



Protect

The Right to International Protection

Deliverable 9.5 The Kick-off
Conference

Dissemination level:
Public

Lead Beneficiary: Ghent University
Co-lead Beneficiary: The University of Bergen



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D9.5 Kick-off Conference (Report)
The Consequences of the Global Refugee Compact for the Right to International Protection
9 March 2020, The Palace of the Academies
Brussels

PROTECT's kick-off conference was held on 9-10 March 2020, i.e. in Month 2 of the project as planned in the Grant Agreement. The first conference day was devoted to presenting the project to relevant stakeholders and getting feedback on how our research plans responded to their knowledge needs. The second day was planned to be without external participation because it was devoted to the internal matters of consortium management, research coordination, and research planning.

We used a variety of channels to share information about the kick-off conference, including the European Union's Cordis and EU-events services; teaser posts/videos in social media like LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook and YouTube; the PROTECT website, e-mail lists and social media channels of large international migration research networks, and our consortium partners' own means of information sharing. This ambitious conference-information-sharing effort aimed primarily to create an awareness of the existence of PROTECT, its forthcoming research, and its online information channels, rather than attracting a large lay audience to the conference. We had planned to have, and booked a venue for, a maximum of 75 participants, which included both the 26 representatives of our consortium (two persons from each partner plus the coordination office staff at UiB) and the invited stakeholders that were defined as the main target groups in our dissemination, exploitation and communication plans. We received 60 registration requests from these; the conference was attended by 36 persons, 10 of whom were not PROTECT researchers (the list of the attendees attached).

All partner universities were present at the conference on both days, but two universities could only participate online because their countries' authorities and/or their universities imposed travel restrictions because of the corona-virus situation. Participation of external audience on the first day, including those who had registered for participation, was severely affected by the worsening corona-virus spread and the increasing cases of Covid-19 in Europe.

Importantly, for the first conference day, several international organizations (e.g. UNHCR, IOM) and international NGOs (e.g. ECRE, ENAR, COMECE) were registered. UNHCR and ECRE were represented at high levels as keynote speakers on the first day. The EU institutions that we invited to the conference could not attend for two reasons: Although the Chairpersons of LIBE were interested, they could not attend because the European Parliament had their Strasbourg week. The European Commission's staff were asked not to participate in external meetings as a corona-spread prevention measure. The Commissioner for Migration and Home Affairs and the Director-General for the same policy area wished to participate on a later occasion when we will present results. An exception was PROTECT's project advisor, who was present on the second day with an informative presentation.

To make a record of the general conference atmosphere, we hired a professional videographer to film during the conference's first day. The videographer produced an 'aftervideo' in addition to videos of all sessions. *Links to videos of the conference sessions are placed below where these sessions are summarized with blue-marked texts.*

As seen in the statements by UNHCR and ECRE representatives in the [aftervideo here](#), at our kick-off day we managed to get the attention and interest of these two very important stakeholders to our project. Before the start of the project, the PROTECT's coordinator was invited by the UNHCR to the Global Refugee Forum, where he announced two pledges on behalf of the PROTECT Consortium, which were referred to by the UNHCR representative during our kick-off conference. The UNHCR and ECRE representatives had obviously studied our research plans in detail, they confirmed our project's high relevance for their work and objectives, they expressed their ideas about how they wanted to benefit from our findings, and they confirmed their wish to continue to collaborate with us in the future. As seen in the video links and session summaries below, PROTECT's research plans also received useful praise and critical evaluation from the invited external scientists.

Welcome session

[The video of the talks in the welcome session is accessible here.](#)

PROTECT's Kick-off conference opens at 13:00 at the Palace of the Academies, in Brussels. All Consortium members are represented, except two (for the aforementioned reasons), and the conference is also attended by delegation from the University of Bergen, by the PROTECT International Advisory Board, the Secretary General of ECRE Catherine Woollard, the representative of UNHCR Sophie Magennis, additional attendants from partner institutions and other public.

PROTECT Communications Coordinator, Mari Lund Eide, moderates the first welcome session: she explains how momentous the event is, expounds over the relevance of the project, welcomes and introduces the first speakers. Following this, Prof. Frank Caestecker, University of Ghent, addresses the public briefly in the role of conference organization committee leader and institutional host. Prof. Hakan G. Sicakkan, University of Bergen, Principal Investigator of PROTECT, welcomes the participants and thanks them for their involvement in the project.

Finally, Prof. Jan Oskar Engene, University of Bergen, Head of the Department of Comparative Politics, addresses a salute and introductory talk to the project partners and the public. He outlines the identity and the role of the University of Bergen, especially with regard to the UN SDGs agenda, and recalls the historical bonds between Bergen, the first High Commissioner for Refugees Fridtjof Nansen, and the making of the global refugee protection regime.

Session 1: What does the Global Compact on Refugees aim at? What will CEAS do? What will PROTECT research?

The second section opens at 13:10 and is moderated by Prof. Simon Usherwood, University of Surrey. The first speaker is Sophie Magennis, Head of Policy and Legal Affairs, UNHCR Regional Office in Brussels. Magennis expounds over what the Global Compact is, what its core values are, and what are the related challenges which will be hopefully addressed by PROTECT. [The video of Sophie Magennis' talk can be accessed here.](#)

Catherine Woollard, Secretary General of the European Council of Refugees and Exiles (ECRE), intervenes on whether "European Asylum Procedures meet the protection and burden sharing requirements of the GRC". She organizes her talk around three aspects: what the requirements of the GRC are; which of the EU political choices seem to be less coherent with them, and what would be the possible evolution in the future. [The video of Cathrine Woollard's talk can be accessed here.](#)

Prof. Hakan G. Sicakkan presents the CONSORTIUM and introduces its members. He details how the project responds to the Horizon 2020 call and how it will fulfil its expectations. He also explains the origins and aims of PROTECT, its theory, concept, methodology and main subject areas, and concludes with a condensed presentation of its research design and work packages. [The video of Hakan Sicakkan's talk can be accessed here.](#)

During the Q&A session, Prof. Elspeth Guild poses the question of how come the European governments and leaders started to "behave so badly" in the last week. The video of the extensive and very interesting observations and [answers by the UNHCR and ECRE representatives to this question can be accessed here.](#)

Session 2: Roundtable of PROTECT WP leaders

The videos of the roundtable can be accessed by pressing Ctrl-click on the WP numbers below.

The session is opened at 14:45 and moderated by Prof. Idil Atak, the Ryerson University. PROTECT Work Packages are shortly presented by Prof. Jürgen Bast, Justus Liebig University of Giessen ([WP2](#)); Prof. Frank Caestecker, University of Ghent ([WP3](#)); Prof. Christine M. Jacobsen, University of Bergen, SKOK - Center for Women and Gender Research ([WP4](#)); Prof. Simon Usherwood, University of Surrey ([WP5](#)); Dr. Pierre Van Wolleghem, University of Bergen, PROTECT Executive Scientific Coordinator ([WP6](#)); Dr. Boris Mance, University of Ljubljana and Prof. Anamaria Dutceac Segesten, Lund University ([WP7](#)).

Session 3: Exploring key issues for PROTECT

The session is opened at 15:45 and moderated by Prof. Jürgen Bast. Prof. Frank Caestecker gives a presentation on the historical roots and development of the global and European refugee governance regime, with special attention to its institutionalization during the XX century. He also stresses the changes in refugee policies by European states during last decades, and identifies their indicators and their significance. [The video of Frank Caestecker's talk can be accessed here.](#)

Prof. Kees Groenendijk, Professor Emeritus at the University of Nijmegen, intervenes on whether “lessons on implementation of international soft law on migrants and refugees” are “relevant for the implementation of the two compacts”. He analyses the issue with particular attention to the prospects of PROTECT and by drawing light from his experience as lawyer and legal scholar. Prof. Groenendijk points out the instrumentalization and asymmetries to which soft law is exposed. [The video of Kees Groenendijk's talk can be accessed here.](#)

Prof. Elspeth Guild, Queen Mary University of London, discusses the interaction between the Global Refugee and Migration Compacts by analysing the objectives of both. She criticizes the presentation of refugees in the context of “burden” rather than “opportunity”. Prof. Guild concludes by arguing that there is space to integrate both compacts into the global asylum and migration regimes as part of the commitments that states undertake. [The video of Elspeth Guild's talk can be accessed here.](#)

Session 4: Roundtable discussion: the conditions and prospects for the success of the global refugee compact

[The video of the roundtable discussion can be accessed here.](#)

The session opens at 16:30 and is moderated by Dr. Dario Mazzola, University of Bergen, Protect Executive Scientific Coordinator. The moderator contextualizes and introduces the question by noting that prima facie and in terms of numbers a well-functioning refugee regime should not be effortful to the international community, and by asking the discussants to address the issue with a view to current social and political dynamics together with insights in legal and political theory.

Prof. Kees Groenendijk reiterates his argument that the effects of the Compacts might become noticeable only in the long run and depending on circumstances, and that they can be instrumentally put to diverging if not utterly conflicting purposes by states, CSOs, migrant and refugee advocacy groups. Prof. Elspeth Guild reasserts that the Compacts are a promising instrument, for instance in expanding access to 3rd country solutions. Prof. Idil Atak notices that, despite the Compacts, refugee entry numbers are lowering, even in Canada. Prof. Jürgen Bast emphasises that the success of the Compacts should not be taken for granted, but rather it is subject to negotiations. Prof. Frank Caestecker adds that the Compacts do not impact the treatment of recognized refugees only, but also procedural rights, so that they apply to unsuccessful asylum applicants as well.

Prof. Sicakkan answers Prof. Groenendijk's informed concern by pointing to how PROTECT has planned to solve this inference problem by explaining the project's extrapolative methodology that bases its predictions on how the measures currently advised by the two Global Compacts performed in the past and the fine-grained variables which will be analysed at local and global levels by PROTECT, across its work packages.

Conclusion

The Conference ends by 17:30 as planned. In a concluding remark, Prof. Sicakkan thanks all the participants for their committed engagement with the project and summarizes the Conference, with all its lively debates and thoughtful interventions, and despite the reigning public health limitations, as a success which is well-boding to the newly inaugurated work of the Consortium.

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE GLOBAL REFUGEE COMPACT FOR THE RIGHT TO INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

○ 13.00 Welcome session

Session Moderator: PROTECT Communications Advisor Mari Lund Eide

- Frank Caestecker, Leader of the Conference Organization Committee
- Hakan G. Sicakkan, Chair of the PROTECT Consortium
- Jan Oskar Engene, Head of the Department of Comparative Politics, University of Bergen

○ 13.10 Session 1: What does the Global Compact on Refugees (GRC) aim at? What will CEAS do? What will PROTECT research?

Session moderator: Prof. Simon Usherwood, University of Surrey

- The Global Refugee Compact & the Global Refugee Forum: Achievements and Expectations
Sophie Magennis, Head of Policy and Legal Affairs, UNHCR Regional Office in Brussels
- Compatibility of the Global Refugee Compact with the objectives of CEAS
Presenter TBA, European Commission, Directorate-General Migration and Home Affairs, C.3 Asylum Unit
- Do EU Asylum Procedures meet the protection and burden-sharing requirements of GRC?
Catherine Woollard, Secretary General, European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE)
- PROTECT and the future of the right to international protection
Hakan G. Sicakkan, Professor, Principal Investigator of PROTECT

○ 14.30 Coffee, refreshments and mingling

○ 14.45 Session 2: Roundtable of PROTECT WP leaders

Session Moderator: Prof. Idil Atak, Ryerson University

- Presentations of PROTECT work packages by WP2 (Prof. **Jürgen Bast**), WP3 (Prof. **Frank Caestecker**), WP4 (Prof. **Christine M. Jacobsen**), WP5 (Prof. **Simon Usherwood**), WP6 (Dr. **Pierre Van Wolleghem**), WP7.1 (Dr. **Boris Mance**) and WP7.2 (Prof. **Anamaria Dutceac Segesten**)
- Comments by the UNHCR, EU, ECRE, PROTECT's International Advisory Board and audience

○ 15.30 Coffee, refreshments and mingling

○ 15.45 Session 3: Exploring key issues for PROTECT

Session Moderator: Prof. Jürgen Bast, Giessen University

- “Global governance, then, now and the future as foreseen in the Global Refugee Compact”, **Frank Caestecker**, Professor, Ghent University
- “Are Lessons on Implementation of International Soft Law on Migrants and Refugees relevant for the Implementation of the Two Compacts?”
Kees Groenendijk, Professor emeritus, University of Nijmegen
- “Why and how do we need to include the UN Global Migration Compact as a factor while assessing the Global Refugee Compact?”
Elsbeth Guild, Professor, Queen Mary University of London

○ 16.30 Session 4: Roundtable discussion: The conditions and prospects for the success of the Global Refugee Compact,

Session Moderator: Dr. Dario Mazzola, University of Bergen

- Moderator contextualizes and poses the question
- Short introductory answers by the UNHCR, EU, ECRE, **Prof. Kees Groenendijk**, **Prof. Elspeth Guild**, **Prof. Jo Vearey**, **Prof. Jürgen Bast**, **Prof. Idil Atak**
- Short exchanges between the roundtable participants
- The floor opens to the audience

17.30 Closure

LIST OF ATTENDEES
9 March 2020

Name - First	Name - Last	Institution, organization, affiliation
Zainab	Abu Alrob	Ryerson University
Idil	Atak	Ryerson University
Jürgen	Bast	University of Giessen
Michael	Bossetta	Lund University
Veronika	Burget	UNHCR
Frank	Caestecker	University of Ghent
Anamaria	Dutceac Segesten	Lund University
Eva	Ecker	Ghent University
Mari	Eide	University of Bergen
Rickard	Eksten	Brussels representative, Universities in South Sweden
Jan Oskar	Engene	University of Bergen
Theofanis	Exadaktylos	University of Surrey
Matthew	Gichohi	University of Bergen
Siri	Gloppen	Univeristy of Bergen
Kees	Groenendijk	University of Nijmegen
Elspeth	Guild	Queen Mary University of London
Hanne	Iglebæk Christensen	University of Bergen
Christine M	Jacobsen	University of Bergen
Janna	Wessels	Giessen University
Marry-Anne	Karlsen	University of Bergen
Alena	Koslerova	University of Bergen
Stein	Kuhnle	University of Bergen
Sophie	Magennis	UNHCR
Boris	Mance	University of Ljubljana
Dario	Mazzola	Universitetet i Bergen
Alia	Middleton	University of Surrey
Huong	Phan Thi	Free University of Brussels
Philippe-Joseph	Salazar	University of Cape Town
Lucia	Salgado Banea	UNHCR
Sara	Schmitt	University of Stuttgart
Hakan G.	Sicakkan	University of Bergen
Simon	Usherwood	University of Surrey
Pierre	VanWolleghem	University of Bergen
Catherine	Woollard	ECRE
Runa	Aarset	University of Bergen

**PROTECT General Assembly and Other Consortium Meetings
10 March 2020, The University of Bergen Brussels Office**

1. List of Participants

The following participants were present to the project's first General Assembly. Due to the breakout of the COVID-19, some participants could not reach the venue. The column "Presence R/P" indicates whether the participant was present in remote (R) or in person (P). The original list of participants and signatures cannot be provided at this stage as this document is under lock in the UiB's offices and access to offices is prohibited because of preventive measures against corona.

Last name	Name	Organization	Presence R/P
Sicakkan	Hakan G.	UiB	P
Koslerova	Alena	UiB	P
Eide	Mari	UiB	P
Høiland	Hege	UiB	R
Mazzola	Dario	UiB	P
Van Wolleghem	Pierre	UiB	P
Gloppen	Siri	UiB	P
Jacobsen	Christine	UiB	P
Karlsen	Marry-Anne	UiB	P
Christensen	Hanne	UiB	P
Aarset	Runa	UiB	P
Guild	Elspeth	QMUL	P
Bast	Jürgen	JLU	P
Wessels	Janna	JLU	P
Caestecker	Frank	UGent	P
Ecker	Eva	UGent	P
Usherwood	Simon	SURREY	P
Middleton	Alia	SURREY	P
Exadaktylos	Theofanis	SURREY	P
Longo	Francesca	UNICT	R
Barbagallo	Valentina	UNICT	R
Benadusi	Mara	UNICT	R
Panebianco	Stefania	UNICT	R
Irrera	Daniela	UNICT	R
Atak	Idil	RYERSON	P
Abu Alrob	Zainab	RYERSON	P
Mance	Boris	UL	P
Dutceac Segesten	Anamaria	LU	P
Bossetta	Michael	LU	P
Vearey	Jo	WITS	R
Heiberger	Raphael	USTUTT	R
Schmitt	Sara	USTUTT	P
Obermaier-Muresan	Andreas	EU Commission	P
Salazar	Philippe-Joseph	Cape Town University	P

2. Election of three partners to the Steering Committee (STEERCOM)

On 10th March 2020, at 9:30 a.m., the General Assembly (GA) of the EU Horizon 2020 PROTECT Project gathers in the UiB Brussels Office, rue Guimard (Guimardstraat) 9, 1000 Brussel. All members of the Consortium are present, with the exception of the University of Witwatersrand (WITS) and the University of Catania (UNICT), whose absence is due to force majeure.

In particular the following partners and deputies are present:

Prof. Hakan G. Sicakkan (UiB, Coordinator), Prof. Elspeth Guild (QMUL), Prof. Jürgen Bast (JLU), Prof. Frank Caestecker (UGent), Prof. Simon Usherwood (SURREY), Prof. Idil Atak (RYERSON), Dr. Boris Mance (UL), Dr. Anamaria Dutceac Segesten (LU), Sara Schmidt (USTUTT).

Upon inquiry with the present members, no candidature is advanced before the election in addition to those received by COROFF in the previous days.

COROFF members thus present the names of the candidates whose nominations have been received before the conference:

- **Prof. Elspeth Guild (QMUL)**
- **Prof. Frank Caestecker (UGent)**
- **Prof. Francesca Longo (UNICT)**

The General Assembly therefore agrees unanimously to elect the four aforementioned members to constitute the STEERCOM.

Furthermore, **Prof. Simon Usherwood (SURREY)** and **Prof. Idil Atak (RYERSON)** volunteer as deputies in case of unavailability of STEERCOM elected members for future STEERCOM meetings.

Prof. Hakan G. Sicakkan (UiB), as Coordinator, is the chair of the STEERCOM per Grant Agreement.

The elections close at 9:45.

3. Consortium Management

The project's Coordination Office (COROFF) presented Consortium management rules as follows:

- Consortium Structure: Dario Mazzola;
- Decision-making rules and procedures: Pierre Van Wolleghem;
- Administrative rules and procedures: Alena Koslerova;
- Communication procedures: Mari Eide;
- Financial rules and procedures: Hege Høiland.

They were followed by a question-and-answer session to allow participants to clarify possible doubts.

4. Parallel and Joint Work Packages (WP) meetings

WP2: The impacts of the GRC and GMC on the right to international protection: interactions with pre-existing legal frames of protection

The partners agreed on discussing research outlines drafted by the WP leaders.

WP3: The impacts of the GRC and GMC on the governance of international protection: institutional architectures of asylum determination

The core topic of the meeting regarded the institutional architecture of asylum determination processes, and its study from both a quantitative and qualitative perspective. The two approaches are reflected in the two deliverables D3.1 (due for M6) and D3.2 (due for M12). The question underlying both deliverables is which institutional architecture leads to recognition rates that reflect protection needs.

The first approach is quantitative (D3.1, “institutional architecture data collection grid/frame”, confidential report due by July 2020, lead beneficiary UiB). As per Grant Agreement, the institutional architecture data collection grid will follow a format provided by UiB. The data shall cover all EU member states. Data shall also be collected for Canada and South Africa; it shall also be consistent with the data collected for the EU. Peculiarities due to the contexts of Canada and South Africa may be added as long as they do not alter the main objective of the study: correlation between institutional architecture and fair asylum recognition procedure. Note that the data collection grids can be updated after delivery, but should not be substantially altered. RYERSON and WITS agreed to investigate which data are available and provided the data in the desired data format.

In the course of the meeting, the following issues arose:

- How to quantify the access to asylum procedures on the part of asylum seekers as well as the institutional architectures of refugee status determination?
- What stage of the Refugee Status Determination should be analysed (access to procedures, first instance decisions, second/last instance procedures)?

UiB has already conducted similar work in 2008 and therefore has experience on the matter. Said experience will be reflected in the deliverable.

Concerning the dependent variable, i.e. the recognition rate, it may not always be the most suitable proxy for effectiveness. Other measurements of effectiveness should be considered; such as the openness to new protection needs.

The second approach is qualitative (D3.2, “institutional architecture historical data (until 2018)”, confidential data set, due by January 2021, lead beneficiary UGent). UGent decides over the historical data collection grid of institutional architectures, in particular by selecting case studies and specifying the timespan to be covered by the analysis. UGent suggested that the focus be set on the location of agencies competent for asylum matters within the state apparatus. Research is broken down in two stages:

A first stage of the work shall consist in a description of said location in all EU member states and Canada and South Africa. The time frame to be considered is yet to be decided. RYERSON and WITS agreed with UGent on the matter.

A second stage shall consist in research on a set of case studies. The research question is thus: Does institutional location matter for the quality of the asylum agency’s eligibility decisions in terms of protecting refugees? Research shall therefore aim to:

- Identify the institution competent for asylum matters within the state apparatus (the location);
- Analyse how this location has changed over time (the timeline);
- Investigate the reasons why this institution is located there (the intention);
- Analyse the consequences of the location on the quality of asylum determination processes (the effects).

The partners involved agreed that the selection of cases to be studied can be defined after the research design is completed.

In addition, the partners involved in WP3 agreed to research on the interaction between asylum policies and immigration policies as this may have effects, both conceptually and empirically, on refugee status determination.

Due to the online participation of Catania University, which is responsible for the external policy dimension of asylum determination architectures, this dimension could not be discussed in detail. The discussion on this will continue through e-mails.

WP4: The impacts of the GRC and GMC on the governance of international protection: fieldwork studies of governance in practice

1) Timing and sites for fieldwork

- a) Examples of sites included Lesvos or Samos (Greece), Catania or Lampedusa (Italy), Cadiz or Tarifa (Spain), Menton or Marseilles (France), Musina or Komatipoort (South Africa), Ottawa or Toronto (Canada).
- b) We will conduct fieldwork twice in six selected sites:
 - i. First period of fieldwork should begin latest in October and end latest in December. Deadline for field reports from each site is early January 2021 (D4.2).
 - ii. The second period of fieldwork must be concluded by February 2022. Deadline for the first draft analysis of how networks of international, national and local actors collaborate to reduce vulnerabilities is early March 2022 (D4.3).

Decision: *The WP4 Partners agree on the following sites to carry out fieldwork: Marseille (UiB); Cadiz (UiB); Musina (WITS); Toronto (RYERSON); Messina (UNICT); Lesvos/Thessaloniki (this latter point of reception for migrants transferred from Lesvos: SURREY). All the sites for fieldwork are subject to revision in order to avoid security threats to the researchers.*

2) Common understanding:

- a) How do we approach vulnerabilities?
- b) How do we approach the impact of the GRC and GMC in the field?
- c) What do we map?
- d) Where do we do the in depth study/what do we focus on? How similar should the cases be?
- e) Collaborative methods?
- f) Other methods?

Decision:

For the in-depth study: Focus on status vulnerability and how this intersects with gender

Steps to take to build common understanding and better communication within the WP:

- create a folder to share texts to read, particularly on the question of vulnerability, and how the topic can be approached critically.

- create a shared email group (googlegroup? teams?) for communication related to this WP.

- create a 'buddy'-system for support during fieldwork, so that everyone has someone to discuss difficult practical and ethical issues that arise.

-explore possibilities to meet on skype or in person before the start of fieldwork, and during the project period. If the WP Partners flag conference participation to each other, this could be an opportunity to plan meetings.

3) Standard format for the field reports from each of the six sites

- a) Field report – how could this look like?
- b) Progress plan: Draft for the data collection frame (incl. interview guide, supporting document, ethic plan, fieldwork report program/grid (UiB), resource for collaborative method (ACMS)) sent out for comments early June 2020 (D4.1). Discussions and planning on backtalk focus groups are postponed as these will take place in the second round of fieldwork only.

Decisions: *Basic template based on this suggestion will be put in a shared folder:*

Field report:

- i. *Description of methods used (what did you do, who did you talk to (anonymized), where did you do participant observations?)*
- ii. *Mapping of relevant actors (who does what? Who funds? Who trains? How do they collaborate?)*
- iii. *Main observations (Observations should include if and in what ways the Compacts are relevant/used/referred to in the field site)*

Draft of data collection frame, including material to be used in ethical clearance application and template for field reports, sent out early June (D4.1).

WP5: The impacts of the GRC and GMC on civil societies' recognition of the right to international protection

Following UNICT's suggestion, WP5 proposes that UNICT leads on D5.1 and SURREY on D5.2. This work should be very limited to some refinement of the lists, done in coordination among the two leaders of WP5, and with a view to producing a definitive final list by September, for use in administering WP5's survey. Further discussion on the following themes may be useful:

- Transnational v. national activity
- Developing more detailed case studies in which we use WP5 interviews
- The extent of what constitutes a CSO: churches? Trade unions? Political parties?
- Do we just focus on currently-active CSOs, rather than any that might have been active earlier in the sample period?
- Language requirements for our survey

SURREY will also lead on D5.3 and will circulate a proposal once they have agreed the common core with WP6 & WP7. Initially, SURREY suggests considering the following elements:

- Actors and networks: understanding the organisational size and linkages with other bodies
- Attitudes: this would re-use the WP6 survey items (D6.1) to discuss the group position on cleavages (which we are required to consider)
- Actions: scoping of work (e.g. media, lobbying, litigation, direct support to refugees/migrants, engagement with publics, etc.) This section will also need to consider actions relating to vulnerable groups, which is again a requirement of the project

WP5 internal timetable

Within the rigid requirements of the deliverables, SURREY proposes the following schedule:

- Immediately, SURREY and UNICT to agree on scope of WP5 survey (D5.3), especially on range of CSOs and target number of surveys to be secured
- As soon as WP5 has a draft of WP6's questionnaire (draft D6.1):
 - o SURREY and UNICT to input on revisions, with WP7, on core items
 - o SURREY to circulate a draft questionnaire for D5.3
- With final WP6 questionnaire (D6.1; in May), SURREY and UNICT to discuss and finalise D5.3
- By 1st week of July 2020, deliver D5.1, D5.2 and D5.3 to UiB
- From May 2020, SURREY and UNICT to begin local ethical approval for survey and interviews, including development of an information sheet on informed consent. This will need to be secured before WP5 can begin data collection
- From June 2020, SURREY and UNICT to resolve medium-term goals:
 - o Timeline for data collection
 - o Finalisation of data analysis protocols
 - o Planning of deliverables 5.7 and 5.8, due July 2021

WP6: The impact of the GRC and GMC on the citizens' recognition of the right to international protection

UiB has agreed to share their draft of the citizen questionnaire (D6.1) with WP5 and WP7 by the end of month 3, so that WP5 have time to agree a common core of items for D5.3 with WP6 and WP7, and to which WP5 can then add their own elements. UiB will aim to have the final version with WP5 by month 4, to leave WP5 some time for finalising their version (D5.3) by month 6.

WP7: The impact of the GRC and GMC on the recognition of the right to international protection in the public sphere

As per Grant Agreement, WP7 will provide two lists of CSOs: D7.1, list of the most visible actors in national contexts from the EventRegistry platform; and D7.2, list of the most visible actors in the social media.

Question of sampling the media topic of “protection of refugees”

Analysis should offer a wider perspective on the topic, apart from focusing exclusively on the global compacts and EP elections.

Criteria applied:

- **Geography** (15 to 20 countries/languages):

Countries at the border of EU: Italy, France, Spain, Greece.

Pivot cases: Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic, Austria, UK, Germany, Sweden, Denmark.

International comparators: Canada, South Africa, USA (USA not for social media analysis as it would strongly bias the sample).

Extras: Slovenia, Netherlands, Norway.

- **Languages:**

Since the project deals with refugee protection in the receiving countries, and the inclusion of non-EU languages/countries is a matter of additional resources, these should be excluded from the analysis for the time being.

Initial time frame of the analysis: 1.1.2014 to 31.12.2018 for traditional media (responsible partner: UL), with spikes in coverage being used to gather social media data (responsible partner: LU). Commercial data (Twitter) will be acquired only for the periods where the “spikes” in traditional media appear

Keywords: wide family of terms/keywords about the topic (refugee, migrants, asylum, etc.).

Conclusion: UL makes initial sample of words and conducts the analysis of the traditional media. On basis of this social media analysis can commence.

Deliverables

Deadline for deliverables D7.1 and D7.2 is M5 (June 2020).

As the deadlines for the deliverables of WP7, WP5 and WP6 are overlapping, a discussion was initiated to optimise the analysis timing.

Conclusion: WP7 will provide lists of groups/organisations, with some metric of their prevalence in debate. LU suggested it should be easy to identify from this the major CSOs, but if we wanted the smaller bodies then we would have to give them more time, so the leaders of WP5 and WP7 agreed that the initial lists provided by WP7 leaders could be used for WP5 deliverables, but then reviewed once WP5 have made more decisions about their survey (D5.3). The initial list of CSOs participating in the refugee issue debate is derived from the analysis of traditional media. The more comprehensive list of CSO`s is to be delivered once the data cleaning of social media data is finished. On the basis of initial lists of CSOs WP5 develops a categorisation for WP7.

5. How to make PROTECT a successful project?

PROTECT’s project officer in the EU Commission, Andreas Obermaier-Muresan, presented ways to connect PROTECT with other H2020 projects as well as to increase the project’s policy relevance.

6. Plenary Work Packages (WP) meetings

WP1, WP8 and WP11

Concerning WP1, PROTECT’s theoretical framework, it is of paramount importance that all WPs explicitly display the following two dimensions in their research design:

- Vulnerability: how legislation-WP2, governance-WP3, and implementation-WP4- address vulnerable refugee groups;
- Political cleavages – especially in WP3, WP4, WP5, WP6, and WP7 – have to be part of the research design. The one question that WP2 has already thought to pose in the expert fora will help identify cleavages in WP2 as well.

Concerning WP8, the design of this WP will depend on the designs / results of the other WPs. It is therefore necessary to wait until the end of the project's first year to proceed with its design.

The deliverables from the WP11 Ethics workpackage will be provided as planned. Partners will be informed by the coordinator in due time. No other comments were made on the timeline presented for WP11.

WP9

Concerning WP9, the participants agreed on the following: SURREY is preparing a set of shared documents to capture dissemination and engagement activity, which includes a blog rotation. SURREY and UiB will prepare necessary tools for partners that they can lean on when planning dissemination activities, such as guide to making video blog. In addition to a dissemination overview, UiB will make the communication plan and strategy available on the intranet, and gather links to Protect's communication channels, such as website and social media. UiB will also create a stakeholder repository that partners are encouraged to add to: it will be made available on the intranet. Microsoft Teams has been chosen as an apt and secure intranet platform for internal communication and collaboration, information sharing and file storing for the Protect Consortium.

7. International Advisory Board (INTBOARD)

The INTBOARD intervenes at the General Assembly meeting. It is represented on this occasion by Professor Philippe-Joseph Salazar, Distinguished Professor in Rhetoric, at the Faculty of Law, the University of Cape Town, South Africa. What follows is a non-literal summary of Prof. Salazar's extremely rich, insightful, and provocative intervention. After having participated to the Conference, and having observed it attentively, Prof. Salazar puts forward five points to the attention of PROTECT's General Assembly: Prof. Salazar opens his comments by recalling the presentation given by the Commission's Project Adviser, Dr. Andreas Obermaier, where it was made explicit to the Consortium that the Commission expected the Consortium to analyze "discourses", in order to help the Commission frame a "common asylum policy".

1) Discourse of self-perceived position of power: It is first of all interesting to notice how the Funding Agency expects most of the discourses to crystallize in the form of outcomes. From the discourses listened to so far, a self-perceived position of power seems to transpire. Many discourses have a binary form: we/the policymakers, thus setting academics on the same level of the latter, but almost in alternative if not opposition to them. This obscures the fact that they – the policymakers – have attended the same schools as us – researchers. The critique advanced to the policymakers and to the general public reinforces this self-endowment with power: this is evident when the public is criticized for its "maritime psychosis", for instance. The public – European citizens – is thus characterized as lacking knowledge: they have myths, psychoses, we (experts) are scientific, we speak "the truth". Also, politicians are tactical – they respond to emergencies – we are strategic. An interesting – yet not unproblematic – way of perceiving the issue. There might rather be a lack of self-criticism: critiques addressing ourselves might be necessary.

2) Discourse of democratic displacement: Citizens are thus voiced in a critical way: sovereign citizens of the EU are treated and represented in terms of "public attitude", "public opinion". Perhaps the question of sovereignty should also be raised. These citizens are sovereign. They are not giving their mere opinion: they are constituting their politics in a democratic way. The call made to resort to "gurus" in order to "dominate the narrative" further entrenches the displacement of sovereignty and places it into the hands of experts in communication.

3) Discourse of uncritical tropes: Rhetoric tropes, or “taken-for-granted” (Thomas B. Farrell) cast light on the presuppositions of a discourse. These are often floating signifiers, such as “burden-sharing”. Here, despite criticizing the rhetoric of politics, the assumption seems to be shared with the politicians: the only difference is that it is a solidary or fair “burden-sharing” that is sought for. Yet the term evokes the “white man’s burden” of Western imperialism from bygone days. Why speaking of “burden” rather than, say, of generosity, or even more radically, of love? Why not talking about the generosity and the love of the European and Western Citizens toward the migrants and refugees they welcome? Why not declaring a “differend” (Lyotard) and forge our own Consortium glossary in order to better achieve the aims set by the Commission?

4) Discourse of soft law and legal asymmetry: As it has been stressed in this conference, in particular by Prof. Kees Groenendijk, immigrants and refugees are ever more integrally being included in the domain of soft law. What emerges is in fact an ideological asymmetry in the usage of the Law: immigration and asylum law is often useful to protect fellow-countrymen abroad, and it is then ignored when it would force to receive people from outside one’s country. Soft law and law in general are positioned asymmetrically: first, soft law seems a positive achievement in the light of enfranchising migrants and refugees, but is it not a way of subjectifying them also? Extending laws to cover them: this means making them subject. Second, it places EU citizens entirely under the purview and power of the Law, while setting aside soft law procedures to the management of migrants. This asymmetry questions democracy.

5) Discourse of biopolitics: Migrants are “bodies”, this is how they are represented in the media. Masses of bodies, more than human individuals, to be dealt with. Since Foucault there is a word for it: biopolitics. This is expressed through our own discourse: they are “voiced by” agencies (and us, experts, NGOs), and legalized through soft law. Refugees, migrants, active and free human beings, are “being taken care of”, that is to say, somehow, first “taken” (off boats) and then disposed of according to procedures set by the EU. This is a genuine biopolitical operation. It raises a more fundamental, ideological question: Are we not manufacturing a new underclass, as we – intellectuals and academics – traditionally did with the working class, now extinct in Europe, so as to use them as vehicles of historical transformation? Are we not instrumentalizing them in a Hegelian move, as the lever of change in history? To sum: it is in this way that the polarity and the oppositions outlined in the previous points are paradoxically reconciled: we assume the language of the European Union, we as academics who employ the language of the political institution. This is also a way to make up for the lack of a transdisciplinary language, to render it less evident, together with the difficulties it carries with. This critique is thus meant as an enabling instrument.

8. Plenary Task Boards meetings

The KNOWBOARD puts forward a transversal knowledge issue to be aware of in the course of the project’s implementation. In many respects, PROTECT’s research endorses a clear-cut split between refugees and migrants but such a difference is not applicable for all Work Packages. Notably, for Work Package 4, and more precisely for the ethnographic field work to be conducted in sites where asylum claims are registered, the difference between irregular migrants, asylum seekers or refugees cannot be made as it occurs later on as a result of the asylum determination process.

The REGBOARD puts forward the issue of transversal cooperation for ethics and gender matters, and especially gender balance within the Consortium. Plans about how to work across Work Packages with and on gender issues will be developed.

9. The First STEERCOM Meeting

This will be held online toward the end of Month 2 or the beginning of Month 3, when the documents for the first agenda items are ready.