

FREE MOVEMENT

skateboarding in solidarity



ANNUAL REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2023 - AUGUST 2024

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Through skateboarding, we support and promote the wellbeing, empowerment and social cohesion of youth in Athens. Together, we push for a welcoming and diverse Athenian skate scene and society.

WELLBEING

Skateboarding is mindful exercise, in which focus is necessary to learn new tricks, championing physical and mental health.

EMPOWERMENT

We create spaces in which girls and women, people of colour, refugee, migrant and Roma communities, LGBTQI+ and other groups feel safe to develop their skills on and off the board.

SOCIAL COHESION

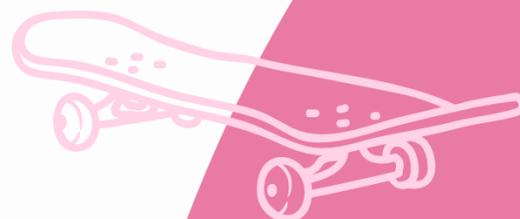
Through the supportive, communal act of skateboarding, diverse youth share more than just space and build community.

IMPACT

SNAPSHOT



588 Unique participants



229 Total Sessions



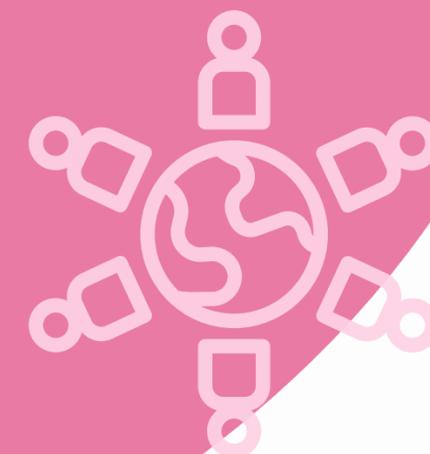
2393 Total Attendance

35% Girl Participation



18 Different Locations

32 Different Cultural Backgrounds



23 Community Events

"I can do it if I try a little longer!"

N., 9 Year Old Participant learning about
perseverance and not giving up



OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT



CURRENT CONTEXT...

Greece has faced the ongoing societal and economic struggles that have persisted for years, along with new developments every year have only strained the situation for the marginalized communities we work with, and impacted the public spaces we rely on. Despite these challenges, our commitment to supporting the well-being, empowerment, and social cohesion of children and young people through skateboarding remains.

Socio-Economic Challenges: The years of economic struggles in Greece have been further exacerbated by the latest rising cost of living, which has had a disproportionately harsh impact on marginalized communities, especially migrant and refugee families. With limited and insecure employment opportunities, and a lack of state support, many families are struggling to meet basic needs. This leaves little, if any, disposable income to accommodate their children's recreational, educational, and social development. Parents are often forced to work multiple jobs or long hours, in many cases they are absent from these important aspects of their children's lives. Our free skateboarding sessions provide accessible and inclusive activities for children, offering physical activity, social interaction, empowerment, support, and skill development at no cost.

Urban Development and Public Space Closures: Ongoing metro line expansion and urban development projects continue to result in closures of public spaces, some of which we use for sessions. Public spaces are essential for cultivating community connection, promoting inclusion, and improving overall well-being, yet they are increasingly threatened by long-term development goals that often neglect the needs of local neighborhoods and their residents. Without careful consideration of short-term disruptions and the concerns of local users, many spaces are being taken away from the very people who need them the most. Paradoxically, while some public spaces are redeveloped or repurposed, others, particularly in overlooked or disregarded neighborhoods, remain neglected and unsafe for users. For example, in one square where we deliver sessions, a neglected playground used by the neighborhood was demolished due to safety concerns. While there are plans to rebuild, the site has remained derelict and inaccessible for over a year. This highlights the disparities in municipal priorities and the lack of urgency in addressing the needs of more marginalized communities and neighborhoods. Such neglect and inconsistency in managing public spaces deprive residents, especially children and youth, of safe and inclusive places to gather, play, and build connections.

Political Developments: The 2024 European elections saw an increase in conservative and nationalist parties, shifting policies toward stricter migration controls and reduced funding for integration programs. These changes are likely to reduce funding further for vital services and programs in Greece, leaving vulnerable populations with even fewer resources.

WHY OUR WORK MATTERS?

As public spaces shrink, socio-economic challenges grow, and services for marginalised communities decline, our sessions and activities remain a lifeline for children and youth in Athens. For us, skateboarding is more than a sport; our sessions are a space for resilience, connection, and empowerment. By providing free, shared, inclusive spaces, we enable youth to thrive amidst adversity, break down barriers, and create together stronger, more united neighbourhoods.

WHY SKATEBOARDING?

Skateboarding is more than a sport—it is a powerful tool for social change and personal growth.

Accessibility and Inclusivity: Skateboarding requires minimal equipment and can be practised in various environments. With our van, mobile skatepark and equipment we are able to bring sessions to some of the most marginalised children and youth in our city. Our sessions are open to everyone, creating safe spaces where youth from different backgrounds—regardless of gender, background, or socio-economic status—can participate freely and without judgement.

Building Resilience and Empowerment: Skateboarding teaches important life skills, like persistence, problem-solving, and self-confidence through the process of learning and mastering tricks. Participants develop a sense of agency and accomplishment, critical for overcoming the challenges they face in their daily lives.



Building Community and Connection: Skateboarding culture is deeply rooted in community and mutual support. By bringing together youth from diverse backgrounds, it naturally promotes social cohesion and breaks down stereotypes. Our sessions are designed to create shared experiences, build friendships, and a sense of belonging that overcomes cultural and societal divides.

A Bridge to Public Space and Advocacy: Skateboarding and our sessions can actively reclaim and revitalise neglected public spaces, turning them into vibrant hubs of activity and inclusion. By advocating for the preservation and development of public spaces, our work highlights their importance as communal assets while advocating that marginalised communities and local residents have a voice in their use and management.

Mental and Physical Wellbeing: Skateboarding combines physical exercise with mental focus, offering a mindful activity that reduces stress and improves emotional health. For youth facing anxiety, isolation, or trauma, it provides an outlet for expression and a sense of freedom.

By integrating these unique strengths, skateboarding not only addresses immediate challenges faced by youth but also equips them with the skills, confidence, and networks they need to succeed in the long term. Our work demonstrates how a simple, inclusive activity can transform lives and strengthen communities.



“We speak alot of languages!”

L, 13 Year Old Participant following our warm up where each participant counted in a different language they known



DEVELOPMENTS AND ACTIVITIES



OUR SESSIONS...

This year we operated **across 18 locations** in Athens, and beyond, with a focus on disregarded neighbourhoods where diverse communities reside, including Roma, refugees, migrants, and economically disadvantaged families. Our free sessions are open to children and youth aged 6 and above, prioritising inclusivity particularly for girls and marginalised youth. Using skateboarding as a tool for empowerment, we aim to provide a welcoming and safe space where all participants can grow, build community and engage with others, regardless of background or ability.

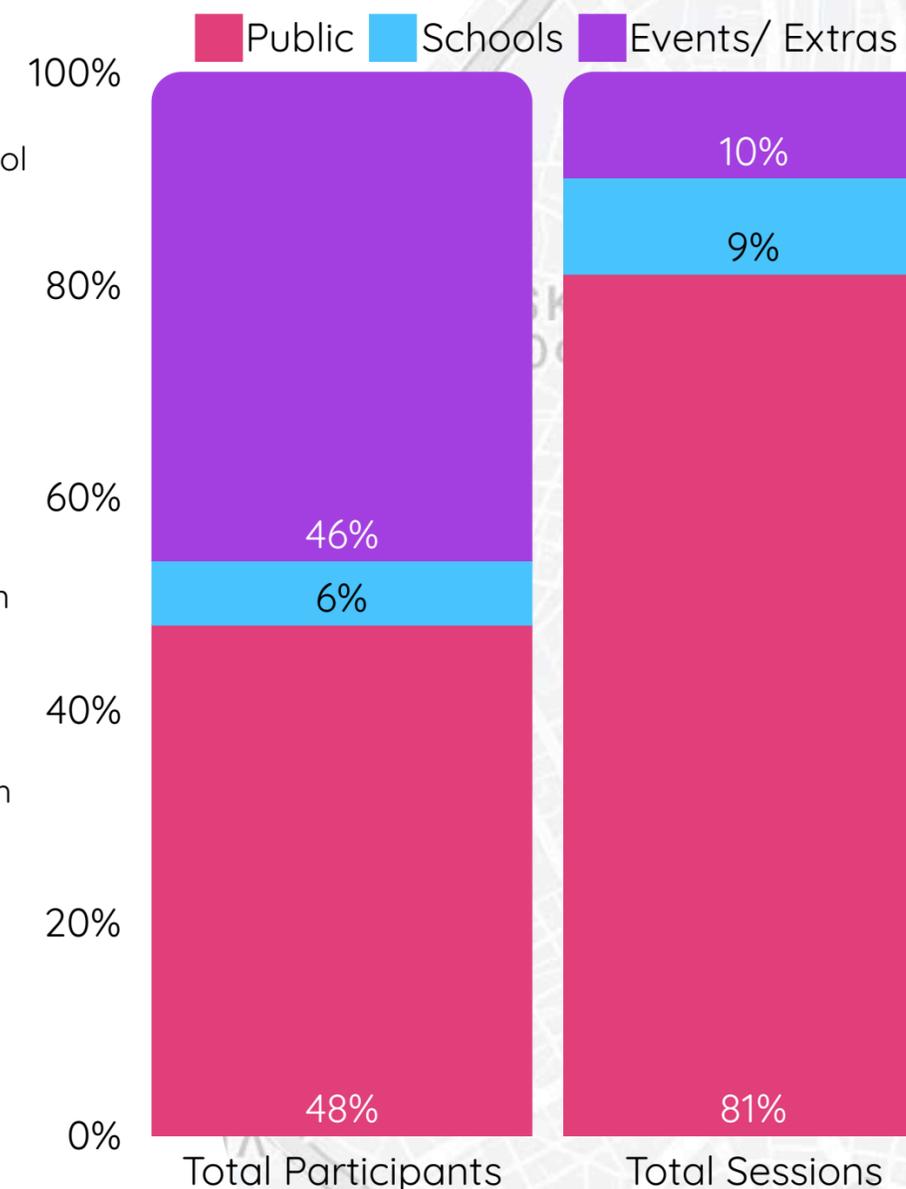
Key Insights

- We **delivered 229 sessions** this year, a 29% increase from the previous year, reaching more children, more neighbourhoods, and making an even bigger impact.
- Across 18 locations, we **engaged 588 unique participants**, from the heart of Athens and beyond, spreading the access to the benefits of skateboarding.
- While total attendance slightly decreased—from 2,599 to 2,393—due to space limitations, the return rate of participants grew, reflecting **stronger bonds and deeper connections** within the communities we serve.
- Girl participation remained steady at 35%, a testament to our **ongoing commitment to gender inclusivity**. But we know there is more work to do, and we are excited to keep pushing forward with new initiatives to create even more opportunities for girls to thrive.

Diverse Approaches to Engagement:

We deliver three types of sessions:

1. **Weekly Public Sessions:** Free, open and consistent skateboarding sessions held in public spaces, where participants from all walks of life come together to skate, learn, and grow. These sessions are about breaking down walls and building community—one trick at a time.
2. **Weekly School-based Sessions:** In collaboration with schools, we bring skateboarding to a school environment, reaching children directly within their educational settings, overcoming challenges like travel, accessibility and ensuring every child can participate.
3. **Special Events and Extra Sessions:** One-off events or short-term series of sessions outside our regular program, expanding our reach and creating unique opportunities for participants, celebrating milestones and collaborating with partners.



PUBLIC SESSIONS

Our public skateboarding sessions remained at the heart of our work to create **safe, inclusive, and empowering spaces for children and young people** from diverse and marginalised communities. These sessions are more than just an opportunity to skate - they are a chance for participants to find belonging, confidence, and joy regardless of their background.

This year, 81% of our sessions were part of our weekly public sessions, **reaching 48% of our unique participants across 5 locations.** Free and open to all, these sessions ensure that no child is excluded due to financial or social barriers. By bringing skateboarding sessions into neighbourhoods that need it most, with the use of our mobile skatepark in a van, we make it accessible to those who may not otherwise have the opportunity.

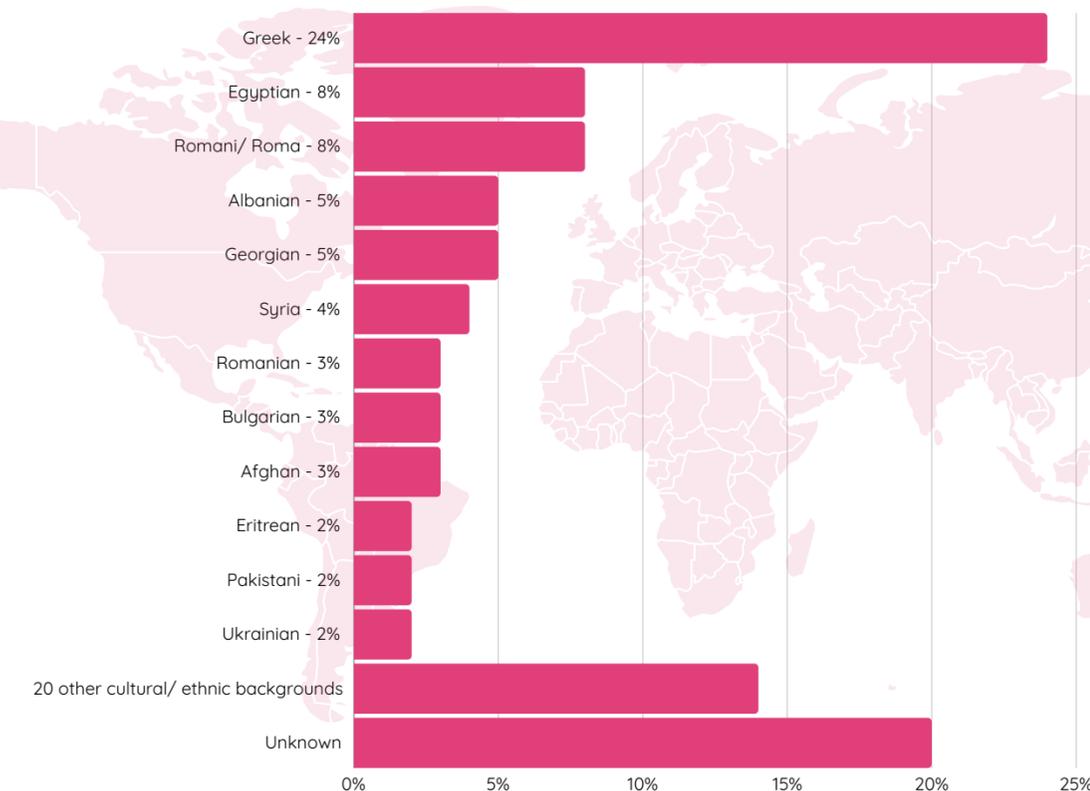
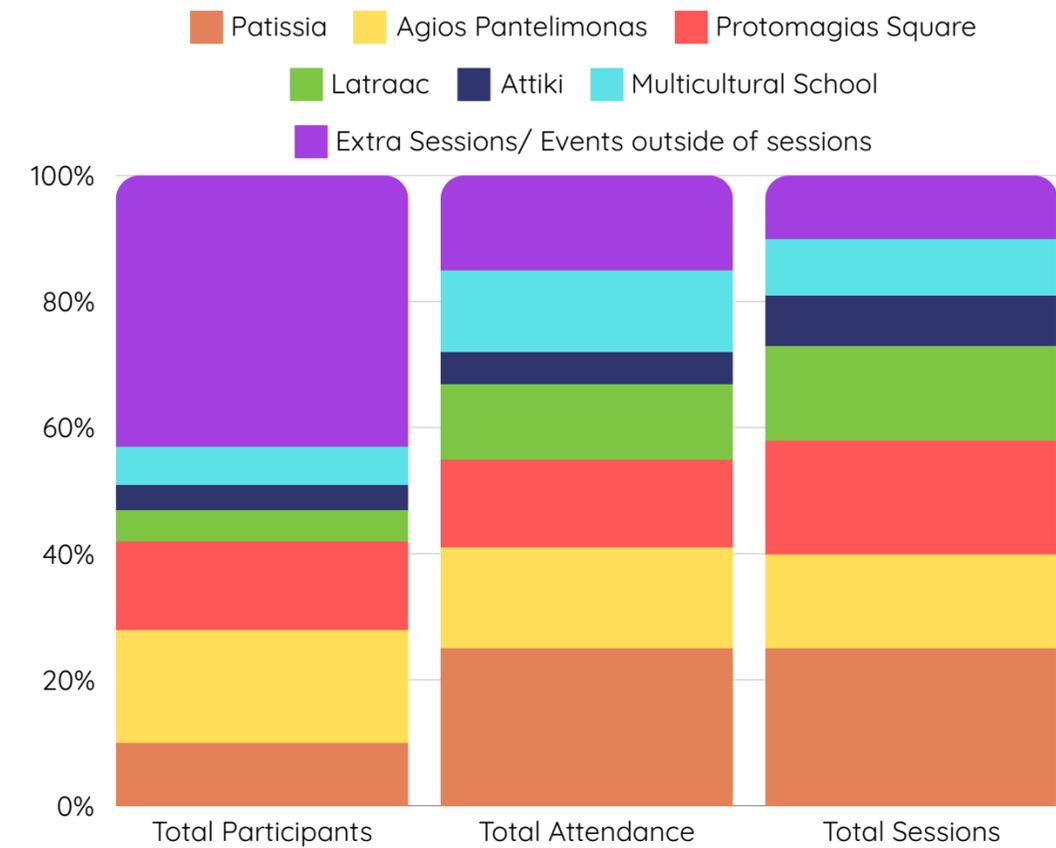
Our public sessions are built on the values of **diversity and inclusion.** In the past year, our sessions welcomed participants from **more than 32 different cultural and ethnic backgrounds**, all residing in Athens. While Athens can sometimes feel unwelcoming due to issues like racism, bureaucratic barriers, and exclusion based on differences, we remain steadfast in our commitment to providing a safe, inclusive, and accessible environment for everyone. Our community speaks **over 25 languages** and embraces a wide array of cultural traditions and perspectives, fostering opportunities for mutual learning and sharing as we come together through skateboarding.

With **35% of attendees being girls**, we continue to prioritise gender equity and representation in skateboarding—an area where girls are often underrepresented.

These sessions are **not just about skateboarding.** They are vital spaces for social cohesion, self-expression, emotional wellbeing, and social connection. They offer a weekly chance for young people to escape from their daily stresses, learn new skills, and experience the joy of being part of a vibrant community. As one 12-year-old participant shared:

“Skateboarding makes me forget the world, and I can do anything if I try.”

FMS acknowledges and values diversity and the importance of a sense of belonging and safety. The connections built through these sessions lay the foundation for stronger, more united communities. These connections contribute to a more peaceful society, where neighbourhoods are enriched by mutual respect and understanding.





"She is so brave! She is strong, she falls but that is not a problem"

Father watching one of his daughters skateboarding

PATISIA SESSION

59

Unique participants

58

Total Sessions

583

Total Attendance

34%

Girl Participation

76%

Return Participation

Patissia remains a cornerstone of our program, showcasing the ability of skateboarding to build community, create connections, and friendships.

Key insights and developments:

- **Longest-Running Session and Lasting Engagement:** Many of our participants have been with us for over three years, highlighting their continued commitment and the bonds formed within this location, highlighting its history of strong community engagement.
- **High Return Rate:** Increased to 76% reflecting participant satisfaction and strong community bonds.
- **Deeper Learning:** Regular participants engaged meaningfully with key curriculum themes (more about Edu-Skate on page 28), while progressing in advanced skateboarding skills.
- **Inclusive Environment:** Slight increase in girl participation highlights ongoing efforts to improve inclusivity and gender equity.
- **Stronger Community:** Despite fewer attendees per session (average fell from 23 to 10), small group size allowed for stronger relationships and meaningful participation.

Challenges:

- **Session Space:** Unique participants decreased 77%, primarily due to relocating from the basketball courts to a smaller space in the square. This change limited capacity and caused disengagement due to the challenging skating surface. This less ideal location negatively impacted accessibility and participation. As a result, we reduced weekly sessions from two to one, in response to falling attendance.



AGIOS PANTELEIMONAS SESSION

Since its introduction, our Agios Pantelimonas session has grown into a consistent and vibrant space where local children come together to skate and connect.

104

Unique participants

34

Total Sessions

369

Total Attendance

49%

Girl Participation

65%

Return Participation

Key insights and developments:

- **Sustained Growth and Increased Engagement:** Over the past year, we have seen consistent engagement with 104 unique participants. The increase in the number of sessions (from 26 to 34) and total attendance (from 305 to 369) highlights the growing demand for skateboarding in this community. The program's ability to adapt and expand in the face of space limitations is a testament to its value and impact.
- **Higher Return Rate:** Our return participation rate increased to 63%, up from 58% last year, indicating that more participants are returning for multiple sessions.
- **Increased Girl Participation:** Girl participation has risen from 45% to 49%, reflecting our ongoing efforts to create an inclusive environment that encourages gender equity in skateboarding.
- **Building Deeper Connections:** While the number of unique participants remained stable, the growth in return participation and total attendance reflects the deepening of relationships within the sessions. More children are coming back regularly, suggesting that the sessions are not only attracting new participants but also creating meaningful, long-term involvement.

Challenges:

While the small public square continues to be a challenge, limiting the number of participants we can engage at once, our creative adaptations and strong community support have ensured that the sessions remain impactful and accessible for local children.



PROTOMAGIAS SQUARE SESSION

83

Unique participants

42

Total Sessions

340

Total Attendance

52%

Girl Participation

45%

Return Participation

This session continues to empower young people through skateboarding, with notable progress in gender inclusivity, deeper participant commitment, and strengthened community collaboration.

Key insights and developments:

- **Increase in Girl Participation:** A remarkable increase in girl participation, rising from 42% to 52%, demonstrates significant progress in creating a space that empowers girls through skateboarding. Notably, several sessions featured only girl participants.
- **Sustained Attendance and Commitment:** Total attendance remained consistent at 340 attendees compared to 342 last year. While unique participants decreased, this stability reflects stronger commitment from those attending, with participants showing more dedication to the sessions, and attending more frequently.
- **Community Collaboration:** Engagement levels improved significantly following collaboration with the local parents' association, which brought new energy and support to the session and contributed to a stronger sense of community ownership. The use of the school space gave our session stability in this neighbourhood following the loss of our permit, the partial closure of the square, and the insufficient lighting in the autumn/winter.

Challenges:

- **Seasonal Participation Patterns:** We continue to observe shifts in attendance between term time and holidays, giving us valuable insights into accessibility challenges linked to children's availability and shifting priorities. For example, many children from migrant families are unable to attend sessions during term time as their parents prioritise their academic studies. Delivering sessions during the holidays ensures that we can still provide opportunities for these children to participate when their schedules allow.





“When I leave, I will miss skateboarding on Fridays.
I will miss all of you. But I will find a skatepark.”

A, 13 year old, migrating to another country from Greece in hope for more opportunities.

LATRAAC SESSION

28

Unique participants

34

Total Sessions

270

Total Attendance

8%

Girl Participation

20%

Return Participation

Latraac remains a valuable space for skill development and fostering connections between participants across different sessions, despite its challenges in space and inclusivity.

Key insights and developments:

- **Steady Session Delivery:** Delivered 34 sessions, maintaining consistency compared to the previous year.
- **Increased Engagement:** Total attendance rose significantly from 189 attendees to 270, showing strong interest in this session despite its limitations.
- **Neighbourhood Regulars:** Participants from the local area showed consistent attendance, forming a core group of regulars.
- **Cross-Session Participation:** Many participants from other FMS sessions attended sporadically, reflecting the appeal of Latraac for more advanced skaters, wanting to learn additional skills.

Challenges:

- **Space and Capacity Constraints:** With only up to three skaters able to use the bowl at a time, session sizes are preferably less than 10 participants to ensure everyone has a chance to skate properly. Side activities are offered to keep those waiting engaged.
- **Not Beginner-Friendly:** The advanced nature of the space makes it challenging for beginners to join, but it successfully attracted participants wanting to progress and challenge themselves.
- **Drop in Girl Participation:** Girl participation fell sharply to 8%, with efforts to engage regular girls from the neighbourhood proving difficult.





"Can we watch skateboarding again?"

N, 12 year old, asking to watch skateboarding videos again after watching girl pro skaters the week before.

ATTIKI SESSION

Early successes of Attiki's session highlight its potential as a vibrant addition to our weekly program.

28

Unique participants

34

Total Sessions

270

Total Attendance

8%

Girl Participation

20%

Return Participation

Key insights and developments:

- **Newest Session:** Launched in March 2024, this session transformed a disregarded, unfriendly square, with a basketball court, into a more welcoming space for children, earning praise from local residents.
- **Strong Start:** In just four months, 21 unique participants joined, with a total attendance of 125 across 18 sessions.
- **Girl Participation:** Achieved 24% girl participation, a promising start for a new session.
- **Neighbourhood Connections:** Attracted participants from two nearby neighbourhoods we deliver sessions at, creating opportunities for new social interactions and enabling some children to attend multiple sessions weekly.
- **Ideal Space:** The location's suitable flooring and adaptable layout for our mobile skatepark provide opportunities for creativity and flexibility, enhancing session quality and engagement.

Challenges:

- **Low Return Rate:** With only a 12% return participation rate, this is expected in a new session where many participants try skateboarding for the first time and may decide it is not for them. Establishing a core group of regular attendees is a key focus.
- **Environmental:** The square around the basketball court presents challenges, including drug users, smoking, occasional police presence, and other unsettling activities. However, these are the realities of the children's daily environment and cannot serve as a deterrent. We remain committed to creating a safe, welcoming space within the basketball court, keeping children engaged, and supported by parents and neighbours to reclaim this space for the neighbourhood and residents. Our team is specifically trained to navigate such environments.



A group of children are skateboarding at an outdoor court. The court has a green and red surface with white lines. In the background, there is a chain-link fence with graffiti on it, including a large eye and some trees. A basketball hoop is visible on the left. The children are wearing helmets and protective gear. One child in the foreground is wearing a dark blue shirt and colorful knee pads. Another child in the background is wearing a white shirt and a green helmet. The scene is set in an urban environment with trees and a building in the background.

"You came! I have been here for 2 hours waiting,
I did not have anything else to do."

R., 10 year old, the second time we arrived at Attiki basketball court to deliver a session. He didn't believe that we would come again. This highlights we put so much value in neglected neighbourhoods, consistency and reliability,

MULTICULTURAL SCHOOL SESSION

37

Unique participants

20

Total Sessions

310

Total Attendance

33%

Girl Participation

92%

Return Participation

We partnered with a local school to deliver skateboarding sessions during school hours, providing pupils with a fun, engaging activity that strengthens social cohesion outside of traditional education. Beyond offering a dynamic break from classroom routines, it supports their confidence, resilience, and teamwork, while introducing them to the physical, mental, and social benefits of skateboarding. The collaboration also helped increase participation in our public sessions, with many students joining us for after-school activities.

Key insights and developments:

- **New Session:** Initiated in December 2023, the school-based sessions provided a consistent and engaging space for students, unaffected by weather disruptions thanks to sheltered facilities.
- **Participation Highlights:** Welcomed 37 unique participants with a total attendance of 310 across 20 sessions, running through the school term until June.
- **Girl Empowerment:** Achieved a 33% girl participation rate, reflecting a more inclusive environment for boys and girls alike.
- **High Return Rate:** 92% return rate underscores the benefits of integrating skateboarding into the school setting, where barriers like location, time constraints, parental concerns, and competing activities are minimised.

Challenges:

- **Restricted Access:** As the only non-public session in the program, participation is limited to students of the school, narrowing outreach opportunities to the wider community.

This session showcases the value of incorporating skateboarding into a school context, enabling consistent participation and fostering a sense of belonging and engagement among the students. Despite its limited accessibility, it remains a vital example of how skateboarding can be seamlessly integrated into educational environments.



"We really hope you come back next year too"

Teacher at Multicultural School at the last session before schools closed for the summer



EXTRA/ EVENTS SESSION

256

Unique participants

23

Total Sessions

356

Total Attendance

44%

Girl Participation

Our community events, extra sessions, and collaborations play a pivotal role in extending the reach of our work, creating opportunities for inclusivity, and building stronger connections within and beyond our core FMS and skateboarding communities. Through various and dynamic events held across various locations, we not only offered new experiences for participants but also created opportunities for cultural exchange, empowerment, and the promotion of values such as gender equity, as well as raising awareness and introducing our work and the benefits of skateboarding beyond central Athens.

Key insights and developments:

- **Increased engagement:** Unique participants and total attendance increased.
- **Expanded Reach:** Delivered and participated in 23 events across 11 locations in Athens and beyond, including multiple sessions in Piraeus and Elefsina. We collaborated to bring skateboarding to even more communities, children, and youth.
- **Girl Participation:** Rose to 44% with dedicated girl sessions to help promote gender equity and representation in the local skateboarding community. We hosted girl skate jams and advocated for alternative forms of skateboarding.
- **Sense of Belonging:** These events provided a space for participants to integrate into the local skateboarding community, strengthening their identities as skateboarders and fostering a deep sense of belonging, especially with our Easter sessions at Galatsi DIY Skatepark.
- **New Experiences:** Events also offered participants the chance to explore new activities outside of skateboarding, for example, Hip Hop dance at the Street Style Festival we collaborated on with Hip Hop 4 Hope.



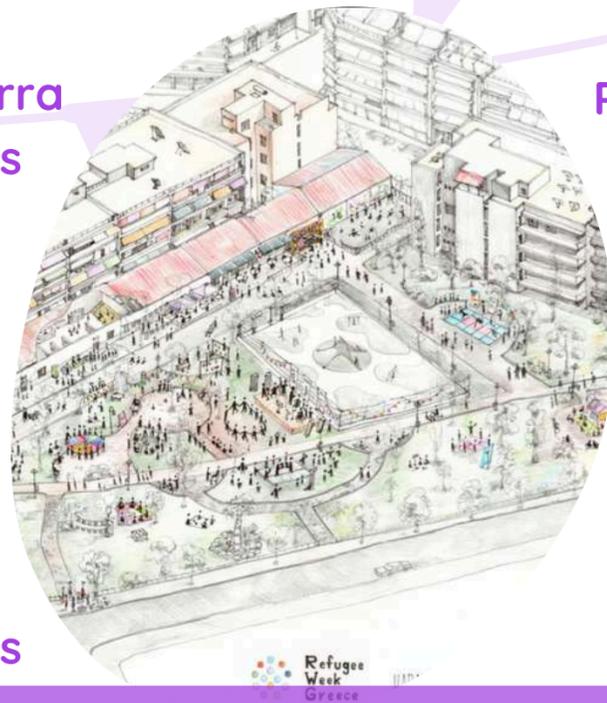
COMMUNITY EVENTS

- **Cross-Cultural Exchange:** Events also provide a space for cross-cultural exchange, where diverse backgrounds are celebrated, and participants learn and celebrate new traditions, contributing to a stronger sense of inclusion. Exemplified with our annual Vasilopita cutting (Traditional Greek New Year's Event) or participating in the Kypseli Mundial with many diverse community groups.
- **Promoting Our Values:** Events allowed us to highlight and promote our values, such as gender equity on International Women's Day and mental health awareness on International Mental Health Day.

Challenges:

- **Diverse Participants:** Balancing the needs of varied communities and locations with different levels of engagement and participation, while ensuring that the focus remains on fostering inclusivity, can sometimes be challenging. However, these events have proven to be an important tool for driving social change, offering much-needed opportunities for connection, empowerment, and growth.

Cult-Terra Sessions



Refugee Week



Pylo Sessions



Christmas Sessions



Kypseli Mundial



New Year Celebration



HH4H Street Style



Dimotiki Agora Kipseli Party



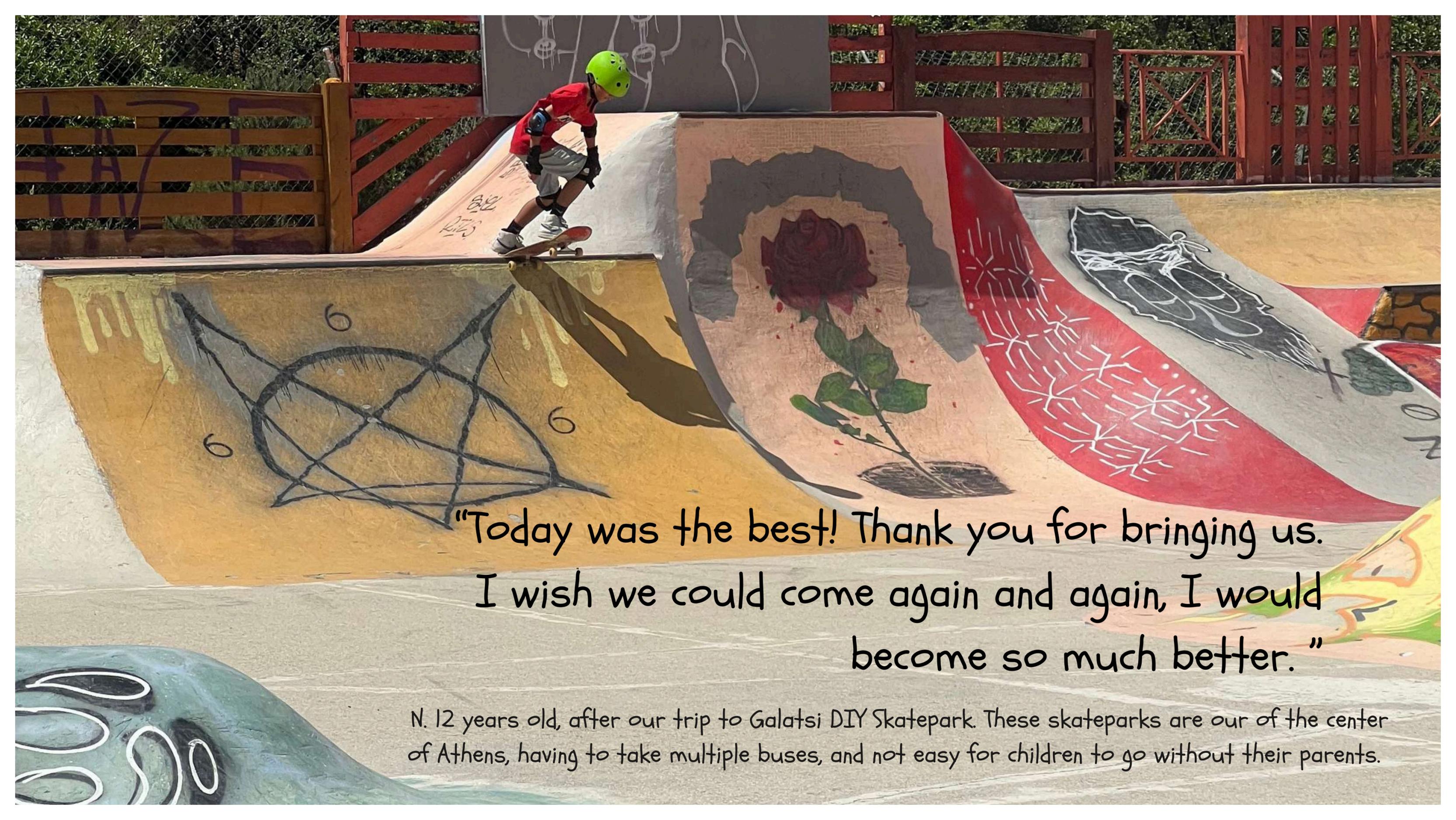
Girl Sessions

7

YEARS SKATEBOARDING IN SOLIDARITY



We marked the 7th anniversary of FMS with a celebration at Platia Protomagias. The party brought together participants from various sessions to play games and celebrate together. Our community enjoyed pizza, juices, and snacks, and we were delighted by a surprise cake shaped like a “7”, lovingly baked by one of the mothers. The event was a lot of fun and a joyful reminder of our growing and vibrant community.



“Today was the best! Thank you for bringing us.
I wish we could come again and again, I would
become so much better.”

N. 12 years old, after our trip to Galatsi DIY Skatepark. These skateparks are our of the center of Athens, having to take multiple buses, and not easy for children to go without their parents.

INSIGHTS FROM ANNUAL SURVEY

Based on responses from 31 participants, this survey offered valuable insights into the impact of our skateboarding sessions and the communities we work with.

High levels of enjoyment and inclusion: 93.5% enjoy sessions, 90.3% look forward to them, and 87.1% feel included.

Confidence boost and skill development: Most participants gained patience, resilience, and confidence, with 71% reporting feeling more confident since joining.

Making Friends: 62.1% have made more than one new friend through FMS sessions.

Cultural Exchange: 91.7% met or spoken to participants from different backgrounds to their own.

Perceived Safety: 76.7% feel safe when skateboarding with FMS, significantly higher than the 33.3% who feel safe outdoors in general. This highlights the secure and supportive environment FMS creates.

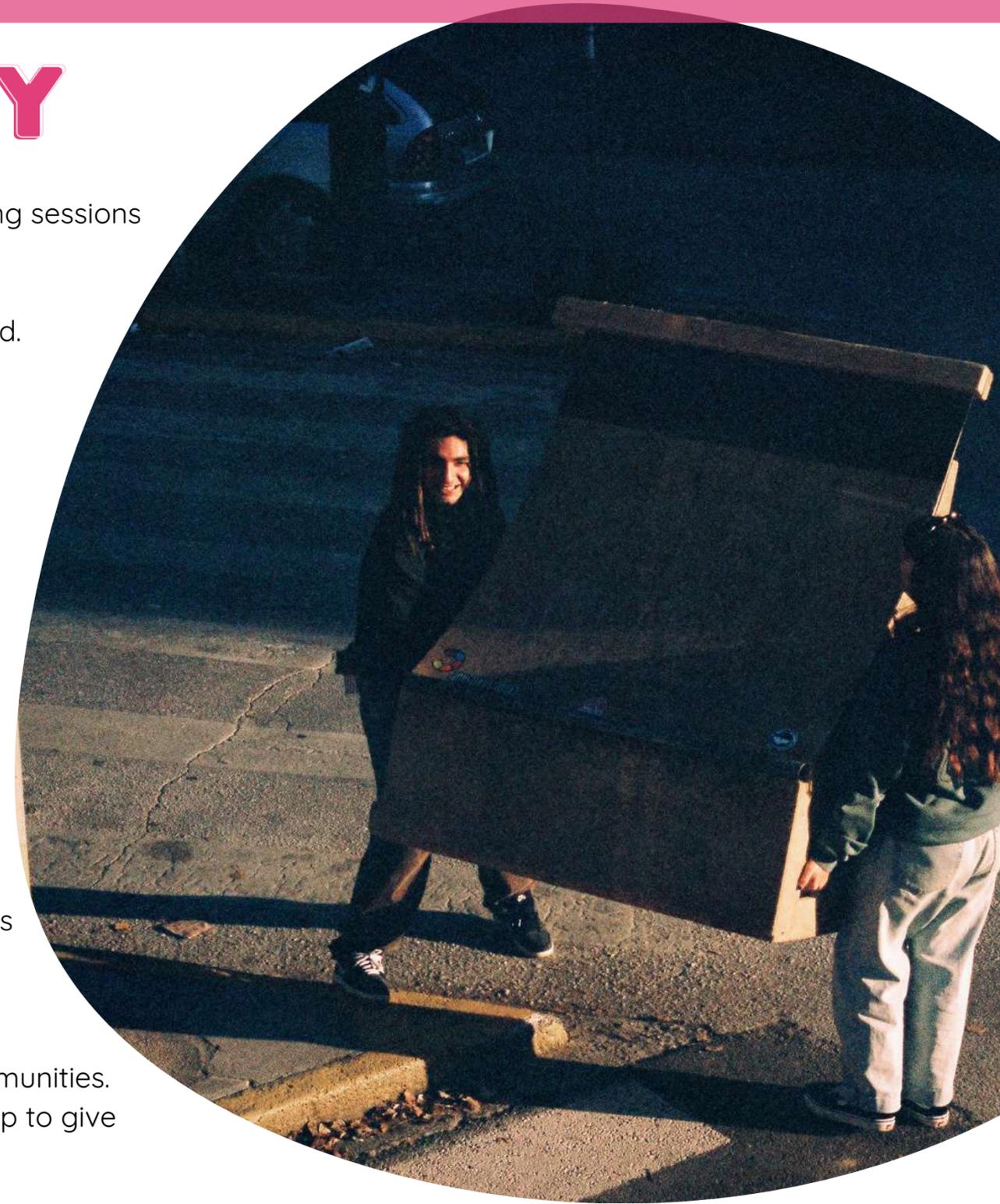
Widening Support System: Participants feel confident discussing challenges with FMS team members, with specific staff members praised for their support.

Self-Expression: While over half of our participants feel free to express themselves (51.6% feel fully free to express themselves), we see this as an opportunity to further foster emotional safety and inclusion.

Educational Gaps: While 93.5% of these participants attended school, we recognise the need to support the 6.5% underaged participants that are not at school. This is primarily due to barriers to education for marginalised communities. Educational activities like edu-skate help to support their learning and growth. Weekly skateboarding sessions help to give them some routine and a space to socialise.

Parental Unemployment: Half of our participants' mothers face unemployment, underscoring the economic challenges in the communities we serve.

Inclusivity Gaps: While we are proud of our diverse participant base and that 96.8% believe skateboarding is for everyone, breaking gender stereotypes, we recognise the need to enhance accessibility and inclusivity, particularly for children with disabilities. This is a priority for 2025.



BEYOND SKATEBOARDING



EDU-SKATE CURRICULUM

As a part of the Concrete Jungle Foundation Edu-Skate Network, we have now been delivering Edu-Skate sessions for over two years, continuing to use skateboarding as a tool to teach life skills and build confidence in our participants. These sessions allow us to go beyond skateboarding, introducing themes such as perseverance, respect, courage, and encouragement. Over time, we have observed noticeable changes in both the mindset and behaviours of our regular participants, alongside the progress in their skateboarding skills.

We continue to be excited about the future of our sessions as we continue to adapt, refine, and expand the delivery of the Edu-Skate curriculum in Athens. Together with the network, we remain committed to empowering young people through skateboarding and education.

CREATIVE WORKSHOPS

This year, we continued our creative activities alongside our skateboarding sessions. These activities engage mainly children who may not yet feel ready to try skateboarding and offer an outlet for artistic expression within our safe and welcoming community. The activities also provide a practical solution for participants who bring younger siblings, allowing them to explore their creativity while the older siblings skate.

This year's highlights included painting skateboard decks, building finger skate ramps, and creating joint art on various themes like respect and celebrating diversity. These activities sparked excitement among participants, encouraging them to connect with skateboarding and our community in new and creative ways.



FILIKA MEET UPS - GIRL EMPOWERMENT

FILIKA

Over the past year, we hosted a variety of events that championed girl empowerment, both within our sessions and across the broader local skateboarding scene. The presence of girls in skateboarding in Athens continues to grow, and we are committed to ensuring they feel safe, supported, and excited to skate.

This year, we hosted 6 Filika Meet-Ups, where girls of all ages and skill levels came together to skate, connect, and celebrate the community. These gatherings help create a welcoming and inclusive space for girls to try skateboarding for the first time or advance their skills while building a sense of camaraderie. Our ongoing collaboration with Latraac Skate Cafe hosted us for a few of these sessions, offering a supportive environment for girl skaters to share their passion and build connections.

One of the highlights of the year was our connection to the global skateboarding scene through Denia Kopita's visit to the Skate Like a Girl - Wheels of Fire event in the U.S. Denia had the chance to network and get inspired by meeting and skating with influential figures from the global women's skateboarding community, as well as share her experiences and FMS's work in Greece, including premiering a short film about our work. Her experience energised her and our local community, creating new aspirations and connections for Greek skaters.

These initiatives contribute to promoting and normalising girl skateboarding in Greece. As we move forward, we remain dedicated to providing opportunities for girls to feel empowered through skateboarding, further nurturing this positive and growing community.

In the year ahead, we will continue to support women skateboarding in Athens and actively work to get more girls on boards.



TEAM TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

We continued the training and development of our team, ensuring that they are well-equipped to deliver safe, inclusive, and impactful sessions. By investing in training and capacity building, we not only enhanced our instructors' skills but also strengthened our ability to address the diverse needs of the communities we serve. We value creating a culture of continuous learning and growth.

Safeguarding and Emergency Procedures Training: In September, the entire team participated in a comprehensive safeguarding and emergency procedures training. This reinforced our commitment to prioritising the well-being of all participants, equipping team members with the knowledge and tools to ensure safe environments during our sessions. We now deliver regular in-house training sessions so our extended team is well-versed in safeguarding protocols and youth work best practices.

Migrant Girls in Sports Training: In November, two of our instructors, Denia K. and Valentina, attended specialised training in Bulgaria. This program brought together professionals from Greece, Italy, and Bulgaria to explore how to create safe spaces and effectively include migrant girls in sports. The training provided valuable insights for inclusion.

Disability Inclusion: Our trustee, Sigurd, and his colleague, Katerina, delivered specialised training on disability inclusion. This session inspired new ideas for integrating individuals with disabilities into our sessions, broadening the accessibility of our sessions.

Paris Roll Models Training: Denia K. and Sonia participated in the Paris Roll Models training program, supported by Roll Model funding. This initiative was a fantastic opportunity to further develop leadership, project implementation, and advocacy skills within our team.

Non-Violent Communication and Active Citizenship Training: Denia N. participated in a youth workers training in Cyprus, enhancing conflict resolution and community engagement skills in our team.



PUBLICITY, RECOGNITION AND INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY



This year, our work continued to gain visibility through multiple platforms, raising awareness about the transformative impact of skateboarding on young girls and marginalised communities. Through media, collaborations, international events, and advocacy opportunities, we can amplify our presence, strengthen our connections, and continue to champion inclusion and empowerment through skateboarding on a national and global scale.

Media Features:

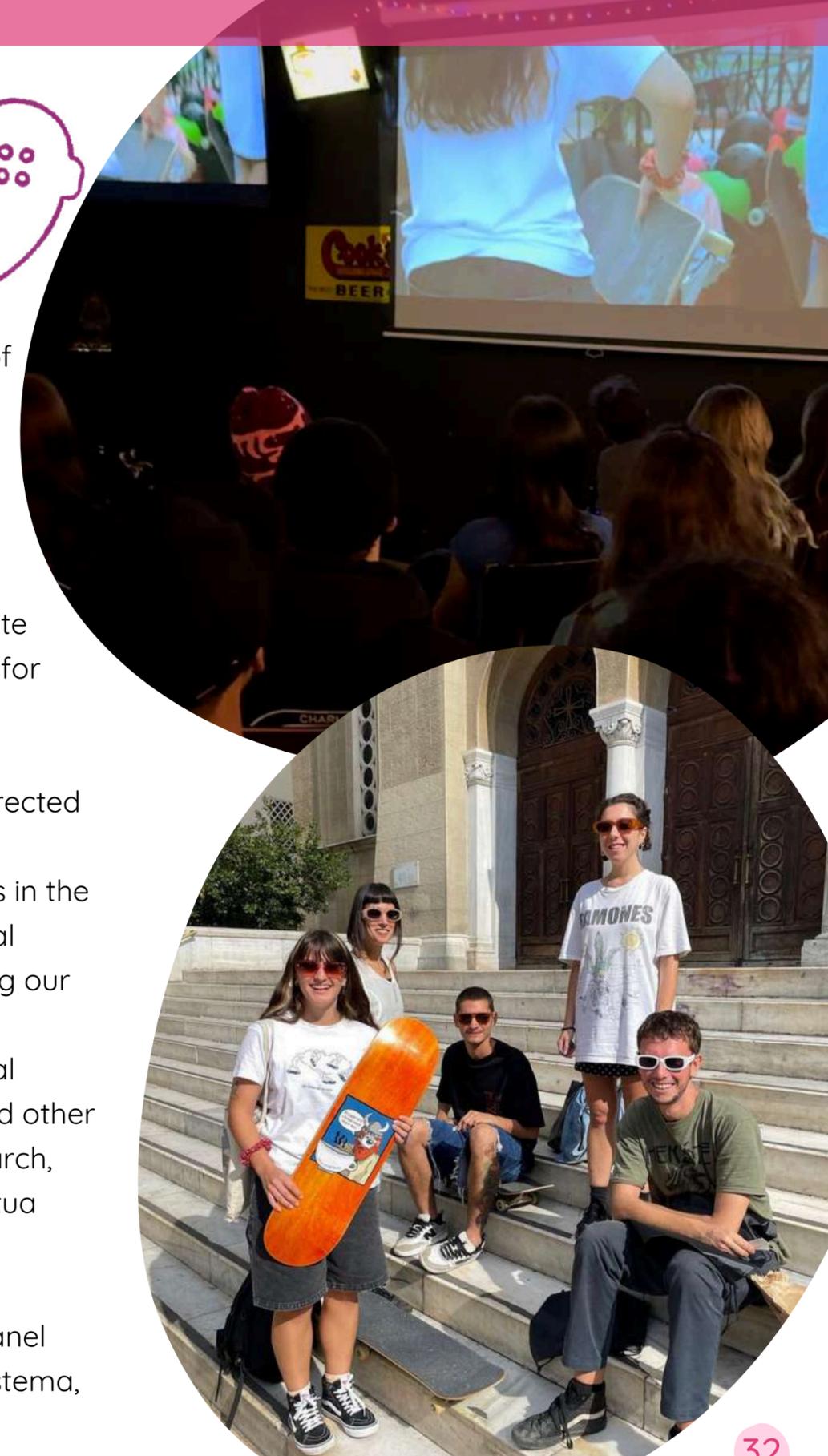
- **Gazetta Women Feature:** A feature article highlighted our efforts to empower young girls and support the growing girl skate scene in Athens. It explored the challenges girls face in skateboarding and showcased how we create safe, inclusive spaces for them to thrive, underscoring the importance of empowerment through sport.

Documentary Collaborations:

- **CHPO Documentary (October 2024):** CHPO, a socially conscious brand, collaborated with us to produce a documentary directed by Markus Bengtsson. It authentically portrayed our work, focusing on the challenges faced by displaced and marginalised communities in Athens and the role of skateboarding in solidarity. The documentary premiered at international film festivals in the US, Sweden, Croatia, and Germany, connecting us with new audiences and amplifying our work. Denia K. attended the global gathering of non-traditional skateboarders hosted by Skate Like A Girl, where the documentary was screened, strengthening our connections within the international skateboarding community.
- **Skateistan x FMS Film (February 2024):** A short film created by Skateistan's communications team focused on International Women's Day and our work on girl empowerment through skateboarding. The film highlighted the work of Denia Kopita and other girls in our team, showcasing their commitment in introducing skateboarding to young girls in Athens. Released online in March, the film premiered in Athens with a fundraising event in collaboration with Patari Records, who donated the music, and Noctua Brewery. The event featured live music, a raffle, and a merchandise stall.

International Advocacy:

- **Global Cultural Districts Network (GCDN) Conference, Athens 2024:** Will and Denia N. participated in a conference and panel discussion on including refugee and migrant communities in cultural spaces. Sharing the stage with The Home Project, El Sistema, and the Walking with Amal project, the event offered valuable networking opportunities and enhanced our visibility.



A group of about a dozen people, including children and adults, are sitting on their skateboards in a circle on a paved path in a park. They are surrounded by trees with some autumn-colored leaves. In the background, there are multi-story apartment buildings. The scene is lit with the warm, soft light of late afternoon or early evening. A quote is overlaid on the left side of the image.

"Remember, it does not matter if you fall. What matters is getting back up."

Coach to the group talking about Edu-Skate theme - Resilience

STORIES (CASE STUDIES)



CASE STUDY 1 - RESILIENCE, COMMUNITY AND SUPPORT

A., a 9-year-old from Eritrea, joined our skateboarding sessions in November while living temporarily in Athens. He was not attending public school and had little routine, a common experience for children living in similar limbo situations. However, in his time in Athens, he attended 28 sessions without missing a single one. From his first experience on a skateboard, he was completely captivated, dedicating himself fully to improving his skills and progressing for the whole 2 hours at each session.

It was clear that A.'s involvement in our sessions brought him joy, something he openly expressed. His enthusiasm for skateboarding became a source of support in his otherwise uncertain situation. He and his father frequently shared how much A. eagerly awaited each session, expressing his love for skateboarding was evident in his dedication. Introduced to our sessions by friends from his Eritrean community, A. and his older sister continued to attend even after their friends relocated. They, in turn, brought new friends from their community to join us.

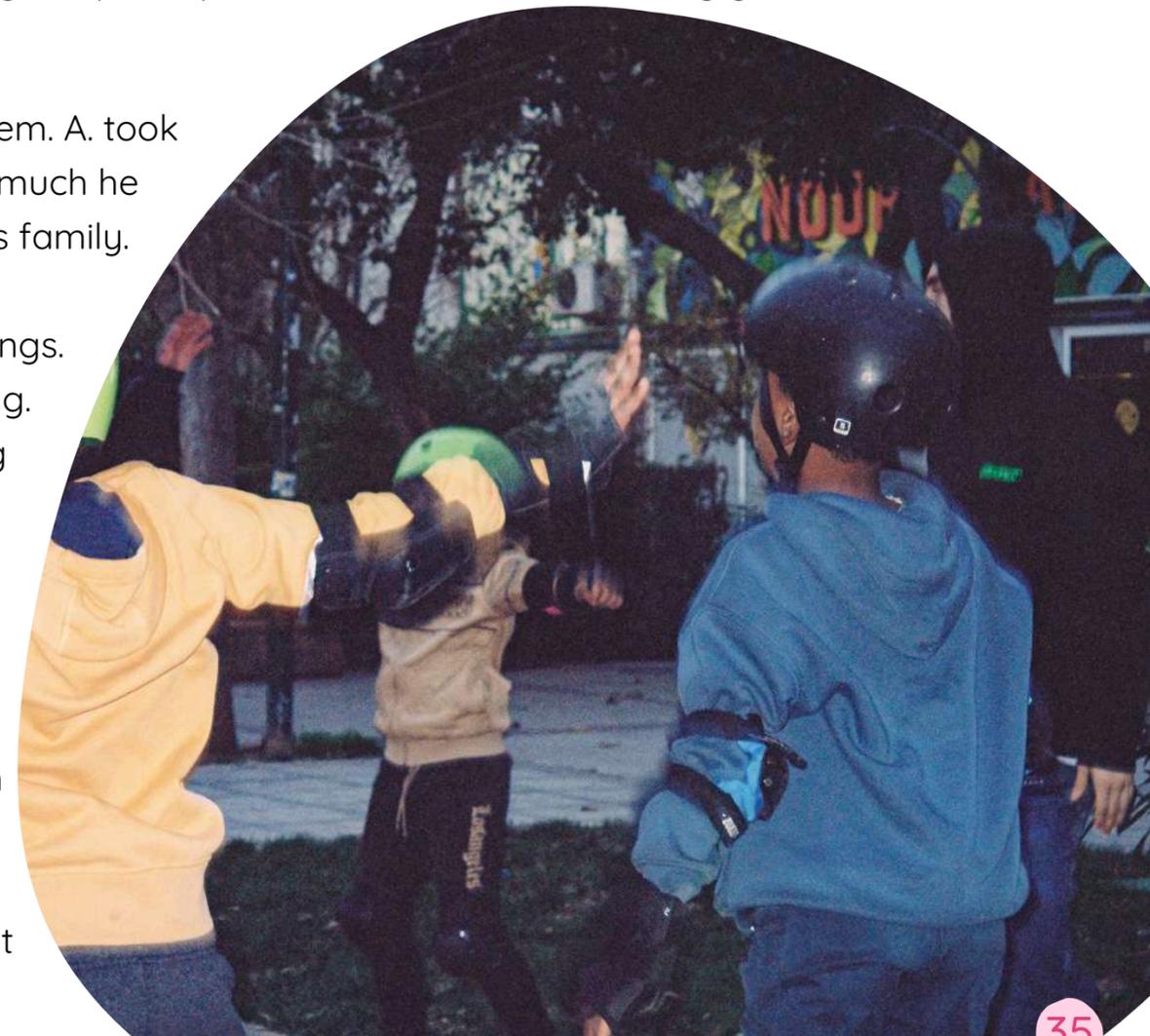
Although A. did not speak Greek and knew little English, he communicated through the universal language of skateboarding with others at sessions. With his sister's help, he made friends, and they often played together in the neighbourhood outside of sessions. The mutual respect and support among our participants were evident in how they greeted each other so warmly and the encouragement shared throughout each session.

For a few weeks, A. also brought his friend E., whose mother was hospitalised, and was temporarily being cared for by them. A. took the lead in teaching E. skateboarding skills, which he expressed made him happy. E. had expressed numerous times how much he enjoyed the sessions, and we hope that it provided him a brief respite from his personal challenges and distance from his family.

A. and his sister eventually stopped attending sessions, as they relocated to Sweden to reunite with their mother and siblings. While we miss them at sessions, we are confident that A.'s time with us has instilled in him a lifelong love for skateboarding. His passion, determination and resilience suggest that skateboarding will continue to be a tool for his personal well-being and empowerment.

We have connected A.'s family with a skateboarding project in Sweden, hoping he continues his journey there. Once he settles in this new city, we look forward to hearing whether he continues to skate. We believe skateboarding will continue to support this wellbeing, empowerment and social cohesion. Our other participants noticing their absence prompted important discussions with our other participants about the realities of displacement and migration. We see these though conversations as an opportunity to raise awareness and empathy within our community.

A.'s story, reflects some of the impact of our sessions can have on individual, providing not only a recreational activity but also as sense of drive, support, friendships, community, and personal growth during uncertain times.



CASE STUDY 2 - N.'S SKATEBOARDING JOURNEY

N. now 13 years old, joined our sessions in the summer of 2021, initially just a kid looking for something to do with his cousins in his grandmother's neighbourhood. With little structure in his life, no interest in school and school work, and no extracurricular activities, N. was only interested in football at the time. However, his involvement with skateboarding quickly transformed his outlook, and he has since been a big part of our community and a beloved part of the wider Athens skate scene.

Through the years, we have watched him grow, but also seeing his progress has been heartwarming and remarkable. From landing his first ollie to dropping in on a large ramp to watching him skate every day. Even his first kickflip was a all-time FMS highlight. His involvement goes beyond participation, he embodies the spirit of skateboarding, spending hours at the local skate shops and introducing many of his friends to the sport. He even encouraged his younger sister to start skating when she turned 7. N. even took the initiative to advocate for skateboarding sessions at his school. While his efforts to engage with this principal did not result in immediate action before he went to secondary school, we deeply admire his dedication and determination. His commitment speak volumes about leadership and passion.

He has come to understand that skateboarding is much more than just a sport or pastime and far more than just learning skateboarding skills. Through our sessions, he has understood the meaning of resilience, perseverance, and goal-setting, values that extend beyond skating. He has even spoken about how skateboarding has provided him with an escape from problems at home.

His dedication continues as he attends weekly sessions, sometimes more than once a week, across various neighbourhoods. He regularly attends skate events with his brother and friends, and during the Easter holidays, as he had asked, and we took him with others to Galatsi DIY Skatepark - a first for N., and an experience he greatly valued. He also has attended the majority of our community events, where he has had the opportunity to participate in other workshops, broaden his experiences and interactions.

N.'s journey illustrates the power of skateboarding to build community, encourage personal growth, and provide a sense of belonging and purpose. His ideas and feedback are key to shaping our future sessions and work, reflecting the value we place on his input. N. has consistently express his gratitude and love for what FMS has given him - a passion for skateboarding, support and another community. He dreams of a future where he can continue to be involved with FMS, even working with us someday if the opportunity still exists when he grows up.





"This here is the only thing that matters"

M, 11 years old

CHALLENGES





SPACES CONSTRAINTS

Finding suitable spaces for our sessions in central Athens remains a persistent issue. The loss of access to previously used basketball courts and OPANDA's skateboarding restrictions forced us to relocate sessions in Patisia to a smaller public square in the neighbourhood, reducing participant capacity from 30-35 to just 10-13 and leading to a drop in attendance. The space limitations, unsuitable skating conditions, and complaints from other users have further strained our sessions, prompting a reduction in participants and conflict management. This issue is together with the limited availability of accessible spaces across the neighbourhoods and the municipality more broadly. While we have explored partnerships with schools to secure playgrounds, navigating bureaucratic hurdles and procedures remains a challenge. Until dedicated skateboarding facilities or permits for our mobile skatepark are established, securing suitable spaces will continue to hinder our work.



FMS VAN

Our ageing van, essential for transporting equipment, has been plagued by recurring mechanical issues. These breakdowns pose a major risk to the continuity of our sessions. An unexpected battery issue forced us to improvise by using a team member's car to avoid canceling a session. Thanks to support from Choose Love, we performed essential maintenance, but the van remains a critical vulnerability.



FUNDING DEFICIT

The loss of our primary funder created a €35,000 funding gap, significantly restricting project development and forcing a slight operational scale-back in the autumn to manage expenses. Despite this setback, we intensified our fundraising efforts and actively pursuing partnerships to ensure the project's future financial stability. This limited our capacity to focus on other projects and goals. As outlined in our financial breakdown (page 42), this gap contributed to a total net loss for the year.

Addressing these challenges has required resilience and adaptability. We remain committed to advocating for improved infrastructure, strengthening our operations, and securing the resources needed to continue empowering marginalized communities through skateboarding.





"Do not worry, I fell a lot too when I started. Now I am not scared to fall."

E. 8 year old comforting a friend who fell and encouraging them to try again

FINANCIAL BREAKDOWN



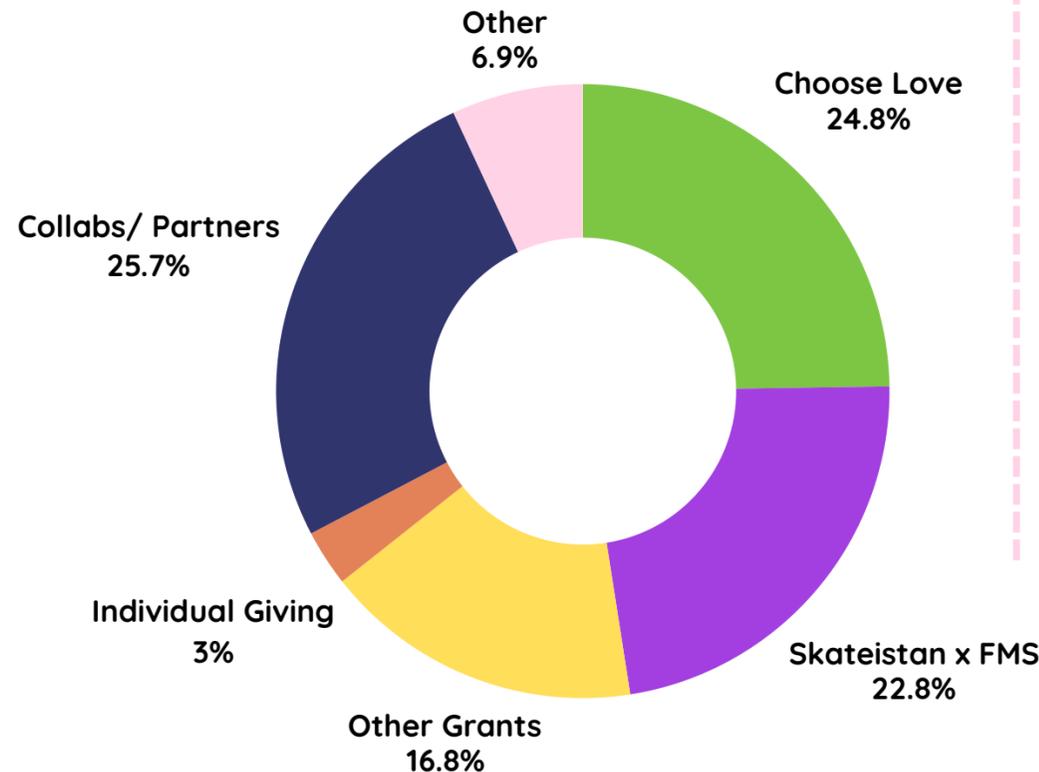
FINANCIAL BREAKDOWN - (SEPTEMBER 23' - AUGUST 24')

INCOME:

It is thanks to the generous support of our community of partners and donors that FMS can continue its impactful work. The chart below outlines the monetary income FMS received between September 2023 and August 2024 (our fiscal year), totaling **€88,711**.

This year, we maintained our focus on diversifying funding streams. This included securing grants, writing project proposals for new activities, and collaborating with partners such as CHPO and local Athenian skate shops. These efforts are critical in sustaining and growing our programs for young Athenians.

Sources of Funding:	
Grants	€57,194
Individual Giving	€2,408
Collaborations and Partnerships	€22,622
Other	€6,487



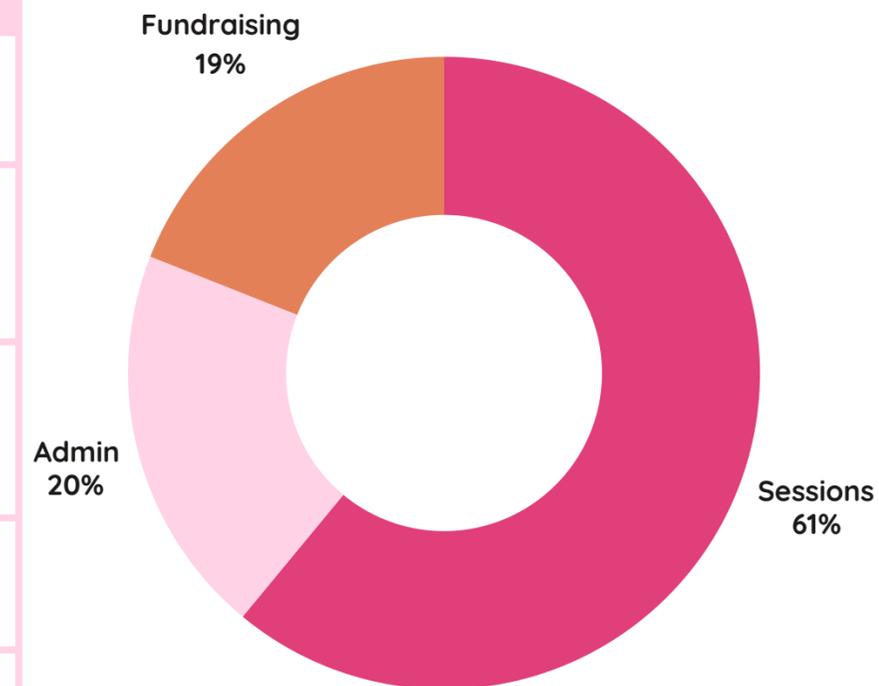
EXPENSES:

100% of our income is dedicated to delivering free, quality and consistent skateboarding sessions and activities for young Athenians.

Administrative and fundraising costs are crucial for covering essential team working hours and sustaining fundraising efforts. These ensure the charity operates effectively and maintains long-term quality and sustainability of our work.

Our total expenses for the fiscal year 2023-2024 amounted to **€105,122**.

Key Areas of Spending:	
Van Costs	€4,487
Session Activities/ Equipment	€5,466
Salaries and Staff Costs	€91,036
Fundraising and Promotion	€1,824
Administration and Operations Costs	€2,309



PARTNERSHIPS, COLLABORATIONS AND IN-KIND SUPPORT

Vans Shop Riot 2023: For the second consecutive year, we partnered with Vans Greece on their event merchandise, with the profits donated to FMS, supporting our work.

Gazetta and Navarino Challenge: Gazetta Women collaborated with us to empower girls through skateboarding. Our first joint effort at the Navarino Challenge weekend in Pylos included three sessions for local and visiting children, promoting outdoor activity and the positive impact of skateboarding. The partnership continued in December with a Christmas collaboration, delivering sessions in various neighbourhoods of Piraeus.

EA Games, Skate. 4: As part of their global support initiative, EA Games donated to ten social skateboarding organisations, including FMS, recognising our contribution to positive skate culture and efforts to make skateboarding accessible worldwide.

CHPO collaboration: A company specialising in sunglasses and watches with a social conscience, released CHPO x FMS sunglasses, with all proceeds supporting our work. The FMS sunglasses designed in collaboration with Denia K. were released in July 23', and continue to support our work.

Palace Boards: Received a donation of brand new decks, always invaluable support as our skateboards endure wear and tear during daily. This donation ensures our participants have access to quality equipment but also highlights the brand's commitment to empowering young skaters in Athens.

Color Skate's Birthday: As a long-standing supporter of our work, Color skates, a skateshop in Athens, held a raffle for Nike Dunks, with all proceeds generously donated to support our work.

Patari Records: Supported us through a unique collaboration, hosting us to premiere a short film produced by Skateistan, emphasising girl empowerment in skateboarding. The event also featured a live show, and shared merchandise and bar with proceeds supporting both of our work.

Skateistan in a Box Partnership: Partnered with Skateistan, in their program to support grassroot skateboarding projects worldwide. This partnership provided us with the ability to continue our sessions over the past year. Collaborating with an organisation that shares our values strengthens our ability to create meaningful and lasting impact through skateboarding.

Mass Action: We were fortunate to receive a micro grant from Mass Action which played a vital role in supporting our community events over the last year. These funds allowed us to organise, host and participate in events that expand our reach, enhanced our work and strengthened our community. We created opportunities for broader experience, community building and cultural exchange.





"Skateboarding helps me feel free!"

A., 11 Year Old Participant

GOALS FOR 2025





FUNDRAISING DIVERSIFICATION

Diversifying our funding sources to achieve greater financial security and stability for our activities by 2026, aimed at reducing our reliance on a small number of grants.

EMPOWERING MORE GIRLS

Increase our outreach efforts and host more events focused on girl empowerment and advocating for girls in the local skate scene.

TEAM CAPACITY BUILDING

Continue to develop our team's skills and knowledge by providing training, support, and opportunities for growth. We are committed to nurturing the potential of all Athenian youth, including those on our team.

SESSION QUALITY AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

Refine our session quality, starting with further developing and adapting the Edu-Skate curriculum, continuing to stay active in social skateboarding networks and creating a 'Rolling Together' activity book for our community, to help them understand the themes and values we discuss.

EXPANDING ENGAGEMENT AND IMPACT

Engaging new participants by delivering additional sessions, creating new collaborations and hosting and participating in community events that expand our reach and strengthen our impact.



A young girl with a pink helmet and a white dress with a floral pattern is skateboarding on a paved public square. She is in the center of the frame, moving away from the camera. The square is surrounded by people, some of whom are watching her. In the background, there are buildings with graffiti and trees. The scene is set during the day with long shadows, suggesting late afternoon or early morning. The ground is paved with interlocking bricks. There are several concrete blocks or ramps scattered around the square. A group of people is standing in the background, some near a building with graffiti. The overall atmosphere is one of a community gathering or a public event.

"It looks easier than it is..."

B. 14 years old participating for the first time

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