

PRESS RELEASE

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THE IDEAL MIGRATION IS THE SAFE MIGRATION

One set of words, synonymous in recent history with catastrophes are “migration crisis”. They carry a weight which has reshaped international relations.

Various conventions related to migration have either been ignored across the world, (Hungary, Australia to name two), temporarily reformulated to tackle the “crisis” (border controls have been reinstated in many EU countries, de facto suspending the Schengen treaty on freedom of movement, or rewritten (Brexit).

By its very nature, a crisis is temporary. It is “an extremely difficult or dangerous point in a situation”, according to a definition in the Cambridge dictionary.

That “point in the situation” of migration has been critical in the past decades, with the phenomenon of economic migrants coming mostly from West Africa and moving to Western Europe via the perilous Sahara and Mediterranean Sea.

It is a bid to tackle this concern which so far has caused a minimum of [20.000 estimated deaths since 2014](#) (according to data produced by the international office of migration), the European commission has opened calls for project proposals under the AMIF fund (Asylum Migration and Integration Fund).

[IDEAL-M](#) or **Ideal migration**, sponsored by that fund is a project led by a consortium of seven partners composed of academics and non-governmental organizations active in the field of research, media and migration.

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The group has taken up the challenge to create a media campaign specifically targeting Senegal to highlight the dangers of illegal migration and the misinformation about the journey to Europe as well as the actual conditions they would find on reaching the host countries.

Research shows that racism and loneliness are among the biggest problems migrants face once in Europe.

Regine Dang, coordinator of a project on employment run by the NGO African Media Malta said that migrants suffer less from low salary than from exclusion from colleagues at work. “A migrant we placed in a restaurant as a kitchen helper quit after a month because none of his colleagues answered his cheery good mornings”, she said.

Another important aspect of the project is highlighting the potential of legal migration, an avenue that seems unlikely, yet opportunities for visas to Europe do exist. The single work permit in Malta is a possibility, the European blue card for researchers and their families or the Students and researchers Directive just to name a few.

But the information, or rather **disinformation about migration is controlled by smugglers** who operate away from the spotlight and lure young people onto what in all likelihood will be a deadly trip.

It is here that the role of the African diaspora already settled in Europe is important. They are in the front line, communicating to would-be migrants, trying to break the vicious spiral created by smugglers.

Aspiring Senegalese migrants need to know that just like the majority of rape cases occur inside families, a smuggler can be a relative, close friend or religious leader. They are merchants of death driven by money.

The team of researchers working on this initial phase of the project are from the University of the Peloponnese in Greece and the Autonomous University of Madrid. The findings from the migration mapping is the basis for the diaspora led NGOs partners in the project to build elements for the media campaign. They are Germany based Migrafrica, African Media Association Malta, Greek forum of migrants, The Providers of Social Responses To The Development in Portugal, The Hellenic Agency for Local Development and Local Government.

Started in January this year, Ideal-M runs until January 2022.

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What we aim to do. [The Project IDEAL-M](#) aims to raise awareness about the dangers of illegal migration and misinformation about the journey to Europe as well as the actual conditions when reaching the hosting countries. It will focus on Senegal as a country of origin and would assess the needs of Senegalese people when arriving in European countries, especially Germany where there is a higher concentration of people from that origin.

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