

PRESS RELEASE

The CCBE launches the *European Lawyers in Lesvos* project

12/07/2016

The CCBE and the Deutscher Anwaltverein (DAV) have launched their joint European Lawyers in Lesvos project, aimed at providing legal assistance to migrants requiring international protection.

Today marks the launch of a project co-organised by the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE) and the Deutscher Anwaltverein (DAV), in close cooperation with the Greek Bars. The European Lawyers in Lesvos project will send European lawyers to the island of Lesvos to provide primary legal assistance to migrants requiring international protection.

The project will be managed on the ground by permanent staff composed of a British lawyer and a Greek lawyer from the Lesvos Bar. There will be at least two volunteer lawyers, experienced in asylum/migration law, present in Lesvos at any given time, staying for a minimum of two weeks.

The first volunteer lawyers will be arriving in Lesvos this week.

The purpose of the project is to give migrants/refugees in Lesvos the chance to receive individual legal advice from a lawyer. This is crucial in the current international environment, as there is great uncertainty amongst the more than 4,000 migrants/refugees on the island about their legal entitlements.

CCBE President Michel Benichou said that **“this project shows that European lawyers are aware of the situation in Lesvos and are engaged in supporting their Greek colleagues in this challenging time. Access to a lawyer is a fundamental right. Medical, food and shelter aid are all recognised as ‘first aid’ rights, while legal advice is often overlooked in the context of humanitarian aid. It is hoped that legal advice will be recognised as such a right. The main aim of the project though is to ensure that every person requiring international protection is able to consult a lawyer.”**

The project is entirely funded by generous contributions of bars and law societies from across Europe: Andorra, Belgium (Avocats.be and OVB), Bulgaria, Denmark, Spain, Finland, France (Grenoble, Lyon, Paris, Rennes, Seine-Saint-Denis, Strasbourg, Conseil National des Barreaux, Conférence des Bâtonniers), Germany (DAV and BRAK), Greece, Ireland (Bar and Law Society), Italy, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Czech Republic, Romania, the United Kingdom (Bar Council of England and Wales, Law Society of Scotland, Bar and Law Society of Northern Ireland), Switzerland (Swiss Bar Association, Ordre des avocats Vaudois, Ordine degli avvocati del Canton Ticino), and the European Bars Federation (FBE).

For more information about the project, please visit the project website www.europeanlawyersinlesvos.eu.

About the CCBE:

The CCBE represents the bars and law societies 45 countries, and through them more than 1 million European lawyers. The CCBE is recognised as the voice of the European legal profession by the EU institutions, and acts as the liaison between the EU and Europe's national bars and law societies.

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