



Media, Migration and Race in Greece

Access Barriers and Representation of Foreigners

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MILD promotes the production of a more accurate media coverage regarding migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and racialised people through research, training, and communication activities. The research was carried out by ANTIGONE - Information and Documentation Centre On Racism, Ecology, Peace and Non-Violence.

We would like to thank all those interviewed for their willingness to participate and their contribution to the research

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Introduction

A. About the present study

The MILD (More Correct Information Less Discrimination) project tackles the critical challenge of racism, discrimination, and hate speech perpetuated through media and public discourse across Europe, with a specific focus on the challenges faced by migrants, refugees, and racialized communities. The project is rooted in the conviction that the widespread circulation of misinformation and stereotypical narratives directly undermines social cohesion and institutional efforts toward equality.

The MILD project is executed through a collaborative partnership of leading organizations from across the Mediterranean and Southern Europe, bringing together expertise in human rights, investigative journalism, media ethics, and anti-racism activism:

- Lunaria (IT): Lead Partner
- African Media Association Malta (Malta): Partner
- ANTIGONE (Greece): Partner
- Carta di Roma (Italy): Partner
- Maldita.es (Spain): Partner

The present report provides an analysis of the research methodology and principal findings of the MILD (More Correct Information Less Discrimination) project for Greece. The study employs a qualitative research design, by utilizing semi-structured interviews and written responses from professionals who shape public discourse in Greece and by supplementing the main findings with information derived from the reports of national and international stakeholders as well as academic research.

This approach enables the collection of nuanced perspectives on the prevalence and impact of misinformation and stereotypical representation. The main findings of the study underscore both the persistent challenges and emerging opportunities in addressing discriminatory practices embedded within media and public dialogue. These insights not only illuminate obstacles to social cohesion and equality yet also inform the development of more effective policies and advocacy strategies intended to foster inclusivity and counteract harmful narratives. Before proceeding with the analysis of the present research, it is crucial to provide some information regarding the legal and policy framework in Greece, as well as the situation of migrants and those of a migrant background.

B. The Greek Regulatory Framework

The legal and policy framework in Greece to combat discrimination and hate speech is relatively robust on paper, particularly in criminal law, however, in practice, there are persistent challenges in the consistent implementation and comprehensive media regulation. Below is a brief analysis:

1. Anti-Discrimination and Hate Speech Legislation

In Greece, discrimination is addressed through a multilayered legal framework, which also criminalizes certain forms of hate speech, namely:

a) Anti-Discrimination Law (Law 3304/2005 and Law 4443/2016)

- **Equal Treatment: Law 3304/2005** was the original legal document to transpose the relevant EU directives (43/2000 and 78/2000), prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of **racial or ethnic origin, religious or other beliefs, disability, age, or sexual orientation** in certain areas including that of employment.
 - **Strengthened Protection:** Law 3304/2005 was later replaced by **Law 4443/2016**, which further solidified the principle of equal treatment, particularly in the labour and employment sectors, and significantly, assigned overall powers to the **Greek Ombudsman** (an independent authority) to receive and examine complaints regarding discrimination in both the public and private sectors.
- b) Criminal Law on Hate Speech and Hate Crime
- **Anti-racist speech** had been addressed through legislation relatively early in Greece. More specifically, **Law 927/1979** (which was recently amended by Laws 4285/2014 and 4491/2017) is a central piece of anti-racism criminal legislation. It punishes anyone who **publicly incites, provokes, or stirs acts of violence or hatred** against a person or group based on **race, colour, religion, descent, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity**, including through the **press or the Internet**. It also punishes those who establish or participate in an organization that systematically seeks to carry out such acts.
 - **Moreover**, the Greek Criminal Code includes **Article 82A** which stipulates that

if a crime is committed against a victim due to **racist characteristics** (which includes race, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, etc.), this constitutes an **aggravating circumstance**, leading to increased minimum sentences.

2. Media-Specific Regulatory Framework

It should be noted that even though the above provisions of criminal law (i.e. Law 927/1979) explicitly apply to Media, **in Greece there are also regulatory mechanisms and soft-law obligations for Media adherence:**

a) National Radio and Television Council (NRTC or ESR)

Pursuant to the Greek Constitution all audiovisual media (radio and television) are subject to the control of the **NRTC (National Radio and Television Council)**, which is also an independent authority. The NRTC has the power to impose **administrative sanctions** to ensure “*the objective and on equal terms transmission of information and news reports*” and to guarantee the quality level of programs mandated by the social and cultural mission of radio and television. The NRTC has also issued regulations which also cover principles related to the prohibition of racial discrimination, such as Directive 6/2004 (see in Greek, ΕΣΠ, [Οδηγία 6/2004](#)).

b) Policy and Ethical Commitments

In Greece, journalist associations, such as the **Association of Daily Newspaper Editors of Macedonia-Thrace**, have historically drawn up ethical guidelines, like the **Charter of Idomeni** (2017), to encourage non-discriminatory monitoring and reporting on issues like refugees and migrants, though the

consistent adherence to such self-regulation is reported to have faded as an initiative.

c) Requirement for Removal of Hate Speech
In light of the criminalization of incitement to hatred through the press and the Internet under Law 927/1979, there is a **legal basis for the prosecution and, implicitly, for the removal** of illegal hate speech especially when it incites violence. Moreover, most online Media platforms have published disclaimers pertaining to EU Commission Regulation 2018/334 on measures to effectively tackle illegal content online, including hate speech, and stating that any such illegal content shall be removed. Yet, despite these laws, Greece does **not have a separate legal definition of “hate speech”** outside of the incitement provision, and in practice the system often struggles with **ex-officio prosecution** and convictions, particularly when the perpetrators are politicians or public officials.

3. Analysis of Implementation Gaps

Despite the existing legislation, reports from international and national bodies consistently highlight significant implementation gaps. The application of the criminal law on hate speech is often criticized for being **insufficient to curb racist acts**, with persistent concerns over the **lack of transparency and official data** on investigations and convictions. On the other hand, while a relevant legal framework is in place, the Greek context suggests that anti-discrimination is not recognized as a structural or institutional problem by mainstream Media, leading to

the reproduction of **stereotypical and racist terminology** often mirrored from political actors. Finally, there is a documented problem of **widespread impunity for acts of hate speech**, suggesting that even when the legal mechanisms exist, the political and institutional will to prosecute high-profile individuals, including politicians, is often absent.

C. The situation in Greece regarding migrants and those of a migrant background

In Greece, the situation regarding the equal treatment of racialised groups including migrants and those of migrant background is characterized by a **significant gap between legal provisions and actual practice**, with persistent structural and social barriers (ECRI 2022, Greek Ombudsman 2021 and 2022 Special Reports on Equal Treatment). Despite having anti-discrimination laws (such as Law 4443/2016, which implements the EU Directives 78/2000 and 43/2000), Greece is often criticized for a long-standing failure to implement a comprehensive and targeted **integration policy** for immigrants. Existing measures are often described as fragmented and contradictory. This policy vacuum leads unfortunately to a situation where equality exists “on paper” but not in reality for migrants and refugees (ISD, 2021). **In Greece**, equal treatment is often undermined by a hostile public environment where discriminatory rhetoric is normalized. Political actors refer to refugees and immigrants in **stereotypical and racist terms**, with their messaging being widely

reproduced by the mainstream media (RVRN 2023, 2022, 2021, 2020 Annual Reports, ECRI Report 2014). Moreover, racism is generally **not recognized as a structural problem** in the mainstream media, which grants outlets the freedom to follow the same terminology as political figures. This lack of internal ethical standards perpetuates discriminatory and stereotypical discourse.

Discrimination manifests directly in the lives of migrants, impacting their professional and civil interactions. While the second generation (children of immigrants who acquire Greek citizenship) is finding things easier due to better opportunities of completing higher education, the **first generation of immigrants faces major obstacles** in accessing various professions. On the other hand, state bodies, particularly law enforcement, are often involved in discriminatory practices. Reports from the

Greek Ombudsman's National Mechanism for the Investigation of Arbitrary Incidents consistently documents cases of arbitrary conduct perpetrated by the Hellenic Police and Coast Guard that involve **racist motives or discrimination**. This arbitrary conduct includes the practice of **unlawful pushbacks** at the country's borders, which is a systemic violation of human rights that targets asylum seekers and irregular migrants by denying them the fundamental right to seek protection.

In summary, equal treatment for migrants in Greece is undermined by a combination of **institutional inaction, systemic abuse of power**, and a **media environment** that actively normalizes and amplifies anti-migrant sentiment. This is clearly demonstrated by the main findings of the present report.

Research Methodology

For the preparation of the research study, the ANTIGONE Team employed a **qualitative methodology** predicated upon **semi-structured interviews** and **written responses**. This design was specifically chosen by all partners of the MILD project to secure **in-depth insights** from professionals who directly or indirectly influence public discourse regarding migration and diversity within Greece.

A. Participant Recruitment and Sample Composition

A total of **18 participants** contributed to this study. Due to limited availability for personal interviews, the ANTIGONE Team decided to send out questionnaires to a total of 30 individuals, 18 of which responded in writing via email. The sample was intentionally structured to ensure a **balanced representation** across several key sectors, including:

- Journalists
- Activists and representatives from Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)
- Journalists that are also affiliated with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)

The participants from Greece were identified and selected using a **purposive sampling strategy** to guarantee the inclusion of individuals possessing demonstrable **expertise** in the fields of media, communication, or social inclusion. All participants received comprehensive information detailing the **study objectives** and the applied **ethical safeguards**. Furthermore, to ensure anonymity, each interview was coded using a unique participant number (i.e. Interviewee 1, etc.

or Interview No. 1, etc). More information concerning the demographic of the participants is presented below.

The study involved 18 participants in total, with a clear majority being male:

- Male: 11 participants
- Female: 7 participants

Most participants were from Greece, followed by smaller, equal groups from Afghanistan and individuals who did not provide this information:

- Greece: 12 participants
- Afghanistan: 2 participants
- (Not provided or mentioned): 2 participants
- Albania: 1 participant
- Sudan and Greece: 1 participant (this participant identified with both countries.)

The participants were predominantly in the 31-45 and 46-60 age groups, with very few in the youngest and oldest groups.

- 31-45: 8 participants
- 46-60: 7 participants
- 18-30: 2 participants
- 61-75: 1 participant

B. Data Collection

Each interview rigorously adhered to a common **research guide** provided by the MILD consortium, thereby guaranteeing **methodological coherence** and comparability across all participating countries (i.e. Greece, Italy, Malta and Spain). The lines of inquiry systematically explored critical themes, including:

- Access to media profession
- Institutional inclusivity
- Representation of migrants

- Practices employed to counter discrimination or hate speech

All interviews were collected following the attainment of **informed consent**. All participants signed GDPR forms and were able to request to remain anonymous. All written responses were received and stored in strict adherence to **ethical standards** and **data protection regulations** consistent with the **EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**. No identifying information is included within this report and only the designated research coordination team had access to the original written responses. Direct quotations included in the present report are **anonymized** and presented in italics.

C. Analytical Framework

The analytical approach integrated the consortium's common partner framework and was based on an agreed-upon questionnaire. The six established analytical categories were:

1. Commitment and Accessibility

- Examined the degree of **personal or institutional commitment** to covering migration/diversity issues, and the **accessibility** of media or communication professions for migrants and individuals from diverse backgrounds.

2. Knowledge and Awareness

- Assessed the participants' **understanding of migration complexities**, including legal frameworks, historical context, and the demographics of migrant communities, as well as their **awareness of ethical reporting guidelines**.

3. Prevention Policies

- Focused on existing **institutional policies and practices** designed to prevent discrimination, hate speech, or unethical representation of migrants within their respective sectors (media, NGOs).

4. Cultural and Media Context

- Explored the broader **cultural and media environment in Greece**, including prevailing public narratives, market pressures, and the influence of political discourse on the representation of migrants.

5. Racism in Mainstream Media

- A critical category that specifically sought to **identify, document, and analyse instances of racist framing, stereotyping, or language** used in mainstream Greek media outlets when discussing migration and diversity.

6. Best Practices and Proposals

- Captured participants' accounts of **successful initiatives or strategies** for promoting balanced narratives, inclusion, and human rights, as well as their **concrete proposals** for future improvements and reforms.

D. Desktop Research

For the contextualisation of the data collected through the above interviews, the research was supplemented by data collected through desktop research (namely, reports of NGOs or institutional bodies or derived from academic research). The analysis's goal was to ensure that while the broad comparative themes were addressed, the **unique thematic depth** and particular challenges of the Greek context were fully captured.

Main findings

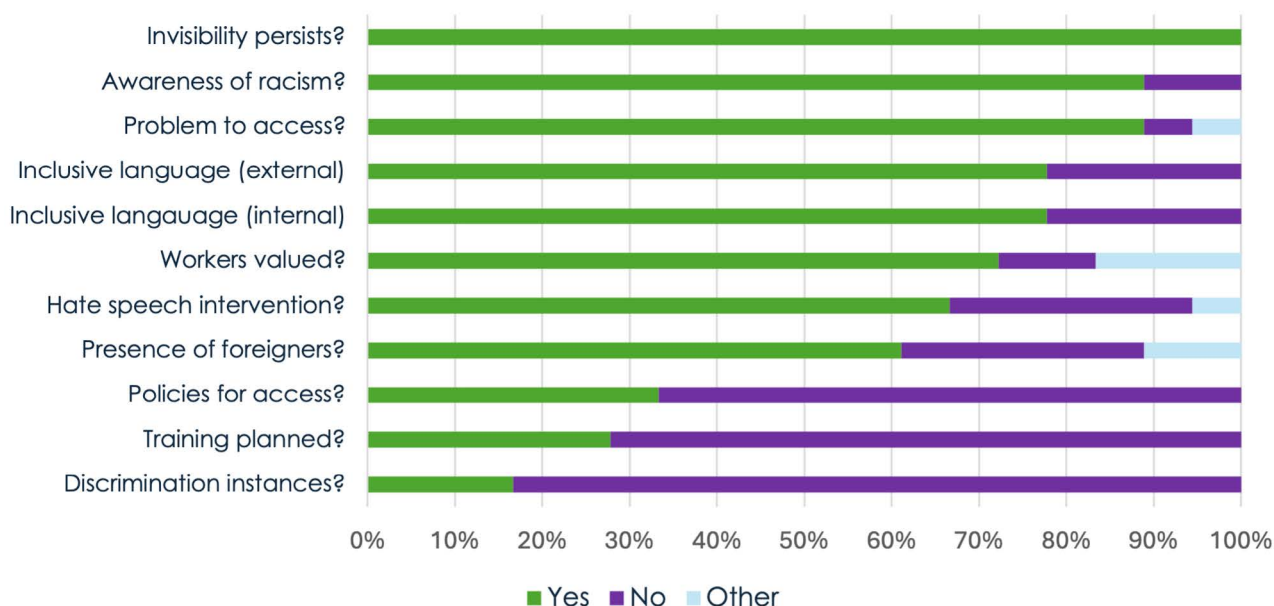
The present report integrates the qualitative data derived from 18 total interviews with professionals across media, non-governmental, and civil society organizations. The analysis, structured into six domains (Commitment and Accessibility, Knowledge and Awareness, Prevention Policies, and Cultural and Media Context, Racism in Mainstream Media, Best Practices and Proposals), aims to identify prevailing trends (convergence) and significant differences (divergence) in organizational approaches to anti-racism and the representation of people of foreign origin. Overall, the analysis reveals a **strong internal commitment** to non-discrimination and equal treatment within the respondents' organizations. However, this internal adherence to equality **starkly contrasts** with a deep awareness of **systemic barriers** and negative external media narratives. Key findings based on the analysis of the completed interviews include:

- **Access Barrier:** Nearly all participants acknowledge a persistent and significant access problem for people of foreign origin in the journalistic profession, which is primarily attributed to the **language barrier** and **discriminatory perceptions** in the broader media sector.
- **Narrative Problem:** There is near-unanimous agreement that in Greece the mainstream media predominantly relies on narratives which link migrants and refugees to **crime, security threats, and economic burden**.
- **Invisibility of Voices:** Interestingly, the problem of **invisibility** - where people of foreign origin are rarely heard as active citizens or experts - is universally recognized as a pervasive issue.
- **Structural Racism:** A crucial divergence is also found in the Media's framing of racism; participants highlighted that it is generally **not recognized as a structural problem**, but rather as a series of isolated incidents.

For a better demonstration of the key responses of the participants, below is a chart displaying responses across key interview questions. The responses have been grouped into three categories: **Yes, No**, and **Other**, with 'Other' including unique responses like "a few," "enough," and "I prefer to not answer":

The following sections provide a more in-depth analysis of the responses provided by the participants, while at the same time offering some contextualisation drawn from the desktop research.

Distribution of Responses across all key interviews questions=18



1. The organisational context

1.1. The composition of organisations

The present section examines organizational policies and perceptions regarding the inclusion and professional advancement of people of foreign origin.

A. Presence and Promotion of Equal Opportunities

"... There are black journalists, but they are counted on one hand and mainly deal with print. They do not appear 'on air'..."

Interview No. 5

A. 1. Points of Agreement

a) Confirmation of Presence:

- A **vast majority** of organizations interviewed **confirm the presence** of foreigners or people of foreign origin within their professional context. This indicates a fundamental, **baseline level of workplace diversity** across the interviewed organizations, establishing that the issue of immigrant presence

is not theoretical, but a reality in their working environments.

b) Equal Treatment as Primary Policy:

- The core mechanism for promoting equal opportunities is defined as **non-discrimination in practice**. This policy according to those interviewed is consistently applied across key professional areas, including **merit-based hiring, equal salary, and development opportunities**. The underlying principle is a commitment to the **rights of all personnel regardless of origin**, which acts as the foundational, general standard for fair treatment.

A. 2. Points of Disagreement

a) Extremes of Representation:

- Representation levels vary dramatically between organizations. One notable organization (the Greek Forum of Migrants) reports an **exceptionally high presence (nearly 99%)**,

which reflects their **mission-driven approach**. Conversely, at least one media professional noted that while foreigners are present, they are often in **support roles** and **not at the core of the organization** (e.g., journalists or administration). This contrast highlights the difference between migrant-led/focused organizations and mainstream professional sectors.

b) Explicit Policy Integration:

- Significant divergence is marked by organizations whose core mandate is **integration**. These groups leverage **specific, articulated protocols** like a Code of Conduct and Gender Equality Policies to govern internal equity. These organizations go **beyond solely relying on the general principle of non-discrimination**. They use targeted, explicit policies to address equity challenges, signaling a more advanced or intentional approach to diversity management compared to those who rely only on the broad non-discrimination policy.

B. Access Barriers to the Journalistic Profession

"...the main cause is the perception that 'journalism is a profession that requires perfect knowledge of the Greek language'... while, in reality, what is needed is the ability to write news stories."

Interview No. 7

Based on the responses of those interviewed, there were areas of agreement and of disagreement specifically regarding issues on the **access of people of foreign origin to professional roles**.

B.1. Areas of Agreement

a) Consensus on Access Problem:

There is overwhelming agreement that a significant problem persists regarding the access of people of foreign origin to the journalistic profession. The primary causes cited by the interviewees included the **language barrier**; **Overt discrimination**; and a general **lack of a multicultural organizational culture** within the media sector.

b) Absence of Specific Facilitation:

Based on the responses provided by the participants, it is apparent that the majority of organizations, despite their commitment to non-discrimination, **do not have explicit, dedicated policies to facilitate access for people of foreign origin**. Instead, they view adherence to the principle of equal opportunity as a sufficient facilitating mechanism. This means that in practice no special measures are taken to overcome existing barriers.

B.2. Areas of Difference

a) Legal and Bureaucratic Impediments:

A key divergence is the specific citation of practical, or legal obstacles. These include **difficulties with immigration law and bureaucratic delays in documentation renewal**, alongside the **existing cultural issues**. This suggests that some organizations encounter and identify the state/legal framework as a barrier, while others may not be able to articulate it specifically.

b) Targeted Hiring/Citizenship Advantage:

On a more positive note, there were interviewees that responded that some

organizations did use specific policies like a **preference for applicants with immigrant backgrounds for interpreter roles**. A crucial finding demonstrates that the path is significantly **easier for second-generation immigrants who possess Greek citizenship and higher education**. This suggests that citizenship constitutes a greater facilitator for access than organizational anti-discrimination policy alone, highlighting a systemic advantage.

C. Creating a Non-Discriminatory Environment

The responses of the participants demonstrate that the dominant strategy for fostering an equitable environment is a combination of deterrent policy and cultural reinforcement.

- **Hate Speech Intervention:** Interventions to prevent hate speech on social platforms are common, often involving **trained staff, internal guidelines, or participation in external multi-stakeholder programs**. This could also be justified by the adherence to EU Commission Regulation 2018/334, which applies to online Media. On the other hand, a minor divergence was the lack of intervention in non-media organizations that perceive no need due to limited public interaction or due to the incorporation of non-discrimination in their core objectives.
- **Non-Discriminatory Actions:** The three most cited actions by the interviewees were: a clear zero-tolerance policy with strict sanctions; fair, meritocratic, and transparent hiring/pay; and proactive

training, education, and cultural awareness initiatives.

D. Commentary

While the interviewees in the analysis noted that accessibility problems, particularly in the media profession, are linked *to language barriers and obstacles for first-generation immigrants*, desktop research places this issue within a broader context of structural labour discrimination.

- **Evidence of Labour Discrimination:** Historical and ongoing reports confirm that the labour market, including employment access and compensation, remains discriminatory for certain groups. A study referenced in the context of persistent discrimination found a significant rate of net discrimination against Albanian immigrants in accessing occupations (Drydakakis & Vlassis, 2010). Reports from the European Network against Racism (ENAR) confirmed that the rise in unemployment following the financial crisis disproportionately affected people with a foreign background, leading to the **exploitation of vulnerable migrants** in informal work.
- **Structural Barrier Confirmation:** This systemic discrimination in the wider labour market corroborates the interviewees' observation that there are major obstacles for first-generation immigrants to access professions like journalism, beyond just the requirement for fluent Greek.

While the data sources do not directly detail the staff composition of Greek Media organisations, they **strongly suggest**

structural barriers to equal representation, particularly in the employment sector:

- **Discrimination in Employment:** Reports repeatedly highlight that groups such as **Roma, Albanians and other immigrants, and the Muslim minority** continue to lag behind and face discrimination in the employment sector, despite the adoption of anti-discrimination legislation like Law 3304/2005 (2009 ECRI Report). Despite new anti-discrimination laws and strategies, the situation has remained relatively unchanged (2022 ECRI Report on Greece).
- **Vulnerability of Migrant Workers:** The economic crisis (around 2012) exacerbated the situation for **migrant workers**, leading to massive violations of their rights and worsening their job security and housing situations (2012 ENAR Report).
- **Lack of Integration Policy:** The overall context is one where there is a **lack of a comprehensive, targeted integration policy** for immigrants (2004 ECRI Report), and existing measures are often **fragmented and contradictory** (2013 ENAR Report). This fragmented integration policy has also been highlighted in more recent reports (2022 ECRI Report on Greece; ENAR Shadow Report 2016-2021). This structural deficit makes it difficult for organisations to achieve true diversity if the state has not effectively facilitated the integration and legal status of non-ethnic Greeks.

1.2. Knowledge and awareness of incidents of discrimination and racism

This section explores internal perceptions of the existence of racism and the feeling of inclusion within the interviewees' respective organizations.

A. Awareness of Racism

*"The main causes are the **racist/xenophobic ideology** that prevails in the media and the **lack of a code of conduct** to stop racism."*

Interview No. 14

There is a near-unanimous **internal convergence** on the issue of awareness. **All respondents** reported having **sufficient awareness** of the existence of racism in the country, likely reflecting the human rights-focused nature of the organizations surveyed. However, the divergence is critical:

- **Broader Sector Deficit:** One respondent noted that this high level of awareness **does not extend to the broader sector of journalism**, citing common negative media terminology (e.g., using the term "invasion" when referring to migration flows).
- **Analysis Depth:** Another point of divergence is that while awareness of *racist incidents* exists, a deeper analysis of **structural or systemic racism** is often missing, limiting the ability to address root causes.

B. Internal Experience and Perception of Inclusion

- **Internal Incidents:** Most organizations reported **no instances** of formal racist discrimination within their work context. A minor divergence exists where two organizations reported instances,

including one focused on exclusion and difficulty in the reporting process of such incidents.

- **Valued Workers:** All 18 respondents **converged** on the belief that all workers feel respected and valued within their respective organizations, suggesting a highly positive internal self-assessment of the working culture.

C. Commentary

The analysis noted that most organizations claimed no internal incidents of racism but were aware of the broader societal issue. Desktop research shows that the level of structural and institutional racism is so severe that it likely inhibits victims from reporting, which could explain the lack of *reported* internal incidents within Media organisations themselves.

- **Racist Policing and Impunity:** Recent UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (UNCERD) reports (2024) confirm serious concerns about racially motivated police violence, ethnic profiling, and excessive use of force, particularly against Roma and non-citizens (migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees).
 - **Barriers to Justice:** UNCERD also expressed concern about the low level of reporting of hate crimes and racial discrimination due to victims' lack of trust in law enforcement and a widespread fear of reprisals. This institutional failure means that discrimination is often hidden or unaddressed, confirming the interviewees' belief that racism is not recognized as a structural problem by state institutions.
- Awareness within human rights and civil society organizations is high, driven by direct documentation, however the data points to a systemic lack of recognition of the problem by state and political actors:
- Frequent Racist Violence: The Racist Violence Recording Network (RVRN) consistently documented numerous incidents of racist violence, primarily targeting migrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers. The number of incidents recorded through victim interviews includes:
 - 143 incidents against immigrants/refugees in 2013 (out of 166 total).
 - 74 incidents targeting migrants/refugees in 2018 (out of 117 total).
 - 89 incidents targeting migrants/refugees in 2023 (out of 158 total).
 - State Official Involvement: Refugees, asylum seekers, and Roma remain victims of frequent hate speech, which at times involves politicians and even state officials (2022 ECRI Report). The UN Committee has also expressed concern over reports of hate speech by politicians and the lack of information on investigations and convictions of these public figures (2024 UNCERD Report).
 - Institutional Failure: The reports of Greek Ombudsman (as a mechanism for the monitoring of arbitrary incidents - EMIDIPA) show a consistent identification of cases involving racist motives or discrimination in arbitrary incidents:
 - 40 such cases were identified in 2021.
 - 28 cases were identified in 2022.
 - 26 cases were identified in 2023.

- Lack of Condemnation and Impunity:
Despite the acknowledgment by Greek authorities of the need to fight racism, there is often widespread impunity for acts of hate speech and insufficient official condemnation (2015 ECRI Report).

2. The cultural and media context: themes, methods and voices in the narrative on migration

This section explores the relationship between migration, racism, and its portrayal in the external media landscape.

Dominant Narratives and Media Focus

*“The issues on which narratives focus are **crime, the ‘burden’ on the economy and public health, and the ‘burden’ on social cohesion.**”*

Interview No. 10

*“The main narratives are that of the **‘migrant threat’** and the **‘security narrative’**”*

Interview No. 18

- **Convergence on Negative Stereotypes**

There is universal agreement among respondents that **the media overwhelmingly relies on stereotypes of threat and burden when covering migrants and refugees.** These narratives are consistently identified as three-fold: **Association with crime and delinquency;** Portrayal as a **security or cultural threat or an “invasion”;** and Framing as an **economic burden on the state.**

This consensus shows that the media’s focus is generally narrowed and negative, often reduced to the **“crisis” aspect of migration,** focusing on crime, security, and borders.

- **Invisibility and Marginalization of Voices**

Another area of universal agreement is **the invisibility or marginalization of the voices of people of foreign origin in media narratives.** These individuals are rarely given a voice, particularly when discussing positive subjects or when sought out in roles as experts or active citizens. Their perspective is overwhelmingly absent from mainstream discourse.

- **Divergence on Framing and Visibility**

Interestingly, a point of differentiation from other responses was the explicit identification of the **“National Security Framing”.** This finding highlights that the “national security” framework is **actively used by state actors to justify deterrence policies, which the media then adopts and amplifies.** This suggests that the negative media narratives are often driven by state-level political discourse.

Regarding visibility, one respondent noted a slight, but unequal, increase in visibility compared to the past. **While there may be a marginal increase in the presence of foreign voices, it was emphasized that these voices are not heard equally to those of native Greek voices,** confirming that fundamental power imbalances persist even when attempts at inclusion are made.

A. Reporting on Racism and Communication Strategy

*“It is reported rarely and occasionally, treated as **‘isolated incidents’**, not as a structural problem.”*

Interview No. 7

The primary findings show a **strong convergence** among respondents that **racism is generally NOT recognized or reported as a structural, systemic problem** in the mainstream Greek Media. Instead, it is typically addressed as an **isolated incident** - such as a specific racist attack or offensive comment - which ultimately limits the public's understanding of its systemic nature within society.

A **divergence** was noted regarding the **degree of recognition**. A minority of respondents highlighted that while the media may ignore or fail to cover structural racism, they *do* recognize and report on the **extreme and violent forms of racism**.

Furthermore, there is a **strong majority agreement** on a significant **deficit in the ability to define effective communication strategies** and alternative anti-racist narratives. This suggests that organizations and advocates struggle to create messages that can successfully counter the dominant, negative media narratives.

However, a **nuanced divergence** presents a different perspective. This argument suggests that the problem is **not in the quality of the alternative narratives themselves**, but rather in the **ability to transmit or disseminate** these messages effectively to and through the mainstream media landscape. In this view, the obstacle is less about message crafting and more about securing the necessary media access and visibility to challenge established narratives.

B. Good Practices and Interventions

*"There is a deficit that can only be resolved with **continuous and updated training**, as well as with **specialized/aware professionals** in a broader context."*

Interview No. 5

Good practices cited generally originate from the non-traditional media and civil society sectors, which include:

- **Training and Toolkits:** Programs to train journalists and the creation of media toolkits.
- **Personal Stories:** Focused efforts on showcasing personal stories and counter-narratives.

Key proposed interventions put forward by the interviewees to fill the communication deficit include **continuous, updated training** and, most critically, the **inclusion of immigrants and people of foreign origin in the decision-making structures** of organizations and media outlets.

Desktop research strongly reinforces the analysis of the Media's negative framing, while adding the context of Media vulnerability in Greece.

- **Securitization and Doublespeak:** Reports confirm that migration is highly politicized and increasingly **securitised**. Politicians often employ "**strategic doublespeak**," where humanitarian language is used to justify exclusionary policies and restrictive measures (GNCHR 2023, Serafis et al. 2023). This directly feeds the Media narrative identified by interviewees, which frames the issue as one of **national security** and protection of borders.

- **Racialized and Gendered Framing:** Media analysis shows that young male migrants, particularly those from Africa and the Middle East, are **disproportionately depicted as threats**, while women and children are often cast as “deserving” victims (Papadopoulos 2022, Maroukis & Skleparis, 2018). This selective compassion reinforces restrictive border controls that primarily target men.
- **“US vs. THEM” Discourse:** Research confirms that Greek Media utilizes an **“US” versus “THEM” discourse**, often classifying perpetrators of crimes based on their nationality and portraying multiculturalism as a threat (Serafis et al. 2023, GNCHR 2023, ENAR Shadow Report 2011).
- **Media Freedom Context:** It should be highlighted that Greece continues to be ranked poorly for press freedom in the EU. Journalists operate in a hostile environment, facing state-ordered surveillance, government interference, and abusive lawsuits (**SLAPPs**) (HRW 2023). This hostile environment provides a structural explanation for *why* mainstream Media avoids challenging the government’s narrative or recognizing racism as a structural issue - it is a matter of professional security.

Overall, the data confirms that the media and public sphere are dominated by negative, stereotypical, and securitized narratives. The problem of racism, intolerance, and discrimination has historically been particularly acute towards the Roma population, Albanians and other

immigrants, and the Muslim minority (2000 ECRI Report). The narratives often centre on an aggressive rhetoric about migrants receiving **better treatment** from welfare authorities; Refugees and migrants being presented as a **threat to national sovereignty**; and a perpetuated **myth of higher rates of criminality** among the migrant population, which is promoted through social media (2023 ENAR Shadow Report).

Hate speech in particular has become a significant issue in the Greek online public sphere, often exhibiting **racism, anti-immigrant sentiment, and nationalism**. A 2024 study in fact notes the **normalization of discriminatory speech** in the digital landscape (2024 Tsirbas & Zirganou-Kazolea). Communication professionals and media practitioners, according to another study, **produce hate speech content both intentionally, to gain visibility and unintentionally due to their inability to recognize it** (2023 Cochliou *et al.*).

Furthermore, the rise in anti-migrant hate and violence has been linked to **xenophobic and anti-immigrant sentiment** fuelled by the financial crisis, with far-right political figures declaring a “civil war with immigrants” (2014 ENAR Shadow Report). Yet while public opinion registers **persistently negative attitudes** toward immigration, the voices of migrants and refugees themselves remain largely invisible in the mainstream media narrative, which prefers to focus on securitization and crime.

3. The prevention policies and the production of alternative (or generative) narratives

This section details the proactive measures organizations take to ensure inclusivity and promote diverse communication practices.

A. Fostering Dialogue and Cultural Recognition

*"We believe that there is no need for special policies, because **inclusion and acceptance are core values** for us that we put into practice."*

Interview No. 4

The responses to the interviews reveal that prevention relies on operationalizing equality and communication.

- **Dialogue and Mutual Understanding:** The common approach put forward is the integration of diverse individuals into everyday operational life - **equal participation in discussions, shared projects, and open communication channels**. The Greek Forum of Migrants stands as a clear divergence, where dialogue between different communities is their **core, structural mandate**.
- **Cultural Commitment:** All respondents showed a **strong, explicit commitment** to recognizing and valuing diverse individual and cultural backgrounds, frequently formalized within **codes of conduct** or mission statements.
- **Inclusive Language:** There is a **strong convergence** among the participants that they consciously use 'inclusive' and non-discriminatory language in both internal and external communications.

B. Training and Education

Based on the content of the 18 interviews, the responses to question (m)—"Are training sessions and workshops on equal opportunities and the prevention of all forms of discrimination planned within your workplace?"—reveal a diverse range of practices across the organizations, from active, continuous training to a complete absence of such programs, often due to perceived lack of necessity or financial constraints. More specifically:

Limited or Absent Training (Majority View)

- The findings indicate that the **majority** of interviewed organizations either have **limited training capacity** or believe **no training is necessary**, accounting for 16 out of 18 total responses:
- **Limited Training (according to 8 respondents):** A significant number of organizations hold or plan training sessions, but their **frequency is severely limited**. The primary reason cited for this limitation is a **lack of financial resources**. Often, the organization only participates in external programs, such as those that are **European-funded**, indicating an inability to sustain internal, continuous training efforts.
- **No Training Planned (according to 8 respondents):** An equal number of organizations stated that **no such training is planned or deemed necessary**. The most common reasons for this absence of effort are related to the nature of the organization itself. For instance, the organization might be a **human rights**

organization that already provides this kind of training externally, or they simply **presume that a non-discriminatory environment already exists** internally, therefore negating the need for specific educational intervention.

Continuous Training (Minority View)

Only a small minority of **two respondents** report that they have a robust and ongoing commitment to education. These organizations confirm that training, seminars, and workshops on equal opportunities and discrimination are **planned, held, and/or represent a continuous process of learning and self-improvement**. This minority group represents the only instances where anti-discrimination education is viewed as an **integral and sustained part of professional development**.

3.1 Media and civil society organisations: comparing strategies

Having completed an analysis of the responses provided by the interviewees, it is important to expand more on the deficit in communication strategy for alternative narratives which is contextualized by significant state pressure on the civil society organizations (CSOs) that champion these narratives.

Since 2019, the Greek government has adopted a **hostile narrative against migration NGOs**, including accusations of “deep and dark networks of NGO interests.” This has been followed by the establishment of a restrictive legal framework for NGO registration, which CSOs have legally

challenged for breaching fundamental rights. This governmental action limits the capacity, funding, and public trust in the primary actors responsible for producing counter-narratives. The data indicates that in Greece civil society organizations (CSOs) are the primary drivers of anti-racist action, while media and state efforts are either insufficient or actively hostile, a trend that needs to be significantly altered.

- **CSO Strategy (Documentation and Advocacy):** CSOs, particularly the **RVRN** (a key source of this data), implement the crucial strategy of **documenting racist violence** through victim interviews. Other NGOs have been commended for their work in support of migrants (2022 ECRI Report).
- **State/Media Deficits:**
 - The state has been criticized for **not implementing a specific policy** in combating discrimination and for not providing measures to inform citizens or train judges/police (2011 ENAR Report).
 - An initiative like the **Idomeni Charter** by the Association of Daily Newspaper Editors was established to monitor misinformation, but as one interviewee notes, its effectiveness has in practice **faded**.

3.2. Institutional Racism

The persistence of negative media narratives is not merely a consequence of journalistic bias or a lack of training, but is **structurally reinforced by the actions of political decision-makers**. The findings from both the interviews as well as desktop research demonstrate an overwhelming consensus that racism is largely ignored

as a systemic, institutional problem, being reduced instead to isolated incidents. This omission is compounded by the explicit use of the “**national security**” **framework** by state actors to justify deterrence policies, which is then swiftly adopted and amplified by the media. By constantly *shaping* the public debate through a lens of **threat, crisis, and border control**, policy leaders effectively create the rhetorical space - and indeed, provide the justification - for treating migrants and foreigners not as citizens or residents, but as security concerns. This political framing thus **insulates institutions from accountability** and actively obscures the reality of **institutional racism** in areas like employment access and fair representation, ensuring that it remains unrecognized and unchallenged.

1. Systemic Failures in Legal Protection and Enforcement

The state has consistently failed to translate anti-discrimination laws into effective action, leading to a climate of impunity:

- **Insufficient Legal Enforcement:** Criminal law provisions are **not enforced to a sufficient extent to curb racist acts** (ECRI, 2004). Even after the adoption of Law 3304/2005 and Law 4443/2016 (prohibiting discrimination), its impact on employment for groups like Roma, Muslims in Western Thrace, and immigrants has been limited, as these groups **continue to be confronted with discrimination** (ECRI, 2009 and 2022).
- **Widespread Impunity:** There is **widespread impunity for acts of hate**

speech and an **insufficient official condemnation** of such acts, even when the incitement comes from representatives of political parties (ECRI, 2015).

- **Failure to Investigate:** The UN Committee (UNCERD, 2024) has expressed concern over the **lack of information on investigations, prosecutions, and convictions** regarding hate speech and hate crimes, particularly when involving politicians and public figures.

2. Discriminatory Practices by Law Enforcement and Arbitrary Conduct

Racist motives are detected directly within the actions of uniformed personnel, as documented by the National Mechanism for the Investigation of Arbitrary Incidents (Greek Ombudsman). The Greek Ombudsman’s reports consistently identify cases of arbitrary conduct by the Hellenic Police and Coast Guard that involve **racist motives or discrimination: 40 cases in 2021, 28 in 2022, and 26 in 2023**.

This regular documentation confirms that discrimination is embedded in the practices of law enforcement agencies (Ombudsman, 2022, 2024, 2025). On the other hand, the practice of **illegal pushbacks** - the immediate, forcible removal of people back across the border without due process - is repeatedly identified. This informal state practice constitutes a **violation of personal freedom** and non-compliance with the procedure of arrest (Ombudsman, 2022, 2024). This structural border control policy acts as an institutionalized form of discrimination against asylum seekers and irregular migrants.

3. Exclusion by Policy of Omission and Hostility to Civil Society

Institutional racism is also characterized by a deliberate policy vacuum in integration, compounded by actions against non-governmental actors. Greece has been repeatedly criticized for its long-standing failure to implement a **specific, comprehensive, and targeted integration policy** for immigrants. Existing measures are described as **fragmented and contradictory** (ECRI, 2004; ENAR, 2013). This omission results in “**equality on paper**” but not in reality for migrants and refugees (Pantazi Psatha 2024). Furthermore, the state has actively undermined the efforts of civil society, which often fills the gaps left by institutional failure. A 2020 Ministerial Decision introduced **stricter registration and operation rules for NGOs** active in migration support, placing their possibilities to assist migrants **at risk** (ECRI, 2022). This structural barrier limits the capacity of organizations to challenge institutional practices and provide alternative support. In summary, it is strongly suggested that institutional racism in Greece is a multifaceted issue encompassing legislative non-implementation, widespread abuse of power by uniformed personnel, and strategic policy decisions (or omissions) that create and sustain barriers to integration and protection for specific racialized and non-citizen groups.

3.3. Pushbacks

The issue of migration and unlawful pushbacks represents one of the most severe manifestations of institutional

racism and human rights violations in Greece. It is framed as a **securitized state policy** that overrides international law and humanitarian concerns.

1. The Securitization of Migration

The underlying institutional approach in Greece frames migration not as a humanitarian or social issue, but primarily as a **national security threat**, something the Media often leans into, as can be identified by the interviewees.

- **Political Rhetoric:** Refugees and migrants are frequently presented in political discourse and media narratives as a **threat to national sovereignty** (ENAR Shadow Report, 2023). This narrative creates public and institutional support for extreme control measures.
- **Contradiction of Principles:** This approach stands in sharp contrast to Greece’s ancient concept of *philoxenia* (hospitality to strangers). By the time of the 2015 refugee crisis, any collective positive attitude had been overshadowed by **security concerns** and the **criminalization of irregular migration** (ISD, 2021).

2. The Nature of Unlawful Pushbacks

Unlawful pushbacks are not isolated incidents but a systemic, documented practice that forms a core part of the state’s border management strategy. The reports of the Greece Ombudsman support the existence of a “**de facto general policy**” which violates the right of personal freedom and constitutes a **failure to comply with the proper**

procedure of arrest and return (Greek Ombudsman, 2022, 2024). This implies that the practice is sanctioned or, at the very least, consistently tolerated at an institutional level. It should be highlighted that the independent authority also confirms the implication of members of the Hellenic Police and the Hellenic Coast Guard in incidents with **racist motives or discrimination** (Ombudsman, 2022, 2024, 2025).

3. The Institutional Response to Pushbacks

The institutional response is characterized by denial, a lack of accountability, and a crackdown on those who challenge the practice. Despite the documentation of pushbacks, there is an **institutional lack of transparency and accountability**. The reports on the lack of information on investigations and prosecutions of arbitrary acts are relevant here, suggesting that those responsible for pushbacks often act with impunity. Furthermore, the efforts of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to assist and protect migrants are actively undermined. The state's introduction of **stricter registration and operation rules for NGOs** and the **criminalization of solidarity** are seen as structural efforts to silence witnesses and critics of the pushback policy (ECRI, 2022; Human Rights Watch, 2023). This institutional hostility makes it difficult to document or challenge the policy effectively, even by the Media itself.

3.4. Anti-HRD Hate Speech

The issue of hate speech in Greece is profound, extending from online platforms to

the highest levels of political discourse, and directly fuels the pervasive hostility toward Human Rights Defenders (HRDs).

1. The Pervasiveness and Normalization of Hate Speech

Hate speech is not limited to fringe platforms; it has become a prevalent and often **normalized** element of the Greek public sphere, with clear links to politics and mainstream Media.

- **Mainstreaming of Extremism:** Studies on the Greek online public sphere highlight the **normalization of discriminatory speech** in the digital landscape (Tsirbas & Zirganou-Kazolea, 2024). This hate speech often manifests as **racism, anti-immigrant sentiment, nationalism**, and is sometimes intertwined with sexism and homophobia.
- **Political Fuel:** The data consistently points to a political root; there has been a **strong increase in the levels of incitement to racial hatred** within the context of **public discourse, including from representatives of political parties** (ECRI, 2015). This legitimizes and encourages hate speech in the wider public.
- **Targeted Groups:** The speech is consistently directed against the most vulnerable groups: **Refugees, asylum seekers, and other migrants**, as well as Roma and members of the LGBTI communities (ECRI, 2022).
- **Failure of Official Condemnation:** Despite the obvious problem, there is **insufficient official condemnation**

of hate speech, creating a climate of tolerance and impunity (ECRI, 2015). The UN Committee also noted its concern regarding the **use of racist hate speech by politicians** and the lack of accountability (UNCERD, 2024).

2. The Targeting and Criminalization of Human Rights Defenders (Anti-HRD Speech)

The hostility toward HRDs is a severe form of institutional and social hate speech, designed to silence those who challenge anti-migrant policies. HRDs and employees of organizations offering refugee support services are themselves targets of **racist violence**. The Racist Violence Recording Network (RVRN) consistently documented this:

- **In 2018:** HRDs were victims in **7 incidents** of racist violence (RVRN, 2019).
- **In 2019:** HRDs were targeted in incidents due to their **connection with refugees and migrants** (RVRN, 2020).
- **In 2020 and 2021:** They continued to be targets, alongside the shelters and facilities they provide (RVRN, 2021, 2022).

Furthermore, the most significant form of anti-HRD speech is the **aggressive rhetoric and crackdown** by state actors. The Greek government's narrative has included claims of "deep and dark networks of NGO interests" (ENAR Shadow Report, 2023). This has manifested in the **criminalization of solidarity**, as noted in reports documenting law enforcement abuse and the failure to protect the rights of asylum

seekers (Human Rights Watch, 2023); and **Ministerial Decisions** introducing stricter registration and operation rules for NGOs, which jeopardizes their ability to function and is perceived as an institutional attempt to silence critics of state policy, especially concerning pushbacks (ECRI, 2022). Finally, the issue is not just individual bigotry, but a **systemic problem where politicians and state institutions fail to condemn or actively participate in hate speech**, particularly against migrants and Roma. This hostile environment then creates a double bind for Human Rights Defenders: they are targeted by racist violence from citizens while simultaneously facing institutional pressure and criminalization from the state for their work.

4. Proposals and Recommendations

The previous section demonstrated the context within the Greek Media is operating. The Media can play a crucial role in reversing the narratives recorded through an internal reflection and restructuring. Recommendations and proposals put forward through the 18 interviews, primarily fall into three interconnected areas: institutional and professional reform, strategic communication for anti-racism, and increasing the visibility and power of racialized groups:

1. Mandatory Professional Development and Training

The most frequent and concrete recommendation across the interviews is

the need for **systematic and mandatory training** for media professionals. This is seen as the primary mechanism to combat underlying prejudice and structural bias.

- **Mandatory Seminars:** There is a specific proposal for **mandatory seminars** for all members of professional bodies, such as the Association of Daily Newspaper Journalists (ESHEA), focusing on non-discrimination and human rights (Interview 8).
- **Continuous, Updated Training:** The need is stressed for **continuous and updated training** of journalists and media professionals on human rights issues, anti-discrimination principles, and the political context of migration (Interviews 2, 6, 18).
- **Addressing Internal Culture:** Training is also recommended to combat **exclusion, discrimination, and “macho” perceptions** in the internal functioning of media organizations (Interview 16).

2. Structural and Policy Changes in Media and State

Interviewees proposed changes at an institutional and legislative level to enforce inclusion and accountability in recruitment and reporting.

- **Legal Framework for Diversity:** One proposal suggests the introduction of a **legal framework for recruitment based on diversity criteria** to overcome the racial/racist profile of employers (Interview 13).
- **Codes of Conduct:** Implementing a robust **code of conduct** is recommended

to stop racism and guide media behaviour (Interview 14), with one organization noting a previous faded initiative (Idomeni Charter) that needs to be revived.

- **Challenging Xenophobic Policies:** Interviewees implicitly or explicitly recommend countering the dominant state narrative that frames migration as a “**national security**” issue (Interview 2) and ensuring critical reporting, such as **cross-referencing Coast Guard announcements** instead of uncritical publication (Interview 12).
- **Increased Transparency:** The media should make an effort to **publicize the reports** and observations of organizations and international bodies on racism in Greek society, which are often systematically avoided (Interview 17).

3. Overhauling Communication Strategy for Anti-Racist Activism

A significant portion of the recommendations put forward by the interviewees focuses on fixing the “deficit” in the anti-racist space’s ability to communicate effectively and promote alternative narratives.

- **Strategic Planning:** Organizations must abandon the belief that “*the truth speaks for itself*” and instead **strategically plan their narratives** (Interview 13). This requires a shift from reactive to **proactive planning** (Interview 17).
- **Unified and Coherent Messaging:** There is a call for the anti-racist space to create a **unified front** that will consistently promote alternative narratives, correcting

the current fragmentation (Interview 9).

- **Simplifying Discourse:** The anti-racist discourse must be made **less complex and theoretical** to find the necessary tools to reach a **wider audience** (Interview 10).
- **Securing Funding and Organization:** The deficit is linked to a **lack of organization and funding**, suggesting a critical need for structural investment in communication efforts (Interview 14).

4. Empowering the Voices of Racialized Groups

A recurring theme amongst those interviewed is the need to shift control of the narrative to the people who are directly affected by the issues. Proposals include:

- **Substantial Participation:** Ensuring the **substantial participation of migrants and refugees themselves** in the presentation of their stories is key, moving beyond the narrative of “voiceless victims” (Interview 5).
- **Access to Decision-Making:** A crucial factor for change is the **participation of immigrants themselves in decision-making structures** (Interview 1).
- **Focus on Contribution:** New narratives should highlight the **positive aspects and contributions** of immigrants to Greek society to counter the dominant narrative of ‘burden’ or ‘threat’ (Interview 4).

The above recommendations and proposals are highly significant and could be reinforced by the specific findings of the desktop research, which also seek to address the structural issues identified in the interviews:

- **Protect and Fund Civil Society:** Authorities must stop the hostile narrative and regulatory crackdown on migration NGOs. (2015 ECRI Report; 2022 ECRI Report). CSOs need **sustained funding, legal protection**, and opportunities to contribute to policymaking to effectively function as a **counterforce** to divisive narratives.
- **Ensure Media Freedom:** Steps must be taken to address the hostile environment for journalists, including protecting them from state surveillance and abusive lawsuits (SLAPPs), as a free and secure press is essential for critical reporting that can recognize and challenge structural racism.
- **Enforce Non-Discrimination in Labour:** Focused efforts are needed to address persistent discrimination in the labour market, ensuring effective remedies for victims of employment discrimination, particularly those from vulnerable groups like immigrants. The Greek authorities must develop a **comprehensive and targeted integration policy** for immigrants, including providing **Greek language classes, access to education, and employment** (2004 ECRI Report; 2009 ECRI Report). Greece is still **lacking an inclusive National Plan** for integration (Pantazi-Psatha 2024).
- **Address State Actor Involvement:** Effective measures are needed to ensure that **politicians and state officials** who engage in hate speech are investigated, prosecuted, and convicted (2024 UNCERD Report).

Conclusions

The MILD research for Greece, synthesizing qualitative interviews with media and civil society professionals alongside extensive desktop research, confirms the detrimental role of the media ecosystem in perpetuating discrimination and the marginalization of migrant, refugee, and racialized groups. The findings of the present report underscore a critical disjuncture between internal organizational commitment to non-discrimination among interviewed professionals and the hostile external environment that is shaped and amplified by mainstream public discourse.

The study shows that the Greek Media landscape is overwhelmingly dominated by negative, stereotypical, and securitized narratives. Migrants and refugees are systematically framed not as individuals or citizens, but as a collective “**threat**” to national security, the economy, or cultural identity. This is often achieved through recurrent, sensationalist reporting that links these groups to crime and delinquency.

A crucial element of this detrimental narrative is the consistent failure by mainstream Media to recognize racism as a **structural or institutional problem** within Greek society, instead treating it as a series of isolated incidents. This dangerous omission is further complicated by the fact that media terminology frequently mirrors and reproduces the stereotypical and racist discourse of political actors, effectively granting media outlets “*the freedom to follow the same terminology*” without ethical challenge.

The media sector suffers from structural

inaccessibility for people of foreign origin. The problem of **invisibility persists**, as the voices and experiential narratives of migrants and refugees are rarely included or heard in stories that directly concern them. This exclusion is sustained by systemic barriers, including a perceived requirement for “*perfect knowledge of the Greek language*” and discriminatory attitudes from some employers.

The Media’s portrayal of migrants as security threats underpins systemic state abuses, including unlawful pushbacks that violate human rights. Reports by the Greek Ombudsman highlight ongoing arbitrary actions and racist motives in the Hellenic Police and Coast Guard, indicating institutional discrimination. Human Rights Defenders are also targeted and criminalized for opposing anti-migrant policies, facing racist violence as a result.

Addressing the systemic challenges in Greece requires comprehensive, multi-layered intervention targeting both state practices and Media ethics. The proposals developed within this report focus on establishing accountability and building genuine capacity for inclusive reporting.

- 1. Mandatory Professional Training:** The most urgent recommendation remains the implementation of systematic, mandatory training and seminars for journalists and Media professionals on human rights, non-discrimination, and ethical reporting to correct underlying biases and challenge the normalization of racist terminology.
- 2. Ensure Media Freedom and Accountability:** Steps must be taken

to address the hostile environment for journalists, including protecting them from state surveillance and abusive lawsuits (SLAPPs), as a free and secure press is essential for critical reporting that can recognize and challenge structural racism. Effective measures are also needed to ensure that politicians and state officials who engage in hate speech are investigated, prosecuted, and convicted.

3. Promote Alternative Narratives:

Support for alternative and independent Media models (e.g., *Solomon, Reporters United*) should be supported and replicated for their good practice in showcasing personal stories and counter-narratives that increase visibility and challenge stereotypes. Furthermore, the Media must be encouraged to publicize critical reports from human rights organizations and international bodies

that expose structural racism, rather than systematically avoiding them.

Ultimately, for the Greek public sphere to align with EU and constitutional principles of equality, the Media must transition from an agent of securitization and stereotyping to a critical, transparent, and inclusive platform that actively recognizes and challenges all forms of structural discrimination.

Finally, it should be noted that while the present report aims to serve as an advocacy tool and a comprehensive synthesis of the challenges facing migrant and racialized communities in the Greek Media, future research is still necessary for effectively addressing the issues put forward in the report that will require a more direct and extensive qualitative investigation into the mainstream Media's editorial boards and journalistic culture to better understand the structural impediments from the inside out.

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1. Interviews framework



Semi-structured interview grid

PERSONAL DATA

What gender do you identify with?

1. Female
2. Male
3. Non-binary
4. I prefer not to define myself

What is your or your family's country of origin?

How old are you?

1. 18-30
2. 31-45
3. 46-60
4. 61-75

QUESTIONS

1. Commitment and accessibility

- Within your professional context, are there any foreigners or people of foreign origin?
- How does the organisation where you work promote equal opportunities and the presence of foreigners and people of foreign origin?
- Do you think there is a problem with the access of foreigners, people of foreign origin or people with a migrant background to the journalistic profession? If so, what do you think are the main causes?
- Within your professional context, are there policies which facilitate access to the profession for foreigners or persons of foreign origin?
- Have specific interventions been promoted to prevent/counteract hate speech on the social platforms of the organisation/media where you work?
- Could you describe 3 actions that contribute to a non-discriminatory working environment?

2. Knowledge and awareness

- Do you think there is sufficient awareness in your work environment about the existence of racism in our country and how this can affect information?
- Have you been informed about any instances of racist discrimination within your work context?
- In your opinion, do all workers of your organisation feel respected and valued, regardless of their background or reference?

3. Prevention policies

- How does your newspaper/organisation actively foster dialogue and mutual understanding between employees of different national origins? What is your newspaper/organisation's commitment to recognizing and valuing different individual and cultural backgrounds?
- In your opinion, does your organisation use 'inclusive' and non-discriminatory language in its internal communication? And in external communication?
- Are training sessions and workshops on equal opportunities and the prevention of all forms of discrimination planned within your workplace?

4. The cultural and media context

- Looking at the media landscape, what are, in your opinion, the narratives that feed stereotypes towards migrants, refugees and people with a migration background?
- What are the issues on which media narratives about migrants, refugees and racialised groups in general tend to focus? What are the most recurrent stereotypical narratives? Is there anything new compared to the past?
- Does the problem of invisibility of the voices of foreigners or people of foreign origin in media narratives persist in your opinion?
- Do you have information regarding possible good practices that may be promoted by traditional media, anti-racist movements and civil society organizations about monitoring and addressing misinformation and producing alternative narratives of migrants, refugees and racialized groups?

Free to decide if making the following questions only to antiracist activists and alternative media

- How much and how is racism reported in the mainstream media? Is it recognised as a structural problem?
- In your organisation and more generally in the world of antiracist activism, is there or is there not a deficit in the ability to define effective communication strategies and relevant alternative narratives? If yes, how could one concretely intervene to fill this deficit?

2. Anonymised List of Interviewees

1. Media/Activist, ORIZONTES and Journalist at DOCUMENTO
2. Activist, Coordinator and Officer of RSA
3. Activist, Officer of HLHR
4. Activist, Executive and Communications Officer of Solidarity Now
5. Media/Activist, Director of GFM
6. Activist, President and Head of Strategy of GFM
7. Media, Journalist at EFSYN
8. Media, Journalist at KATHIMERINI
9. Media, Journalist at KATHIMERINI
10. Media, Journalist at News247
11. Media, Journalist at IN.GR
12. Media, Member of the Board and Journalist at SOLOMON
13. Media, Journalist at SOLOMON
14. Media, Journalist at OMNIATV
15. Media, Journalist at EPOHI and DNEWS, Producer at StreetRadio
16. Media, Journalist at EFSYN
17. Activist, ASANTE
18. Media, Journalist and Communications Consultant at Athens Agency of News



Media, Migration and Race in Greece. Access Barriers and Representation of Foreigners is realised within the **Mild** – More correct Information Less Discrimination project. MILD promotes the production of more accurate media coverage of migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and racialised people through research, training and communication activities. The report offers an analysis of the forms of stereotyping, discrimination and racism present in the media and policies to date, with a view to promoting accurate information about racialised people and/or those with a migrant background.



INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTATION CENTRE

on Racism, Ecology, Peace and Non-Violence

ANTIGONE – Information and Documentation Center on Racism, Ecology, Peace and Non-Violence” (ANTIGONE) is a non-profit organization that has been active in issues related to racism and discrimination, human rights, ecology, peace and non-violent conflict resolution since 1993. ANTIGONE develops actions aiming at ensuring the equal participation of all without any discrimination due to gender, “race”, ethnic or social origin, disability, color, religion, age, sexual orientation, etc. With a focus on solidarity and immediate activation, it seeks to contribute to the creation of appropriate conditions for all people to take an active role in the fields of social, economic and cultural life. Also, the main goal of the organization is to inform and raise awareness of the wider community on issues of non-discrimination, human rights, social ecology, non-violence and multiculturalism.

Info: <https://www.antigone.gr/en/category/news-en/>



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