



Gjengen i Ryggen translated from Norwegian means “The Group that backs you up”. This is a Norwegian association established in October 2017. The main goal of the association is to raise money to secure the salaries for the teachers working in Mikros Dounias. Primarily, this fund raising happens through an annual solidarity event.

It all started with Marit Heldal deciding to act and do something after visiting Lesvos in September 2016. Through the Facebook group “Gjengen i Ryggen” she collected almost NOK 300,000 (about € 30.000) in November and December 2016. She brought the money with her to Lesvos Solidarity Refugee Camp in January 2017, and built a nature playground for the children in the camp, also supplying other important things needed for the project.

The idea of a joint early childhood education and care facility for both local children and children from the camp, eventually matured, and arose. In October 2017, Mikros Dounias (“small world”) saw the light of day. Mikros Dounias values and emphasizes nature and outdoor pedagogy and aesthetic activities. This pedagogical project practices solidarity in every meaning of the word, every day. It shows that peaceful coexistence between refugees and local people is possible. It is a safe space for children living in transit, and a gathering place for people of any background.

The refugee crisis is not over. Boats arrive daily to Lesvos – and the children are a major part of this group. This is children in desperate need of security and care. In the jungle of good intentions, Mikros Dounias is a professional early childhood education and care institution, driven by educated people with wise heads and big hearts. Gjengen i Ryggen supports Mikros Dounias – in solidarity for a better future for all.

You can read more about Gjengen i Ryggen on our web site: <https://www.gjengeniryggen.no/>

Everyone can become a supportive member of Gjengen i Ryggen.