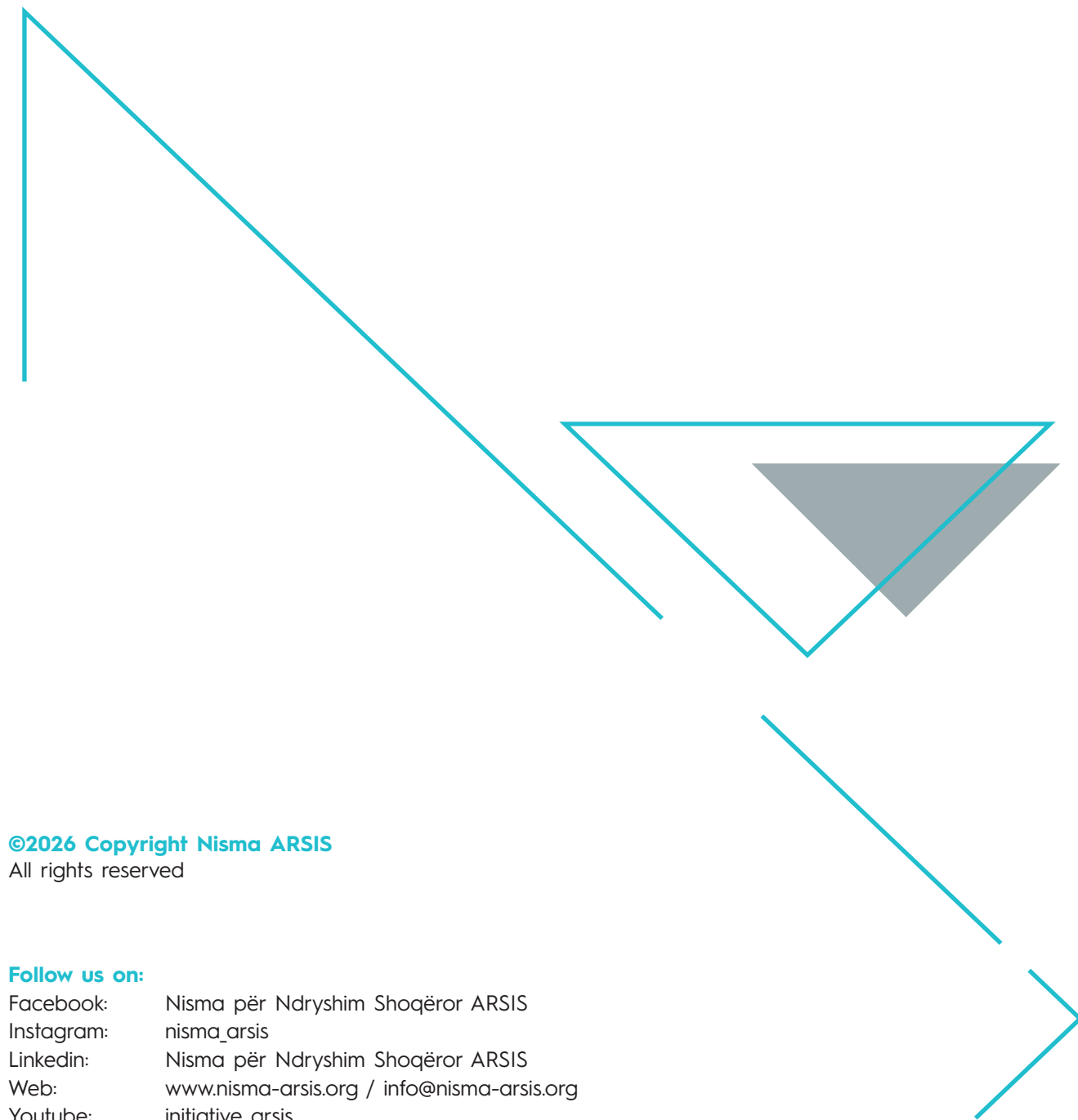




ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Protecting Childhood.
Empowering Youth.
Strengthening Families.
Shaping Systems.





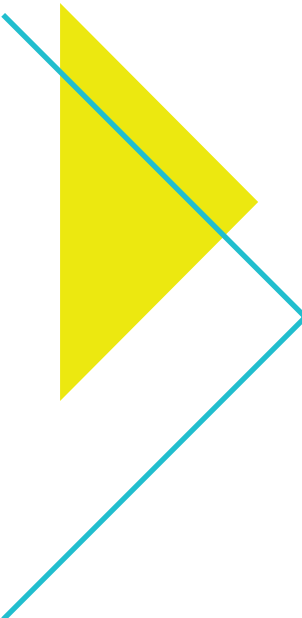
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- Annual report 2024 - https://nisma-arsis.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/ANNUAL_REPORT_2024.pdf
- Annual report 2023 - https://nisma-arsis.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Annual-Report-2023_web_low.pdf
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- Yearbook 2016-2020 - https://nisma-arsis.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Yearbook-2016-2020_Nisma-ARSIS.pdf

CONTENTS

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	4
WHO WE ARE	5
NISMA ARSIS IMPACT IN 2025	7
LINK TO ALBANIA'S REFORM AGENDA, EU INTEGRATION, AND CHILD RIGHTS OBLIGATIONS	11
MAIN FIELDS OF WORK	11
PREVENT	23
PROTECT	27
EMPOWER	39
TRANSFORM	55
PARTNERSHIPS THAT MULTIPLY IMPACT	59
OUR PEOPLE	63
FINANCIAL OVERVIEW	63
DONORS AND SUPPORTERS	65
LOOKING AHEAD	67
HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT NISMA ARSIS	68





Message from the Executive Director

Dear children, young people, families, partners, supporters, and colleagues,
Every year brings its own challenges, but also new opportunities to create meaningful change. As we reflect on 2025, I am filled with gratitude, pride, and hope for what we have achieved together.

Throughout this year, we witnessed the extraordinary resilience of children, young people, women, and families facing some of life's most difficult circumstances. Behind every statistic in this report is a story of courage: a child who found safety after experiencing violence, a young person who discovered their voice and confidence, a family reunited after years of separation, a woman who transformed an idea into a source of income and independence, or a professional who strengthened their skills to better protect those most at risk.

At Nisma ARSIS, we believe that lasting change begins with people, but it is sustained through strong systems, inclusive communities, and partnerships built on trust. In 2025, we continued to protect children from violence, abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and neglect; empower young people as active citizens and leaders; strengthen families through integrated support services; and contribute to reforms that place children's rights and wellbeing at the center of public policies and social care systems.

This year, our work reached communities in 21 municipalities across Albania. We strengthened family-based care and deinstitutionalization efforts, expanded mental health and psychosocial support services, promoted child participation and youth engagement, supported refugee and returnee families, advanced safeguarding standards, and contributed to national policy reforms that will shape the future of child protection and social care in Albania for years to come.

These achievements are not the result of one organization alone. They are the product of collective commitment. I want to express my deepest appreciation to our dedicated staff and volunteers, whose professionalism, compassion, and determination make our mission possible every day. I extend my sincere gratitude to our partners, donors, public institutions, municipalities, civil society organizations, and communities who continue to believe in the importance of investing in children, youth, and families.

Most importantly, I want to thank the children, young people, and families who trust us to walk alongside them. Your strength, dreams, and determination inspire us to do better every day.

As Albania continues its path toward European integration and the implementation of its commitments under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the European Child Guarantee, and the National Agenda for the Rights of the Child, we remain committed to ensuring that no child is left behind and that every child has the opportunity to grow up safe, protected, included, and heard.

Because we care...

Ana Majko
Executive Director
Nisma për Ndryshim Shoqëror ARSIS
Tirana, June 2026



Our mission

"At Nisma ARSIS we are committed to advancing the rights of children, youth and their caregivers facing vulnerability, providing comprehensive services, and facilitating their dignified integration into society."



Our vision

"To create a society where the rights of every child and individual are respected, and vulnerable groups are empowered to lead fulfilling lives."

Because we care...



Our core values

Community: Fostering a sense of belonging and collaboration among individuals united by shared values and goals.

Diversity: Embracing and respecting the varied backgrounds of children, youth, and their caregivers, ensuring equal opportunities for all.

Teamwork: Promoting collaborative efforts, mutual support, and the sharing of ideas to achieve common objectives.

Professionalism: Upholding the highest ethical standards, competence, and respectful behavior in all interactions.

Integrity: Maintaining honesty, transparency, and a steadfast commitment to doing what is right, even in challenging situations.



Where we work

Rooted in Communities Across Albania

In 2025, Nisma ARSIS operated in 21 municipalities across Albania. Through partnerships with 32 organizations and institutions across the country, Nisma ARSIS's programs positively affected 5940 children with their varied initiatives.

1. Municipalities of Tirana
2. Municipality of Kamza
3. Municipality of Korca
4. Municipality of Vlora
5. Municipality of Durrës
6. Municipality of Lezha
7. Municipality of Shëngjin
8. Municipality of Elbasan
9. Municipality of Kruja
10. Municipality of Cërrik
11. Municipality of Belsh
12. Municipality of Prrenjas
13. Municipality of Kavaja
14. Municipality of Fier
15. Municipality of Malësi e Madhe
16. Municipality of Fushë Krujë
17. Municipality of Pukë
18. Municipality of Vau i Dejës
19. Municipality of Pogradec
20. Municipality of Shkodër
21. Municipality of Peqin



Nisma ARSIS Impact in 2025

Turning commitment into measurable change

5,940

children reached through Nisma ARSIS programmes and initiatives across Albania

21

municipalities engaged through direct services, community-based interventions and institutional partnerships

201

children supported through child protection programmes and specialised services

65

More than 65 families strengthened through sustained, individualised case management and family support

25

children and mothers protected through immediate safe accommodation and comprehensive support

180

Approximately 180 children supported through multidisciplinary child protection mechanisms and coordinated case management

1,994

children reached through mental health and well-being activities in schools, community centres and the didactic farm "Da Sandra"

15

young people engaged in structured child and youth participation, including the National Child Advisory Board

707

young people and community members engaged through youth empowerment, civic participation and community initiatives, including UPSHIFT, BOOST and AKR-supported actions

122

professionals strengthened their capacities in child and youth mental health, family support, and preventive and youth-sensitive approaches

589

individuals from 245 families supported through Child and Family Support Hub services in Korçë and Durrës

2

Child and Family Support Hubs consolidated in Korçë and Durrës, strengthening community-based and family-centred social care



4. Roma and Egyptian Inclusion

Dedicated to advancing the rights of Roma and Egyptian children, Nisma ARSIS implements inclusive education and community development programs. These include access to formal and informal education, early childhood development initiatives in Tirana, and Mobile School outreach in marginalized neighborhoods. The organization also assists families facing socio-economic hardship, promoting holistic inclusion and empowerment.



5. Support to Afghan Evacuees

Since the arrival of Afghan evacuees in Albania, Nisma ARSIS has established safe and nurturing environments for women and children through dedicated shelters and programs. Services include early identification and response to violence, psychosocial support, legal aid, and case management, alongside tailored reintegration and rehabilitation programs for vulnerable evacuee families.



6. Countering Trafficking in Human Beings

Nisma ARSIS contributes to national efforts to prevent and combat trafficking in human beings through prevention, early identification, protection, and reintegration. Working with children, young people, women, families, and communities at heightened risk, the organization combines awareness-raising and outreach with targeted support and referral to appropriate protection services. For victims and survivors of trafficking and exploitation, Nisma ARSIS provides integrated, survivor-centred support, including psychosocial assistance, safe accommodation when needed, access to essential services, case management, and support for rehabilitation and social and economic reintegration. Through cooperation with responsible institutions, referral mechanisms, law enforcement, and civil society partners, we also contribute to strengthening coordinated responses that protect rights, reduce vulnerability to re-trafficking, and support sustainable pathways towards recovery, independence, and social inclusion.



7. Countering Violent Extremism

Nisma ARSIS plays a proactive role in preventing and countering violent extremism by working directly with vulnerable youth, families, and communities at risk of radicalization. Through a coordinated approach, it also supports multi-agency local bodies to strengthen inter-institutional responses and promote community resilience. CVE activities include awareness-raising sessions, psychosocial support, and the development of counter-narratives through peer-led dialogues and community engagement events.

8. Women's Strengthening and Economic Empowerment

Nisma ARSIS is dedicated to empowering women, especially survivors of violence, single mothers, and those from marginalized communities, by promoting their economic independence and social inclusion. Through targeted vocational training, mentoring, and access to small business grants, the organization enables women to develop skills and generate sustainable income. Programs also include personalized case management, psychosocial counseling, and legal support to address barriers to economic participation. By fostering local partnerships and market linkages, Nisma ARSIS supports women's transition from vulnerability to resilience and leadership within their communities.

9. Child Participation and Youth Empowerment

Nisma ARSIS actively promotes the participation of children and young people in decisions that affect their lives, in line with the principles of the UNCRC. Children are engaged through the establishment of Child Advisory Boards and peer-led initiatives that foster self-expression, responsibility, and leadership. For youth, the organization implements empowerment programs that combine civic education, mental health support, and skills development, including sport, arts, and digital innovation. Centers like “House of Colors” offer a safe space for youth to connect, organize, and advocate for change, nurturing a new generation of active and resilient citizens.

The organization fosters youth engagement through initiatives that enhance social capital and promote civic participation. At the House of Colors community center, youth participate in clubs and citizen-led initiatives. Programs that integrate sport and mental health support in Tirana help young people build resilience and positive coping skills in challenging environments.

10. Multidisciplinary and Integrated Services

Nisma ARSIS operates comprehensive multidisciplinary service centers that provide integrated support to children, youth, and families in need. The flagship center, “House of Colors” in Tirana, has been operational since 2010, offering mental health, psychosocial, and educational services. Additional multidisciplinary centers have been developed in Rrashbull (for Albanian returnees) and Selita (for children aged 0–8). These centers offer family strengthening, economic empowerment, and specialized protection services that reflect a holistic, community-based approach. Throughout 2025, Nisma ARSIS continued to provide integrated protection and community-based services for children, young people, women, and families in vulnerable situations. At the heart of this work is the House of Colors, which combines emergency protection with educational, psychosocial, psychological, parenting, and community-based support. The House of Colors operates as a 24/7 Safe Emergency Shelter, providing immediate protection, care, and stabilization for children and adolescents at risk, including victims and potential victims of trafficking, violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation. As part of Albania’s child protection system and the National Referral Mechanism, the shelter works closely with Child Protection Units, law enforcement, social services, and other institutions to ensure timely referral and intervention. Beyond direct services, the House of Colors continued to strengthen participation, volunteering, family support, and community engagement.



From Nisma ARSIS programs in the region

Behind every intervention is a story of risk, resilience, and the gradual rebuilding of safety and trust. The following story reflects the journey of one child supported through the emergency shelter.

A step toward safety and trust – Hera's Story

When Hera was identified by the Child Protection Unit, she was staying at her grandfather's home, while her mother (her legal guardian) was absent and her whereabouts were unknown. The family situation had been fragile for years, as her mother had previously been a victim of trafficking and had endured prolonged exploitation and violence. These experiences had deeply affected the stability and safety of the family environment. In this context, immediate intervention was essential. Nisma ARSIS supported the Child Protection Worker throughout the case management process, playing a key institutional role in coordinating and ensuring emergency protection.

Upon her admission to the Safe Emergency Shelter, Hera appeared withdrawn, with poor personal hygiene and a clear refusal to cooperate with staff. During the first contact, she showed visible signs of stress, insecurity, and confusion. She repeatedly asked to see her uncle and struggled to understand why she was at the center. Although she was immediately offered basic services hygiene care, food, and psychological first aid her initial response was resistance. Her behavior alternated between rejecting and accepting care, reflecting her inner fear and lack of trust.



With time, patience, and a trauma-informed approach, small but meaningful changes began to emerge. Through consistent emotional support and psychological first aid interventions, Hera gradually began to stabilize. Play became a bridge for communication and emotional expression. Through structured activities, she was able to express her fears and concerns in a safe and supportive environment. Although she experienced some difficulty with articulation, her understanding was clear, her attention appropriate, and her creativity evident during activities. Her emotional responses, though sometimes unstable, were consistent with the stress she had experienced. Gradually, resistance was replaced with cooperation; fear began to give way to trust.

Her protective factors became increasingly visible: her openness to engage despite initial resistance, her ability to express needs and seek reassurance, her emotionally appropriate responses, her good comprehension and focus, and her creativity and initiative during play. These strengths became the foundation for building a more stable plan for her future. Through coordinated institutional support and continued care, Hera was eventually placed in a long-term residential care center for girls. She has enrolled in school and is making significant progress in her emotional development and behavior. Today, she demonstrates greater stability, improved social interaction, and a growing sense of confidence and security.

Every child's journey is different. Sometimes change is visible; other times it happens quietly, step by step. The following story reflects how consistent support and a safe environment can help a child rediscover confidence and self-belief.

“When I learned not to be afraid”

When she joined our mental health programme, she was 11 years old. Quiet on the outside, she carried a heavy emotional burden within. Significant changes in her family life had deeply affected her behaviour, sudden anger, unexplained tears, difficulty concentrating, and withdrawal from her peers. At school she often reacted with irritability and spent breaks alone, silently coping with overwhelming emotions.

During the first emotional learning sessions, she barely spoke. Through structured activities, reflective exercises, and guided emotional awareness, she gradually began to recognise and name what she was feeling. One day, during an exercise on emotional waves, she quietly said: *“I get angry because I am afraid.”* It was the first time she had put her inner experience into words.

Nature-based activities became a turning point. In open spaces, away from the classroom, she began to relax, connect, and feel a sense of belonging. But the most transformative experience came through working with horses. Initially fearful, she hesitated to approach them. Over time, she learned that the horse responded to her emotional state when she was tense, it became restless; when she calmed herself, it responded gently. She discovered that her emotions had influence and that she could regulate them.

As the weeks passed, she began feeding, grooming, and guiding the horse with confidence. After successfully leading it on her own, she said with shining eyes: *“If he trusts me, maybe I can trust myself too.”*

Over the following months, her emotional outbursts significantly decreased. She began using breathing techniques to self-regulate, developed more stable peer relationships, and became actively involved in group activities. Teachers observed a profound change: from reacting impulsively to responding thoughtfully. Her parents reported more open communication and greater calm at home.

This transformation was not simply about overcoming fear of a horse. It was about rebuilding trust, developing self-awareness, and learning that strength lies in managing one’s own emotions. Through the integration of mental health support, nature-based learning, and therapeutic interaction with animals, she discovered a new sense of confidence and inner stability.

From a girl who reacted with fear, she became one who leads with calm.

Her journey reminds us that sometimes a child needs only a safe space, a supportive environment, and a meaningful connection to discover that their inner strength is greater than their fear.





1. Preventing violence, abuse, exploitation, and trafficking

In 2025, Nisma ARSIS strengthened its prevention efforts against violence, abuse, exploitation, and trafficking through targeted awareness and community engagement activities. Approximately 500 children and adolescents in schools across several municipalities were reached through interactive sessions on trafficking risks, domestic violence, online safety, and child rights, using participatory and age-appropriate methodologies. In parallel, outreach with parents, caregivers, and community members helped increase awareness of protection risks and early warning signs, while collaboration with schools, Child Protection Units, and law enforcement supported timely identification and referral of at-risk cases. These efforts contributed to building safer environments for children, strengthening protective behaviours, and reinforcing a coordinated response to prevent harm and exploitation.



2. Preventing violent extremism and promoting social cohesion

In 2025, Nisma ARSIS, in cooperation with the CVE Center and the support of GCERF strengthened its contribution to preventing violent extremism and promoting social cohesion through a comprehensive, community-based approach implemented in close collaboration with local authorities, civil society organizations, frontline professionals, and the national structures responsible for the prevention and countering of violent extremism. Through interventions in Tirana, Vlora, Fier, Pogradec, Kavaja, Cërrik and other municipalities, the organization supported the strengthening of multi-agency local mechanisms, enhanced the capacities of professionals working in education, social services, law enforcement, and community structures, and promoted coordinated case management and referral pathways for individuals and families at risk. Special attention was given to youth engagement, civic participation, digital resilience, and critical thinking through awareness sessions, peer-led activities, and educational initiatives aimed at countering harmful narratives and fostering inclusion, tolerance, and democratic values. Nisma ARSIS also provided tailored rehabilitation and reintegration support to returnee families and vulnerable individuals through psychosocial services, educational support, social inclusion activities, and coordinated referrals to essential services.



12 FEBRUARY 2025

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR PREVENTION OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM AS AND WHEN CONDUCTIVE TO TERRORISM

NISMA PER NDRYSHIM SHOQEROR ARSIS



"ONE FOR ALL, AND ALL FOR ONE"

My name is Maribela, a 17-year-old student at "Halim Xhelo" School in Vlora. I've always considered myself someone who connects easily with others, someone who values tolerance and understanding. These qualities are what motivated me to join a group of young people working to promote democracy and religious tolerance through the "Nisma Arsis" project. At first, I wondered how I could meaningfully contribute to such an important cause. But as the project progressed, I realized that my social nature, tolerance, and ability to support and understand others, almost like a psychologist among my friends, would play a crucial role in our work. During the training sessions, we delved deeply into the true meaning of democracy. It's not just a word; it's a way to ensure that everyone feels valued, included, and heard. We also explored the power of religious tolerance and learned how vital it is for building fair and equal societies. For me, it became clear that religious tolerance isn't just a principle; it's the foundation of harmonious communities. Inspired by what we learned, my group and I decided to take action.

We organized a fundraising campaign to support orphans and children in need. With the funds raised, we purchased food, clothing, and toys. When the day comes to deliver these gifts, I will never forget the joy on the children's faces. Their smiles and happiness were incredibly moving and emotional. In that moment, I understood the true power of kindness and giving. This project is teaching me so much—not just about democracy and tolerance, but also about the strength of dialogue and communication. Dialogue is the key to breaking down prejudices and building understanding. Communication is the backbone of every strong and supportive community. Life, as I've learned, is a journey filled with challenges, opportunities, and lessons. Every moment is a chance to grow, to learn, and to find beauty, even in the hardest times. As I reflect on this experience, one phrase resonates deeply in my heart: One for all, and all for one. This project is not just about helping others; it's about coming together as a community, as human beings, and making a difference—no matter how small."



🕯️ On this International Day for the Prevention of Violent Extremism as and when Conducive to Terrorism, we salute the thousands of women, men, youth, and children in 🇰🇪 who are courageously leading efforts to resist radicalization, reject extremist ideologies and fight recruitment by extremist groups.

✨ Community ownership is not just an approach—it is the heart of our programmes to prevent violent extremism. Empowering local voices and investing in their capacity to lead, we are creating strong, united communities that can stand resilient against the forces of hate and extremism.

🌍 Our collective mission is clear: to ensure peace, tolerance, and justice thrive over violence, hate, and division. Today, we reaffirm our pledge to provide communities with the tools, resources, and knowledge they need to shape a safer future for all.

Let's continue to amplify community voices, inspire change, and create a world free from the shadows of extremism. Together, peace is possible.

GLOBAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND RESILIENCE FUND



Protecting children, youth, women, and families at risk

3. Immediate protection and safe accommodation for children in need of protection

In 2025, Nisma ARSIS continued to provide protection and emergency support to the vulnerable children and mothers in Albania. We kept the **“House of Colors” Safe Emergency Shelter** fully operational, making sure that every child or mother referred in urgent need received immediate help. Established in 2011 in cooperation with the Municipality of Tirana and UNICEF Albania, the Center remains an important part of the national child protection system. It offers not only safe accommodation, but also stability, care, and support for children and mothers who have experienced violence, neglect, trafficking, or in street situation.

25

children and mothers received safe accommodation and comprehensive support, including food, hygiene, healthcare, psychosocial support, individualized case management, and referrals for longer-term solutions

4

Among them were 4 children in street situations

4

children supported through child protection programmes and specialised services

8

mothers with children in street situations

5

victims of domestic violence

4

were aged 0-5

6

were aged 6-9

3

were aged 10-14

5

were aged 15-17

5

were adults

All beneficiaries received safe shelter, food, hygiene items, access to healthcare, emotional support, individual case management, and referrals to other institutions for long-term solutions. Nisma ARSIS continued to play a key role in providing safe emergency shelter, ensuring that every child and mother was treated with dignity and given a real opportunity for recovery and reintegration.

4. Child-friendly justice and psychosocial support in police stations

Nisma ARSIS continued to provide child-friendly justice interventions through psychosocial support services embedded within police commissariats in Tirana. The programme ensures that children in contact with and/or in conflict with the law are treated with dignity, supported emotionally, and safeguarded throughout police procedures.

Approximately 60 children were supported by the psychosocial team, including minors in conflict with the law and those requiring accompaniment to police commissariats or the Police Directorate. Beyond immediate psychosocial assistance, the intervention played a critical role in strengthening coordination with the child protection system, ensuring timely identification, case assessment, and referral to Child Protection Units and other relevant services. By facilitating effective communication between law enforcement and social services, Nisma ARSIS contributed to reinforcing referral pathways, improving case management, and promoting a more integrated, child-sensitive response across institutions.



5. Protection of children through case management and professional capacitation of frontline child protection workers

Nisma ARSIS combined direct case management with continuous professional support to frontline child protection workers, strengthening both the quality of assistance provided to children and families and the functioning of local child protection mechanisms. The organisation's Case Management Team followed and supported Intersectoral Technical Group meetings convened by Child Protection Units in Tirana and its administrative units, as well as in Durrës, Vorë, Korçë, Kamëz and Shijak. These multidisciplinary meetings reviewed the situations of approximately 180 children and facilitated coordinated assessment, joint decision-making, service planning and referral among the responsible institutions.

Nisma ARSIS provided Child Protection Workers with ongoing coordination, expert guidance and practical technical assistance throughout the case management process. This support extended beyond facilitating access to services and included assistance in preparing and reviewing statutory case documentation, following up on decisions taken by Intersectoral Technical Groups, strengthening compliance with child protection procedures and improving the overall quality and consistency of case records. Through case-based mentoring and hands-on professional support, frontline workers were better equipped to manage complex situations and coordinate timely, child-centred responses across institutions.

Alongside this systems-strengthening work, more than 65 families benefited from sustained, individualised case management. Support included regular assessment and follow-up, accompaniment to relevant institutions, access to social and specialised services, psychological counselling, family empowerment activities, positive parenting sessions and periodic monitoring. By linking direct assistance to families with the professional development of frontline workers, Nisma ARSIS contributed to more coordinated, accountable and sustainable protection responses, helping prevent further harm, reduce family vulnerability and promote solutions based on the best interests of each child.



6. Strengthening Local Responses to Gender-Based Violence

In 2025, Nisma ARSIS strengthened prevention, protection, and local responses to gender-based violence across Belsh, Përrenjas, Peqin, Malësi e Madhe, Pukë, and Vau i Dejës, combining survivor-centred assistance with institutional capacity building and community engagement. In Belsh, Përrenjas and Peqin, 22 women and girls received integrated case management, psychosocial support, specialised referrals and economic empowerment assistance, while 48 professionals strengthened their capacities through training, mentoring and technical support. Awareness activities engaged 289 participants, complemented by 74 community members participating in local dialogues and the distribution of approximately 1,050 information materials. In Malësi e Madhe, Pukë and Vau i Dejës, activities reached 472 direct beneficiaries—264 women and girls and 208 men and boys. Capacity-building included 39 local professionals engaged through gender equality and gender-responsive budgeting forums and 90 municipal councillors. At the same time, 51 men and boys participated in dedicated sessions addressing harmful gender norms and violence prevention. In addition, 18 women survivors of violence received tailored psychosocial and material assistance. Through cooperation with municipalities, Coordinated Referral Mechanisms, schools, social services and civil society, these interventions strengthened referral pathways, inter-institutional coordination and gender-responsive local governance, contributing to more accessible and responsive protection mechanisms and safer communities for women and girls, particularly in rural and marginalized areas



7. Humanitarian response for refugees and returnees

In 2025, Nisma ARSIS continued to strengthen its role in safeguarding and protection mechanisms. The organization continued to serve as a Focal Point for the development and implementation of the Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Policy among service providers supporting Afghan nationals in Albania. With the support of UNICEF Albania, Nisma ARSIS worked to disseminate PSEA standards within the community and delivering ToT PSEA training among partners and 197 stakeholders engaged in providing assistance to Afghan families. During the year, 29 mothers, 61 children, and 63 women and girls were reached through services delivered within the Child Friendly Spaces (CFS), Women and Girls Safe Spaces, and the GBV response framework, contributing to improved protection, awareness, and access to support services. During the reporting period, three protection cases were identified and addressed through CFS services, including one case of domestic violence, one case of school bullying involving three children and four adults, and one case of early marriage.

Nisma ARSIS continued its engagement with the Afghan community through the “Support for the Voluntary Integration of Afghan Nationals in Albania” program, targeting Afghan nationals whose U.S. Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) applications were denied but who chose to remain in Albania. Funded by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration and implemented in partnership with IOM, the initiative aims to support the long-term socio-economic inclusion of these families. Through this program, Nisma ARSIS provided accommodation, legal aid, targeted cash assistance, access to healthcare and education, and ongoing psychosocial support, while 49 individuals received direct support through integrated case management services. In addition, 59 individuals were supported within the framework of the partnership with the Afghan Future Fund, following the same integrated case management approach. These interventions promoted safety, dignity, and long-term inclusion for Afghan families and individuals choosing to rebuild their lives in Albania.





Success story refugees

A New Beginning: The Rahimi Family's Journey in Albania

When the Rahimi family fled Afghanistan, they left behind more than their home, they left behind their sense of safety. Forced to escape insecurity and fear, the family of six carried with them grief, uncertainty, and the weight of an unknown future. Their journey through Pakistan was long and difficult, marked by loss and hardship, reflecting the reality faced by many families forced to flee conflict.

In 2022, they arrived in Albania, where, for the first time in a long while, they found safety. In Tirana, they were given the opportunity to start again. With the support of the Afghan Future Fund and its implementing partner Nisma ARSIS, the family accessed protection, housing, and essential services support that provided not only immediate relief, but also the foundation for rebuilding their lives with dignity.

What makes the Rahimi family's story truly powerful is their determination to move forward. Step by step, they began to rebuild. Today, three members of the family are employed, contributing to their household and becoming active members of their community. Their youngest daughter attends school with joy and curiosity, embracing new opportunities and dreaming of a future full of possibilities.

Tirana is no longer just a place of refuge, it is now their home. Through tailored integration support, the Rahimi family has overcome challenges, regained stability, and strengthened their independence.

Their story is a reminder that behind every displacement is a family striving for safety, dignity, and a second chance. With the right support, even after profound hardship, it is possible not only to survive, but to rebuild, belong, and hope again.

8. Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

In 2025, Nisma ARSIS strengthened its commitment to Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) by ensuring that safeguarding standards were fully integrated into its programs and services. Throughout the year, all staff members, experts, and volunteers involved in Nisma ARSIS programs were trained on PSEA principles and procedures, reinforcing their capacity to prevent, identify, and respond to risks related to sexual exploitation and abuse. In addition, Nisma ARSIS continued to serve as the PSEA focal point for service providers within the accommodation platform supporting Afghan refugees in the Municipality of Lezha, facilitating coordination, information sharing, and the dissemination of safeguarding standards among partner organizations. Through these efforts, Nisma ARSIS contributed to strengthening a safe, accountable, and protective environment for vulnerable communities receiving support.



9. Deinstitutionalization and family-based care

The promotion of professional and voluntary foster care, alongside the sustainability of services delivered through the Child and Family Support Hubs in the frame of the EU4SocialCare Program led by UNICEF, World Vision Albania and the support of Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, constituted the two main pillars of intervention in the municipalities of Korçë and Durrës, contributing to the deinstitutionalisation process and the strengthening of family-based care. In both municipalities, support was tailored based on assessed needs. In Korçë, **144 individuals** and **100 families** benefited from targeted interventions, while in Durrës, services reached **445 individuals** and **145 families**. The support package included needs-based assistance, parenting programmes, and psychosocial activities for children throughout the reporting year. In addition, approximately 13 multidisciplinary case reviews (SVKs) conducted both in person and online by residential care institutions in Tirana and Durrës were monitored and followed up. These discussions proved instrumental in enabling the family reunification of two children, following improvements in family conditions and the restoration of a safe caregiving environment. At the same time, awareness-raising efforts reached approximately 3,000 individuals, increasing understanding and community engagement around professional foster care and the importance of supporting children without parental care. In Korçë, Nisma ARSIS supported the development of a more structured local system of family-based alternative care. A regional

assessment mapped children living in formal and informal care arrangements, while child- and family-specific files and monitoring plans were developed using tools aligned with national alternative care monitoring guidance. Domiciliary services enabled regular assessment of children's wellbeing, placement stability and caregivers' support needs. Formal foster families and informal kinship caregivers received home visits, counselling, practical assistance and guidance on legal and administrative procedures. Structured workshops helped caregivers strengthen their knowledge of child development, trauma, positive discipline, identity, relations with biological families, placement stability and cooperation with child protection institutions. The intervention also supported the identification and assessment of potential foster families and promoted the formalisation and monitoring of informal care arrangements. In Durrës, a new Child and Family Support Hub was established and inaugurated in renovated premises linked to the public residential institution for children aged 0-5. Its location and service package were designed to support gatekeeping, prevent unnecessary admissions, strengthen families whose children were at risk of separation, and facilitate safe family reunification. In Korçë, the existing Hub expanded its specialised services, including support to children in formal and informal family-based care, domiciliary monitoring, parenting programmes and assistance to foster and kinship caregivers.

A family from the very beginning in Korçë

For one newborn in Korçë, the first days of life began without the care of a biological family. Following the child's abandonment at the maternity hospital, the local child protection structures, hospital social worker, and Child and Family Support Hub acted immediately to ensure that the baby would not have to begin life in an institution. Through rapid assessment, coordinated decision-making, and completion of the necessary protection procedures, a foster family was identified and the newborn

was placed directly into family-based care. From the very beginning, the child was able to experience the safety, warmth, and individual attention of a family environment. This case represents more than the protection of one newborn. It demonstrates what deinstitutionalisation means in practice: when services, professionals, and family-based alternatives are ready to respond, institutional placement can be prevented before it begins.

Together again - two brothers return home in Durrës

After spending five years in residential care, two six-year-old twin brothers in Durrës reached an important turning point in their lives: they returned to their biological family. Their reunification was the result of a carefully coordinated process involving assessment of the family situation, case planning, preparation and support to the family, and cooperation among the professionals responsible for the children's care and protection. The support did not end when the brothers crossed the threshold of their family home. Continued monitoring and follow-up helped safeguard their well-being and strengthen the conditions needed for the reunification to remain safe and sustainable. Their story shows that bringing children out of institutional care is not simply about changing where they live. Successful reunification requires strengthening the family around the child and continuing to support both after the return home. For these two brothers, deinstitutionalisation became something tangible: the opportunity to grow up together, within their own family.





Strengthening youth, families, and communities

10. Child and youth participation

On 28 August 2025, Nisma ARSIS facilitated a child and youth participation event hosted by the Delegation of the European Union to Albania at Europe House, bringing together 15 young people involved in the “Unity in Care” project. The event provided participants with an opportunity to learn about EU institutions and Albania’s integration process, share their experiences, and engage directly with EU representatives. Through the interactive discussion “Why Children and Youth Participation Matters,” young people reflected on their role in decision-making and advocated for stronger mechanisms to ensure their meaningful involvement in policies, services, and community life. The activity strengthened youth agency, promoted dialogue with institutions, and explored future opportunities for cooperation between young people and the European Union.

Within the framework of the *Unity in Care* project, Nisma ARSIS has further strengthened its commitment to meaningful child and youth participation by establishing and empowering Child Advisory Boards (CABs) as structured mechanisms for inclusive and rights-based engagement. During 2025, we contextualized and translated into Albanian the methodology “Walking the Journey amidst Challenging Situations,” equipping professionals and young people with practical tools to enhance

participatory practice in their daily work. A National Child Advisory Board composed of 12 young people was established, enabling them to actively inform the design, implementation, and evaluation of interventions across social protection, education, mental health, community development, and other key sectors. All these steps will be a continuous journey during 2026.

In addition, four youth representatives are contributing to an international CAB online experience, promoting the Albanian perspective on advancing mental health support systems. Through strong safeguarding standards and structured facilitation by the TDH Hungary team, children are engaged as trusted actors in decision-making processes, strengthening accountability, improving project effectiveness, and ensuring that interventions remain responsive, inclusive, and sustainable in their community and beyond.

Grid, 14-YEAR-OLD Changemaker Active Member of the International Children’s Advisory Board from Albania

Grid is only 14 years old, but he already carries a voice that resonates far beyond his community in Zall Herr, Tirana. A student at the “Mustafa Kemal Atatürk” public school, Grid has been nominated to join the International Children’s Advisory Board, where he exchanges ideas and perspectives with peers from Romania, Greece, Kosovo, and Hungary.

This unique opportunity is part of the Unity in Care – Advancing Mental Health Support Systems for Vulnerable Children and Youth project, funded by the European Union and implemented in partnership with Terre des Hommes Kosovo, Romania, Hungary, Greece, and represented in Albania by NISMA ARSIS.



A Voice for Albania's Children

Grid participation in the Advisory Board is not just about sharing his personal perspective but also about carrying forward the voices of many children from Albania. He sees this as a responsibility to highlight the needs, aspirations, and ideas of children who often feel unheard.

Recently, Grid joined a youth visit to the House of Europe, where he engaged in open dialogue with EU Ambassador Silvio Gonzato. During the discussion, he expressed a strong interest in ensuring that children in Albania have equal opportunities for wellbeing and development, free of barriers tied to social, economic, gender, racial, or ability-based differences.

Grid himself comes from Zall Herr, an area often perceived as isolated, with few recreational or learning opportunities for young people. "With no sports or recreational spaces in our area, my main way of connecting with peers and new ideas has been through the virtual world," he says. It was through an online announcement from Nisma ARSIS that he first learned about the creation of Children's Advisory Boards. Inspired, he not only applied but also encouraged his friends to join. His initiative led him to be selected as one of four young representatives from Albania in the international Advisory Board.

Through this experience, Grid has come to understand the importance of youth participation when it is supported by adults, institutions, and international partners. He values these initiatives in Albania that give young people a chance to raise their voices and shape their future. At the same time, he calls for stronger community structures and institutional support to ensure these voices are heard and acted upon.



As he himself puts it:

"For me, participating in these activities is not only about learning more about European values and meeting distinguished figures such as the honored Ambassador. It is also a reminder to myself that I will succeed and overcome every challenge in my future and support my peers who believe they cannot, to do the same."

Through the Unity in Care project, funded by the European Union and implemented in Albania by Terre des hommes - Kosovo, Terre des hommes - Romania, Terre des hommes in Europe, Terre des hommes Hellas - Γη των ανθρώπων and Nisma ARSIS, Grid and other children are proving that youth voices can drive change across borders.

11. UPSHIFT Erasmus+

In 2025, Nisma ARSIS has been partnering on the implementation of the program “UPSHIFT Impact: Amplifying Social Change through Youth Initiatives,” co-funded by the European Union’s Erasmus+ Programme and implemented by a consortium led by Genesis Project, in cooperation with LEAD – Leaders for Education, Activism and Development, HERMES, and Nisma ARSIS. The program promotes youth empowerment through skills development and social entrepreneurship, using the Human-Centered Design (HCD) methodology to engage young people as active creators of solutions for challenges in their communities. Through UPSHIFT workshops, 25 young people and 10 mentors were trained to identify local challenges, develop innovative ideas, and design practical solutions. As a result, two small community initiatives were implemented, generating positive impact and encouraging youth-led social innovation.

Success Story – UPSHIFT-led initiative: ECHOOF1001 – Improving Tourist Accessibility in Berat

During the first UPSHIFT Boot Camp held in Sarajevo, the youth team ECHOOF1001 from Berat developed an innovative idea to improve tourists’ access to information about urban transport in the city. Their proposal was selected as one of the winning initiatives and received seed funding for implementation.

Working closely with the Municipality of Berat, the team designed and installed a large information map next to the city’s Tourist Information Point (Info Point). The map provides visitors with clear information on the urban transport network, helping them navigate the city more easily and enhancing their overall experience.

Although the implementation process took longer than initially planned due to administrative procedures, the young people demonstrated commitment, perseverance, and effective collaboration with local authorities. Their initiative illustrates how youth-led ideas, when supported through mentorship and funding, can address real community needs and contribute to making cities more accessible and visitor-friendly.

This initiative was implemented within the framework of the Erasmus+ project “UPSHIFT Impact: Amplifying Social Change through Youth Initiatives,” demonstrating the potential of young people to drive meaningful and sustainable change in their communities.



12. VIBE- Connecting young people

Through the 14-month regional project VIBE – Connecting Young People, Nisma ARSIS joined forces with lead partner Juventas from Montenegro and the Heartefact Fund from Serbia to promote intercultural dialogue, European values and active youth participation across the Western Balkans. In Albania, an open call attracted 56 applications, followed by the three-day “Voices of Change” training in Durrës, where young people aged 16–25 explored human rights, democracy, civic participation and EU integration through non-formal education and a study visit to the EU Delegation. Three cultural mobility visits in Shkodër, Tirana and Durrës encouraged reflection on heritage, identity and diversity, while nine focus groups involving 75 young people generated evidence on prejudice, social distance and intercultural relations for an analytical report supporting future policies. Regional exchanges enabled Albanian participants to visit Montenegro and Serbia, while Nisma ARSIS hosted 12 young people from both countries for a cultural programme in Tirana combining psychosocial activities, teamwork and educational visits. Through learning, research, mobility and direct cross-border interaction, VIBE strengthened young people’s leadership and intercultural communication skills, challenged stereotypes, created new friendships and contributed to a more inclusive, peaceful and connected Western Balkans.



13. SHPREH: Turning Youth Well-Being into Community Action

SHPREH – Health, Participation, Reflection, Education and Harmony were a 10-month youth empowerment project implemented with the support of the National Youth Agency, across Tirana, Fier and Cërrik. The project created safe and inclusive spaces where young people strengthened their emotional resilience, communication, leadership and civic engagement through mental-health training, non-formal education and cooperation with families, schools, municipalities and community actors. Three SHPREH Youth Clubs were established as sustainable participation structures, enabling members to identify local priorities and design six youth-led community initiatives addressing anti-bullying, human rights, reading, sports, school environments and children’s recreation. Parent awareness sessions and three creative workshops reinforced emotional support, positive communication and self-expression, while Local Coordination Groups connected young people with institutions and local decision-making. Through the youth-led “Express Yourself” campaign, participants produced one campaign video, ten awareness videos, fifteen posters and illustrations, five personal stories and more than 60 social media posts promoting mental well-being and positive peer support. SHPREH significantly exceeded its initial target, directly engaging 707 beneficiaries instead of the planned 150 and reaching approximately 600 additional people, while leaving behind stronger local partnerships and lasting mechanisms for youth participation.



14. Education, Mental Health, and Well-Being

The project *“Well-being Together – Occupational Therapy, Work Inclusion and Experimentation of Independent Living for People with Mental and Psychosocial Distress”*, implemented by Nisma ARSIS in partnership with Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII within the Municipality of Tirana, generated measurable and sustainable impact on children’s mental health and psychosocial well-being. Reaching 1994 children across community centers and public schools, the project strengthened emotional literacy, resilience, and self-regulation skills through an integrated model combining psychoeducation and experiential occupational therapy, including farm-based activities at “Da Sandra.”

The intervention contributed to improved classroom climate, reduced conflict, increased emotional awareness, and greater willingness among children to seek support and discuss mental health openly. What we delivered throughout this year were integrated methodological models that support children in increasing their awareness and in building a circle of trust where they feel safe to report and refer to their concerns. Simultaneously, the project contributed to strengthening psychosocial services by enhancing their role in children’s lives and promoting the integration of activities in outdoor environments beyond the school setting. These experiences enabled children to connect with nature and their surroundings, further supporting the development of their social, emotional, and personal skills.



"Unity in Care" project during 2025 proved itself as more than a standalone project, emerging as a model for sustainable impact. It became a transformative approach for promoting children's and young people's mental wellbeing. Its impact extended across the entire ecosystem of care, influencing professionals, institutions, and decision-makers at both local and national levels. The project implementation demonstrated how sustainable change can be achieved when a child's mental health is approached through joint actions for collaboration, inclusive participation and long-term vision. A major milestone during 2025 was the implementation of this fruitful regional collaboration by NISMA ARSIS with TDH Hungary, Kosovo, Romania and Greece, which successfully aligned experiences and models into a unified framework of continuous development.

Throughout the year, Nisma ARSIS contributed significantly in capacity building through Training of Trainers (ToT) programs conducted in three different countries for 3 methodologies MGSC, ISMF and Mo&E. 63 Professionals from diverse institutions, such as education, social services and child protection, will continue to replicate and scale these approaches across diverse groups of children and adolescents. Consequently, the project has not only increased awareness of mental health but has also laid the foundation for a resilient and self-sustaining ecosystem of support, empowering young people to become proactive advocates for well-being within their communities.



15. Women's empowerment and economic resilience

In 2025, Nisma ARSIS supported women to strengthen their economic independence, entrepreneurship, and resilience through tailored skills development, mentoring, and financial support. In Tirana and Shkodra, 20 returnee migrant women facing socio-economic vulnerabilities received individual economic empowerment support through the GIZ-funded “Socio-economic Reintegration Measures for Returnees” project, including business development guidance, mentoring, and financial assistance to improve employability and establish or strengthen income-generating activities. The intervention also provided psychological support to 40 families, reaching 160 individuals, contributing to more sustainable reintegration and family stability.



In 2025, 32 women and girls with inspiring life stories strengthened their entrepreneurial journeys through targeted support aimed at promoting economic empowerment and financial independence. Participants received entrepreneurship training based on the CEFE methodology, equipping them with practical skills in business planning, financial management, and market analysis. Following the training, participants were supported with micro-grants to establish new businesses and expand existing ones, enabling them to transform their ideas into sustainable economic opportunities. This support was delivered within the framework of the program “Improving Access to Knowledge, Skills and Resources for Business Development in the Administrative Units of the Municipalities of Tirana and Durrës.” Implemented by Nisma ARSIS in partnership with the BALANCE Center, and supported by UN Women with funding from UK International Development, the program aims to strengthen women’s economic participation by providing them with the knowledge, resources, and confidence needed to develop and grow their businesses. Through this initiative, women entrepreneurs were empowered not only to improve their livelihoods, but also to strengthen their role as active contributors to their communities and the local economy.

From Care to Creation

Arena's Story

Arena Llapaj is a 29-year-old mother of two, a social worker, and a passionate artisan of natural cosmetic products. For years, she has been driven by a deep desire to help others. Inspired by her family's cultivation of lavender and medicinal plants in northern Albania, Arena began to dream of creating something of her own, something that could combine nature, care, and well-being. From this dream, her initiative "Misk Ecosocial Care" was born.

Through the "Improving Access to Knowledge, Skills and Resources for Business Development in the Administrative Units of the Municipalities of Tirana and Durrës" program, Arena participated in entrepreneurship training based on the CEFE methodology. The training helped her believe more strongly in her idea and gave her the tools to turn it into reality. Step by step, she began producing and testing her natural products and presenting them at local fairs, sharing her vision with others. Today, Arena continues to grow her small business with hope and determination. Her journey is not only about building a business it is about creating opportunities, supporting her family, and inspiring other women to believe that their ideas and dreams can also become reality.



16. Integrated Counseling for Labor Development and Empowerment in Korça Municipality - EU4LMI

From March 2025 to February 2026, Nisma ARSIS implemented the EU4LMI project "Integrated Counselling for Labour Development and Empowerment in Korça Municipality," piloting the Intensive Counselling for Employment model in cooperation with the Municipality of Korça, the local AKPA Employment Office and social services. The project supported NEET youth, unemployed mothers, social assistance beneficiaries, persons with disabilities and other individuals facing multiple barriers to employment through proactive identification and referral, individual profiling and tailored Individual Development Plans.

A six-month intensive programme was delivered through four groups and 48 counselling, training and mentoring sessions, combining employability and life-skills development with continuous individual guidance and follow-up. The flexible, trust-based approach helped participants identify their strengths, address skills gaps and develop realistic pathways towards employment, internships, vocational training or further support. Alongside individual empowerment, the project strengthened cooperation among employment services, municipal structures, civil society and training providers, generating practical lessons for improving local employment support. The pilot demonstrated the value of intensive, personalised counselling as a complement to public employment services and provided a promising model for future institutionalisation and replication.



Shaping Systems, Policies, and Long-Term Solutions

17. Strengthening child protection and social care systems

In 2025, Nisma ARSIS continued to contribute to strengthening Albania's child protection and social care systems by combining policy and legal expertise, institutional development, sustainable community-based services, and professional capacity building.

At the national level, Nisma ARSIS provided technical expertise and input to key legal and policy processes, including the development and consultation of the Law on Alternative Care (Law No. 92/2025). This engagement contributed to advancing the framework for family-based and alternative care and to broader efforts to strengthen protection and care arrangements for children who cannot remain safely within their biological families.

Through EU4SocialCare, the organization also worked with the Municipalities of Durrës and Korçë to move the Child and Family Support Hubs from project-based service delivery towards greater integration within municipal social care systems. This included strengthening service packages and referral mechanisms, improving premises, developing professional capacities, and supporting the integration of the Hubs into local planning and financing. A significant sustainability milestone was the joint preparation and subsequent approval of municipal proposals for financing through the Social Fund, strengthening prospects for continued public financing and municipal ownership beyond the project period.

Building the capacities of frontline professionals remained an integral part of this systems approach. In Durrës, 30 professionals from child protection, social services, education, healthcare, residential and community-based services completed an accredited programme on supportive services for children and families. Training was reinforced through mentoring and case-based technical assistance addressing real protection cases, referral barriers, family circumstances, foster care, statutory procedures, reunification and post-placement follow-up, helping translate knowledge into stronger multidisciplinary practice.

Nisma ARSIS also strengthened cooperation with law enforcement to promote more preventive and child- and youth-sensitive approaches. In May 2025,



29 police officers



14 men



15 women

from all regional police directorates across Albania participated in the training "Empowering Police Engagement with At-Risk Youth – Best Practices and European Models," organised in cooperation with the General Directorate of State Police. Drawing on European practices, including the German "Kurve Kriegen" model, the programme strengthened officers' capacities to engage constructively with children and young people at risk through preventive, trauma-informed and community-based approaches.

18. Advocacy for Child Rights, GBV Prevention, and Anti-Trafficking

Nisma ARSIS used its frontline experience to advocate for stronger protection systems, greater public awareness, and policies that uphold the rights and dignity of children, young people, women, and families. Through community campaigns, national awareness days, dialogue with institutions, and participation in international policy discussions, we worked to bring the realities experienced by vulnerable communities into broader conversations on prevention, protection, and systems reform.

Raising awareness and mobilising communities

Community-based advocacy remained an important part of our work. During the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, more than 194 people, including Roma and Egyptian women, students, community members, and frontline professionals, participated in activities promoting the prevention of violence against women and girls, gender equality, empowerment, and access to protection and support services.



ÇFARË ËSHTË JAVA E NDËRGJEGJËSIMIT PËR MBROJTJEN E VIKTIMAVE TË KRIMIT ?

KUSH KONSIDEROHET VIKTIMË E KRIMIT?

KU MUND TË DREJTOHEN VIKTIMAT PËR NDIHMË ?

Nisma ARSIS also used key national and international dates—including Crime Victims’ Rights Week, 1 June - International Children’s Day, and 20 November - World Children’s Day—to amplify the voices and rights of children and victims of violence and crime. Through awareness activities and engagement with children, young people, professionals, institutions, and communities, these moments provided opportunities to promote child rights, prevention, participation, and access to protection.

Bringing Albania’s Anti-trafficking experience to international dialogue

In February 2025, Nisma ARSIS contributed to the Shared Learning Event “Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking from Albania: Nuanced Narratives and Cultural Insights,” organised by Medaille Trust in London. Bringing together representatives of the UK Home Office, academia, and specialised anti-trafficking organisations, the event provided an important platform for discussing the realities of trafficking from Albania and the challenges faced by protection systems.

Representing Nisma ARSIS, Executive Director Dr Ana Majko presented “The Challenges Faced by the Albanian System in Victim Protection,” drawing on the organisation’s frontline experience in shelters, communities, and police stations. The intervention highlighted the need for stronger victim identification, child-sensitive procedures, inter-institutional coordination, specialised professional capacities, effective case management, and sustainable rehabilitation and reintegration. By bringing evidence and lessons from direct practice into international dialogue, Nisma ARSIS contributed to a more nuanced understanding of trafficking and advocated for responses centred on the rights and long-term recovery of victims and survivors.



A Day of Solidarity and Hope: EU Ambassador Visits the House of Colours in Tirana

In June 2025, the House of Colours in Tirana welcomed the European Union Ambassador to Albania, Mr. Silvio Gonzato, in a visit that highlighted the importance of community-based social services in protecting children, women, and families facing vulnerability, violence, trafficking, and social exclusion. Supported by the European Union, UNICEF, and the Municipality of Tirana, the House of Colours continues to serve as a safe space where protection, care, and opportunities for recovery come together through integrated services including emergency accommodation, psychosocial support, counselling, family strengthening, and youth engagement. During the visit, Ambassador Gonzato met with children, mothers, and professionals, witnessing first-hand the transformative impact that inclusive social services can have on people’s lives. His recognition of the dedication, resilience, and hope present within the centre reaffirmed the shared commitment to the values of human rights, solidarity, dignity, and non-discrimination. The visit represented not only an acknowledgment of the work carried out by Nisma ARSIS and its partners, but also a strong message of support for Albania’s ongoing efforts to strengthen child protection systems and expand quality community-based services as part of its European integration journey.

19. Evidence, research, and knowledge generation

Children victims, witnesses, and suspected offenders in Albania
Nisma ARSIS and State Police conducted a national study examining the experiences of children as victims, witnesses, and suspected offenders within Albania's justice and child protection systems. Covering all 12 regions, the research combined official quantitative data with interviews, focus group discussions, and case studies involving police officers, child protection professionals, and children. The findings identified important gaps in the consistent application of child-sensitive procedures, particularly for children in vulnerable situations, and highlighted the need for specialised and standardised training for police officers and child protection workers. The study also recommended improving child-friendly spaces within police stations, strengthening ethical communication with children, and introducing more robust safeguards for children's privacy and personal data, particularly in relation to media reporting. Its recommendations provide an evidence-based foundation for improving institutional practices and ensuring that every child in contact with the justice system is treated safely, respectfully, and in accordance with international child protection standards.

<https://nisma-arsis.org/children-victims-witnessesand-suspected-offendersin-albania/>



Advancing safeguarding culture across South-Eastern Europe

In May 2025, Nisma ARSIS, in partnership with Terre des hommes and with the support of NGO Academy, hosted the International Conference "Best Practices and Challenges in Safeguarding within Civil Society Organizations in South-Eastern Europe." Bringing together more than 100 participants from Albania, Kosovo, Romania, Moldova, public institutions, civil society organizations, academia, and international partners, the conference created a unique platform for dialogue, learning, and collaboration on safeguarding practices across sectors.

Discussions explored challenges and promising approaches in child protection, disability inclusion, education, sports, technology, and community-based services, highlighting the importance of safeguarding as a continuous process embedded in organizational culture and everyday practice.

A key message emerging from the conference was that safeguarding is not merely a policy or protocol, but a shared commitment to creating environments where every child and every individual feels safe, respected, included, and heard. The event reinforced the importance of cross-sectoral cooperation, meaningful participation, capacity building, and institutional accountability in strengthening safeguarding systems and advancing a culture of safety, dignity, and inclusion throughout the region.

Partnerships that multiply impact

At Nisma ARSIS, we believe that sustainable change is achieved through strong partnerships, shared learning, and collective action. Throughout 2025, we continued to strengthen our cooperation with public institutions, civil society organizations, regional networks, and international platforms, ensuring that local experiences contribute to broader policy discussions and that global knowledge informs our work on the ground.





Institutional partnerships

Our collaboration with national and local institutions remained central to our work. Through partnerships with the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the State Agency for the Rights and Protection of the Child, the State Social Service, municipalities, law enforcement agencies, schools, and social care providers, we contributed to strengthening child protection systems, alternative care reforms, safeguarding standards, and community-based services.

Civil Society and Networks

Nisma ARSIS continued to play an active role within national and international civil society networks, recognizing the importance of collective advocacy and knowledge exchange. As a member of the PICUM – Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants, we contributed

to European discussions on the rights and protection of migrants, refugees, and undocumented individuals, ensuring that the realities and experiences of vulnerable communities in Albania are represented at the international level.

Nisma ARSIS is an active member of the **Code of Standards for Non-Profit Organizations in Albania (Kodi i Standardeve)**, reflecting our commitment to transparency, accountability, good governance, ethical practice, and continuous organizational development. Beyond applying these principles within our own work, Nisma ARSIS contributes its practical experience and expertise to peer learning, dialogue, and initiatives aimed at strengthening quality and accountability across the civil society sector. Through this engagement, we promote safeguarding, responsible governance, meaningful participation, and higher standards of service delivery, contributing to a stronger, more credible, and sustainable civil society in Albania.



Our people

The Professionals Behind the Mission

Multidisciplinary teams and frontline workers

Ana Mjako
Greta Troka
Julinda Vokopola
Denita Mancellari
Roberta Profka
Fjorina Hoxha
Altea Xhaferaj
Anisa Shpati
Nazmie Sinani
Elona Doko
Xhevahire Hoxha
Tauland Sadiku
Ilirjan Karaj

Et'hem Jace
Alma Jella
Indrit Preza
Entela Gjinaj
Kejsi Kasemi
Rrezearta Hoxha
Brikena Lasku
Kristina Kadena
Amarildo Hoxha
Arli Capo
Tedi Jaho
Edlira Zdralla
Jora Katro

Esmeralda Breshani
Albana Troshani
Nada Atassi
Ermira Dashi
Suada Niga
Klevis Braimllari
Aldea Seferi

Marjana Baçellari
Kristi Lako
Miguel Kreka
Vasiona Dimço

Our volunteers

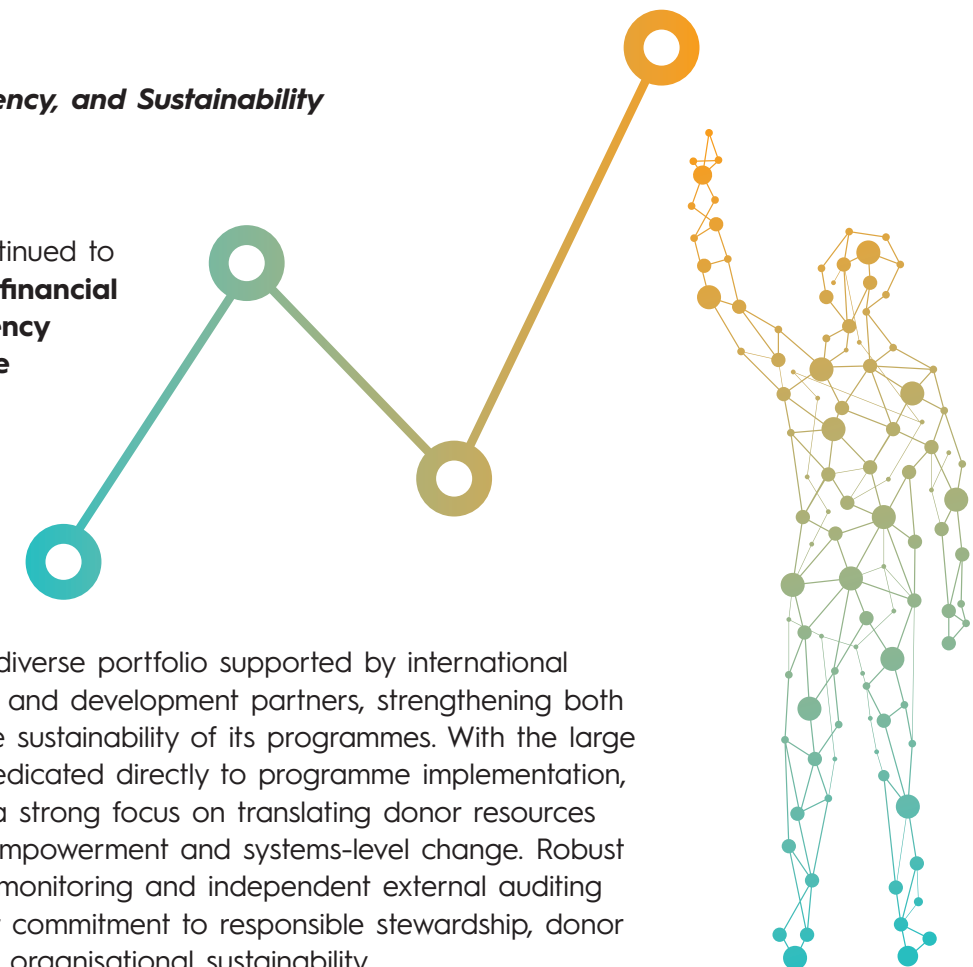
Paul and Zara

Financial overview

Accountability, Transparency, and Sustainability

Financial highlights

In 2025, Nisma ARSIS continued to uphold high standards of **financial accountability, transparency and responsible resource management**, ensuring that available resources were directed towards achieving meaningful results for children, young people, families and communities. The organisation managed a diverse portfolio supported by international organisations, foundations and development partners, strengthening both financial resilience and the sustainability of its programmes. With the large majority of expenditure dedicated directly to programme implementation, Nisma ARSIS maintained a strong focus on translating donor resources into services, protection, empowerment and systems-level change. Robust financial controls, regular monitoring and independent external auditing continued to underpin our commitment to responsible stewardship, donor confidence and long-term organisational sustainability.



1,780,914 €

Operational expenses

1,977,054 €

Total Operational Revenue

301,621 €

Total Assets

11,156 €

Receivables

215,992 €

Cash and bank

74,473 €

Tangible fixed assets

301,622 €

Liabilities and Net Assets

21,488 €

Payables

83,994 €

Retained Net Assets

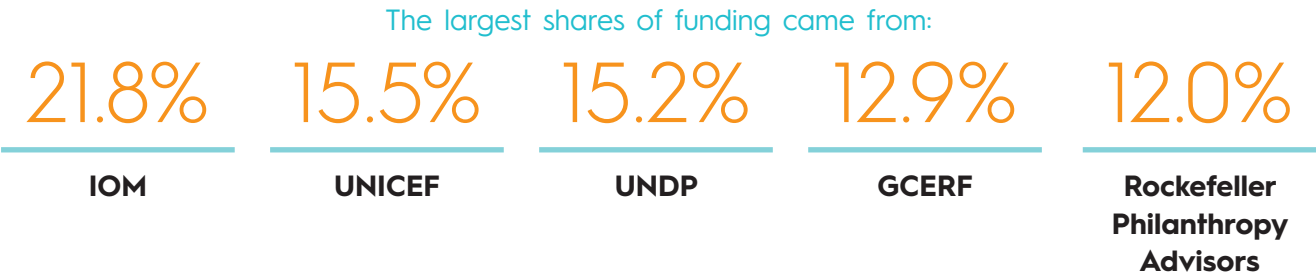
196,140 €

Surplus of Income over Expenditure

58 employees – Average workforce supporting programme implementation
Compared with 2024, Nisma ARSIS significantly expanded its programme implementation, with project expenditure increasing from approximately €1.22 million to €1.78 million in 2025, reflecting the organisation's growing portfolio and capacity to mobilise resources for its mission.

Donor composition

In 2025, Nisma ARSIS maintained a **diversified funding portfolio**, with support from UN agencies, international organisations, foundations, development partners, civil society networks, and public institutions.



Complemented by support from Terre des Hommes, AKPA, GIZ, World Vision, Medaille Trust, RYCO, and other national and international partners. This diversified donor base enabled Nisma ARSIS to sustain a broad portfolio of interventions while reducing reliance on a single funding source and strengthening organisational resilience and continuity of services.



Program vs operational costs

In 2025, Nisma ARSIS maintained a strong focus on directing resources toward **programme implementation and direct impact**, with audited project expenses of approximately **€1.78 million**. These resources supported direct services, professional staff, beneficiary assistance, capacity building, community outreach, and systems-strengthening interventions. Operational and administrative costs were carefully managed within approved budgets to ensure effective programme delivery, compliance, accountability, and organisational continuity.

Donors and supporters

We extend our sincere appreciation to all donors, partners, institutions and supporters whose trust and commitment made our work with children, young people, families and communities possible throughout 2025.



Individual and other supporters

Thank you for standing with children, youth and families

Looking ahead

Our commitment for 2026 and Beyond



As we look toward 2026 and beyond, Nisma ARSIS remains committed to building a society where every child, young person, and family can live with safety, dignity, and opportunity. The challenges facing children and vulnerable communities continue to evolve, requiring innovative responses, stronger partnerships, and sustained investment in prevention, protection, and empowerment. Guided by our strategic vision and informed by the voices of children, families, and communities, we will continue to strengthen systems, expand quality services, and advocate for policies that uphold human rights and social inclusion.

Scaling What Works

Over the years, Nisma ARSIS has developed and tested innovative models that have demonstrated tangible impact for children, families, and communities. Looking ahead, we will focus on scaling and institutionalizing successful approaches, including Child and Family Support Hubs, integrated case management, emergency protection services, mental health and well-being models, youth participation mechanisms, safeguarding frameworks, and community-based family strengthening interventions.

We will continue investing in the capacities of professionals, strengthening partnerships with public institutions, civil society organizations, donors, and communities, and fostering innovation to ensure that effective practices reach more children and families across Albania.

Our ambition remains clear: to create sustainable change that not only responds to immediate needs but also transforms systems, strengthens communities, and ensures that every child has the opportunity to grow up protected, included, heard, and empowered.

Because every child deserves a safe childhood, every young person deserves opportunities to thrive, and every family deserves the support to build a better future.

Strategic Priorities

Our priorities for the coming years focus on:

- Strengthening child protection systems and community-based services to prevent violence, abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and family separation.
- Advancing the deinstitutionalization agenda through family strengthening services, foster care, and alternative family-based care solutions.
- Expanding mental health and psychosocial support services for children, adolescents, caregivers, and frontline professionals.
- Promoting meaningful child and youth participation, ensuring that children and young people actively contribute to decisions affecting their lives and communities.
- Supporting women's empowerment, economic resilience, and social inclusion for vulnerable families and marginalized groups.
- Strengthening safeguarding standards, accountability mechanisms, and safe organizational cultures across civil society and public institutions.
- Enhancing preparedness and protection responses for refugees, migrants, returnees, and other vulnerable populations.
- Contributing to policy development, research, and evidence generation that inform national reforms and strengthen child rights implementation.
- Supporting Albania's European integration process through interventions aligned with the National Agenda for the Rights of the Child, the European Child Guarantee, and international child rights commitments.



How you can support Nisma ARSIS
Join us in protecting childhood and strengthening society



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