



HAL FAR OUTREACH

ANNUAL REPORT 2022



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INTRODUCTION



This report outlines the work done by Hal Far Outreach (HFO) during the year 2022. Unfortunately, the first two months were dominated by the Covid-19 pandemic, and therefore the majority of the work during this time was kept online. However, this did not stop the operations at HFO and more importantly during this time we also managed to finalise preparation for two new programmes. This report will outline the work done throughout 2022, namely, that of the English Classes, the Information Centre and Distribution, as well as our new projects, the Computer Literacy Program and the Malta Migrant Befriending Programme. This year we also had the pleasure of taking part in various Refugee Week Events.

All our work has been possible thanks to our hard working team of volunteers. We are truly grateful to the volunteers who dedicate their time and efforts to HFO. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank all our partners who help us with our projects. The network of support we have is what truly allows us to keep functioning. We are grateful towards the Gudja Parish Centre providing us with the space to hold our English classes, as well as the Melita Foundation for providing us with free WiFi that facilitates our functioning. We also thank the Capuchins Convent in Kalkara for providing us the space to host our Computer Literacy Program classes and space for storage of clothes for distribution. We take this opportunity to also thank the other NGOs working to empower migrants, who are there to help and guide us. Namely we thank; JRS Malta, Aditus Foundation, KOPIN, Blue Door English, Integra, Dancers Beyond Borders and Spark15. We are also grateful to UNHCR Malta, AWAS and the MCVS for their support throughout the years.

Lastly, we thank the community with whom we work; whose resilience, strength and friendship motivates us. We continue to strive for equality and hope to bring about a positive change.

ENGLISH CLASSES

Hal Far Outreach offers free English lessons for the migrant community in Malta. The lessons are held on a weekly basis and focus on all the components of language learning: reading, writing, listening and speaking. They are uniquely tailored to the English that migrants require for the processes, forms and daily situations they will encounter in Malta and abroad. Teachers are encouraged to work with the students to develop a curriculum for their 10- week course in order to ensure they get the maximum benefit from the programmes.

Hal Far Outreach teachers are trained in cultural competency, sensitivity, and flexibility. They are guided by this curriculum while tailoring the lessons to each unique group. Teachers begin each course by asking students what their goals are to ensure the most relevant and meaningful experience. They additionally conduct weekly assessments through homework and adapt the next lesson to review areas that need attention. Finally, teachers aim to make the lessons as interactive as possible and frequently use conversational activities and role-plays.

In 2022, lessons continued to be held online via Zoom. While Covid-19 restrictions were easing around the island, the English Programme Coordinator felt it would be in the interest of the teachers and students to continue virtually until a plan for return to in-person lessons was formed. Uptake of English classes in 2022 was slower than anticipated. Similarly, it took longer than anticipated to recruit teachers for the 2022 semester with 5 teachers being interviewed for a teaching position and two being selected for the role.

Consequently, the first semester of the year began in April 2022 with 2 classes:

- 1 Intermediate men's course
- 1 Advanced mixed course

15 students participated in the April semester. New students are typically recruited to join the English classes via open calls on social media, word-of-mouth among current students, and through Hal Far Outreach's other activities.

A number of students who participated in this semester had previously completed a HFO English course and thus, the aim moving forward would be to prioritise new students.

Looking at the second half of 2022, the English classes successfully moved into in-person classes. It was decided to hold two classes per week, on Tuesday at 7pm for intermediate level students and on Saturday at 11am for beginner level students. The location of the classes was determined to be the Gudja Parish Center. This was the first time since the Covid-pandemic that classes returned to in-person sessions. Several persons were interviewed and it was decided to engage 2 teachers for the roles of English teachers on Saturday and Tuesday. The classes started on October 11 with around 7 persons registered in each class. The lessons continued throughout the rest of the year.

INFORMATION PROVISION AND DISTRIBUTION

Throughout 2022, the plan was to return to our on-the-ground work in Hal Far as much as possible. After closing the Free Shop in 2021 we needed to see how best to carry out distribution and how to provide essential information to Hal Far residents. During the first half of the year, we set up our Information Centre at the Gudja Parish Centre. The space is equipped with printing services and internet access and has been used when we get requests for help with CV writings or job search. Currently the demand for such services is low and thus these services are provided on an ad-hoc basis.

Throughout this year we have also been visiting Hal Far as often as possible to speak to the residence and distribute clothes. Once Covid-19 cases were reduced in March we frequented the area of Hal Far on Saturday mornings, speaking to residents and letting them know of our Information Centre and other services. Throughout the summer months, distribution was done in the evenings due to the heat, where volunteers would visit Hal Far around twice a month to distribute clothes.

Once the summer was over, we resumed distribution over the weekend, where we found that the best time to go would be on a Sunday morning. Volunteers would pack their cars with clothes and set up in the area around the open centres in Hal Far greeting beneficiaries and distributing clothes. We would also provide hot drinks and some snacks, as beneficiaries would gather around us. This was the perfect opportunity for us to speak to the residence, to see to their needs.



MALTA MIGRANT BEFRIENDING PROGRAMME

The Malta Migrant Befriending Programme (MMBP) is the second new programme we launched in 2022 after a successful funding application. The MMBP aims to promote integration of asylum seekers and refugees into Maltese society. It will be accomplished by grouping asylum seekers/refugees, (referred to as befriendees), with long-term Maltese residents, (referred to as befrienders) during a number of group events developed and organised by the MMBP team. This project is being funded through the Voluntary Organisation Project Scheme managed by the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector supported by the Ministry for Inclusion, Voluntary Organisations and Consumer Rights (MIVC).

As an organisation, Hal Far Outreach always looks at the needs of the migrant population that we work with. Therefore, before launching our project a needs assessment was carried out with the beneficiaries of our other projects. After analysing the responses we received from the beneficiaries we designed a new project in line with the beneficiaries' needs. The official recruitment and training started once the project was launched in March 2022. Once a number of persons showed interest, training sessions were set and delivered by the facilitators of the programme.

The programme has had an extensive training schedule for all participants involved as well as for the volunteers and staff of the programme. This involved training on the concepts of boundaries and safeguarding and how best to account for these in a befriending programme. During the training the participants were asked about their motivations and goals to join the programme as well as their concerns. This was an opportunity for the participants to open up and for us to address any concerns they may have.

The main activities of the programme are the group activities that bring all the participants together to facilitate connections. Due to the low number of COVID-19 cases up until now, all activities took place in person, and were not only well received, they were all a great success! The group events have created opportunities for the participants to come together to form friendships. It has proven beneficial for all to share their stories and cultures with one another. The group events have taken place all around Malta, and will continue as such, allowing the migrants to have new experiences with the rest of the group, while feeling a part of Maltese society. The group events have ranged from sports activities, to a clean-up, to workshops involving local artists and even cultural events. The programme is set to continue for the foreseeable future.



INFORMATION LEAFLET

This year we were pleased to have finalised our role in forming an information leaflet for Asylum-Seekers living in Malta together with the RIME partners. This handbook includes all the basic and necessary information needed to live and get around in Malta: information on access to education, housing opportunities, health services, and employment. This project was initially inspired by Le Guide du Réfugié (The Refugee's Guide), a French-produced illustrated handbook intended for refugees and including all basic information needed to navigate all aspects of refugees' rights in France. Arriving in a new country, without knowledge of the local language or culture is challenging, and asylum-seekers often lack the basic information they need to reach essential services.

This comprehensive guide is based on the needs of the beneficiaries, and was created for and with the inclusive and direct participation of asylum-seekers. The information leaflet is available online to migrants and refugees to use throughout their journey in Malta.

JUNE 2022

INFORMATION LEAFLET for Asylum Seekers in Malta



This work is made available within the framework of the EU project RIME (Refugees' Inclusion Moves Europe) conducted by Fondation COS Alexandre Glasberg, Le LABA, Université de Bordeaux, EDRA, Lai-momo, Jönköping University, VisMedNet Association in collaboration with Hal Far Outreach (Cristina AGIUS, Christa CALLUS, Rajaa GACEM, Clara Lou MICHAL, Leslie SCHEMBRI, Arkadiusz MAYER-GAWRON, Ambra ANSELMO and Kim HEGGER)

RIME is a project supported by the Erasmus+ programme. The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflect the views only of the authors and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

COMPUTER LITERACY PROGRAMME

The Computer Literacy Programme is an educational programme which was introduced this year. During the year 2021 and up till the first quarter of 2022, the team had worked towards collecting used computers, with donations coming from private persons and corporate entities. The team was busy with formatting the machines and installing new operating systems and educational software which cater for this programme. The Computer Literacy Programme was launched on the 9th of April, with weekly three hour classes held at the Capuchins Convent in Kalkara. The first course ran for ten weeks until the 11th of June, when the final class was held. The course was attended by 12 students who received basic training in the use of computer applications such as Paint, MS Word, MS Excel, MS Powerpoint and their google equivalent. The students also became familiar with the use of e-mails and the use of Windows operating systems.

The computer literacy programme was well received by the first class as it delivered the basic computer skills and gave confidence to the students to learn on their own time using other learning material found on various platforms online. Several students within the class have shown a desire to continue learning through formal education and our team assisted them with applications and referrals to the applicable colleges in Malta and their guidance services.

After gathering feedback from the first class of students and volunteers alike, the course syllabus and delivery methodology were finetuned according to the needs of our beneficiaries and a new class was welcomed on the 5th of November, 2022. The second beginner class is expected to run until February or March 2023, with the end date being defined as the course progresses and in accordance with the needs of the students. To this date, the Computer Literacy Programme was well received and demand for the course is high, thus we intend to continue investing in this programme in the year to come.





EVENTS

REFUGEE WEEK MALTA 2022

This year we had the pleasure to attend a number of events during Refugee Week. As part of the Malta Migrant Befriending Programme we attended two events during Refugee Week Malta, organised by Dance Beyond Borders. The first of which we co-ordinated with the organiser and hosted an artistic workshop led by local artist Anna Calleja. This event was open to the public and very well attended. It was lovely to see everyone coming together through the artistic activities planned. The second event we attended was the March for Peace in Valletta that marked the official start to Refugee Week Malta. This was a lovely event that included moving speeches, a symbolic walk through Valletta and an opportunity to stand in solidarity with the refugee community.

SPARK! REFUGEE FESTIVAL

On the 19th of June, to commemorate refugee day - Spark 15 in collaboration with Malta Trust Foundation, organised a day festival. This included an afternoon and evening of festivities, music and dance. Hal Far Outreach, together with other NGOs were present to promote their services.

Here we got the opportunity to meet a number of persons willing to join the organisation, as well as services users who signed up for our programmes. We also got the chance to speak to our colleagues and friends who form part of other NGOs.