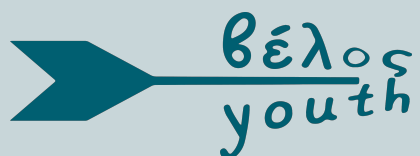




# Velos Youth Annual Report 2019



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# Executive Summary

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This year, Velos Youth continues to support young people in Athens, Greece. The youth centre remains a safe space for displaced unaccompanied children and young people on the move, with 2019 bringing exponential growth and development to Velos Youth's services, operations and reach. Velos's position in the community as a key service provider remains strong. The significant increase in attendance by young people comparatively to 2018 confirms the importance of the safe space and accompanying holistic service provision.

Two and a half years after opening, Velos's mission remains untouched; to support young people to re-start their lives where they are, or safely and legally reach an alternative destination that is in their better interests. This report highlights the organisational achievements of 2019, and some of the major developments implemented to match and support all relevant needs. These achievements are in terms of how we have developed operationally to optimise the impact and effectiveness of our support services, but also about the direct impact these developments have on the children and young adults visiting us.

Velos Youth continues to strive for the improved safety and wellbeing of young migrants in Greece, with a determination to grow the range and quality of services offered, directly and via our network of collaborative partnerships, throughout 2020.

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# Major Year 3 Achievements

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Velos Youth experienced a great year full of developments, expansions and growth. A major achievement in 2019 was receiving the European Program for Integration and Migration fund to run a 2-year project titled "Transitioning to Adulthood: A Pathway to self reliance and autonomy"<sup>1</sup>. The project, based on supporting young people's transition to adulthood, integration and eventual autonomy, is delivered alongside our partners *HumanRights360* and *Day Centre Babel*. Through these collaborations, we began covering some of the gaps in support for young people that Velos has historically struggled to fill, including 1:1 psychological support, employment counselling and stronger local and national level advocacy regarding the challenges faced by young people. The beginning of this project in October coincided with the ending of the Monopati Education Engagement Pilot Project<sup>2</sup>. The tools developed within this one year pilot project became foundational to the work of Velos Youth, were instrumental in obtaining this new funding and will be carried forward into the following two years.

Further, 2019 saw the continuation of collaborations formed in 2018, and the development of many new ones. Our collaboration with *Defence for Children International* (DCI) assisted with various legal gaps in service provision. DCI delivered legal information sessions, while consistently taking on new legal cases and supporting minors to apply for asylum and reunification. Our collaboration with *Medecins Sans Frontieres* (MSF) has also remained strong, delivering weekly workshops on Health Promotion, First Aid and Travel Medicine, and consistently providing us with support of hygiene and medical supplies. Finally, *Humanity Crew* have continued to be a close partner. This year they ran useful trainings for the Velos team covering topics such as "Self Care", and continued to provide 1:1 psychosocial support to some team members. Humanity Crew also ran psychosocial activities for the young people visiting the centre through the exploration of poetry.

For another year, the case work system of Velos Youth was transformed. The team was joined by two certified social workers, of which one took the role of Child Protection Lead, and the other the role of coordinating the *Transitioning to Adulthood* program. Velos upgraded its case management system through the delegation of key areas of focus, to specific members in the case management team. This restructuring allows for a greater depth of knowledge of external services and referral pathways into them. As intended, this system enables us to continue providing a safe, supportive, and information-packed space. The physical system used was also upgrade from Outcomes Star to Lamplight Database<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>[https://www.epim.info/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Recommendations\\_A-Future-with-Children-on-the-Move-in-Greece.pdf](https://www.epim.info/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Recommendations_A-Future-with-Children-on-the-Move-in-Greece.pdf)

<sup>3</sup><http://www.lamplightdb.co.uk>

As described by a visiting organisation, "you walk in [to Velos] and you feel the dynamism, it's a hub". It's in this hub that children and young adults can be directed to specialist services through direct referrals and sign-postings to other organisations. As our casework system has exponentially developed, its success is reflected through the increased number direct referrals, sign-postings and sharing of information. The table below shows the number of each of these under 9 key areas of support.

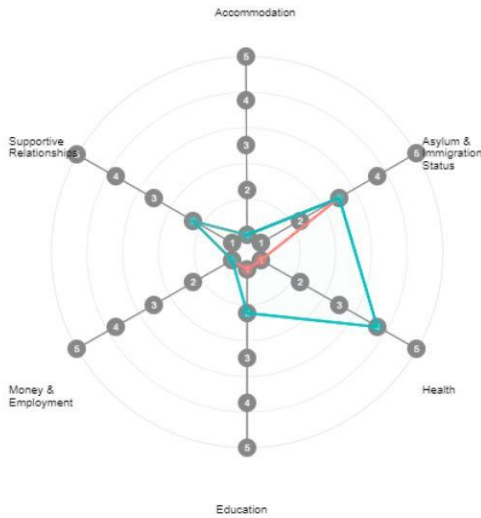
	Housing	Asylum/ Legal	Medical	Education	Drug/Alcohol	PSS
<b>Direct</b>	80	191	147	88	1	109
<b>Signposting</b>	118	130	164	523	0	39
<b>Information</b>	552	583	397	1141	176	326
	Employment	Money/ Material	Guardian	Relationships	Protection	Total
<b>Direct</b>	60	17	15	6	38	752
<b>Signposting</b>	36	192	15	1	12	1230
<b>Information</b>	410	201	167	258	308	4519

Many of these referrals and interactions are carried out throughout the Lamplight casework system, which we have customised to our needs. After designing the platform from scratch, the new system separates a young persons progress into two overall categories: change in attitudes and willingness/motivation to move forward, and the actual tangible progress made. The platform enables Velos to account for the many barriers that prevent a young person progressing despite their best and repeated attempts, and shows the disparity in those trying to access their rights and those successfully accessing them. Lamplight has also allowed us to maintain more secure communication with the people who visit the center and be readily aware of changing circumstances in their lives.

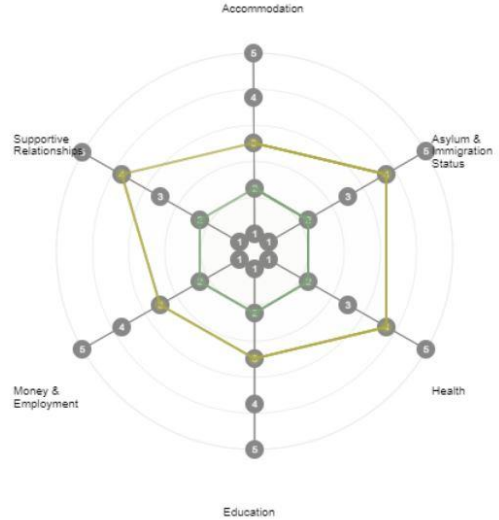
Outcome	Average change	Average initial score	Average final score	Percentage w. positive change	Percentage w. negative change
Accommodation	0.9	2.5	3.4	47.4	5.3
Asylum & Immigration Status	0.3	3.1	3.3	22.2	11.1
Health	0.9	1.8	2.7	42.1	0.0
Education	0.7	1.9	2.7	61.1	0.0
Money & Employment	0.4	1.7	2.1	47.4	10.5
Supportive Relationships	0.8	2.3	3.1	66.7	0.0
Accommodation	0.5	3.0	3.5	50.0	0.0
Asylum & Immigration Status	3.5	3.0	6.5	100.0	0.0
Health	0.0	3.5	3.5	50.0	50.0
Education	1.5	3.0	4.5	100.0	0.0
Money & Employment	0.0	3.5	3.5	50.0	50.0
Supportive Relationships	2.0	2.0	4.0	100.0	0.0

Practically, the Lamplight system is similar to the Outcome Star system previously used. However, Lamplight has two stars - *Motivation* and *Current Situation* - and each star looks at 6 key areas, scaling them from 1 to 5. This is illustrated in the pictures below.

Select outcomes to view:



Select outcomes to view:



The following table shows the total number of visits made to the youth center from the 1st January 2019 to the 31st December 2019. Throughout the year, an average of **56 new young people** visited the center each month, with a total unique service base of **676** people. In comparison to 2018, this data has seen a drastic increase - a natural result of the changing and developing political landscape - which often strained the capacity of our work.

Male	Female	Under 18	18+	Total
7572	28	3897	3703	7600

A small part of the work of Velos Youth is ensuring that young people have access to basic facilities and material items they need, as many of our service users are homeless. The following table shows the quantities of items distributed. Included in this is access to showers and laundry facilities at the Velos Youth Centre.

Clothes	Hygiene products	Sleeping bags/blankets	Shower	Laundry
1056	755	123	1330	1075