DELIVERABLE D9.1
COMMUNICATION & DISSEMINATION PLAN AND COMMUNICATION OUTPUTS

July 2024

PROJECT OVERVIEW

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This deliverable contains original unpublished work except where clearly indicated otherwise. Acknowledgement of previously published material and of the work of others has been made through appropriate citation, quotation, or both.

HISTORY OF CHANGES

Version	Date	Change	Page
1	12/07/2024		

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Introduction

The deliverable D9.1 Communication & Dissemination Plan and Communication outputs includes activities that are delivered at different moments in the project. In the first half of 2025, the FAiR consortium has delivered seven op-eds.

Deliverable 9.1, Task 9.6 Public Engagement, calls for 14 op-eds or interviews. As of 31 July, the FAiR consortium has produced 7 opinion pieces published in Italian media, by Professor Maurizio Ambrosini from the University of Milan. Below is the 5th translated opinion piece, along with their original publishing link, as well as the English translated link to the FAiR website.

Opinion: Migrants. The pseudo-solution of third countries and the real alternatives to returns

Originally posted in Italian news: La pseudo-soluzione dei Paesi terzi e le vere alternative ai rimpatri (avvenire.it) - Translated via Google Translate.

by Maurizio Ambrosini, University of Milan, FAiR Consortium partner

Friday, May 17, 2024

There are 15 EU countries – including Italy – that are attacking the European Commission asking for "new measures" to stem arrivals, even with "unconventional" solutions. The letter, sent yesterday to Brussels, expressly indicates the agreements with Turkey, Tunisia and the Italy-Albania agreement as virtuous cases and goes so far as to evoke a sort of Rwanda model for repatriations. The EU executive confirmed that it had received the document but specified that it will "need time" to study the text, which is "complex" and full of ideas.

After celebrating the EU's new Pact on Migration a month ago as a historic turning point and an agreement capable of balancing reception and border protection, a large group of EU governments must have changed their minds. They are no longer so sure that the many pages on repatriation (mentioned more than 90 times in the text) will achieve the desired effect. So they felt the need to put pen to paper on additional demands. From a political point of view, the enlargement of the team of sovereignists without hesitation is striking: in addition to the usual Eastern European governments, Austria and Greece, which have been following the former Visegrad group for some time, we find two small island states in the Mediterranean (Cyprus and Malta), the Netherlands, which is increasingly less welcoming, and two Scandinavian countries that have abandoned their tradition of humanitarian commitment: Denmark, more recently Finland, after the last elections saw a national-populist affirmation. Italy is therefore in good company, but misaligned with its major continental partners.

The imminence of the European elections throws more fuel on the fire of exploiting the difficult issues of migration policies, for the purpose of gathering consensus on the line of closure. On the whole, a European Union is being designed that is geared towards reducing the reception of refugees, but divided between those who maintain a certain attachment to humanitarian values and those who have elevated the defence of borders to an unbreakable principle. In this perspective, repatriations have become something of an obsession for several governments. They realize that their promises to combat unwanted immigration are shattered by the low capacity to turn away migrants affected by deportation orders: in Italy, just 4,304 in 2022. What governments do not say is that there are several factors at play: the difficulty of accurately identifying the persons concerned and their country of origin, the little or no cooperation of many of these countries, the situations of danger, denial of fundamental rights, misery that they

would face, as well as the high costs of detention and deportation. Expelling people, especially to places as far away as China or Latin America, with their police escort, costs thousands of euros, taken away from other jobs that are perhaps more important for citizens.

Hence the attempt to respond to the problem with pseudo-solutions such as these: dumping the migrants you would like to deport to third countries, when you are unable to repatriate them. Anyone who has a modicum of sensitivity to human rights should ask themselves what is the point of sending a person to a country with which they have no relationship, whose language they do not know, where they would not know how to make a living. Perhaps, as in the case of the British agreement with Rwanda or the Italian agreement with Albania, the tenuous expectation is to exert a deterrent effect on the departures. More likely, to make the public believe that they have the solution to the problem at hand by showing determination.

However, it is legitimate to ask whether alternatives to this pseudo-rigorist line can be identified. Without pretending to sell simple solutions to complex problems, one can invoke the need for manpower and thus the pragmatic opportunity to transfer asylum seekers with the necessary skills into the immigration channel for work. It is possible to imagine forms of sponsorship by subjects in the area who intend to take charge of the reception, bearing the costs. Then there is the instrument of assisted voluntary returns, which are currently under-funded and under-used. What is not needed are repeated proclamations that exhibit a severity that is ultimately ineffective.

Link to article on FAiR website: Opinion: Migrants. The pseudo-solution of third countries and the real alternatives to returns - Fair Return (fair-return.org)