



Newsletter number 1

Dear members, supporters and volunteers

Before 2016 comes to an end, we'd like to send you the very first RANA newsletter.

First of all, **to thank you:** for your very impressive commitment to refugees, for your ideas and comments, and also for the times we've shared. Things have really got moving now! It's also an opportunity to have a first look back at RANA's first few months of existence and to share some news with you.

Note now the date of the next Annual General Meeting: on 23 January 2017 at 7pm at Mundo B (26 Rue d'Edimburgh in Ixelles) to discuss our next activities and to make some strategic choices. .

Happy reading and Happy New Year – and don't hesitate to send us your comments and ideas.

The RANA team.

Our activities : help at the Gare du Nord and individual ‘buddying’

Over these last few months, we’ve put in a lot of time and money into helping refugees at the Gare du Nord. Thanks to around 20 very active volunteers, we’ve managed to give out more than 1200 hot drinks and 1500 meals, as well as dozens of blankets, sleeping bags, clothes and shoes. Moreover, our volunteers Aurélie, Ophélie and Marie organised a session of legal advice there. The situation remains nonetheless difficult: around 50 young men, most of whom arrived in Brussels after the dismantling of the Calais ‘Jungle’, are still spending freezing nights in the streets around the station.



Alongside this emergency aid, we've been individually 'buddying' several refugee families. Achraf especially has put in a lot of time and energy helping with accommodation, registration for courses or administrative procedures. As several of you have also suggested, we should intensify this work, which is at the heart of RANA's mission. We will discuss this during the Annual General Meeting on 23 January and Achraf will present different possibilities for getting involved in these projects .



First Appraisal: concerts, charity sales, applications

As a very young organisation, RANA must not only embark on different activities, but also make itself known to the wider public and find the funds needed to run its projects. In December, two big events helped us in this respect: from 5 - 9 December, we had a stand in the European Parliament to sell different decorative items of in aid of RANA. This raised about 1100 Euros.



In the same week, our big evening event “Refugees Are Not Alone – Concert and Oriental Food” took place on Thursday 8 December. More than 130 people came to listen to the music and the experiences of the members of “Syrians Got Talent”, and to discover and support RANA. It was a powerful and emotional event that the Belgian and international media covered. A big thanks to the Atelier Marcel Hastir who provided us with the space and to the very large number of volunteers who helped that night.

You can find some of the words and images from this event on [cctvnews](#) or on [Bruzz](#).



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A few days later, another concert took place: one of our supporters organised a musical evening for their friends and invited them to donate the money to RANA, which raised about 500 Euros. A great example that we will have to encourage again!



Finally, there is, however, some bad news that arrived before Christmas: we had applied for funding from the Roi Baudouin Foundation for a project named “The Three Musketeers” (an individual ‘buddying’ arrangement undertaken by small teams of three people), but this project unfortunately did not get through. Amongst the 170 applications, only about 30 were chosen and priority was given, it seems, to the big organisations. But we won’t despair and we have already prepared some other proposals. On 23 January we’ll also discuss our ideas and actions for financing RANA...

