

Volunteers in Lesvos
The Burden of Volunteering in Humanitarian Crisis and the Opportunities for Support for Volunteers

An Abstract of the Thesis By

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The research for this work focusses on finding out about indicators for activist burnout and helpful practices for prevention. In turn well-being within the activist and volunteer community working with refugees and migrants in Lesvos should be enhanced. By promoting a culture of care specifically addressing human rights and social justice topics the recipients of care can be adequately supported and an additional burden on them can be prevented.

Six interviews were conducted and analyzed based on the existing theoretical scholarship. It was found that altruistic motives drove the research participants to volunteer in Lesvos. At the same time, those motives are the main reason causing symptoms of burnout while not being addressed in staff care measures, hence an existing gap in support structures for activists.

By focusing on outputs and achievements stressors and activist burnout could be mitigated.

Keywords: Volunteering – Activist Burnout – Staff Care – Lesvos – Humanitarian Aid – Mental Health – Migration – Refugees