

Towards a New Media Coverage of Refugees and Migrants in the EuroMed Region

Context

While the International Organization for Migration (IOM) calls for the recognition of the contribution of migrants and human mobility to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), some media narratives too often remain polarized and perpetuate negative stereotypes on migrants and refugees. This phenomenon has increased with the pandemic marked by discourses presenting these population groups as vectors of contagion, and thus encouraging discriminatory practices against them.

In this context, both traditional and online media have a vital role to play in better informing the public, combating hate speech and preventing cultural divides. This is reflected in the EU Action Plan against Racism 2020-2025 which recalls the importance of promoting balanced and positive narratives, increasing the awareness and knowledge of journalists, as well as fostering media literacy, as crucial ways to contribute to inclusive societies.

The Anna Lindh Intercultural Trends Research carried out in 2021 that will be released at the beginning of the year, reveals that TV remains the most trusted media source for cross-cultural reporting for respondents in European and Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries (SEM). Social media appears to be the most trusted source for 36% of SEM respondents, in comparison to only 15% of respondents in European countries. The Survey data also suggest that media stories had had a negative, rather than positive, impact on their views.

Objectives of the round table

Building on the experience of the Anna Lindh Foundation in advancing collaborative initiatives among various stakeholders in the Euro-Mediterranean region, this event organized in the framework of the *Forum des Mondes Méditerranéens* in Marseille, aims at bringing together media professionals, civil society actors, and experts from the field to discuss how the media impacts people's perceptions of the "other"; and the most effective measures to tackle hate speech, strengthen mutual comprehension and promote social cohesion.



Guiding questions

- To what extent has the spread of fake news on social media led to a wave of hatred and hostility towards refugees in the region? How does mainstream media fight misinformation?
- To what extent have journalists been sensitive to various forms of discrimination and racial hatred while covering the migration crisis? Are refugee views adequately represented?
- Have journalistic ethics been applied in the media coverage of the refugee crisis?
- Has media coverage in the host countries placed greater importance on security or humanitarian concerns? Has it been sensitive to the use of appropriate terminology regarding the different categories of migrants on the basis of international law?
- How do we explain the fact that the figures reflecting the social and economic contributions of these populations in certain countries are largely ignored, even when the mainstream media reports on them?
- What role could the Anna Lindh Foundation play with young bloggers/influencers and media professionals in raising public awareness about the migration crisis in the region?

Format

The event will take place on Tuesday **8 February 2022** from **14:15 to 15:30 PM** including a 15-minute exchange with the audience, in the **amphithéâtre Callelongue - Palais des Congrès**, Marseille, France. It will be web streamed online. Simultaneous interpretation will be provided in English, French, and Arabic

Speakers

HRH Princess Rym Ali, President of the Anna Lindh Foundation (moderator)

Emmanuelle Chaze, Journalist
Sélim El Sayegh, Professor of Law
Abdellatif Garrouri, Director and Producer
Kristi Ockbi, Humanitarian Aid Expert

