





HUMAN

翻翻目目

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We set sail at ten o'clock. It was an iron boat. There was very little room. The engine gave out on us. The weather was getting bad. The sea was taking a turn for the worse, the waves were too high. We were in a panic and started crying. There were thirty-nine of us. There were two children on board, and a pregnant woman. I thought it was all over for me. That's what I told myself. It was at the last minute, maybe at nine p.m., when you arrived. The sky was leaden. The only thing that gave us a small bit of hope was the light we saw from your boat."

> Romeo (name changed), from Ivory Coast, rescued in the summer of 2023 by the Humanity 1 crew. (note: the photo does not depict Romeo's distress case)

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As a person with a refugee background, I am very moved by the fate of people who are trying to find their way to Europe across the Mediterranean. I know their dreams and understand what they leave behind and what they go through on their way. Since 2014, almost 30,000 men, women and children have drowned in the Mediterranean. I cannot and will not look away. We must do everything in our power to prevent further deaths in the Mediterranean. That's why I support SOS Humanity – in the hope that their rescue ship Humanity 1 will save many more people."

Hadnet Tesfai, moderator, patron of the Humanity 1

Dear supporters,

Once again, civil search and rescue was indispensable in 2023. After three months in a shipyard, our rescue ship Humanity 1 completed six missions, carried out 24 rescues and saved 1,101 people from distress at sea. We were supported by an impressive international crew, many of whom are volunteers. Around 2,500 people drowned in the Central Mediterranean in 2023 – more than at any time since 2017. This is partly due to the obstruction of non-governmental rescue ships by Italian authorities which has increased massively under the far-right Meloni government. The civil fleet in the central Mediterranean could have saved many of these lives if their work had not been interrupted. In 2023, the Humanity 1 and the other rescue ships lost more than one year of operational time, as authorities sent them to distant ports for disembarkation. This new systematic practice of assigning ports in northern Italy went hand in hand with the so-called Piantedosi law, which forces NGO ships to call at an assigned port directly after the first rescue instead of continuing their rescue efforts.

Additional challenges came from the German federal government: its planned "Rückführungsverbesserungsgesetz" (Repatriation Improvement Act), intended to make humanitarian aid punishable by law. Thanks to massive protests, search and rescue was exempted from this illegalisation. At the same time, SOS Humanity was the first search and rescue organisation in the Mediterranean to receive money from the Federal Foreign Office, which followed a decision by the German Parliament.

Just before this, a serious financial bottleneck jeopardised our rescue operations. The teams on land and at sea were able to collect enough donations with the "Save our Ship!" campaign. An impressive effort, and an encouraging sign that in 2023 large parts of civil society will continue to stand up for search and rescue. Our cooperation with institutional partners continues to be very important and we were able to expand on this at a donor conference. In September, for the first time ever, we opened the gangway of the ship to this engaged civil society.

Several awards that we received were additional encouragement: The Workers' Samaritan Federation awarded our crew the Annemarie-Renger-Prize; the Schleswig-Holstein Refugee Council awarded us the Lighthouse of the North; and, last but not least, SOS Mediterranee, from whose association we separated as a German founding partner at the beginning of 2022, received the Right Livelihood Award (Alternative Nobel Prize) for our life-saving work in recent years.

SOS Humanity will continue undeterred as long as rescues are needed – despite obstacles such as the unjustified detention of the Humanity 1 at the end of this eventful year; despite the escalation of EU closed-door policies and the obstruction of search and rescue work. Thank you for continuing to stand with us. We urgently need your support in these turbulent times!

Warm wishes,

Laura Gorriahn, Chair of the Board

Till Rummenhohl, General Director & Head of Operations





What did we achieve? Looking back at 2023

On board:



00 00

HUMANITY 1

On land: 200,000 signatures collected for our petitions

'

3 new city partnerships

Angermünde, Braunschweig, Oldenburg

SOS Humanity was the **first**

search and rescue organisation to receive government funding

namely from the German Federal Foreign Office

Our newsletter, available in both German and English, reached a total of



In Germany we have



including a new group in Heidelberg

They participated in **83** events and published **4** podcast episodes

2 main events: SOS Sessions

concert evening which raised €37,797.22 in donations

Tatort Mittelmeer

10 TV detectives read eyewitness testimonies from on board the Humanity 1

Our social media channels accumulated:

128,880 followers **793,906** likes **7,257** shared posts



August: 163 people rescued in our 7th mission



October: 148 people rescued in our 8th mission **November:** 200 people rescued in our 9th mission

> **December:** 20-day detention of the Humanity 1. We go to court!



Search and rescue work: Binoculars are used to scan the horizon non-stop for boats in distress.

The year in pictures

SOS Humanity's work at sea and on land is multi-faceted. Here, we share an overview and some impressions of our many different activities and events in 2023.



In 2023, non-governmental ships are assigned distant ports for disembarkation.

Shipyard: For weeks, volunteers work on

the refurbishment of the Humanity 1.



presents additional risks.

Rescues often take place at night. Poor visibility makes rescue operations difficult and

On the deck of the Humanity 1, survivors recover and receive care.



In late December, the Humanity 1 is unjustifiably detained in Italy.

8



Disembarkation: The relief is great when those rescued can finally go ashore in a place of safety.



Awards: In autumn 2023, ASB awards the crew of Humanity 1 with the Annemarie-Renger-Prize.



Political activism: The German government aims to make humanitarian aid at the EU's external borders a criminal offence – our protests are working!



Open Ship: For two weeks, the Humanity 1 is open to the public in the Sicilian port of Syracuse.



Handover of the petition 'SOS on the Mediterranean' at the German Federal Ministry of the Interior. The petition collected 62.589 signatures.



Campaigns mobilise civil society, this time to fund rescue operations.



In December 2023, our annual charity concert, SOS SESSIONS, was attended by around 1,000 people.

Anoto: Hant Arth

oto: Valentina Goebels



Our ship

The Humanity 1 is the centrepiece of our life-saving work in the Mediterranean.

With a length of 60.8 metres and a spacious main deck, the former research vessel Poseidon is well suited for search and rescue, as well as the accommodation and care of hundreds of rescued people. Thanks to its diesel-electric engine the ship is particularly quiet and lowvibration and consumes relatively little fuel for the more than one thousand tonnes it weighs, which includes its equipment. In addition, the Humanity 1 is very steady in the water – rolling and pitching movements that cause seasickness are almost non-existent. 28 crew members master the challenges of the rescue missions together. More than a third of the crew work on a voluntary basis, thereby ensuring that civil society is not only on board indirectly through donations, but also directly during operations. Two speedboats (RHIBs) are used for the initial approach to boats in distress and the transfer of people in distress to the mother ship. Survivors are accommodated on three decks. Women and children have a separate shelter and a playroom on the Humanity 1. The survivors receive initial treatment from the medical team in our on-board clinic, which is fitted with modern equipment and stocked with medicines.



Renovation in the shipyard thanks to volunteers!

From January to March 2023, the Humanity 1 was overhauled at a shipyard in Burriana, Spain. In addition to maintenance work on the engines and deck, the almost 50-year-old ship was renovated, optimised and many things were renewed. The entire main deck, where the rescued people spend their time and sleep, was given a new wooden floor. This extensive work was only possible with the help of numerous volunteers from all over the world, who worked incredibly hard for three months. They worked tirelessly welding, sawing, screwing, sanding, assembling and painting. Search and rescue truly depends on a supportive civil society!

Facts and figures about the ship

- → Year built: 1976
- → Length: 60.8 m; Width: 11.4 m
- → Weight: 1,150 t
- → Maximum speed: 11 knots
- → **Ship owner:** SOS Humanity gGmbH
- → Flag state: Germany



Crew

Total: 28 staff across the following teams:

- → Ship operations: 12 people in the marine crew
- → **Rescue operations:** 7 people in the rescue team
- → Care of the rescued: 6 people in the care and medical team
- → Communication and documentation: 3 people

Equipment

- → Technical equipment: 2 speedboats (RHIBs), 2 radars on the mast
- → Rescue equipment: 620 life jackets, life rafts, floating devices for mass rescues
- → Kitchen: equipped for the preparation of hundreds of meals





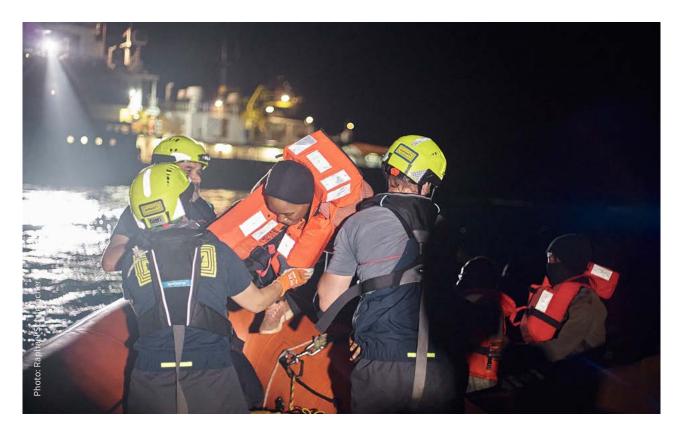
Accommodation

- \rightarrow 29 beds for the crew plus 1 journalist
- → Accommodation of those rescued on three decks, mostly covered, radiators
- → Shelter for women and children with a shower, sink and bunk beds for at least 12 women and their children

Care

- → Women's health: gynaecological chair and mobile ultrasonic probe
- → Clinic with 2 beds, 3 defibrillators, respirators, bandages, surgical instruments and medication
- → Sanitary facilities: 7 sanitary 'multi-use' cabins (showers & toilets), one exclusively for women





Humanity 1 in operation

In 2023, the crew of Humanity 1 rescued 1,101 people from distress at sea in six missions, consisting of a total of 24 rescue operations, and brought them to a place of safety. While the Italian government attempted to obstruct non-governmental search and rescue operations, more people attempted to flee across the central Mediterranean than any year since 2017.

After three successful missions and the rescue of 855 people the previous year, the Humanity 1 was due for a refit from January to March 2023. The ship was serviced in Burriana, Spain, and some parts were overhauled or replaced. Humanity 1 set off for the central Mediterranean at the beginning of April and ended its fourth mission in darkness and high waves by rescuing 69 people from an overcrowded rubber dinghy.

Among them was Viktor (name changed) from Sudan, who, after years as a refugee, saw his last hope in Europe: "In our country, there was discrimination based on ethnicity, religion, politics and culture. I suffered under these circumstances. In December 2018, I was part of the revolution. [...] We fought for our rights."

Distant ports

After the rescue, authorities assigned the Humanity 1 to the distant port of Ravenna, more than 1,600 km away –

an example of this new Italian practice of assigning distant ports.

On subsequent missions, the Humanity 1 continued to be sent to unnecessarily distant ports. In May, the crew, with 88 survivors on board, first had to travel to Livorno and later to Civitavecchia. In total, the Humanity 1 had to cover 11,163 additional kilometres in 2023, losing 33.5 days in the operational area.

Fleeing violence and persecution in Tunisia

The crew experienced a particularly challenging mission between the end of June and mid-July: first, they rescued 199 people from five boats in distress at sea within 36 hours and brought them to the assigned distant port of Ortona. Just one week later, the crew carried out four rescues in one afternoon, taking 204 people on board and bringing them to Ancona. The rescues took place between Tunisia and Lampedusa, a rather atypical operational area for the Humanity 1. All took place in consultation with the Italian authorities, who required our assistance.

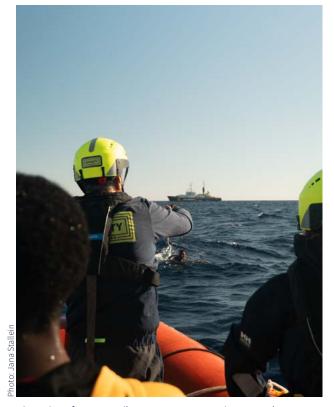
The number of departures from the Tunisian coast increased dramatically. Céline (name changed), who had fled from Burkina Faso to Tunisia, told our crew about the reason behind the massive increase in violence against Black people in Tunisia: "In Tunisia, Black people are being chased away. They are beaten. I was taken from a house with my little baby, they took stones to throw at us. They took the little money I had, pulled out knives and tried to grab me. I had nowhere to go."

Unlawful detention of Humanity 1

After a further 163 people were rescued in August, the Humanity 1 was docked in Syracuse harbour in September for our Open Ship event. Returning to action in October, the crew rescued a total of 148 people from distress at sea. They were able to go ashore in the ports of Bari and Taranto.

Humanity 1's last mission for 2023 was particularly challenging: the crew first rescued 200 people from four boats in distress in international waters off the Libyan coast. Simultaneously, the crew witnessed a pull-back by the so-called Libyan Coast Guard, during which numerous people went overboard. After the so-called Coast Guard made no rescue attempts and did not respond to radio messages from Humanity 1, our crew rescued 46 people from the water.

After disembarkation in Crotone, Italy, the Humanity 1 was unjustifiably detained for 20 days based on false claims by the Libyans. SOS Humanity immediately filed a lawsuit.



Disruption of a rescue: Libyan actors cause panic, 46 people are rescued from the water by our rescue crew.

The deadliest year since 2017

In 2023, the dangerous journey across the Mediterranean ended fatally for more than 3,100 people. In view of this ongoing humanitarian emergency, non-governmental search and rescue in the Mediterranean remains vital.

Facts and figures about our rescues



In a total of **24 rescues** in 2023, the Humanity 1's crew saved a total of **1,101 people** from drowning, including **103 women**, **nine of whom were pregnant**. Amongst the rescued were also **256 minors**, including **eight babies**, **nine toddlers** between the ages of one and three, and **33 children** between the ages of four and thirteen. **201 of the minors were unaccompanied**. The majority of those rescued came from West African countries including Gambia and the Ivory Coast, as well as from Syria and Bangladesh.



At the end of the year, SOS Humanity and other NGOs protest against a draft law aimed at making humanitarian aid at the EU's external borders a criminal offence.

Change on land: political and legal action

Search and rescue is a duty, and the right to asylum is enshrined in human rights. Nonetheless, in 2023, the rights of refugees were further eroded, and the obstruction of the work of non-governmental search and rescue intensified. We are fighting back against these legal and human rights violations both politically and, increasingly, by taking legal action.

We exert influence

In 2023, as part of our efforts to advocate for the rights of refugees and compliance with the law applicable at the EU's external borders, SOS Humanity sought to engage with members of the German Bundestag, employees of the federal ministries, as well as members of the European Parliament and the European Commission. As experts on the situation in the central Mediterranean, we participated in political events, such as the parliamentary evening of the Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund Deutschland e.V. (ASB). Together with 60,000 citizens, SOS Humanity petitioned the Federal Ministry of the Interior to implement the coalition's promise of European-organised and state-coordinated search and rescue. In 2023, SOS Humanity further expanded its cooperation with other civil society actors, including by joint statements. We published our political demands in the position papers "Compliance with international law" and "No delay in disembarkation".

We are taking legal action

In 2023, the obstruction and criminalisation of humanitarian aid at sea reached a new level of escalation in EU member States. The rights of refugees and civil search and rescue came under threat not only in Italy, but also in Germany. In February 2023, the new "Piantedosi Law" came into effect in Italy, regulating non-governmental search and rescue. Among other things, it stipulates that rescue ships must proceed to the assigned port immediately after the first rescue – regardless of other distress cases. It also enables the detention of civil rescue ships on spurious grounds. For example, the Humanity 1 was detained in December 2023 after a rescue operation, despite evidence proving that the crew acted in accordance with international law. SOS Humanity filed a lawsuit against the detention in December 2023.

Lawsuit against the obstruction of search and rescue in Italy

Non-governmental rescue ships were hindered in their operations by being assigned unnecessarily distant ports for the disembarkation of survivors, forcing them to undertake long trips to return to the rescue zone. In 2023, the ships lost over a year of operational time due to long voyages of up to four days and 1,600km, to ports in the north and east of Italy. In April 2023, SOS Humanity filed a lawsuit in the Civil Court of Rome against this systematic obstruction. Additionally, SOS Humanity and other organisations lodged a complaint with the EU Commission regarding the 'Piantedosi Law' and the practice of assigning distant ports. They called for an examination of its compatibility with EU law.

No imprisonment for civil search and rescue in Germany

As part of the 'Repatriation Improvement Act', the Federal Ministry of the Interior proposed a legal amendment in November 2023 that would criminalise humanitarian aid for refugees, including search and rescue, punishable with up to 10 years' imprisonment. Together with other organisations, SOS Humanity initiated a petition that garnered around 137,000 signatures. Due to pressure from civil society, the law was passed in a weakened form in 2024. However, due to a loophole, the risk of criminal liability for civil search and rescue, absurdly, remains.

Protest against the EU's closed-door policies

The injustices at the EU's external borders have worsened since 2023 due to the reform of the Common European



ASB parliamentary evening: EU politician Katarina Barley, founder Klaus Vogel and Mirka Schäfer, SOS Humanity (from right).

Asylum System (CEAS) and the EU's new agreement with Tunisia. Departures of people seeking protection from Tunisia's coast have surged since March 2023, largely due to the severe deterioration of the human rights situation on the ground. In June and July 2023, the crew of Humanity 1 rescued a total of 403 people in nine rescue missions, all of whom had fled Tunisia in unseaworthy metal boats. SOS Humanity published survivor stories to highlight the problematic nature of the EU's cooperation with Tunisia.

Similarly, the EU's cooperation with Libya continues to violate human rights. The crew of Humanity 1 repeatedly encountered the EU-sponsored so-called Libyan Coast Guard at sea. In November 2023, the Humanity 1 crew witnessed masked and armed Libyan forces endangering people in distress at sea and dragging some back to Libya. This violates international law. The crew managed to rescue the others and bring them aboard the Humanity 1.

At the 'Stop CEAS!' demonstration in November 2023, SOS Humanity delivered a speech calling on the EU to ensure protection for people in need.

SOS Humanity demands:

- → Uphold and implement existing law: This includes the duty of search and rescue, state coordination of search and rescue operations, and the prompt disembarkation of rescued individuals at the nearest place of safety. The human rights of people seeking protection in the EU must be respected, rather than undermined by the CEAS reform.
- → Support, don't obstruct civil search and rescue: Support, don't obstruct civil search and rescue: EU Member States must not criminalise or otherwise hinder the rescue of people through regulations, laws, or practices that impede civil search and rescue efforts.
- → Establish a European search and rescue programme: EU Member States must finally create a European-organised, state-coordinated, and EU-funded search and rescue programme in the central Mediterranean
- → No cooperation with third countries to deter migration: by cooperating with unsafe third countries such as Libya and Tunisia in search and rescue operation, the EU is complicit in violations of international law, including human rights law. Instead, legal and safe routes must be established, to end the deaths in the Mediterranean.

Women in rescue operations

In the summer of 2023, for the first time, the majority of the crew on the Humanity 1 were women – a rarity in the male-dominated maritime world. We asked the all-female rescue crew of one of our fast rescue boats (RHIBs) whether, as a result, they experienced this mission differently.



Only women on the speedboat: the all-female crew is responsible for initial contact with people in distress at sea.

What was it like to carry out rescues with an all-female team on the RHIB?

- **Sarah, RHIB Coordinator:** I was told at the interview that I would be on an all-female RHIB crew and I was super excited. But I didn't feel a difference on the RHIB, everything just worked really well.
- **Colive, RHIB Driver:** Yes, I agree, we are all professionals. But the way in which we supported each other was different. With male colleagues, there's sometimes more of a competition: who does the cleaner manoeuvre or who drives a bit better.

Why is an all-female RHIB crew unusual?

Viviana, Search and Rescue Coordinator: In six years of search and rescue, this was the first time I have worked with women only. I am very happy to have the opportunity to work with these women, who are so dedicated and highly qualified – and very strong. Physically strong, but above all emotionally strong – with brains and hearts. I believe that we all have this kind of strength, sometimes more so than men.

- Anne, Cultural Mediator: A male crew member told me that he was a bit worried about a crew where most of the members are female. But after working together for a while, he had to admit that it works pretty well.
- **Olive:** We have proven that we are also able to take care of all the technical things on a RHIB: refuelling a RHIB, pumping it up ...

What experiences have you made as women in the maritime field?

- **Olive:** I have a commercial shipping background where I was usually always the only woman on board.
- **Anne:** I see a trend in search and rescue organisations. There are more female engineers and more female captains. I think that's a good sign.
- **Olive:** In an all-female team, you don't have to prove that you really know your job or that you're strong enough to lift a bag of lifejackets. You can concentrate on more important things like the training.

What needs to change to make the maritime sector and non-governmental search and rescue more female?

- **Olive:** I don't always want to be seen as a woman working at sea. I just want to be seen as a seafarer. But any mistake you make as a woman on board is seen as a failure of all women working on board.
- **Sarah:** We should talk about our own work and be a kind of role model for other women or young girls.

 Read in full length at: sos-humanity.org/en/testimonies/teamstories/women-in-rescue-operations/

Humanity! Menschlichkeit! Umanità!

2023 was the first full year in which we operated as SOS Humanity with a focus on "testifying, rescuing, protecting and assisting, and effecting change". This was accompanied by an expansion of our public image: we were able to strengthen our public image in English and also in Italy.





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La Stampa September 2023

ZDF November 2023

doku: SOS Mittelmeer!



BBC September 2023



tagesschau December 2023



bie Blockade gilt demnach für 20 Tage, zudem sei eine Geldstrafe in Höhe von 3.333 uro verhängt worden. Von der iTalienischen Küstenwache gab es zunächst keine Miziellen Informationen dazu. Die Berliner Orzanisation will nun rechtliche Schritte

EURONEWS October 2023



We reached even more people on our English social media channel X (formerly Twitter) than on its German counterpart. Due to X's drop in quality, we launched an English-language channel on the social media platform Bluesky. Likewise, on LinkedIn, we communicated predominantly in English in 2023. Across all social media, including Facebook and Instagram, we were able to record continuous, moderate growth of followers.

We introduced the prompt dispatch of press releases to both German and international press distribution lists, following each rescue operation. As a result, the Italian press response exceeded the German one. We were also successful across leading media such as Deutschlandfunk, Tagesschau, Spiegel Online, BBC, La Repubblica and Rai News. One journalist and one photographer were able to join each of Humanity 1's rescue missions. One highlight was the documentation of a rescue operation on the Humanity 1 by a ZDF film team.

In summer 2022 we redesigned our website, which is now complete thanks to the addition of the English-language version in 2023. For our fundraising work, we created a donations page with new functions. We invited the public to join us on board virtually, to explain what their donations are used for. On average, we were able to publish three newsletters per month. While the communications team size remained the same, it continued to grow its impact in 2023 –increasing its reach and working with new tools – and thus also growing the support for our work.



Photo: SOS Humar

SOS Humanity volunteers network with activists from other NGOs and plan joint campaigns such as information stands.



Volunteers give speeches at protests and rallies – our head office provides content support.

Volunteering on land

They raise awareness and their voices against the deaths in the Mediterranean: SOS Humanity's volunteers are an indispensable pillar of civil society engagement.

In 2023, the number of volunteer groups grew to eight with a new group in Heidelberg. With great enthusiasm, our volunteers raised awareness about the deaths in the Mediterranean. Through information stands and



Volunteers are on site at festivals and other events, providing information, collecting donations and gaining new supporters.

the organising and hosting of various events, the volunteers raised awareness about non-governmental search and rescue in the Mediterranean and the deadly consequences of Europe's migration policies.

The volunteers networked with other humanitarian movements such as Seebrücke. Through joint statements at protests they publicly called for more humanity at Europe's external borders, including at the "Stop GEAS!" day of action in Cologne, Kiel and Berlin.

In 2023, our volunteers were represented at 72 events across Germany, including information stands at 24 concerts including artists like OK KID, Kraftklub and Herbert Grönemeyer. They raised awareness of the humanitarian emergency in the Mediterranean at 12 festivals including Splash, Fusion and MS Dockville. Amongst others, the Munich group gave speeches at events such as the church congress in Nuremberg and the large demonstration against the far-right in Flensburg. Several different events were also organised, such as a charity concert in Paderborn, Climb for Rescue in Kiel, Poetry for Rescue in Hamburg and pub quizzes in Berlin. Through social media work and their podcast 'Save our Souls', our volunteers carried out important online educational work. Finally, they raised an impressive 33,000 Euros for SOS Humanity in 2023.



Welcome aboard the Humanity 1!

Open Ship: In September 2023, the Humanity 1 was opened to the general public for the first time. For around two weeks, our rescue ship was open to visitors in the port of Syracuse, Sicily.

Crew members provided guided tours of the Humanity 1 and a comprehensive photo exhibition was open to visitors for the duration of the Open Ship. Visitors were given an insight into the bridge, the engine room and the open decks, while pictures as well as audio and video installations showed what happens on each part of the ship during our search and rescue missions.

Donors also used the opportunity to get to know the Humanity 1 and its crew. Amongst them was Katrin Weidemann, CEO of Kindernothilfe: "It seems to me that in Europe's political debates, humanity is currently being sidelined. The Humanity 1 will only be anchored in the port of Sicily for a few more days. Then it will return to sea, to search and to rescue. And to stand for a humanity that is shaped and moved by the fates of those seeking protection."

Some members of SOS Humanity's team on land were also able, for the first time, to see with their own eyes what they work for on a daily basis. In addition to the guided tours and the opportunity to interact with the crew, a panel discussion with SOS Humanity's lawyers and a live online tour also took place.



Insights into a rescue ship: Tourists and partners alike benefit from the open ship with our crew.

The varied program and the easily accessible location of the Humanity 1 on Syracuse's harbour pier attracted a wide variety of visitors. Journalists, tourists who gave donations, including from a cruise ship from the USA, and locals visited Humanity 1 – a rescue ship that many had previously only heard about through the media.

Celebrity support

In 2023, numerous celebrity supporters championed search and rescue in public events and participated in campaigns. They were indispensable to our public relations and fundraising work. Thanks to their public profile, they drew attention to the humanitarian emergency in the Mediterranean and raised donations for rescue missions

SOS SESSIONS



For the third year in a row, this charity concert took place in support of SOS Humanity. This time, it was hosted on 13 December 2023 at the concert venue Huxleys Neue Welt in Berlin. The band Deichkind, electro-pop duo ÄTNA, rapper Megaloh, DJ Josi Miller and singer MINE brought a fantastic two-hour live show to an audience of around 1,000 people who were joined by many more on the livestream. The evening was hosted by Hadnet Tesfai. Almost 40,000 euros were raised and the stars drew additional attention to the plight in the Mediterranean.

⁶⁶ They display a lot professionalism in the Mediterranean. My family and I have been donating privately to the organisation for years. I just love the work they do. It's a tough job."

Philipp Grütering, Deichkind singer

Participation in TV quizzes

Actor Oliver Mommsen took part in two quizzes, donating the prize money to SOS Humanity: Das große Deutschland-Quiz in September and Die große Terra X-Show in October 2023, both on ZDF. All in all, he won more than twenty thousand euros in support of search and rescue.

We won't let anyone drown! There are no open questions, there's nothing to explain: It's clear, it feels right. SOS Humanity puts these words and thoughts into practice every day. At a time when 'Yes, but ...' inhibits most normal reactions, nothing has convinced me as much as this simple and clear commitment to life."

Tatort Mittelmeer





In 2023, the on-stage reading Tatort Mittelmeer ('Crime Scene Mediterranean') took place at the Thalia Theatre in Hamburg. Ten on-screen detectives read testimonies from the crew and survivors shedding light on how the Mediterranean is a crime scene. These included: Meret Becker, Lucas Gregorowicz, Wolfram Koch, Peter Kurth, Nina Kunzendorf, Bjarne Mädel, Heike Makatsch, Oliver Mommsen, Daniel Sträßer and Hans-Jochen Wagner. The reading was accompanied by music from pianist Aeham Ahmad. The almost sold-out hall was visibly moved, NDR reported.

Tatort Mittelmeer is about giving a voice to those not listened to: People who are fleeing and the team members of the SOS Humanity rescue crew. Together, we are focusing attention on the humanitarian and political catastrophe in the Mediterranean."

Peter Kurth, actor

#HumanityForAll photo campaign



In a photo campaign, celebrity supporters posed for more humanity in the Mediterranean. Together, they took a stand for the protection of human rights for all.

To me, humanity means recognising people as people and not as a nameless crowd of refugees. Humanity means giving these people a face, a name and a voice."

Daniel Sträßer, actor

Photo: Anthony Molina



In summer 2023, a limited-edition T-shirt was released. A collaboration between sustainable fashion label Armedangels and artist GABE called for 'humanity for all' and raised funds for SOS Humanity. More than 2,500 T-shirts were sold within a very short period of time. Half of each T-shirt sold went to SOS Humanity.

Showing humanity is never wrong to me, it is never going in the wrong direction. Where we are born is a matter of chance, luck or misfortune. Currently, more than 110 million people around the world are displaced from their homes. They are fleeing war, violence, abuse, persecution and the effects of the climate catastrophe. As of June, over 1,000 people have already drowned in the Mediterranean this year while trying to cross. SOS Humanity and Armedangels have teamed up with artist GABE for a limited-edition T-shirt. All profits from the sales of these shirts will go to SOS Humanity." Bjarne Mädel, actor

Instagram account of Bjarne Mädel, June 2023



24 Good Deeds Advent Calendar

With two online videos, Heike Makatsch promoted SOS Humanity's rescue mission in the context of the 24 Good Deeds Advent Calendar initiative. She raised over 42,000 euros in donations.

66 Humanity recognises the equal value in every human being. We are all one and will not let our brothers and sisters drown in the sea on their harrowing journeys."

Heike Makatsch, actress and ambassador for SOS Humanity



Your donation has an impact!

As a non-profit organisation, a member of the German Spendenrat (Donation Council) and Initiative Transparente Zivilgesellschaft (Transparent Civil Society), SOS Humanity discloses all its expenditures. It is important to us that you can understand what impact your donation has and what contribution you are making to non-governmental search and rescue in a transparent manner. Below you will find some examples of how your personal donation helps people in need:



With 15€ we can provide 2 survivors with warm blankets on board.



For 50 € we can provide 5 children with warm, clean clothes on board.

100€

100€ enables us to provide 4 small children with suitable life jackets.

700€ For 700€ we can provide 20 survivors with rescue kits, including a blanket, clothing, a water bottle, high-calory food, a toothbrush and a towel on board.

2.500 € With 2,500 €, we can cover the costs for one day of urgently needed medical care for 20 survivors on board.



11.300€ Around 11,300 € covers the cost of a day's search and rescue operation with the Humanity 1. With your donation, you are contributing to our life-saving work!

Strong partner organisations

Donation-based search and rescue is grounded in solidarity and support. Through their financial commitment, the partner organisations supporting SOS Humanity make our life-saving work in the Mediterranean as well as our political and educational work on land possible.

With the number of deaths in the Mediterranean rising significantly in 2023, SOS Humanity also found itself in crisis: amongst other things, the expenditures for fuel, food, medicines, harbour fees and legal support caused a considerable funding gap. Through a donor conference, convened at short notice, many supported us with additional funds – special thanks go to the German Postcode Lottery. Additionally, ADRA Germany, Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund (ASB), AWO International, Handicap International e.V., Help – Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe, Islamic Relief Germany and Kinderhilfswerk Stiftung Global Care were part of the fourth follow-up project of the Aktion Deutschland Hilft consortium. We also received support from World Vision Germany and the Central Welfare Board of Jews in Germany.

In addition, our work was made possible by both new and existing partnerships with Pharmacists Without Borders, Choose Love, Kindernothilfe, Islamic Relief Germany, SOS Children's Villages Worldwide, United4Rescue and UN-Flüchtlingshilfe. Many thanks also go to Solidar Suisse, who organised a successful fundraising campaign for us.

We are also grateful for the ship sponsorships by the cities of Braunschweig and Oldenburg and their fundraising campaigns for the Humanity 1, the dedication of the city of Angermünde and the municipal initiatives of Seebrücke Angermünde/Uckermark and Seebrücke Oldenburg.

Our heartfelt thanks go to everyone for their commitment: the Humanity 1 would not have been able to save the 1,101 people from distress without you. What incredible support! We are supported by:

Aktion

Deutschland Hilft



DEUTSCHEI

GLOBAL CARE

Kinderhilfswerk











International





In these turbulent times, it is more important than ever to stand up for the protection of



everyone's human rights and to raise awareness of the situation in the central Mediterranean. This is precisely why we support the work of SOS Humanity, which rescues people in distress at sea, accompanies them and brings them to

a place of safety. This support is only possible thanks to our participants. Every lottery ticket makes the world a better place."

> Friederike Behrends, Chairperson of the Management Board of German Postcode Lottery

Even without bordering the sea or an EU membership, Switzerland is part of Europe. We cannot simply



look the other way when people drown. Solidar Suisse is committed to helping refugees worldwide, which is why it was important to us and our members to support the valuable and courageous work of SOS Humanity and

to raise awareness around search and rescue in Switzerland."

Benjamin Gross, Head of Marketing & Communication Solidar Suisse

About us

What drives us

How we act

Our vision is a world in which the human rights of all are respected. No one has to drown while fleeing and everyone is treated with dignity.

WE SAVE LIVES

Humanitarian rescue of people in distress at sea in the Mediterranean by search and rescue professionals.

WE TESTIFY

Documentation of the stories of survivors as well as human rights violations and abuses at Europe's external borders.

WE PROTECT AND ASSIST

Medical and psychological care as well as humanitarian protection for survivors on board.

WE CREATE CHANGE

We inform the public about the inhumane consequences of European migration policies. On a political level we advocate for the rights of people fleeing across the sea.

SOS Humanity, a non-governmental search and rescue organisation, was founded in 2015, originally as SOS Mediterranee, by captain and historian Klaus Vogel. In 2022, the German association separated from the European network and has been operating in the central Mediterranean as SOS Humanity ever since, with its own rescue ship, Humanity 1.

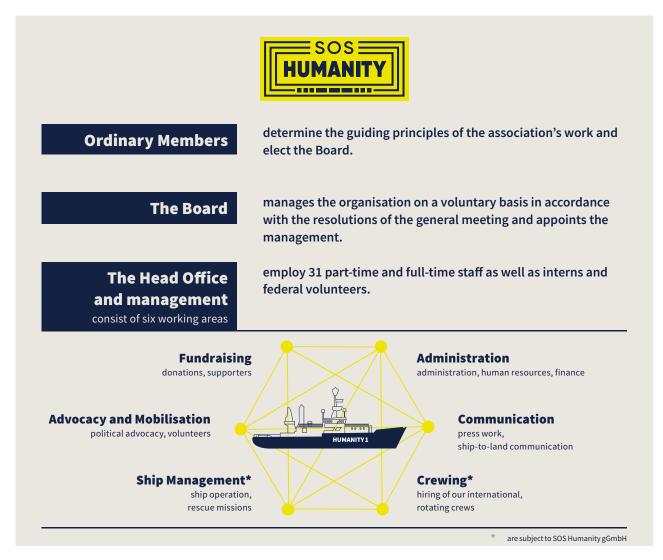
Rescuing, protecting and assisting, testifying and changing: for eight years, our goals have been to rescue people in distress in the Mediterranean, to provide care aboard our ship for those rescued, and to bear witness to and document their experiences and our observations at sea. Since 2022, we have increased our efforts to inform the public and influence politicians through targeted lobby and advocacy work. In so doing, we are calling for a more humane migration policy at both federal and EU level.

In 2023, our work at sea and on land was expanded and structurally consolidated. It is supported by a committed civil society, including in Italy. SOS Humanity is primarily financed through private donations and the support of other organisations, and more recently also by the German Federal Foreign Office following a decision by the German Bundestag. Together, they all helped us operate the Humanity 1 in 2023 and rescue a total of 1,101 children, women and men from distress at sea and bring them to a place of safety.

Humanity What motivates us We rescue people in distress at sea because we promote the human rights and dignity of each and every individual. **Solidarity** Transparency We educate, inform and mobilise We bear witness to the humanitarian people across Europe to take catastrophe in the Mediterranean a stand for those in distress at sea. and communicate transparently and responsibly about this work By joining forces, we want to create Europe-wide solidarity. to the public. Appreciation Independence We treat everyone with respect We ensure our independence and firmly believe that we can in order to pursue our mission. achieve more through diversity. Professionalism We are experts in what we do to carry out our work effectively in an ever-changing environment.

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The association



The association SOS Humanity e.V. works on land and at sea to bring to an end the deaths of people fleeing across the Mediterranean.

The ordinary members determine the underlying principles of the association's work and elect the Board. In 2023, general meetings were held on 24 June and 5 December. At the end of the reporting period, the association had 57 ordinary members.

The voluntary board must consist of at least four ordinary members who manage the association in accordance with the Articles of Association and the resolutions of the General Meeting. The Board is usually elected for a term of three years. The Board appoints the management.

The head office is divided into six areas of work. Fundraising is responsible for attracting and supporting donors as well as partner organisations. Administration takes care of the association's administration, staff and finances. Advocacy and Mobilisation is responsible for political work and volunteer engagement. Communications covers all media and public relations work as well as ship-to-land communication. SOS Humanity gGmbH, which was founded to operate the ship, brings together the crewing team and the operation of the rescue ship, and is responsible for the alternating international crews and the missions of the Humanity 1.

During this last reporting period, the office employed 31 part- and full-time staff. The various teams were regularly supported by interns and federal volunteers. The average number of equivalent full-time positions for the year was 18.5 (the association (e.V.) 14.3, gGmbH (on land) 4.2), which corresponds to an increase of one full-time position compared to the previous year.

Income and Expenses

Income 2023, SOS Humanity e.V.

For this reporting year, the total income of SOS Humanity e.V. amounted to **EUR 3,805,270**. This marked an increase of 31% from the previous year (EUR 2,899,676).

EUR 1,254,219 came from private donors who supported us through one-time or permanent donations and sponsoring memberships.

Membership fees of SOS Humanity e. V.'s ordinary members accounted for an additional EUR 3,860.

40 percent of the total income, i. e. EUR 1,515,913, came from foundations and other funding we received from partner organisations. This is an increase of 42 % from the previous year. One of the reasons behind this increase was the donor conference in June 2023, convened to ask partner organisations for support. At this point, it had become apparent that we would no longer be able to reliably cover our expenses due to rising costs, declining private donations and inflation.

Around 2.5% of our funds, EUR 94,674, were donated by companies. The majority resulted from a successful cooperation with the company Armedangels.

Public funds accounted for 23.1% of the total income in 2023.

The biggest change compared to previous years was the financial support from Germany's Federal Foreign Office. For the first time, the German government supported non-governmental search and rescue in the Mediterranean following a decision by the German Bundestag: in the final quarter of 2023, SOS Humanity e.V. received a total of EUR 746,828 from the federal budget.

Other public funds came from city partnership projects with, amongst others, Oldenburg and Angermünde.

In 2023, we also received an additional EUR 80,162 from our long-standing partnership with the city of Lüneburg, which, for contractual reasons, we passed on to our former SOS Mediterranee network

Revenue	3,805,270 Euro	(100 %)
Private donations	1,254,219 Euro	(33.0 %)
Grants	1,206,308 Euro	(31.7 %)
Public funds (including city partnerships)	879,620 Euro	(23.1 %)
Donations from foundations	309,606 Euro	(8.1%)
Donations from companies	94,674 Euro	(2.5 %)
Other income	56,983 Euro	(1.5 %)
Membership fees	3,860 Euro	(0.1 %)

Expenditures 2023, SOS Humanity e.V.

For the reporting period, the total expenditures of SOS Humanity e.V. amounted to **EUR 3,836,957**. Of this, a total of EUR 2,497,572 were transferred to SOS Humanity gGmbH for the operation of the ship. This process is regulated in a service contract.

EUR 566,034 or around 15 % of the total expenditure went towards statutorily mandated educational, public relations and political work.

EUR 362,460 were spent on fundraising. Donors were provided with the best possible support and information and new donations were secured.

A further EUR 314,871 were necessary to cover the association's administrative costs.

Overall, the costs of fundraising and administration came to 17.7 %. At 82.3 %, the largest share went directly to the rescue work and communication, thus contributing to the respective statutory objectives.

Our association's accounts comply with the guidelines of the Deutscher Spendenrat and have been audited by an auditing company (see pg. 34). This guarantees that donations and funding are used for the intended purpose in an economical and transparent manner.

Expenditure	3,836,957 Euro	(100 %)
Project costs for rescue work	2,593,592 Euro	(67.6 %)
Statutory educational and public relations work	566,034 Euro	(14.8 %)
Fundraising	362,460 Euro	(9.4 %)
Administrative expenses	314,871 Euro	(8.2 %)

SOS Humanity gGmbH:

In 2023, apart from a few weeks in the shipyard in the first quarter for urgently needed conversion and repair works, the Humanity 1 was, for the first time, operational all year round.

The funds that the non-profit Schiffsbetriebs-GmbH received from the association in 2023 were used for ongoing ship operations.

Amongst other things, these were used to pay for ship management, personnel costs on board and ashore,

rescue equipment, meals for the crew and rescued people, refueling the ship, harbor fees and medication.

Note:

As the annual financial statements of SOS Humanity gGmbH for the 2023 financial year were not yet available for the editorial deadline of this report, no specific figures on the gGmbH are published here. Upon receipt, the annual financial statements are regularly published in the electronic Federal Gazette.

Annual financial statements 2023

Balance sheet as of 31 December of the 2023 financial year, SOS Humanity e.V.

		31.12.2023	31.12.2022
	Assets		
Α.	Fixed assets		
I.	Property, plant and equipment other equipment, business and office equipment	1.00	534.00
н.	Financial assets Investments	25,000.00	25,000.00
в.	Current assets		
١.	Receivables and other assets		
1. 2. 3.	Trade receivables Receivables from companies in which participations are held Other assets	0.00 112.30 26,668.20 26,780.50	1,060.00 0.00 3,947.60 5,007.60
Π.	Cash balances, Bundesbank balances, other bank balances and cheques	686,488.60	586,188.71
с.	Deferred income	5,550.00	15,153.64
	total	743,820.10	631,883.95
	Liabilites		
Α.	Equity capital retained earnings other retained earnings	499,471.50	531,158.96
В.	Accrued liabilities other provisions	50,300.00	50,600.00
С. І.	Liabilities Liabilities towards credit institutions – of which with a remaining term of up to one year EUR 1,276.45 (EUR 12.63)	1,276.45	12.63
II.	Liabilities from deliveries and services – of which with a remaining term of up to one year EUR 61,399.54 (EUR 22,683.34)	61,399.54	22,683.34
III.	Liabilities to companies in which participations are held – of which with a remaining term of up to one year EUR 0.00 (EUR 9,345.31)	0.00	9,345.31
IV.	Other liabilities - of which taxes EUR 20,973.06 (EUR 16,713.44) - thereof within the scope of social security EUR 1,413.56 (EUR 444.52) - of which with a remaining term of up to one year EUR 131,372.61 (EUR 18,083.71)	131,372.61	18,083.71
	total (I. bis IV.)	194,048.60	50,124.99
	total	743,820.10	631,883.95 Data in Euro

Data in Euro

Profit and loss account for the financial year 2023, SOS Humanity e.V.

		fiscal year 2023	previous year 2022
1.	Contributions	3,783,883.11	2,899,677.30
2.	Other operating income	21,386.48	32,458.59
3.	Use of funds Funds transferred	- 2,591,830.50	-1,884,827.94
4.	Personnel expenses		
a)	Wages and salaries	- 632,602.60	- 658,827.09
b)	Social security contributions and expenses for pensions and other employee benefits – of which for pensions EUR -725.50 (EUR -174.52)	- 145,845.37	- 138,115.37
	total	-778,447.97	-796,942.46
5.	Depreciations on intangible fixed assets and property, plant and equipment	- 1,132.00	- 10,946.82
6.	Other operating expenses	- 465,516.08	- 533,057.76
7.	Interest and similar expenses	- 30.50	0.00
8.	Result after taxes	- 31,687.46	- 293,639.09
9.	Annual deficit	- 31,687.46	- 293,639.09
10.	Withdrawals from revenue reserves from statutory reserves	- 31,687.46	293,639.09
11.	Allocations to revenue reserves to statutory reserves	0.00	0.00
12.	Net profit	0.00	0.00

Data in Euro

Financial year 2023

Allocation of income and expenses for the 2023 financial year by division and function/area © Deutscher Spendenrat e. V. (German Donation Council)

(Multi-division calculation in the total cost method, Annex 2a GKV)

Activities			
			Direct activities
Item designation	Total income statement	Direct idealistic activities / projects	Statutory educational and public relations work
	EUR	EUR	EUR
Donations and similar revenues	3,783,883.11	3,783,833.11	
of which membership fees/ sponsorship contributions	3,860.00	3,860.00	
Other operating income	21,386.48		13,551.90
Subtotal of income	3,805,269.59	3,783,883.11	13,551.90
Direct expenses for statutory purposes / project expenses	2,591,830.50	2,591,830.50	
Personnel expenses	778,447.97		431,066.74
Subtotal of expenses	3,370,278.47	2,591,830.50	431,066.74
Preliminary result 1	+ 434,991.12	+ 1,192,052.91	- 417,514.84
Depreciation and amortisation of intangible assets and property, plant and equipment	1,132.00		599.00
Other operating expenses	465,516.08	1,761.35	134,365.78
Preliminary result 2	- 31,656.96	+ 1,190,291.26	- 552,479.62
Interest and similar expenses	30.50		2.50
Result after taxes	- 31,687.46	+ 1,190,291.26	- 552,482.12
Net profit / loss for the year	- 31,687.46	+ 1,190,291.26	- 552,482.12

Total income (EUR)	3,805,269.59	3,783,883.11	13,551.90
Total income (%)	100.00	99.44	0.36

Total expenses (EUR)	3,836,957.05	2,593,591.85	566,034.02
Total expenses (%)	100.00	67.60	14.75

Fulfilment of statuto	ry purposes/idealist	ic area		
	Indirect activities			
Subatotal direct activities	Management / Administration	Fundraising	Subtotal indirect activities	Total of statutory activities
EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR
3,783,833.11			0.00	3,783,883.11
3,860.00			0.00	3,860.00
13,551.90	5,093.54	2,741.04	7,834.58	21,386.48
3,797,435.01	5,093.54	2,741.04	7,834.58	3,805,269.59
2,591,830.50			0.00	2,591,830.50
431,066.74	187,046.93	160,334.30	347,381.23	778,447.97
3,022,897.24	187,046.93	160,334.30	347,381.23	3,370,278.47
+ 774,537.77	- 181,953.39	- 157,593.26	- 339,546.65	+ 434,991.12
599.00	533.00		533.00	1,132.00
136,127.13	127,261.53	202,125.42	329,388.95	465,516.08
+ 637,811.64	- 309,749.92	- 359,718.68	- 699,468.60	- 31,656.96
2.50	28.00		28.00	30,50
+ 637,809.14	- 309,777.92	- 359,718.68	- 669,496.00	- 31,687.46
+ 637,809.14	- 309,777.92	- 359,718.68	- 669,496.00	- 31,687.46
3,797,435.01	5,093.54	2,741.04	7,834.58	3,805,269.50
99.79	0.13	0.07	0.21	100.00

3,159,625.87	314,871.46	362,459.72	677,331.18	3.836,957.05
82.35	8.21	9.45	17.65	100.00

Audit certificate



The 2023 annual financial statements were audited by the auditing company Solidaris Revisions-GmbH. You can find the complete audit report in German on our homepage at sos-humanity.org/transparenz.

Imprint

Publisher:	SOS Humanity e.V. PO Box 44 03 52 Telephone: +49 (0) 1 76 55 25 06 54 Homepage: sos-humanity.org E-Mail: kontakt@sos-humanity.org
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Translation:	Lea Main-Klingst, Sasha Ockenden, Louis Klausnitzer
Layout:	Dirk Braunheim
Print:	Pinguin Druck GmbH, Berlin, Germany
Editorial deadline:	1. July 2024
Note on pictures:	To protect their identity, the survivors depicted do not correspond to the persons quoted. Not all photos used in this report were taken in 2023.
Note on quotes:	The names of those rescued have been changed to protect their anonymity.

Your donation saves lives!

With your donation of 15 euros, we can provide baby food to a toddler for a whole week. 150 euros will make it possible for us to distribute two hot meals to 100 rescued children, women and men in one day. Help us to feed the survivors on our ship.

Donate now – your help is urgently needed!

Account details:

SOS Humanity e.V. IBAN: DE 04 1005 0000 0190 4184 51 BIC: BELADEBEXXX

Or online at: sos-humanity.org/en/donate-now







Donation account:

SOS Humanity e.V. IBAN: DE 04 1005 0000 0190 4184 51 BIC: BELADEBEXXX Visit our website: wwww.sos-humanity.org/en Follow us on social media:

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