



PREVENTING HATE AGAINST REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

# Report of the interviews with journalists

DESCRIPTION OF THE WORK CARRIED OUT IN  
GREECE, ITALY AND SPAIN



This project is funded by the  
European Union's Rights, Equality  
and Citizenship Programme (2014-  
2020). REC-RRAC-RACI-AG-2019.  
Grant Agreement number 875217

UNIMI Team (Italy)

*October 2020*

<http://pharmproject.usal.es>

*This report constitutes Deliverable 19, for Work Package 4 of the PHARM project.*

October 2020

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This project is funded by the European Union's Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (2014-2020).  
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VERSION CONTROL SHEET

Deliverable number + title	D19. Public report of the results of the interviews
Prepared by	UNIMI Team (Italy)
Work package number	4
Work package leader	Sergio Splendore
Dissemination level (PU, CO)	PU
Delivery date	1/09/2020
Submission date to EC	1/10/2020
Main authors	Sergio Splendore, Martín Oller
Reviewers	Carlos Arcila Calderón

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Date	Summary of changes	Initials	Changes marked
1				

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# 1. Representation of migrants and refugees in the Southern European media

Preventing Hate Against Refugees and Migrants (PHARM)<sup>1</sup> is a project that monitors hate speech against refugees and migrants in Greece, Italy, and Spain in order to analyse their representation in the Southern European media.

In a context in which migration has a relevant media presence, and given the existing agreement in the academia about the deficiencies of the media coverage of migration and the potential connection with rejection attitudes toward migrants, which tends to be negative and stereotypical, we seek to dig into the media discourse from the perspective of its producers: journalists specialized in migration.

Migration to Europe is not a new phenomenon, but in recent years the so-called “refugee crisis” has increased the migratory pressure on Europe, being especially acute in southern European countries. Greece, Italy and Spain are currently principle gateways to the Europe for migrants and refugees. Countries that receive migrants and refugees from three directions: The Central Mediterranean route from North Africa to Italy or Malta, the Eastern Mediterranean route from Turkey to Greece and the Western Mediterranean route from North Africa to Spain.

The migration across the Mediterranean has dominated the European media and political debate during the last years. A humanitarian crisis that has been exploited for party’s purposes (Krzyżanowski, Triandafyllidou, & Wodak, 2018; Triandafyllidou, 2018) in a context marked by political polarization due to the emergence and strengthening of extreme right-wing and populist parties (Colombo, 2018) in Spain (*Vox*), Italy (*Lega* or *Five Star Movement*) and Greece (*The Popular Association-Golden Dawn*).

As highlighted by Ambrosini (2018), southern European societies, and particularly Italians and Greeks, given their condition of doorways to Europe, are most exposed to negative public representation of the asylum issue in public and political discourse. In this context, in the last few years there have been a general shift towards a securitisation of the public discourse on the both sides of the political spectrum in Italy and in Greece (Fotopoulos & Kaimaklioti, 2016; Gianfreda, 2018). In Spain, many empirical studies confirm a negative framing of migrants in the media (Igartua, Muñiz & Cheng, 2005) and, although the anti-immigrant discourse was apparently marginal in the overall political and

<sup>1</sup> PHARM is a European project funded by the European Union, within Rights, Equality and Citizenship programme REC-RRAC-RACI-AG-2019 (GA n. 875217).

public debate on migration and refugees until a few years ago (Hoyer, 2016), the emergence of *Vox* is changing this very quickly.

We state that the tendencies in the media discourse, along with perceived negative effects of migration by part of the political parties and population, a fear of the disruption of the local ethnic balance and anxiety about the arrival of people with apparent ties to terrorism, are leading to a gradual shift in hateful attitudes, opinions and behaviours towards refugees and migrants in Greece, Italy and Spain, that are clearly depicted in online hate speech and materialized in hate crimes. Both hateful behaviours are the core problems that are addressed by PHARM.

At this point, it is worth mentioning that there are no previous studies in Spain, Italy and Greece that have used a comparative qualitative analysis focused on the representation and hate speech about migrants and refugees and, in turn, have analysed the way in which journalists approach, construct and interpret this type of information.

### **Methodological approach**

The implementation of a methodological common framework based on 90 deep-interviews to journalists specialized in migration, refugees and human mobility in these countries, offer the possibility of a large-scale analysis for the representation of these community of people. 30 semi-structured and reconstruction interviews were conducted among journalists in each country in order to understand the challenges they face while informing about migrants and refugees in the media and the phenomenon of hate speech or hate crimes related to them.

In all the interviews, a questionnaire previously designed for Italy, Spain and Greece was followed, and applied in a semi-structured way, which pays special attention to the narrative used and the influence from hate speech referring to these groups.

To do this, the questionnaire was divided into five dimensions of analysis, to which must be added the initial phase of the interview and the closure. The first four phases constitute the body of the in-depth interview –the journalist's career; changes in journalism and the effect of technologies on it; journalists' idea about hate speech and their interaction with the audience, colleagues and sources; and responsibility, deontology and alternatives to combat journalists' hate speech about migrants and refugees– while the fifth phase is a reconstruction interview based on a publication of the interviewees themselves to establish how they carry out their pieces and information focused on migrations.

## Process

Due to the circumstances caused by COVID-19, these interviews were held via videoconference (Skype, Zoom, and Google Meeting) conducted by members of the team in each country. This work also has the goal of deepening into possible personal experiences in which journalists might have seen their freedom of speech cut while reporting about migrants or refugees.

After preparing the questionnaire, searching for the sample and conducting the interviews, they were fully transcribed. These transcriptions were carried out in two phases: first, in an automated way through Google's *Cloud to Speech* API for R and, second, manually so that the final transcript would validate the first version and thus complete the elements missing.

In the content analysis phase, manual and automated techniques were combined in the processing of the content of the aforementioned transcripts, being able to study the discourse of consensus and dissent around the representation of migrants and refugees in the media by the interviewed journalists. Initially, through *AntConc* free software, a word count was carried out in all the interviews. A fundamental action as the starting point of the work analysis because knowing the frequency of the words has an exploratory utility for the researcher, allowing him/her to enter into the analysis of the linguistic corpus based on the percentage of repetition of the words that, a posteriori, will act as keywords. As Barredo and Oller (2019) highlight, the absence of hierarchical categories allows expanding the objectives of the research and encourages objectivity.

The semantization of the lexical units allowed us to generate the data matrixes and establish the clusters (groups of words) from the lexical associations. The analysis of the lexical associations between the words gave the possibility of grouping them by their order of frequency, indicating their relationship and proximity with the contiguous words / terms. This analytical procedure is based on the generation of an unsupervised artificial neural network, taken as a reference in tools such as the *CatPac* program (Category Package) that "acts as a self-organized artificial neural network aimed at optimizing the reading of a text" (Woelfel, 1998: 11). The final result of this quantitative procedure based on the count of elements that make up the units of analysis allows to obtain precise, objective and easily validatable results (Tian and Stewart, 2005).

Ward's grouping method (based on a  $\pm 1$  word repetition algorithm), recommended by Woelfel (1998) in the *CatPac II User's Guide*, is the procedure we use to place keywords within groups of keywords. words or clusters based on the relationship and distance established between them according to an established central point.

From the data obtained from this process, a qualitative manual analysis was carried out, adapted to the context and the reality, avoiding a standardized analysis that prevents deepening or qualifying particular aspects of the speech of the interviewed journalists.

## Summary

The representation of migrants and refugees in Spanish, Italian and Greece media is characterized, in general terms, by:

- a) done in a decontextualized way (it is not usually done in "territory");
- b) lack of generation of new narratives;
- c) determined by the interests and editorial lines of the media;
- d) positioning of the phenomenon of human mobility as a problem and not as an opportunity; journalism of solutions;
- e) hate speech, although not explicitly present, is perceived in the adjectives and use of words and expressions that stigmatize groups of migrants and refugees;
- f) reification and dehumanization of this group, which is usually transformed into numbers, percentages and acronyms;
- g) interested and biased publication based on the defame of a group with a reality and a much more complex background - superficiality;
- h) politicization and instrumentalization of the image of migrants and refugees according to the interests of certain political groups and sectors of the population - companies, churches, etc.;
- i) inappropriate use of the language - illegal, clandestine, etc.;
- j) relationship of the migration phenomenon with aspects such as insecurity, violence, poverty, instability, etc.;
- k) influence of hate speech phenomena and disinformation from social networks and digital platforms in the narrative of journalists;
- l) different positions of journalists, from those who consider themselves activists to those who maintain the position proposed by the editorial line of their media;
- m) limitation of the informative space destined to the informative coverage of issues related to migration;
- n) situation of clear decline in the working conditions of journalists specialized in migration, marked by high rates of professional insecurity.

These results fill an empirical gap that helps us understand the phenomenon in its multidimensionality; bearing in mind the limitations of this type of

methodology, which requires the application of other methods of analysis that allow a systematic recording of the representation of migrants and refugees in the media and of the phenomenon of hate speech around them. A problem that is accentuated, even more so, in a context of socio-health crisis caused by COVID-19.

**Keywords**

Media discourse; representation of migrants and refugees; Spain; Greece; Italy; COVID-19.

## 2. ITALY REPORT

### 2.1 Methodological approach

The PHARM project in Italy is run by the Università degli Studi di Milano (UNIMI). At the methodological level, it proposes five interconnected work packages on hate speech about migrants and refugees. Work Package 4 in Italy focuses on learning the perspectives and opinions of journalists specializing in migration through in-depth interviews and reconstruction.

In the Italian case, thirty-two semi-structured interviews were conducted with journalists who actively work on issues related to migration and people in mobility, a methodology that has not been used with sufficient depth and consistency in previous studies.

### 2.2 Sample

The field work has been based on the implementation of 32 semi-structured and reconstruction in-depth interviews with journalists specialized in the area of migration, refugees and issues related to human mobility.

All these journalists (Table 1) work for Italian media and communication platforms, often in collaboration with other media from different countries. Although most of them reside in Italy, some of them do so in other countries and travel often - mainly in / to the countries of origin of most of the people who arrive in Italy.

Table 1. Journalists interviewed in Italy in the framework of the PHARM project

CODE	DATE	MEDIUM	AGE	GENDER
3_6_11_00_Zurich	3/6/20	nelpaese.it, giornaleradiosociale.it	40	Male
5_6_15_30_Zurich	5/6/20	rockit.it	31	Male
6_6_11_30_Zurich	6/6/20	Il Fatto Quotidiano, Famiglia Cristiana	52	Male
10_6_12_30_Zurich	10/6/20	freelance, Il Corriere della Sera, L'Espresso	37	Male
16_6_18_00_Zurich	16/6/20	COSPE onlus	50	Female
16_6_19_30_Zurich	16/6/20	Redattore Sociale	37	Female
13_6_11_00_Zurich	13/6/20	Freelance, Università Cattolica di Brescia	50	Female

17_6_13_00_Zurich	17/6/20	freelance	58	Male
17_6_23_00_Zurich	17/6/20	Freelancer, Internazionale, Radio3 Mondo	38	Male
18_6_14_30_Zurich	18/6/20	freelance	45	Male
19_6_16_30_Zurich	19/6/20	freelance	30	Male
18_6_16_30_Zurich	18/6/20	freeelance	32	Male
23_6_10_00_Zurich	23/6/20	freeelance	30	Female
23_6_16_00_Zurich	23/6/20	freelance, Radio Cusano Campus	28	Female
23_6_18_00_Zurich	23/6/20	freelance	40	Female
25_6_17_00_Zurich	25/6/20	centro studi Tempi Moderni e ricercatore Eurispes, Il Manifesto, L'Eurispes, Articolo 21, Il Venerdì, Il Salto, Repubblica.it	42	Male
25_6_19_00_Zurich	25/6/20	RAI, freelance	41	Female
29_6_17_00_Zurich	29/6/20	Rainews.it	30	Female
26_6_19_00_Zurich	26/6/20	freelance	36	Male
1_7_12_00_Zurich	1/7/20	freelance	32	Male
26_6_17_00_Zurich	26/6/20	Associazione Carta di Roma	48	Female
29_6_14_30_Zurich	29/6/20	freelance	28	Male
30_6_10_00_Zurich	30/6/20	RAI	48	Male
30_6_17_00_Zurich	30/6/20	freelance, Fanpage.it	31	Female
30_6_22_00_Zurich	30/6/20	Università degli Studi di Salerno, freelance	49	Male
1_7_15_15_Zurich	1/7/20	Internazionale, Il Manifesto	50	Male
1_7_14_15_Zurich	1/7/20	RAI New 24	31	Female
2_7_12_10_Zurich	2/7/20	freelance, barometro odio	29	Female

2_7_15_00_Zurich	2/7/20	freelance	31	Male
3_7_10_30_Zurich	3/7/20	freelance	28	Female
6_7_11_30_Zurich	6/7/20	Rai News 24	44	Female
6_7_13_30_Zurich	6/7/20	freelance	33	Male

Source: own elaboration

## 2.3 Process

The process of establishing the sample in Italy was carried out in four phases:

- 1) In the first place, the search focused on the official records of media and journalists at the national level showed us that there are no official records at the state level of the number of media and journalists in the country.
- 2) Second, the search focused on the main databases of journalists:
  - a. *My News Hemeroteca*
  - b. Data base FACTIVA
  - c. *LexisNexis*
  - d. MEDIADDRESS MEDIA CONTACT:
- 3) Next, the search was carried out on official websites of professional associations, organizations and institutions related to journalism and journalists in Italy:
  - e. **Federazione Nazionale della Stampa Italiana (Fnsi)**. Il sindacato dei giornalisti italiani (<https://www.fnsi.it/che-cose-la-fnsi>)  
ContattimFederazione Nazionale della Stampa  
Italianamm(centralino) 06 680081, [lavoroautonomo@fnsi.it](mailto:lavoroautonomo@fnsi.it)
  - f. Istituto Nazionale di Previdenza dei giornalisti italiani “Giovanni Amendola” (<http://www.inpgi.it/>) Via Nizza, 35, 00198 Roma, Centralita: 06-85781
  - g. **Cassa Autonoma di Assistenza Integrativa dei Giornalisti Italiani** (<https://www.casagit.it/chi-siamo>) Via Marocco, 61, 00144 Roma (RM) Italy, T. +39 06 548 831, F. +39 06 548 832 20
  - h. **Consiglio Nazionale Ordine dei giornalisti** (<https://www.odg.it/>)  
Via Sommacampagna, 19, 00185 Roma; [cnog@pec.cnog.it](mailto:cnog@pec.cnog.it) ,  
[amministrato@pec.cnog.it](mailto:amministrato@pec.cnog.it) , [consigliodisciplina@pec.cnog.it](mailto:consigliodisciplina@pec.cnog.it) ,

esami@pec.cnog.it, ricorsi@pec.cnog.it , Centralita telefonica +39  
- 06 686231

- i. **Fondo Pensione Complementare dei Giornalisti Italiani.** Corso Vittorio Emanuele II, 349, 00186 ROMA, Tel. 06 6893545  
[http://www.fondogiornalisti.it/Fondo16\\_new/Index.asp](http://www.fondogiornalisti.it/Fondo16_new/Index.asp)
- j. **Unione Sindacale Giornalisti Rai** (<http://www.usigrai.it/>) Centro Rai Saxa Rubra (pal. F, st. 035) Largo Willy de Luca, 4 – 00188 Roma, tel +390633170809
- k. **Unione nazionale giornalisti pensionati**  
(<http://www.ungp.it/ungp17/Pagine/Home.asp>) ungp@fnsi.it  
Direttore responsabile : Guido Bossa; Web project & design : Aldo Azzari. Corso Vittorio Emanuele II, 349-00186 Roma, Tel. (+39) 06680081
- l. **Fondazione sul giornalismo italiano**  
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- m. **Federazione Italiana Editori Giornali (FIEG)**  
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- n. **AERANTI-CORALLO, Le imprese radiotelevisiva locale, satellitale e via internet** (<https://www.aeranticorallo.it/chi-siamo/>)  
Via Martiri della Resistenza, 7 – 60125 Ancona, Ufficio di Roma: p.zza G. Belli, 2 – 00153 Roma; Indirizzo per la corrispondenza: C.P. 360 – 60100 Ancona, c.f. 93074270427, Tel. 071 2075048, e-mail: [ufficio.corrispondenza@aeranticorallo.it](mailto:ufficio.corrispondenza@aeranticorallo.it), Twitter: @aeranticorallo, Facebook: [www.facebook.com/aeranti.corallo](http://www.facebook.com/aeranti.corallo)
- o. **USPI - Unione Stampa Periodica Italiana**  
(<http://www.uspi.it/Home.html>) - V.le B. Bardanzellu n. 95 - 00155 Roma | CF 80188110581, Tel/Fax 06.4065941 - Tel. 06.4071388 - e-mail: [uspi@uspi.it](mailto:uspi@uspi.it)
- p. **Dipartimento per l'informazione e l'editoria. Presidenza del consiglio de Ministri** (<https://informazioneeditoria.gov.it/it/>) Via della Mercede 9, 00187 Roma, Telefono: 06.6779.6699, Posta elettronica: [segreteriacapodie@governo.it](mailto:segreteriacapodie@governo.it) PEC: [archivio.die@mailbox.governo.it](mailto:archivio.die@mailbox.governo.it), Sottosegretario, Palazzo Verospi, Via dell'Impresa 90, 00186 Roma, Tel. 06.6779.6821, Posta elettronica: [segreteria.martella@palazzochigi.it](mailto:segreteria.martella@palazzochigi.it)
- q. **ARTICOLO21 liberi di** (sito per la libertà di informazione e di espressione) (<https://www.articolo21.org/contatti/>) DIRETTORE, Stefano Corradino [corradino@articolo21.info](mailto:corradino@articolo21.info), Contatto mail:

redazione@articolo21.info (Paolo Borrometi, Anna Cerofolini, Marina De Ghantuz Cubbe, Giuseppe Giulietti, Silvio Giulietti, Elisa Marincola, Cristiana Mastronicola, Antonella Napoli, Giorgio Santelli, Barbara Scaramucci, Roberto Secci, Danilo Sinibaldi, Vincenzo Vita).

- r. **Ossigeno Informazione** (<https://www.ossigeno.info/>) Email segreteria@ossigenoinformazione.it, Sede Legale: presso OdG Via Sommacampagna 19 – 00185 Roma, Tel. 06684027-30/32
- s. **Centro di Studi ed Iniziative Culturali** (<http://www.piolatorre.it/>) Pio La Torre Onlus, Via Umberto Boccioni, 206, 90146 Palermo, Telefono-Fax +39 091 348 766, info@piolatorre.it
- t. **Giornalisti Italia** (<https://www.giornalistitalia.it/>) redazione@giornalistitalia.it direttore@giornalistitalia.it
- u. **Associazione Carta di Roma** (<https://www.cartadiroma.org/contatti/>) L'Associazione Carta di Roma è stata fondata nel dicembre 2011 per dare attuazione al protocollo deontologico per una informazione corretta sui temi dell'immigrazione. Testata giornalistica registrata presso il Tribunale di Roma, autorizzazione n° 148/2015 del 24 luglio 2015. Direttore responsabile: *Domenica Canchano*.
- v. **Organizzazione internazionale per la migration (OIM Italia)** @OIMItalia Ufficio di Coordinamento per il Mediterraneo dell'Organizzazione Internazionale per le Migrazioni (OIM), l'agenzia delle Nazioni Unite per le Migrazioni.

- 4) Fourth, a personalized search of journalists was carried out through the main social networks (Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn), platforms, blogs and personal web pages in order to obtain the necessary contact information.

## 2.4 Summary

The migratory phenomenon in Italy is not something, as it has been constantly occurring during recent decades. However in the last five years there has been a greater attention by journalists and the media in Italy. According to the interviewed journalists, in this country there is a part of journalism that is aware of the importance of an individualized and specialized treatment of migration and people in mobility, in all their conditions and situations. A greater media prominence that has led them to have greater visibility and, linked to this, of the problems associated with migration. A situation that has caused migration issues to become part of the main topics that make up the political agendas; with the consequent discussions and confrontations in this regard that have had a direct impact on public opinion.

Media, political and public debates have one of their main expressions in cyberspace, a place where it has acquired global dimensions that journalists, on many occasions, have been unable to assume or monopolize. The agglutination of overinformation, misinformation and the spread of fake news have led to an exponential increase in messages and hate crimes regarding vulnerable groups, especially migrants and refugees. A situation that puts on the table a dilemma for Italian journalism and journalists: their level of responsibility in a country where far-right parties have parliamentary representation and accuse migrants and refugees of being some of the main responsables for the increase of violence, crimes and precariousness.

## 3. REPORT GREECE

### 3.1 Methodological approach

The PHARM project in Greece is run by the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH).

30 semi-structured and reconstruction interviews were conducted among journalists in each country in order to understand the challenges they face while informing about migrants and refugees in the media and the phenomenon of hate speech or hate crimes related to them.

### 3.2 Sample

The field work has been based on the implementation of 30 semi-structured and reconstruction in-depth interviews with journalists specialized in the area of migration, refugees and issues related to human mobility.

All these journalists (Table 2) work for Greek media and communication platforms, often in collaboration with other media from various countries.

A total number of 14 interviews were conducted via Skype, 1 was conducted live and 9 via telephone call. Unfortunately, we finally conducted 6 interviews via e-mail since the journalists, after more than one cancellation, expressed the desire to answer to the questions in their own free time or they would not do it at all. Since all the interviews should be transcribed and translated by the 30th of June, we decided to go along with their proposal.

After collecting the interviews we started transcribing and translating them in English. We tried to present in the best possible way the Greek expressions of oral speech that they used, in corresponding expressions in English.

Ensuring their anonymity was a delicate issue especially in relation with hate speech, since for some of them there was a fear of targeting. This was pointed out to us and some even mentioned that they proceeded in conducting the interview since they trusted us personally and, in that way, they knew that their identity will not be revealed. Finally, personal data was replaced by more general expressions and data. The names of the media the interviewees work for, the names of their towns of origins as well as names of political parties they mentioned during the interviews are not used. Instead of them, appropriate characterizations and general information is provided.

The final documents were coded using the formation of date, time and place of the conducted interview, which resembles “16\_6\_19\_00\_Thess”, meaning that the interview was conducted on the 16th of June at 19:00 in Thessaloniki (Table 2). After internal discussion we decided to use Thessaloniki as a place for all the interviews since we, as researchers, did not move to any other city or town. Inside each document file the demographics of the interviewee along with general characterization of the place they live are provided. Regarding the interviews that were received via e-mail we used as date and time, the date and time we received the mails.

Regarding the completeness of the questionnaires, twelve of them are answered fully. The rest of them present lack of the fifth part of the interview (reconstructive interview).

The reasons are that:

- a. on the seven initially conducted interviews we were not aware that we should ask those questions as well,
- b. some of interviewees were not willing to state certain incidents out of fear to be connected with them,
- c. some of them after having mentioned specific incidents in previous questions were not willing to repeat them, especially since they were tired and their availability was constrained by time and
- d. some questionnaires were received via e-mail without answers in the last section.

Table 2. Journalists interviewed in Greece in the framework of the PHARM project

CODE	DATE	TIME	MEDIUM	AGE	GENDER
16_5_16_00_Thess	16/5/20	16:00	television/radio	34	Female
18_5_21_00_Thess	18/5/20	21:00	Newspaper	50	Female
19_5_14_00_Thess	19/5/20	14:00	television/radio	42	Female
19_5_18_00_Thess	19/5/20	18:00	native online news outlets	50	Female
19_5_22_00_Thess	19/5/20	22:00	Newspaper	46	Male
21_5_19_30_Thess	21/5/20	19:30	Newspaper	48	Male
21_5_21_00_Thess	21/5/20	21:00	television/radio	43	Female

22_5_12_30_Thess	22/5/20	12:30	Newspaper	44	Female
22_5_23_00_Thess	22/5/20	23:00	native online news outlets	36	Male
23_5_22_00_Thess	23/5/20	22:00	native online news outlets	48	Male
24_5_22_30_Thess	24/5/20	22:30	native online news outlets	53	Male
25_5_15_30_Thess	25/5/20	15:30	Newspaper	45	Male
26_5_10_00_Thess	26/5/20	10:00	native online news outlets	41	Male
26_5_17_00_Thess	26/5/20	17:00	online news legacy media	40	Female
26_5_20_30_Thess	26/5/20	20:30	Newspaper	44	Male
27_5_13_00_Thess	27/5/20	13:00	online news legacy media	50	Female
29_5_22_00_Thess	29/5/20	22:00	online news legacy media	34	Male
1_6_14_00_Thess	1/6/20	14:00	native online news outlets	32	Male
1_6_15_00_Thess	1/6/20	15:00	television/radio	38	Male
1_6_16_30_Thess	1/6/20	16:30	television/radio	43	Male
3_6_9_00_Thess	3/6/20	9:00	online news legacy media	44	Female
9_6_21_00_Thess	9/6/20	21:00	online news legacy media	56	Male
12_6_20_00_Thess	12/6/20	20:00	Newspaper	37	Male
12_6_21_00_Thess	12/6/20	21:00	native online news outlets	35	Female
12_6_19_00_Thess	12/6/20	19:00	Newspaper	44	Female
13_6_10_00_Thess	13/6/20	10:00	online news legacy media	38	Female
13_6_12_00_Thess	13/6/20	12:00	television/radio	44	Female
15_6_20_30_Thess	15/6/20	20:30	online news legacy media	37	Female
17_6_15_00_Thess	17/6/20	15:00	online news legacy media	40	Female
23_6_15_00_Thess	23/6/20	15:00	native online news outlets	65	Male

Source: own elaboration

### 3.3 Process

Initially, we officially communicated with the Journalists' Association of Northern Greece (ESIEMTH) and asked to provide us with the names of its members and of those of members of the other Greek Associations that were specialized in covering issues of refugees and immigrants regardless of the medium they work. We used the formal text that was in the guidelines document that explained the origins and the purposes of the research. According to the way the association works, in order to receive the data through the official route, our request would have been set as a topic in one of their assemblies and then an official answer would be given.

Unfortunately, due to the pandemic of covid-19, all processes were moving at real slow speeds and that would demand an amount of time that we could not afford to lose. Therefore, in order to overcome this obstacle, we were given some names unofficially due to the good collaboration we keep as School of Journalism and Mass Communications with the Association. We were also given the corresponding e-mail addresses in order to communicate with them and ask them whether they wanted to participate in the research. When we started communicating with them not all of them were willing to participate in the research, presenting various reasons for their refusal, the main one of which was the lack of free time. We used the arguments in the instructions but we did not always have positive results. Even, after accepting to participate some of them finally withdrew their original acceptance.

After that we started communicating on a personal level with journalists all over Greece making use of our acquaintances with graduate students of the School of Journalism and Mass Communications and asking them either to participate themselves or to provide us names of their colleagues that might be willing to participate. In this way we managed to collect the total number of 30 interviewees accomplishing the proposed distribution among the media categories (newspapers, online legacy media, online native media and radio and TV), of course, we have to mention that most of them worked in more than one medium. This was achieved after many cancellations mainly due to the limited time they had and the emergencies they encountered. At this point we realized that there were not many journalists who were exclusively occupied with refugee-immigrant issues. Most of them during their job course they had covered relative topics among other.

At our initial communication we explained the purpose of the research, the procedure that should be followed and the fact that their anonymity would be ensured. We asked them to provide us their time availability to conduct the interview and whether they preferred through an online platform, such as skype,

or via telephone call. The majority did not provide specific information and expressed a desire for re-communication in order to think it over. Therefore, we re-communicated with them, with some of them more than two or three times and managed to schedule appointments when the interviews took place.

### **3.4 Summary**

Some of the general comments we received were that the research is very interesting and that they wish the results to help in minimizing hate speech on refugees' and immigrants' issues.

More than five journalists asked if they could have the results in order to present them themselves in the media they work for and therefore help in any way they can.

On the disadvantages, was the length of the questionnaire which was longer than what they thought it would be. Despite our initial informing regarding the duration of the interview, some of the participants were dissatisfied with the size of the questionnaire.

## 4. REPORT SPAIN

### 4.1 Methodological approach

The PHARM project in Spain is run by the University of Salamanca (USAL).

30 semi-structured and reconstruction interviews were conducted among journalists in each country in order to understand the challenges they face while informing about migrants and refugees in the media and the phenomenon of hate speech or hate crimes related to them.

### 4.2 Sample

The field work is based on the implementation of 33 semi-structured and reconstruction in-depth interviews with journalists specialized in the area of migration, refugees and issues related to human mobility. All these journalists (Table 3) work for media and communication platforms in Spain, often in collaboration with other media from different countries, and live in Spain –mostly those who work in newsrooms, or in places of arrival of migrants in Spain, such Ceuta and Melilla, the Canary Islands or Andalusia– or other countries –mostly correspondents or freelancers “on the ground”–.

Table 3. Journalists interviewed in Spain in the framework of the PHARM Project

CODE	DATE	TIME	MEDIUM	AGE	GENDER
SP_1	27.5.20	18.00	Periodistas en Español	Male	70
SP_2	2.6.20	17.30	PorCausa	Female	22
SP_3	3.6.20	15.00	Freelance – El Mundo	Male	55
SP_4	4.6.20	10.00	Freelance – El País	Male	55
SP_5	4.6.20	11.30	El País	Male	30
SP_6	4.6.20	15.30	Freelance – El País	Male	48
SP_7	5.6.20	12.30	PorCausa	Female	40

SP_8	6.6.20	20.00	El País	Female	36
SP_9	8.6.20	11.30	El País	Female	30
SP_10	8.6.20	17.00	En FronteraD	Male	62
SP_11	9.6.20	10.00	PorCausa	Male	21
SP_12	9.6.20	13.00	Freelance	Male	37
SP_13	9.6.20	17.00	El País	Male	26
SP_14	10.6.20	16.00	Infolibre	Male	30
SP_15	11.6.20	10.15	Freelance – El País	Female	30
SP_16	11.6.20	16.00	Freelance	Female	47
SP_17	12.6.20	9.00	Freelance – El Confidencial	Male	67
SP_18	13.6.20	11.00	PorCausa – NYT	Male	38
SP_19	14.6.20	12.00	Freelance	Male	40
SP_20	15.6.20	20.00	Foro de Ceuta	Male	50
SP_21	16.6.20	12.00	Público	Male	30
SP_22	16.6.20	16.00	EIDiario.es	Male	44
SP_23	16.6.20	18.00	El País	Female	53
SP_24	17.6.20	8.00	Mundo Negro	Female	47
SP_25	17.6.20	10.00	Freelance	Female	42
SP_26	17.6.20	13.30	Nueva Tribuna	Female	50
SP_27	17.6.20	18.00	El Foro de Ceuta	Female	35
SP_28	18.6.20	10.00	Cadena SER	Male	48
SP_29	19.6.20	19.00	Freelance	Female	28

SP_30	23.6.20	13.00	eDiario.es	Female	31
SP_31	24.6.20	12.00	ABC	Male	34
SP_32	29.6.20	10.00	Revista 5W	Female	36
SP_33	22.7.20	17.00	Agencia EFE	Female	31

Source: own elaboration

### 4.3 Process

The process of establishing the sample in Spain was made from four stages: First, the search focused on the official records of the media and journalists in the country, which were unable to offer reliable data regarding the journalists specialized in migration issues. Second, we focus on the databases that collect information about national media and the journalists who work in them, narrowing the search to publications referring to migrants, refugees, and hate speech.

The databases consulted were *Mediaddress Media Contact* –the most operational of those used–, *My News Hemeroteca*, *Factiva* and *LexisNexis*, as well as those of the websites of some of the main Spanish media such as *El País*, *ABC*, *El Mundo*, *Agencia EFE*, *Infodefensa.com*, *La Razón*, *El Español* and *20Minutos*, looking for journalists who had published within the Migration section. Thirdly, the websites of professional associations, organizations and institutions were accessed, such as the Professional Association of Journalists of Andalusia, the Federation of Associations of Journalists of Spain, the Spanish Society of Journalists, the House of Journalists, the Organization of Associations of Journalists of Spain, the Spanish Association of periodical publications publishers and the territorial delegations of CEAR and associated entities.

Finally, through a personalized search, more than 200 journalists with a profile that could be suitable for the study were located through the main social networks (*Facebook*, *Twitter* and *LinkedIn*), platforms, blogs and personal web pages in order to get the necessary contact information. Through this search, a total of 128 journalists were contacted through social networks and email, 34 of whom answered affirmatively.

The state of alarm decreed by the Government of Spain on March 14, 2020 for the management of the health crisis situation caused by COVID-19 caused the

interviews scheduled in our field work to be carried out via videoconference (*Skype, Zoom and Google Meeting*) during the months of May, June and July 2020. Due to technical limitations, one of the 34 interviews had to be eliminated from the study, since its analysis was not possible, thus increasing the total to 33.

#### **4.4 Summary**

According to the existing literature that affirms that the treatment of immigration is stereotyped and negative (Igartua-Perosanz et al., 2007; Muñiz-Muriel, Igartua-Perosanz & Otero, 2006), journalists criticize that the information on migrants and Refugees in the media is often done in a decontextualized and superficial way, especially when it is not carried out in “territory” and by experts / specialists in the field.

In general, the journalists interviewed defend that this incomplete, biased and dehumanized coverage is very often encouraged by the lack of training of professionals; media, economic and political interests and the precariousness of working conditions (Blanco-Herrero, Oller Alonso and Arcila Calderón, 2020; Figueras-Maz, Mauri-Ríos, Alsius-Clavera and Salgado-De-Dios, 2012).

The arguments proposed by the journalists interviewed vindicate the stories "with a face", individualized, data, deep and contextualized, which allow understanding the phenomenon of migration from the point of view of the people who are actively involved in this process: migrants -in all their meanings- and the groups and organizations that directly and indirectly work with them.

In this sense, despite the fact that there is an increasing offer for the training of journalists and migrants, a systematization of these training processes is lacking, which would allow specialized journalists a better optimization of technological tools. Something that would have a positive impact on a greater and better use of data and an improvement in the capture of information from primary sources - especially from migrants themselves.

In Spain there is no ethical code agreed upon and accepted by all professionals who practice journalism, as is the case with the Carta di Roma in Italy, to give a clear example. A professional destructuring that has immediate effects on the indiscriminate use of concepts and terms that do not conform to the reality that they are trying to define or delimit. This lack of terminological precision on many occasions leads journalists, wanting or for lack of knowledge, to dehumanize or criminalize certain individuals or groups for the simple fact of being migrants through objectification in figures, data, acronyms and / or statistics. A type of

deficient news coverage that strengthens a dual vision between “us” and “them” in the audience and promotes hate speech with an anti-immigration approach.

We highlight the desire of journalists to defend the human rights of migrants, censoring attitudes and hate speech or rejection towards this group. Although not everyone agrees with the activist nature of the journalism profession when it comes to migration, in general they defend the need to bet on proactive journalism and solutions, also addressing the positive reactions and effects of migration.

Migration is a comprehensive and cross-cutting issue that maintains links with other fundamental issues for Spanish society such as labor, political, health, ethnic, cultural, international organizations, NGOs, religious, to mention some of the most mentioned by journalists.

The geographic component of migration has regionalist, religious, ethnic, and border constraints connotations. However, the “mobility” factor determined by the irregular routes through which people on the move arrive in Spain takes on an even greater preponderance. A stationary / dynamic factor that begins to overlap the static / geolocated factor as part of the journalists' discourse.

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PREVENTING HATE AGAINST REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

## ABOUT PHARM (2020-2022)

Preventing Hate against Refugees and Migrants (PHARM)

Migration to Europe has grown in the last years in scale and complexity. The so called 'refugee crisis' and the migratory pressure is particularly acute in southern EU countries as the main entrance to the EU.

The main goal of PHARM project is to monitor and model hate speech against refugees and migrants in Greece, Italy and Spain in order to predict and combat hate crime and also counter its effects using cutting-edge techniques, such as data journalism and narrative persuasion. The activities distributed in 5 coordinated work packages include:

(i) Implementation of a conceptual and methodological common framework for large-scale analysis and detection of hate speech; (ii) Implementation and evaluation of machine learning approaches to model and predict hate crimes against refugees and migrants based on hate speech features; (iii) Survey journalists to understand how they inform and raise awareness about hate speech and how they can help building and disseminating counter-narratives based in data-driven news pieces; (iv) Creation, evaluation and dissemination of counter-narrative fictional stories adapted to different characteristics of citizens using large-scale narrative persuasion.

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