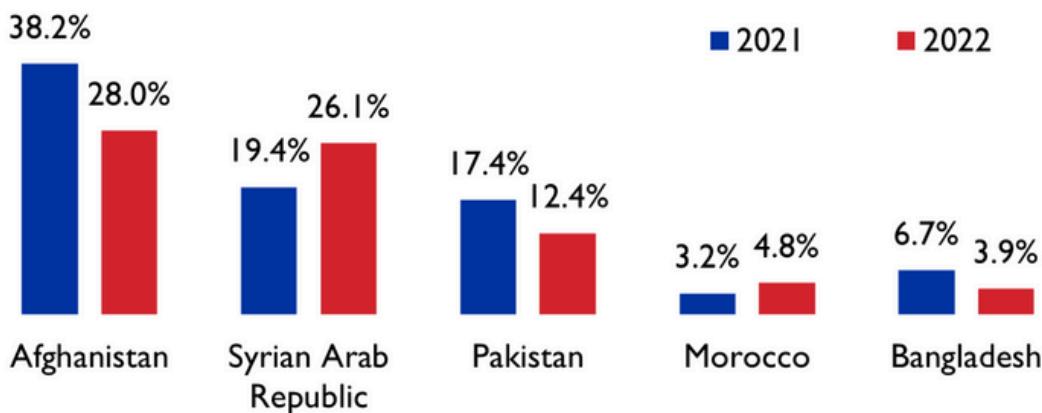


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MIGRANT ARRIVALS IN THE WESTERN BALKANS, 2018-2022



NATIONALITY OF MIGRANT ARRIVALS IN THE WESTERN BALKANS, 2021-2022



SOURCE: DTM, IOM DISPLACEMENT TRACKING MATRIX, 2023

IOM also reported a 33% increase in departures and attempted crossings of the Central Mediterranean Sea in 2022 compared to 2021, for a total of 144,200 attempts – the highest since 2017 at the height of the crisis. In both areas, violence and illegal pushbacks from FrontEx and other border control agencies continued to be an issue. Nevertheless, there appeared to be some progress in creating accountability at the governmental level, with FrontEx experiencing an 8.5% reduction in budget to 692.8 million EUR after a European parliament review deemed that they had insufficiently addressed concerns over pushbacks.

In September, the death of 22-year-old Kurdish-Iranian woman Mahsa Amini in Iran's police custody drew new awareness to the rights of women and children under oppressive regimes, and the importance of human rights overall. Her death also triggered widespread protests in Iran, which by September 2023, led to almost 20,000 arrests, over 500 deaths, and seven executions.

All in all, 2022 proved to be an eventful year that presented many cross-cutting challenges to the humanitarian sector. Just as the easing of the COVID-19 pandemic promised a return to normality, international tensions flared, driving intense, but rapidly shifting media attention across the globe. Although the aftermath of COVID-19 lockdowns had the effect of creating a higher level of awareness of hygiene and cleanliness supplies among the general public, which reinforced the importance of NFI and related interventions, by and large, the media coverage of international events was mirrored by an evolution in donor priorities, which in turn impacted many grassroots' organisations long-standing operations in the Mediterranean.

At Boxtribute, while the team sometimes struggled with some of the challenges brought on by these events, the end result was that it helped refine our vision and strategy further and create better focus. Some of the outcomes included a reorganization of the volunteer team to singularly push for one outcome over the year, rather than splitting up an overstretched team into multiple functions with unrelated goals, as well as strong insights from the Ukraine crisis response on the ground and among the donor communities, which has lead to an improved readiness for future shocks and crises.

GEOGRAPHICAL OVERVIEW

Poland

In just over two weeks after the Russian incursion into Ukraine, DiH set up a huge warehouse in Krakow with *IB Polska* to support people that were fleeing Ukraine.

UK

There was a huge increase of people arriving in the UK via irregular routes, in 2022 a total of 45,755 arrived, a 60% increase from 2021.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, there was a 75% increase in arrivals, over 40% of whom were from Afghanistan. They had four temporary reception centres, able to hold 4,500 people, and set up mobile teams outside the reception centres as a response to the high turnover of people using the centres.

Italy

Throughout the year, arrivals in Italy doubled as asylum seekers sought refuge in Europe.

Ukraine

Thousands of people displaced due to the Russian incursion into Ukraine in February 2022.

Key Developments in 2022
Boxtribute Deployed Locations

Greece

Over 18,000 people arrived through Land or sea seeking asylum in 2022, an increase of over 100%. There were also accusations of illegal pushbacks by Greek authorities, with some substantiated proof.

Lebanon

Lebanon was hosted the largest number of refugees per capita in 2022, this, along with the ongoing economic crisis has contributed to 90% of Syrian refugees living in extreme poverty.

SPECIFIC LOCATIONS

NEW PARTNERS / SITES IN 2022

- **Collective Aid** in Subotica, Serbia
- **Blind Spots** in Ubl'a, Slovakia
- **International Bund Polska** in Krakow, Poland

ONGOING PARTNERS / SITES IN 2022

- **Grenzenlose Wärme** in Dortmund, Germany
- **Samos Volunteers** in Samos, Greece
- **Leave No One Behind** in Lesvos, Greece
- **Movement on the Ground** in Lesvos, Greece
- **The Free Shop** in Bekaa Valley, Lebanon
- **The Health Impact** in Zahlé, Lebanon
- **Intereuropean HumanAid Association** in Lakadikia, Greece
- **Lifting Hands International** in Serres, Greece
- **HERMINE** in Würzburg, Germany
- **Dar Bazar** in Rome, Italy
- **Dråpen i Havet** in Nea Kavala, Greece

PARTNERS CEASING OPERATIONS IN 2022

- **Hardcore Help Foundation** in Lüdenscheid, Germany -- Stopped due to resource constraints of the team
- **Dråpen i Havet** in Skaramangas, Greece -- Stopped due to camp closure in 2021; participation continued until 2022 for M&E work
- **EuropeCares** in Frankfurt, Germany -- Stopped due to mismatch between Boxtribute and the intermittent nature of their warehouse operations.

IMPACT IN DEPTH

STOCK MOVED THROUGH WAREHOUSES

In the same way that 2021 saw a huge increase of aid stock moved through our system compared to 2020, 2022 saw a huge increase of aid stock moved through our systems compared to 2021. The total number of aid moved through the warehouses of our partners with Boxtribute increased from 460k aid items in 2021 to 1.4MM in 2022.

Most of this was due to the Ukraine response starting end of February, notably the *Sfaza Dobra* response effort in Krakow which alone registered the distribution of almost 800K items inside Boxtribute (see Impact Highlight #1) and German aid sending organizations like *Grenzenlose Wärme* (see Impact Highlight #3).

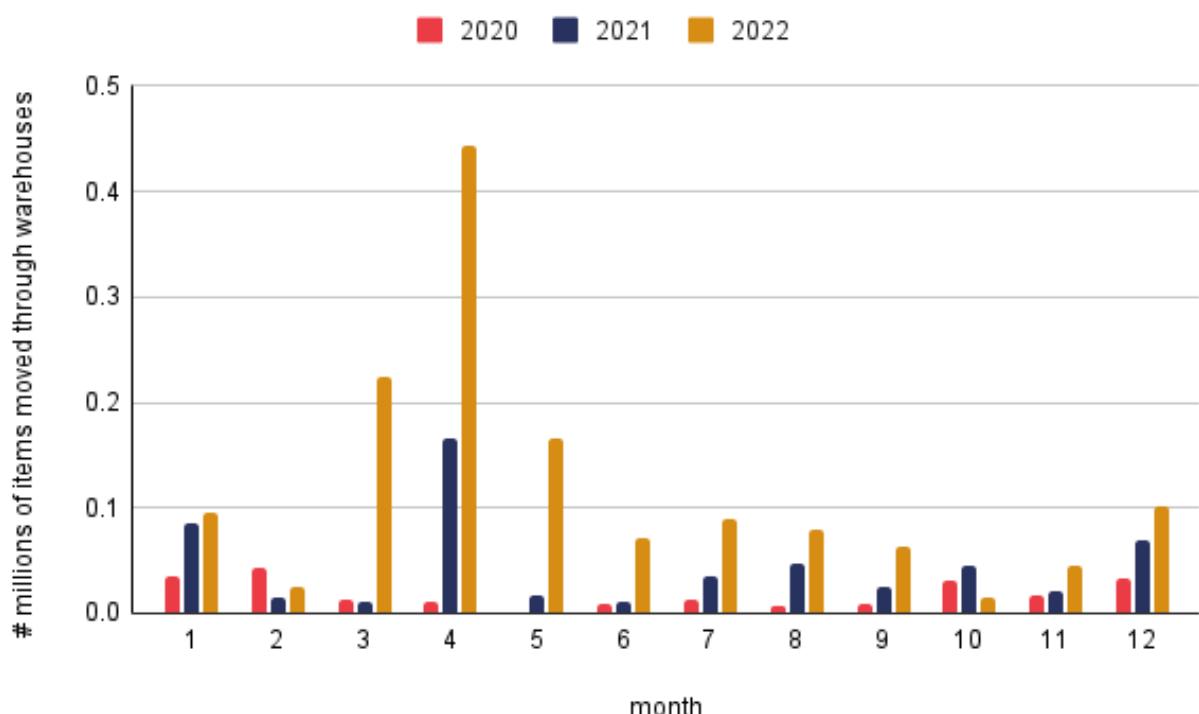


Figure 1: How many items of aid were moved through our partners' warehouses by each month between 2020 and 2022.

As shown in Figure 2, the mix of aid items moved through our partner's warehouses consists predominantly of clothing, e.g. shoes and underwear, and hygiene products, e.g. menstrual pads, soap, toothbrushes, and band aids. Due to the response to the war in Ukraine we have seen a sharp uptake of Food and Medication being processed with Boxtribute in 2022.

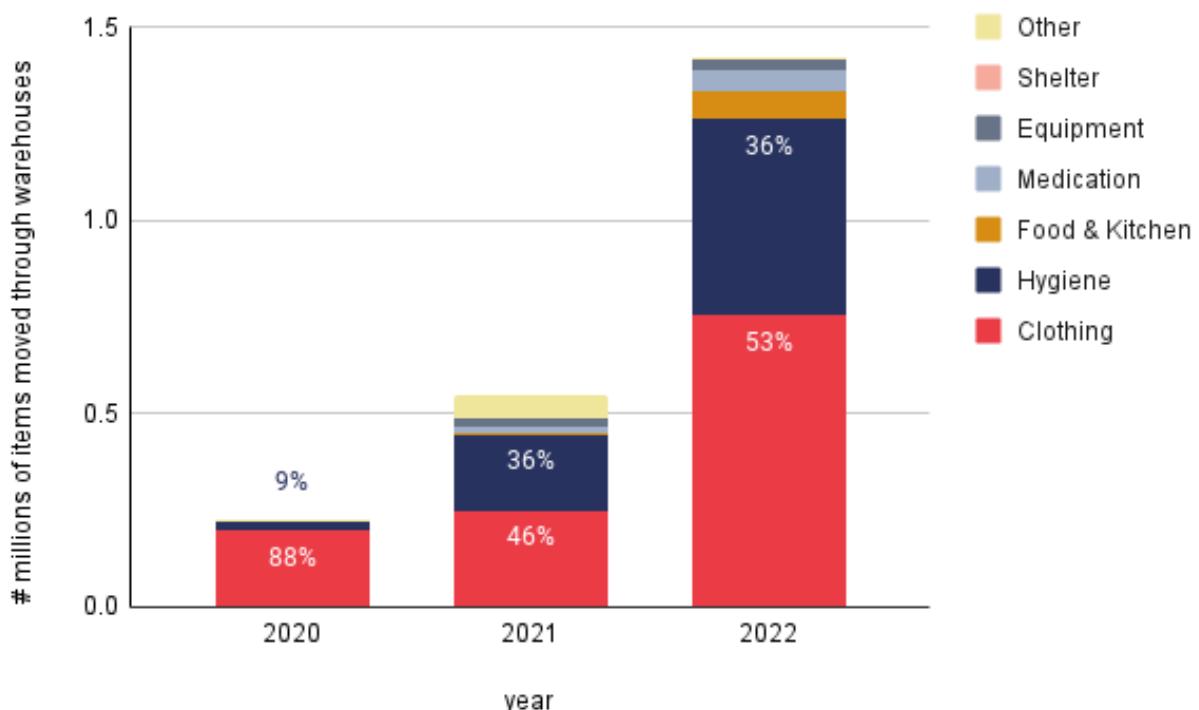


Figure 2: How many items of aid were moved through our partners warehouses by product category and year.

BENEFICIARIES REGISTERED & FREE SHOP TRANSACTIONS

610,885 new beneficiaries were registered in 2022 in comparison to 8376 in 2020. The highest proportion (66%) of newly registered beneficiaries were in Lebanon, from our partners The Free Shop and The Health Impact, totaling 7,199 out of 10,885 newly registered beneficiaries. One interesting dynamic that sheds light on these operations is that The Free Shop registers families as individual beneficiaries for the sake of speed. This means that the true number of newly registered beneficiaries is at least 8,241, rather than 2,747 families as registered in Boxtribute, under the conservative assumption of an average family size of 3.

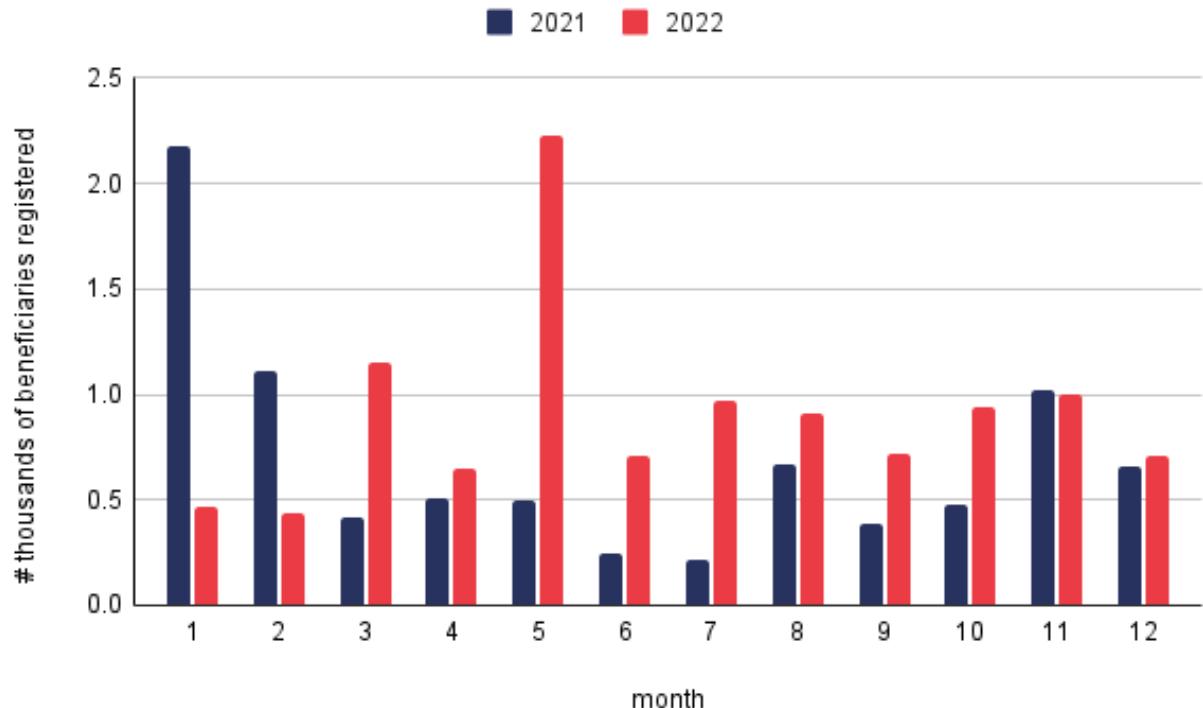


Figure 3: How many beneficiaries were registered by our partners by each month in 2021 and 2022.

By contrast, in Greece, *DiH* experienced a significant decrease in shop checkout distributions, going from 18,753 checkouts in 2021 to 4,289 in 2022. This decline is mainly due to the closure of the Skaramangas camp in 2021 (15,000 checkouts) and the 2021 handover of the Samos warehouse to Samos Volunteers. Comparing the equivalent operations between *DiH* and Samos Volunteers shows that checkouts remained stable at around 3,000 in both years.

The difference in registrations between Lebanon and other locations can be explained by the fact that beneficiary registrations work best for a stable, settled population. In the Bekaa Valley, due to the Lebanese government's no-camp policy, there is minimal movement out of the country or into different regions of Lebanon. Most refugees reside in informal settlements on rented land. Without a central coordination authority, it becomes critical for nonprofit organizations providing support to register beneficiaries for fairness in distribution. In contrast, in Greece, where camps have become a core part of the asylum system, this registration is less critical.

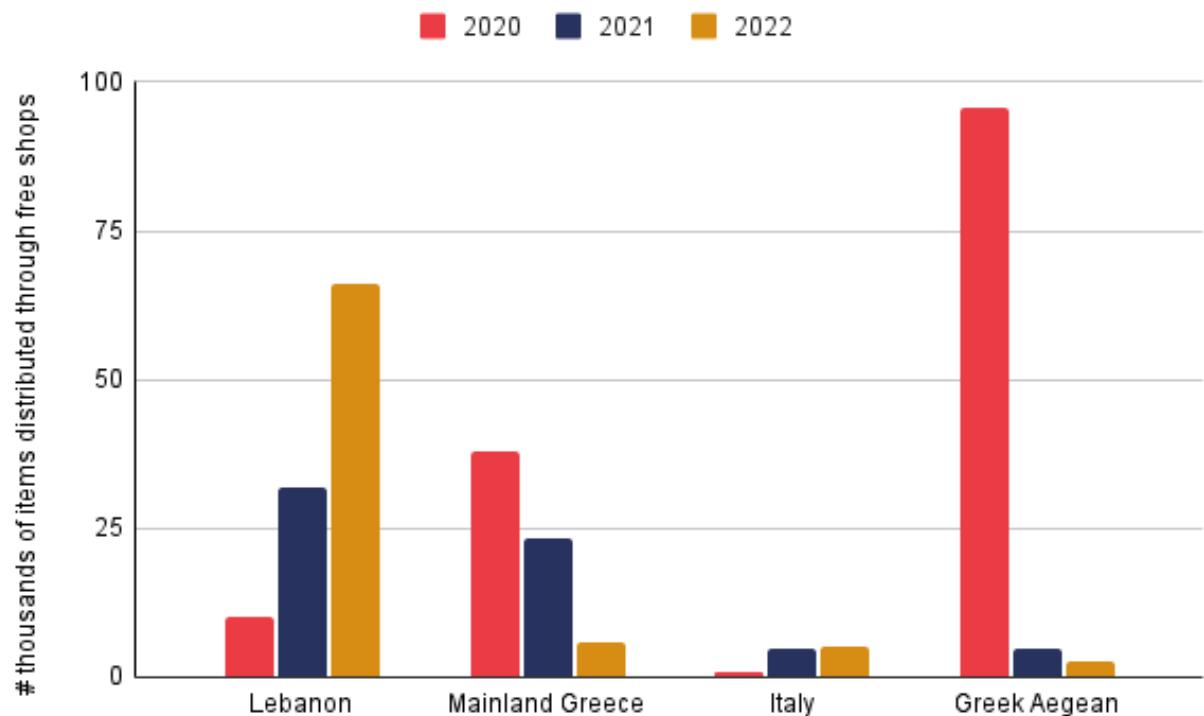


Figure 4: How many items were distributed through free shops by our partners by region and year.



KEY ORGANISATIONAL MILESTONES

Our purpose is to truly make a difference for vulnerable people by addressing the fundamental issues that prevent humanitarian aid from effectively aiding those in need today. However, this level of change is not possible without us developing plans for the long-term. Behind the scenes, we've reached some key milestones in 2022, some of which are highlighted below.

SUSTAINABILITY

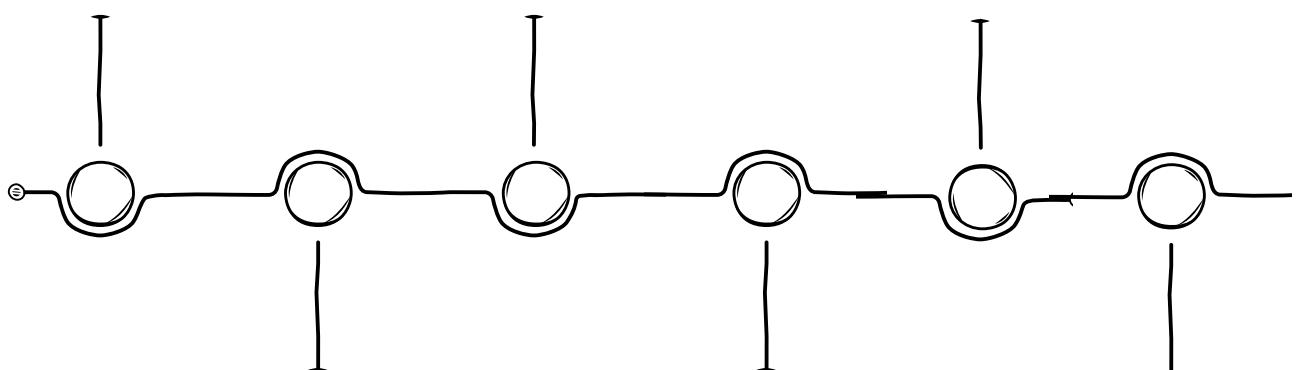
A successful first year for the Fundraising Team

DEVELOPMENT

Boxtribute 2.0 moved from development stage to production

SECURITY

Policy on only supporting actors who do not provide offensive military items in aid



Received pro-bono legal support for ANBI status

NETWORKING

United goals and milestones for the volunteer team, rather than splitting by function

STRATEGY

Completed first year of sponsorship, received two more grants for senior devs

TEAM GROWTH

PARTNERS



DROP IN THE OCEAN



LIFTING HANDS INTERNATIONAL



INTEREUROPEAN HUMANAID ASSOCIATION



HERMINE



DAR BAZAR



GRENZENLOSE WÄRME



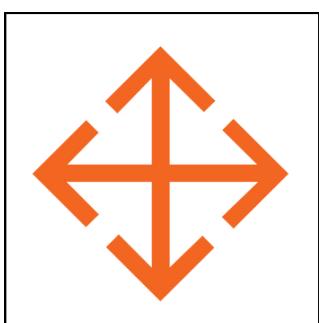
BLIND SPOTS



COLLECTIVE AID



THE FREE SHOP



MOVEMENT ON THE GROUND



LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND



SAMOS VOLUNTEERS



HARDCORE HELP FOUNDATION



INTERNATIONAL BUND POLSKA



HEALTH IMPACT



EUROPE CARES

SPECIAL THANKS

While we are grateful to all those who have contributed their valuable time and energy for Boxtribute, we would like to extend a special thanks for pro bono contributions of:

- **Finan Tretheway**, for his work as Partnerships Lead for Boxtribute from 2020-2022. During his time as Partnerships Lead, Fin was responsible for significantly increasing the size of Boxtribute's network, and was responsible for developing a partnership strategy that made it possible for Boxtribute to support small, resource-constrained nonprofits.
- **Keith Wallace**, Solicitor for Reed Smith LLP, for his excellent legal advice on attaining ANBI status for Boxtribute; as well as **Louise Cosgrove**, whose consistent support throughout the process was invaluable to allowing us to bring this endeavour to a successful conclusion.
- **Ilona Van Den Bergh**, Notary Public of Van Campen Liem, who was instrumental in bringing the revision of our articles of association into effect.
- **Hendrik Kaptein**, who supported us with reviewing the Dutch amendments to our Articles of Association we executed during our application for ANBI status, and for advising Boxtribute on the interaction between the SBBI scheme and our pending ANBI status for 2022.

Other volunteer team members who contributed significantly to the success of Boxtribute in 2022 include:

Arnina Beciri, communications manager
Agathe Neulet, product manager (website)
Breanne Chan, graphic design (website + print)
Daniel Spaude, software developer
Ewa Flis, software developer
Philipp Metzner, software developer
Sophie Bluestone, communications manager
Sophie Kurtz, fundraising advisor (German)
Vahid Bazzaz, software developer

OFFICE HOLDERS

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HANS PETER GÜRTNER

SENIOR ADVISOR, TREASURER

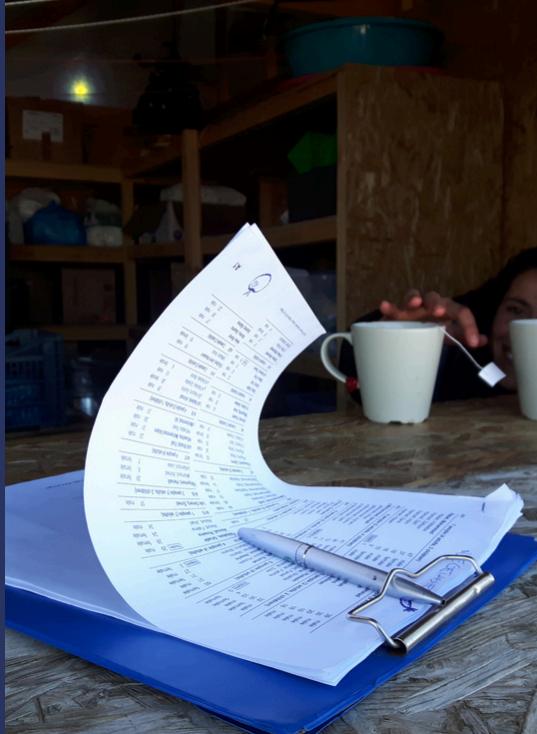
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