



Mani International Animal Organisation



A whirlwind of a month

Our first month as a new board has been a whirlwind. We've been busy trying to get a clear picture of how everything works behind the scenes—learning the ins and outs of internal processes, sorting through reporting systems, and keeping track of what needs to be registered where. Like with any big transition, there's been a fair bit of organisational chaos, but we're steadily getting on top of it. We're also starting to identify where improvements can be made, which is already helping us feel more confident in our roles.

At the same time, it's been a particularly intense period out in the field. We've seen a noticeable rise in animal abandonment, welfare issues, and bite incidents, which has kept the team on high alert. It's clear that the need for our work is as strong as ever, and this has only strengthened our motivation to get fully up to speed. While the challenges have been real, so too has the sense of purpose—and we're looking forward to building momentum as we settle into the months ahead.

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Adoptions & New Arrivals

We are delighted to say we have had a much better April, with 5 dogs adopted. Falkor, Astera, Max, Dottie and Kyria all went to their forever homes. Interestingly, most of them will actually stay in Greece, something that rarely happens.

Falkor has found his people here in the Mani, as has little Max, who has joined a local farmer on his daily rounds. Astera has joined a wonderful couple in Leftkros and Kyria now lives near Kalamata. She is a happy foster fail - her mum just couldn't let her go anymore. Dottie, now Leni recently flew to Munich in Germany and will live in beautiful Bavaria.

Lizzie, a young, female terrier/griffon mix, joined the MIAO family and is very lucky to be in foster care. We also received a phone call about a couple of tiny kittens found tied in a plastic bag near one of the hotels in Kardamyli. Amy and Louis, as they are now called, were less than 2 weeks old when found. Luckily, they took to bottle feeding and are now thriving in their forever home with Eva, our previous president!



Lizzie

*“Animals are reliable,
many full of love, true in
their affections,
predictable in their
actions, grateful and loyal.
Difficult standards for
people to live up to.”*

~Alfred A. Montapert



Louis and Amy

DOG OF THE MONTH

Every month we put the spotlight on a long-term resident, in the hope to find their forever home.

Pina

Pina is a very special girl. She is beautiful and elegant - and she moves gracefully like a dancer. She is always very enthusiastic and happy to see us. She is, however, quite shy and lacks confidence around new people, situations and other dogs, but she has come on leaps and bounds in recent months. Pina would really benefit from being in a 1 to 1 relationship, to have her very own special person who will love her as an individual. Pina will be a very rewarding dog for the right person who has patience at the beginning and turn into a wonderful life companion.



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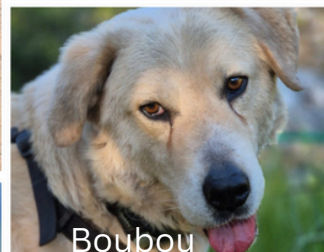
Recipient: Mani FOM/MIAO



Rudi



Max



Boubou



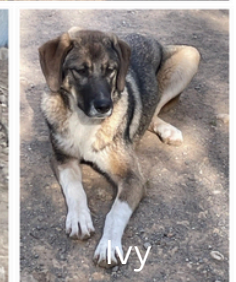
Abby



Kyria



Wurzel



Ivy



We're Not Magicians – Just Volunteers Doing Our Best

One of the biggest challenges we continue to face as an animal rescue group in the Mani is the misconception that we can respond instantly to every report of a stray animal. We understand where this comes from—people care, they're upset, and they want someone to help. So do we. But we want to be honest and transparent with you: we are not a government service, and we are not equipped with a magic wand.

We're a small, entirely volunteer-based group. That means everyone involved in the rescue and care of animals is doing it in their free time, often around jobs, families, and other responsibilities. We have no shelter, no central facility, and no paid staff. Our rescue efforts rely almost entirely on whether a foster home is available at the time—and more often than not, there isn't one.

Our foster families open their homes and hearts to dogs in need, and we're lucky to have them. But space is limited, and the need far outweighs our capacity. Taking in cats is even more difficult, as we have fewer fosters equipped for them and fewer options for safe placement. When someone demands that we "come and collect a dog immediately," the heartbreaking truth is: we usually can't—not because we don't care, but because we simply have nowhere for that animal to go.

We are doing what we can with what we have. What we don't have is the ability to respond to every call, pick up every stray, or resolve every situation on demand. And we're not legally or practically obligated to do so. This is a community issue, not something a handful of volunteers can fix alone.

In the coming weeks, we'll be sharing more about what we can do, how the community can help, and what steps we believe could create long-term, sustainable improvements for animal welfare in our region. But it starts with a bit more understanding—and a lot more teamwork.

Thank you to all of you who support us with your time, donations, kind words, and patience. You're the reason we're able to help at all.

The Economic Cost of Animal Cruelty and Neglect in Greece

Greece, a country renowned for its rich history, breathtaking landscapes, and vibrant culture, also struggles with an issue that casts a shadow over its international reputation—animal cruelty and neglect. While often viewed as a moral or social issue, the mistreatment and abandonment of animals also have very real economic consequences. From straining public resources to damaging the nation's tourism industry, animal cruelty is costing Greece more than many realize.

A Strain on Public and Private Resources

Every year, municipalities across Greece are obliged to allocate substantial funds to manage the problem of abandoned animals. Stray dogs and cats are captured, fed, vaccinated, and sheltered—tasks that require ongoing public funding and NGO (non-governmental organisations) support. Veterinary care, food, sterilization programs, and the upkeep of municipal shelters all add up, creating a recurring financial burden.

Moreover, when cases of extreme neglect or abuse are reported, law enforcement and judicial systems are required to intervene, diverting resources that could otherwise be focused on other areas of public need. In rural regions where illegal poisonings or mass abandonments occur, clean-up operations and public health interventions may also become necessary.

The Hidden Cost: Damage to Tourism

Tourism is one of Greece's most vital economic sectors, contributing over 20% to the national GDP and employing a significant portion of the population. Yet, for many foreign visitors, witnessing the suffering of stray or abused animals during their stay can be deeply distressing. Stories and images of emaciated dogs, injured cats, and mistreated donkeys frequently circulate on social media and travel review sites, sometimes going viral.

Some tourists, particularly from northern European countries where animal welfare standards are much higher and more strictly enforced, report feeling shocked and helpless after encountering cruelty or neglect while on holiday. For a number of these travelers, their emotional response is strong enough that they decide not to return—and they advise others to do the same.

The impact may seem anecdotal, but even a small percentage of tourists opting for other destinations can translate into millions of euros lost annually in tourism revenue. Negative word-of-mouth, bad reviews, and social media posts affect how Greece is perceived as a travel destination. At a time when competition among Mediterranean countries for tourism dollars is intense, Greece can ill afford to ignore a factor that affects its global image.

A Call for Humane and Economic Reform

Improving animal welfare in Greece is not only an ethical imperative—it's an economic one. By investing in effective sterilization programs, stricter law enforcement against abuse, and public education campaigns, Greece can reduce the number of stray animals over time and improve its international standing.

Several municipalities and organizations have already shown that change is possible, with successful partnerships between local governments, veterinarians, and volunteers leading to fewer strays and healthier communities. Scaling these efforts nationally could significantly reduce long-term costs and help protect one of Greece's most valuable assets—its tourism industry.

In the end, how Greece treats its animals matters—not just for the animals themselves, but for the well-being of its people, its economy, and its global reputation.