



MIRAS (Media for Integration of Refugees and Asylum Seekers) Project

1) The frequency of the media enquiries, interviews and reports by media outlets on asylum issues, as well as whether these include ECRE's advocacy position.

Since the beginning of the project and thus increased cooperation with EMON, ECRE has received around 80 media enquires and interview requests from news outlets such as [EU Observer](#), [European Voice](#), [Radio Free Europe](#), [BBC World Service](#), [Financial Times](#), Norwegian NRK, German ARD and [Deutsche Welle](#), Swedish Göteborgsposten, Dutch KRO Television, Italian [La Repubblica](#), Greek Investor's World, Belgian De Morgen, VRT, and MO, etc.

2) Frequency of joint products and activities, such as joint press releases, articles, open letters, press conferences, response to media and planning meetings and calls.

ECRE has been in touch (calls, exchange of e-mails) with its members on a regular basis providing them with information, lines to take for their media work and updates on new developments.

Together with the unforeseen developments in Libya, the Dublin Regulation¹ was the other topic on which we focused most of our press work. This was in line with the conclusion of the meeting of ECRE Press Officers, supported by EPIM where colleagues agreed that showing the devastating effects of the Dublin system in order to bring support to change this Regulation should be one of the priorities of our media work.

During the course of our EPIM project, ECRE disseminated a [press release](#) on our call to European countries to stop sending asylum seekers to Greece, which was followed by several media enquiries and interviews². The draft press release was shared with members in advance who could use it in their media work. The press release or similar statements adapted to the national context were disseminated by several ECRE Members³.

On this issue, ECRE also coordinated a [response](#)⁴ to the European Court of Human Rights decision on the MSS vs Greece and Belgium. There was substantial cooperation and exchange of information among the press officers via ECRE. For example, the Secretariat shared with members key points to be underlined depending on the outcome of the ruling and figures highlighting the impact of this decision in their own countries; and Members kept the Secretariat up to date on related national developments. Our main point was that the ruling was 'a blow to the Dublin system' rather than just a reflection of the shortcomings of the Greek asylum system and this was broadly reflected in the related [press coverage](#).

1 According to the Dublin Regulation, the first Member State that an asylum seeker enters should be the one to examine the asylum application.

2 BBC World Service, [Financial Times](#), Norwegian NRK, German ARD and Deutsche Welle, Swedish Göteborgsposten, Dutch KRO Television, Greek Investor's World, Belgian De Morgen, VRT, and MO.

3 [Greek Council for Refugees](#), German [ProAsyl and Arbeiterwohlfahrt](#) (AWO), Austrian [Asylkoordination](#), [France Terre d'Asile and Forum Réfugiés](#), the [Irish Refugee Council](#), the British [Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture](#), the [Swedish Red Cross](#), the [Danish Refugee Council](#), Spanish [Accem](#) and [CEAR](#), [Italian Refugee Council](#), [Swiss Refugee Council](#), Menedek, Hungarian Helsinki Committee, and the Dutch Council for Refugees.

4 In addition to the general press release, ECRE co-signed press statements with its members based in Belgium (Flemish Refugee Action, CIRE, JRS Belgium, Amnesty International Belgium, Caritas International) titled '[La Cour européenne des droits de l'Homme condamne la Belgique pour le renvoi d'un demandeur d'asile afghan vers la Grèce](#)'; and with France Terre d'Asile: 'La CEDH condamne les transferts Dublin vers la Grèce'.

3) Coalition building to achieve policy change.

One of our project's main aims is to increase collaboration and our capacity of working together strategically with the media as a tool to impact policy making.

EPIM's financial support facilitated communication among Press Officers from the ECRE Secretariat and its member organisations. Through more regular meetings and other contacts, ECRE has been able to create an active platform to exchange information, ideas, and therefore coordinate and plan common initiatives. Strengthening ECRE's Press Officers network was key in order to undertake planned media initiatives together, as in the case of the work around the Dublin Regulation, but also to be better prepared to respond together to unexpected and rapidly changing developments, as in the case of Libya.

In the survey circulated among Press Officers who participated in the seminar on exchange of good practices on media work around integration-related issues last October, all respondents considered that communication between the person in charge of media relations in their organisation and ECRE Press Officer was very good (72,7%) or good (27,3%). 80% said that they need joint press releases with ECRE and 70% acknowledged that they need joint press releases and articles by ECRE for their newsletter.

Contact:

Ana Fontal - Senior Press and Public Information Officer

Tel: +32 2 212 08 12

afontal@ecre.org

www.ecre.org

The European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) is a network of 67 refugee-assisting organisations in 30 European countries, working together to protect and respect refugees.