Media coverage of the "refugee crisis": A cross-European perspective

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Myria Georgiou
Rafal Zaborowski

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Dr Myria Georgiou[1]
Dr Rafal Zaborowski
Department of Media and Communications
London School of Economics and Political Science

[1] The opinions expressed in this document are personal and do not engage the responsibility of the Council of Europe. They should not be regarded as placing upon the legal instruments mentioned in it any official interpretation capable of binding the governments of member States, the Council of Europe's statutory organs or the European Court of Human Rights.

Executive Summary

1. European press played a central role in framing refugees' and migrants' arrival to European shores in 2015 as a crisis for Europe. While coverage of "the crisis" is characterised by significant diversity, overall, new arrivals were seen as outsiders and different to Europeans: either as vulnerable outsiders or as dangerous outsiders.

2. Regional trends: There are significant differences in the coverage across European regions. Especially at the beginning of "the crisis", and to an extent throughout it, there was a stark contrast between media coverage on the West and the East and especially, between media in the receiving and non-receiving countries.

3. Temporal trends: the narratives of the coverage changed across Europe during 2015. The sympathetic and empathetic response of a large proportion of the European press in the summer and especially early autumn of 2015 was gradually replaced by suspicion and, in some cases, hostility towards refugees and migrants.

4. Media trends: Press coverage that promoted hate speech and hostility towards migrants and refugees was systematic and persistent in a proportion of the press. This was especially the case in some parts of Eastern Europe (esp. Hungary), throughout "the crisis" and in a significant section of some countries' right-leaning press in the East and West Europe alike.

5. Voice: Refugees and migrants were given limited opportunities to speak directly of their experiences and suffering. Most often they were spoken about and represented in images as silent actors and victims. There were some significant exceptions, but these were time and place specific.

6. Gender: Female refugees' and migrants' voices were hardly ever heard. In some countries, they were never given the opportunity to speak (e.g. Hungary) while in other cases (e.g. Germany) they were only occasionally given this opportunity.

7. Context: Overall, media paid little and scattered attention to the context of refugee and migrant plight. There was little connection between stories on new arrivals and war reporting or between stories on refugee plight and international news stories from their countries of origins. In addition, little and scattered information was made available to the public about migrants' and refugees' individual stories, their lives and cultures; thus information about who these people actually are was absent or marginal in much of the press coverage in most European countries.

8. As the "refugee/migration crisis" is entering a new phase, media continue to face significant challenges in safeguarding the values of independent and fair journalism, while respecting freedom of expression for all and tackling hate speech in Europe. Self-regulatory and international bodies and organisations need to support media in these efforts.

Introduction

While Europe has long been a destination for migrants and refugees, 2015 saw a sharp rise in the numbers of refugees and migrants arriving at Europe's shores. Approximately one million people, fleeing war and poverty arrived in Europe in 2015 (Frontex 2015), with a significant proportion fleeing war-torn Syria. This was the year that journalists recorded the biggest movement of people across boundaries (Ethical Journalism Network 2015), which they responded to through many stories that appeared on a daily basis in Europe's media. The events, which were soon to be referred to widely as Europe's "refugee crisis" or Europe's "migration crisis", called for attention and action from governments, politicians and European publics. In this report, we refer to the significant numbers of people arriving to Europe from conflict-torn areas in 2015-16 as the "refugee/migration crisis". We use the two concepts together, as they have become widely and interchangeably adopted by the media and policy makers to refer to the recent arrivals of almost a million people in Europe. At the same time, we remain aware that the conflation of terms ("migrant" and "refugee") carries profound and dangerous consequences for the quality of press coverage.

Throughout the events of 2015-16, the media played a central role in providing information about the new arrivals and in framing these events as a "crisis". While social media have also played a significant role in exchanging information across Europe and beyond (including among refugees themselves and as a link to the countries of origin), mainstream media's informational role remains paramount. Mainstream media still constitute key and trusted resources for officials and publics to make sense and take action in the course of events. In addition, while media are always important in framing events, in this case, their role has arguably been even more crucial than usual for two reasons: (i.) the scale and speed of events in the second half of 2015 meant that publics and policy makers depended on mediated information to make sense of developments on the ground; (ii.) the lack of familiarity with the new arrivals, their histories and the reasons for their plight meant that many Europeans depended exclusively on the media to understand what was happening. Thus, the need to analyse media coverage of "the refugee/migration crisis" is critical to understanding: (i.) narratives of "the crisis"; (ii.) geographical trends; (iii.) challenges to policy making, especially in relation to hate speech and freedom of expression.

This report represents an entry-point to European media coverage of the "crisis", especially as this was formed during the peak of the events, in 2015 (Summer – Winter 2015). The report offers a cross-European perspective and insight. It primarily draws from the analysis of European influential press in eight Member States of the Council of Europe (CoE), and also from two major Arabic-language newspapers. The report is organised in three main sections: (i.) The policy and media context of the media coverage; (ii.) The key elements of press coverage across Europe in eight countries (Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Serbia and the United Kingdom); (iii.) Challenges of media practices and recommendations.

SECTION I: Context of media coverage of the "refugee crisis"

This section examines in brief the context, especially in regards to policy, in which the discussion on the media coverage of refugees and migrants takes place. While the events of 2015 were unprecedented in scale, the challenges of fairly reporting news on migrants and refugees in the context of freedom of expression, fairness and ethical journalism are not new.

Academic literature on media representations, especially concerning ethnic minorities, migrants and refugees, has repeatedly highlighted the importance of media coverage of different groups for the ways we understand rights and identities. As Cottle argues:

> The media occupy a key site and perform a crucial role in the public representation of unequal social relations and the play of cultural power. It is in and through representations, for example, that members of the media audience are variously invited to construct a sense of who "we" are in relation to who "we" are not (Cottle, 2000: 2).

Academic literature has also highlighted issues of concern regarding the stereotyping of migrants, refugees and other minorities in certain media, which may result in prejudice and discriminatory attitudes against individual representatives of such groups and the rejection of cultural diversity altogether (cf. Firmstone et al. 2007; Ferjani 2007; Siapera 2010). Policy makers and self-regulatory media bodies have raised similar concerns. A case which attracted significant public and transnational political and media attention was that of the Leveson Inquiry (2012), which followed the phone hacking scandal in the UK. Lord Leveson noted in his report that: "some newspapers expressed a consistently clear view on the harm caused by migrants and/or asylum seekers (often conflating the two) and ensured that any coverage of the issue fits within that narrative".

Freedom of expression, especially as protected by Article 10 of the European Convention of Human Rights, is complemented by Article 4 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and Article 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. These Articles recognise the equal rights of freedom of expression, free speech and participation for all groups and individuals in a society, including minorities. The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), through its monitoring, has developed country-specific recommendations addressing situations where representatives of minority groups, including refugees and migrants, may be hindered in their access to equal rights because of discriminatory attitudes against them, which are often fuelled by negative narratives in the public debate.

Effectively confronting hate speech is therefore a challenge that is gaining new urgency, especially as we are witnessing a steady rise in language promoting discrimination (and in some cases even encouraging hatred and violence against refugees and migrants) across a section of Europe's mainstream and social media.

Some of the difficulties in tackling hate speech relate to the fact that hate speech has no internationally accepted, singular definition. However, international, regional and national

initiatives and media self-regulatory bodies have developed a number of recommendations for members of the CoE regarding hate speech. In particular, the country-by-country monitoring by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) proposes a set of cross-European and country-specific recommendations that tackle hate speech in its complexity. As noted by ECRI:

> Hate speech….entails the use of one or more particular forms of expression – namely, the advocacy, promotion or incitement of the denigration, hatred or vilification of a person or group of persons, as well as any harassment, insult, negative stereotyping, stigmatization or threat of such person or persons and any justification of all these forms of expression – that is based on a non-exhaustive list of personal characteristics or status that includes "race", colour, language, religion or belief, nationality or national or ethnic origin, as well as descent, age, disability, sex, gender, gender identity and sexual orientation (ECRI 2015: 16).

How much has journalistic practice in the coverage of the "refugee/migration crisis" been sensitive towards these forms of discrimination? How much do the language and frames adopted in the media coverage of the "refugee/migrant crisis" reaffirm divides on the basis of origin, nationality and belief – and how much do they promote understanding? How do media frame European responsibility or vulnerability towards newcomers how fairly do they represent the different voices of the involved actors?

UNHCR addressed these questions through its own guidelines for covering refugees and asylum seekers in a report stemming from collaboration with the National Union of Journalists in the UK and the Irish Refugee Council (UNHCR 2016). The report provides practical guidelines for interviewing refugees and asylum seekers and a glossary with appropriate terminology for fair reporting.

In this report and the next section, these questions are directly tackled through the evidence produced in a cross-European study of press coverage of the "refugee/migration crisis".

SECTION II. Media coverage across Europe

1. Media coverage across Europe

This report draws from a systematic year-long research project located at the Department of Media and Communications, London School of Economics and Political Science.[2] The project is constituted by a content analysis of quality press in eight European countries – Czech Republic; France; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Ireland; Serbia; UK) as well as of the two main

[2] The authors would like to thank our colleagues working on the project, Professor Lilie Chouliaraki and Dr Ellen Helsper. We are also grateful to our coders without whom the project would not be possible: Zuzana Brezinová, Leah Selig Chauhan, Antonios Dimitriadis, Joelle Eid, Lisa Elkhoury, Poliana Geha, Shreya Goenka, Róbert Hegedűs, Gyorgyi Horvath, Rosanna Hutchings, Leticia Ishibashi-Poppenwimmer, Götz Kadow, Kaylah Kleczka, Kristina Kolbe, Afroditi Koulaxi, Jan Krotký, Ana Lomtadze, Rita Nemeth, Sadichchha Pokharel, Corinne Schweizer, Karim Shukr, Ema Stastna, Tijana Stolic, Sanja Vico, Pauline Vidal, Felicity Ward.

Arabic-language newspapers – Al-Hayat and Al-Araby Al-Jadeed. The conceptual design of the project (developed by Professor Lilie Chouliaraki and Dr Myria Georgiou) aimed to investigate the range of narratives that predominate the coverage of the refugee/migrant crisis. The hypothesis driving the analysis is that narratives of the coverage are contained within an axis that has militarization (control of borders and security of Europe or the nation) on one extreme and humanitarianism (compassion and care of new arrivals) on the other. While these are the two extremes of the analytical frame, other narratives exist in-between and alongside those (e.g. a careful mix of defensive and humanitarian measures present in press narratives in a few countries in the study). The key questions the project asked are:

- What are the media narratives of the "refugee/migrant crisis"?
- Who speaks and who is spoken for?
- What are the specific frames of positive and negative actions relating to the management of "the crisis"?
- How do all these findings differ across European regions and countries as well as across three distinct time periods in 2015?

The study examined press coverage of the crisis in the days immediately after three sets of key events (20 articles per newspaper in a period, 1200 articles analysed in total), associated with the crisis. The events on focus are: (i.) Hungary beginning to build a barrier along its border with Serbia; (ii.) the publication of Alan Kurdi's images; (iii.) the November 2015 Paris terrorist attacks.

The decision to focus on quality press was based on the significance that this section of the media plays in public affairs: quality press sets agendas and it is read by "the influential" – i.e. politicians and policy makers. Thus, while its impact expands beyond its direct numerical readership and spills into policy making, it also influences the public culture of what is and what is not acceptable and legitimate to say and do. In addition, we looked at one right-leaning and one-left leaning newspaper in each country in order to capture the main ideological frames of the coverage and record the range of opinions and values that framed the response of the media to "the crisis".

2. Europe in 2015

Overall, we see the three periods analysed in the study as important points on a European mediated narrative of the crisis. Separated roughly by two-month intervals, they serve to capture the dynamically changing frames surrounding the dramatic situation. As seen in the short description below, the periods should be seen in the context of preceding and succeeding developments to fully understand their significance.

Period 1 (July): *Careful tolerance*

By July 2015, Europe experienced three months of the current "refugee crisis"[3] in the media, starting from reports about mass drownings in the Mediterranean in April and May (adding to previous, but less mediated reports about similar tragedies between January and March 2015). In July, the European Council agreed on measures concerning relocating refugees from Greece and Italy to other EU Member States in June, while migrants in Calais desperately tried to get on trucks heading to the United Kingdom thorough the Channel Tunnel. Finally, on July 13th the Hungarian government announced its decision to start building a physical barrier along its Serbian border.

July was a dynamic period in the crisis, with stories about humanitarian efforts on the Mediterranean interweaving with anxieties fuelled by stories of migrant violence. The balance between securitisation and humanitarianism is representative of the whole study: Europe appeared to want to help refugees more than not, but remained careful about negative consequences.

Period 2 (September): *Ecstatic humanitarianism*

After photographs of the body of three-year old Alan Kurdi made headlines in the European press, media narratives changed significantly. Descriptions of measures to help refugees significantly dominated over measures to protect the country. Refugee emotions were most frequently featured in the narratives, compared to the other two periods, and there were significantly more mentions of positive consequences of the migrant arrivals than in July or November. For a while at least, Europe appeared from the narrative as a place of (relative) solidarity to the plight of asylum seekers.

Period 3 (November): *Fear and securitisation*

Everything changed drastically after the November Paris attacks. In articles concerning refugees, defensive measures dominated over helping measure for the first time as a general trend. Negative geopolitical consequences of the migrant crisis appeared in almost half of the press articles of the period while the refugees were the most voiceless compared to July and September. Europe was deep in shock – and the refugees appeared to be to blame.

3. Detailed analysis of emerging trends

A. Refugees and consequences for Europe

In our analysis, we have been attentive to how European press frames narratives of consequences of migrants' arrivals. We divided these into, broadly, positive and negative consequences, and each category had four further distinctions relating to the type of consequences envisioned: economic, geopolitical, cultural or moral. These were not exclusive, and it was possible for a newspaper story to contain a few or, indeed, none of these frames.

[3] This is not to say that the crisis started then (as it is a result of multiple factors and happenings dating back significantly further than that), but rather to suggest that this period is the start of what has been widely mediated as the European refugee crisis in 2015.

Overall, across all analysed countries, negative consequences of refugee arrivals were strongly emphasised in newspaper stories, as two-thirds (66% to be precise) of all stories in the sample mentioned these. To add to that, 59% of all articles mentioned no positive consequences (real or projected) of refugees arriving in Europe.

First, the fact that most journalistic stories about refugees mention consequences for European societies, especially in the early periods of the crisis when little empirical, causal relationship could be established between the plight of migrants and the wellbeing of European countries, is telling about the overall narrative constructed by the European press: the narrative of anxiety about unwanted consequences.

Second, our analysis of specific types of consequences between positive and negative frames in the articles shows considerable differences. Negative consequences articulated in the press rarely emphasized a moral rationale and were mostly geopolitical, economic or cultural in nature. On the other hand, when positive consequences were mentioned, they were framed predominantly as a moral imperative of empathy or even solidarity. The emerging narrative, then, strongly links negative consequences to "real", tangible developments in European countries, while very few positive aspects beyond a moral frame are outlined.

Third, specific types of negative consequences show fluctuations in press narratives between the analysed periods. While economic and cultural consequences were most prominent in the narrative in Period 1, they then experienced a steady drop in frequency in Periods 2 and 3. References to geopolitical consequences, on the other hand, spiked in frequency in Period 3. This signifies the move of European press toward discourses of securitisation after the Paris attacks: refugees are framed through the geopolitical dangers they bring with them.

B. Militarisation dominant after November

Our main classification of actions stated, suggested or declared with regards to the refugee crisis in the press articles distinguished between measures to help the refugees (these included actions such as providing shelter, donating money or other things, opening borders, help with registration, lobbying for political solution etc.) and measures to protect the country and/or Europe (which included, among other measures, sending refugees or migrants back, closing borders, building physical obstacles between countries, upping police or guard presence). In our framework, we broadly conceptualised the first group of actions as humanitarian and the second group as militaristic.

The proportion of humanitarian and militarisation frames changed across the three periods. While in Period 1 and especially so in Period 2 the majority of articles were sympathetic to the refugee plight and emphasized actions to assist asylum seekers in a variety of ways, in Period 3 this trend was reversed and over 60% of the actions mentioned were put in a defensive, militaristic frame. This is consistent with our findings about geopolitical dangers in Period 3 mentioned in the previous section.

We analysed these findings further, with attention to each country in the study. Certainly, a deeper contextual analysis of historical, political and socioeconomic trends in each of the regions needs to be considered in order to fully understand press narratives surrounding the

refugee crisis in each country. While we cannot achieve this here because of space limitations of the report, we will outline significant trends emerging from the study.
In particular, geographical location of countries correlated strongly with types of narratives in the domestic press.

In particular, we found that the press in "Western" countries in the study (to which we include the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Czech Republic) was characterised by a high percentage of narratives of military securitisation voiced in the articles and more often than not mentioned measures to protect Europe/the country. On the other hand, the press in "Eastern" countries in the sample (to which we include Greece and Serbia) focused more on actions to help the refugees. In other words, in our statistical models based on the countries' proximity to the arriving refugees, being a 'frontline' country predicted significantly lower militarisation vs humanitarian scores.

C. Voice or voicelessness? Refugees in the press

Another finding emerging from the study concerns the portrayal of the refugees themselves. Unsurprisingly perhaps, we found that although much was said for and about the refugees in the European press, their descriptions were highly limited in scope. Most notably, refugees were predominantly described in the press as nationals of a certain country (62% of articles in the sample). Only 35% of articles distinguished between men and women among the refugees and less than a third of articles referred to the refugees as people of a specific age group. Strikingly, only 16% of articles included the names of refugees and as little as 7% included their professions.

Refugees thus emerge from these narratives as an anonymous, unskilled group. They are 'the other' to the presumed reader of the press and this limited characterisation shapes the discourse surrounding the refugee crisis for both European audiences and stakeholders. In the mediated narrative, without individual characteristics, refugees are implied to be of little use for European countries (as they seem to have no profession), inspiring little empathy (because they are dehumanised and de-individualised) and raising suspicion (because no gender distinction aids the narrative of refugees being "mostly young men chancing their luck"[4]).

Descriptions aside, our study also looked at who among people mentioned in the articles is allowed to speak and who is not. This is particularly relevant, because through giving a voice to individuals and groups, particular narratives are being legitimised. In the study, the opinions of refugees were rarely represented. Refugee voices remained in minority across the sample compared to those who were allowed to speak. In all analysed countries, voices of representatives of national governments, governments of other countries or European politicians were featured in articles significantly more often than voices of asylum seekers.

Looking at the articles across the analysed periods, there was a spike in refugee voices in the hopeful Period 2, but even so, these voices added to less than half in frequency compared to

[4] As described by David Davies, a Welsh MP in his comments to BBC Radio Wales on September 2nd, 2015 (http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-34126247).

voices of national government representatives. As far as refugee voices are concerned, these results remain very similar regardless of geographical proximity to incoming refugees. However, national government representatives were significantly more quoted in the "Western" countries than in the "Eastern" countries in the sample. To add to this, the voices of European citizens were featured even less than those of refugees across the sample. Finally, the refugee women were particularly missing in the journalistic frames. Women were rarely quoted and in descriptions of refugees in the articles men and children dominated the narrative.

This all leads to a problematic narrative emerging from the media. There was much talk in the articles about the refugees and their reasons for seeking asylum in Europe. There was an emphasis on the consequences this has for European citizens. However, neither of these groups was allowed to speak for themselves in the articles; actions and emotions were instead validated by the (Western) officials in charge.

D. The fall in reported emotions

In line with the rising militaristic frame, our findings suggest that the peak of the "refugee/migration crisis" saw a gradual shift in media narratives – from emotional, humane narrative surrounding the refugees and national citizens to a relatively distant, emotionless framing. In particular, articles in the period after the Paris November terrorist attacks (Period 3) reported significantly fewer citizen emotions than in Periods 1 and 2. Similarly, Period 3 also had the fewest number of refugee emotions reported overall.

These findings vary across countries and there is again a Western/Eastern frame to be observed: the biggest gap between emphasizing home citizens' emotions versus refugee emotions were found in Western countries (France, Ireland, Czech Republic, Germany), while Eastern countries (Greece, Serbia, and also the Arabic-language press) were more balanced in the proportion.

E. Country specifics: A brief glance

While geographical proximity to the South-Eastern European borders emerges as a vital factor in the analysis, as outlined above, the correlation is not straightforward. There are significant differences among "first contact countries", as there are differences between and within countries in Western Europe. We suggest that in order to more comprehensively understand these complex relations, a number of further factors needs to be taken into account and these include not only socioeconomic and political context of the country in question, but also the press culture, media regulation, the ideological orientation of the press, media and digital literacy and media freedom. It is difficult to discuss all of these characteristics vis-à-vis our findings in this report, though the discussion that follows highlights the particular challenges and recommendations that our findings point at when it comes to European and national policies and media regulatory frames. In this brief section, we stress a number of patterns through outlining characteristics of a few countries below.

Hungary: Hungarian press, more than in any other analysed country, stressed refugees' economic reasons behind migration. Narratives of security and border control measures were important features in the articles, and proposed defence initiatives in the press

stressed physical obstacles between countries (which paralleled governmental policies at the time). The refugees were particularly nameless (6.7% compared to 15.6% average across the European sample) and voiceless in the sample, which particularly concerned women: female refugees in Hungarian press were silent: sometimes seen, but never quoted.

Greece: Newspaper frames emphasised geopolitical reasons behind the crisis the most across all countries. Refugees were given more voice compared to the European average in the study and they were described with more attention to their gender (especially descriptions of women were frequent – 26.3% compared to the European average of 15.9%) and age (44% compared to the European average of 27%). There was a great disproportion between humanitarian actions (25%) and defensive actions (65.8%) reported in the articles. Greek press was one of the three sets of media (alongside Serbian and Arabic press) where reported emotions of citizens or refugees were not significantly different across the three periods. This is possibly the result of familiarity, extended understanding of context and journalist research on the events. Greece was also the only country where the number of citizen emotions reported was roughly equal to refugee emotions reported.

France: One of the only three countries (along with Czech Republic and the UK) where mentions of defensive measures (closing borders, tightening registration procedures increasing police and army presence, etc.) dominated over mentions of caring measures. France was the second highest, after Ireland, in the frequency of women refugee descriptions and second highest (after the UK) in mentions of refugee professions. France had also the largest, by far, disproportion between refugees' emotions reported (20% of articles) and citizens' emotions reported (over 65% of articles). Significant differences emerged between Le Monde and Le Figaro, where the former often stressed empathy and described refugees as victims, while the latter often emphasised fear and painted refugees as perpetrators.

Germany: German press had the most significant emphasis on *action* overall. Over 76% of articles mentioned defensive measures (closing borders, sending refugees back, increasing army and police presence, etc.) and over 85% mentioned humanitarian measures – both statistics were the highest across the European sample. On the other hand, the emphasis on reasons behind migration was the lowest in the sample. Germany had also the lowest presence of female refugees across the European sample. Lastly, German press was the third lowest (after Hungary and Czech Republic) in the frequency of refugee names mentioned and remained below average in reporting refugee professions or age.

SECTION III. Challenges associated with media practices, good practice and recommendations

The findings from our cross-European study demonstrate the complexity of challenges associated with the media coverage of "the refugee/migration crisis". These challenges are national and transnational and can be outlined under three subthemes: (1.) reporting context; (2.) national media policy environment; (3.) competition.

1. Reporting context

Media had to cover fast-developing stories in the context of tragedy, loss of life, and changing national and European policies. In addition, in some parts of Europe especially, media and journalists had to cover news relating to unfamiliar phenomena and people. European mainstream media had to respond to these developments fast with reporting that at times lacked good understanding of context and background. The desire and delivery of speedy coverage by mainstream media is largely the result of pressures associated with the fast and vast flow of information delivered on online and social media.

Many of the media organisations and journalists were unprepared to cover such events and there is little evidence of European media initiating systematic training for their staff on how to deal with the events and the sensitive issues involved. Such training opportunities have been scattered and exceptional. Furthermore, media coverage of "the crisis" was inevitably interacting with political decision-making and popular opinions. Thus, the mainstream political narratives, which sometimes promoted hostility and sometimes solidarity towards newcomers, were inevitably reflected in the press coverage. However, questioning political decision-making and engaging critically with the narratives of the "crisis", which is a responsibility associated with independent journalism, was very uneven across Europe. It is important to note that we observed no singular and direct link between national frameworks associated with freedom of expression and hostile coverage of refugees (e.g. Serbian press was more sympathetic towards refugees vis-à-vis French media). However, we observed that in countries where hate speech is not always tackled systematically (e.g. Hungary, France), hostility and dehumanisation of refugees in the media was more widespread.

2. National media policy environment

In all countries studied, there is at least some basic regulation to protect media freedom and diversity. However, there is significant unevenness in the political and media policy environments across Europe. For example, in some countries, political pressures over the press are sometimes indirect but effective. In addition, regulation is not always followed by effective action, thus hate speech, stereotyping and discrimination of minorities (such as migrants and refugees) in the media are common in certain sectors of the European press. In most countries, press regulation is mostly enacted in the form of self-regulation, with varying outcomes. Those countries have press self-monitoring bodies responsible for overseeing standards and addressing issues associated with hate speech and discriminatory reporting. However, in a number of countries (e.g. Hungary, the UK) these bodies have little influence upon media practice. Also media cultures and acceptable language in the media vary significantly across Europe. For example, there is significant difference in media environments between some countries that have long history of independent and powerful public service media (e.g. Germany; UK) and others with weak or marginal public media (e.g. Greece; Hungary). In many countries of East and West (e.g. France; Hungary), the level or effectiveness in prosecution of hate speech and of discrimination against minorities and groups on the basis of race, ethnicity and religion does not correspond to existing legislation against hate speech and protection of minorities. In addition, discriminatory reporting sometimes relates to limited knowledge and understanding among media professionals of

groups and phenomena they cover. Furthermore, financial pressures faced by a significant section of the media across Europe mean that resources for developing training opportunities for staff are scarce.

3. Competition

In all countries studied, the media environments are diverse and independent from state control, at least when it comes to regulatory frameworks. Yet even when law protects free speech, some national environments are defined by extremely competitive markets. In many countries of East/Southeast Europe, corporate media dominate the media market (e.g. Serbia, Greece) and only selectively engage with self-monitoring media industry bodies. In some Western European countries, effective action also remains a challenge with hate speech legislation being contested by a section of the media. Across Europe, new players, especially those functioning on digital platforms, constitute new competitors for established media. As a result of intense competition, speedy and formulaic reporting sometimes replaces responsible reporting.

In light of these challenges, the coverage of "the refugee/migration crisis" demonstrates the urgent need for ethical and independent journalism in the new media environment of fast and vast flows of information provided by multiple and competing players. This increasingly diverse, competitive, and demanding media environment calls for even more responsibility and adherence to values of ethical journalism and respect of democracy and diversity: most importantly, fairness, balance, avoidance of language that promotes intolerance, and inclusiveness of voices of all parties involved in stories.

International and national organisations – not least, the UN, the CoE, the EU, OECD, the European Federation of Journalists, and others – have developed monitoring and standard-setting work including treaties, monitoring, and supportive tools for self-regulating provisions for European media.

Existing recommendations and tools

A number of cross-national initiatives, reports and recommendations by international organisations also contribute to public debate and action in this area. For example, the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (2014) has developed a series of recommendations in support of fairer and more inclusive coverage of migration in the media. Among these recommendations, UNAC calls media organisations and journalists to develop a more sustained understanding of migration before reporting on it, to use tools for expanding this knowledge and to also use informants from among the migrant communities and organisations, making a particular effort to include more voices of migrants in their coverage of relevant stories. These recommendations are compatible and complement Article 10 of the European Convention of Human Rights, which offers a key point of reference on issues relating to freedom of expression

The CoE's engagement with fair coverage and representation of all groups in European media is shaped by a number of relevant treaty provisions (e.g. the European Convention on Human Rights and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

(FCNM)). In addition, the CoE has advanced work on freedom of expression and protection of minorities through monitoring initiatives (e.g. under the FCNM and as conducted by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)) and standard-setting (e.g. by the Committee of Ministers and Parliamentary Assembly of the CoE) exercises. The Parliamentary Assembly, for its part, has also adopted a number of Recommendations dealing with "the image of asylum seekers, migrants and refugees in the media" and "migrants, ethnic minorities and media". Both texts contain useful provisions for countering practices of negative stereotyping and for ensuring access to the media. Such treaties and recommendations provide legislative tools for the members of the organisation to take effective action against hate speech and discrimination, while protecting freedom of expression for the media and for minorities and also for promoting and protecting independent journalism and access to media production and consumption for all.

Alongside international organisations' initiatives, media professionals themselves have in cases addressed the challenges of fair and accurate reporting in the midst of "the crisis". For example, a self-regulation initiative in Greece highlights the role and responsibility of journalists in covering the plight of refugees and migrants. More specifically, the Journalists' Union of Macedonia and Thrace Daily Newspapers (ESIEMTH) drafted a proposal for the adoption of the Anti-racism Ethics Code of the Greek journalists called *The Charter of Idomeni* (after the border village in Northern Greece where thousands of refugees have passed or hope to be passing through on their way to northern Europe). The charter aims to discourage and denounce the climate of intolerance in the media, while protecting freedom of expression and press freedom alongside the rights of refugees and migrants. This initiative has been warmly welcomed by the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) and other national and international bodies (see EFJ 2015 for full text of the chapter).

Besides treaties and recommendations, a number of tools are available to media professionals to enhance their own understanding of ethical and fair journalism, especially in covering issues associated with migration and diversity. The CoE has taken a leading role in this area developing a number of projects, information packs and hands-on tools, in supporting journalists and the media. For example, the joint CoE/EU MEDIANE (Media in Europe for diversity inclusiveness) offers a hands-on, interactive tool – Mediane Box – which media professionals can use to test their own practice and for developing their own understanding of diversity and inclusiveness agendas, while getting access to practices and keywords that promote diversity in the media. Another joint EU/CoE programme, MARS (Media Against Racism in Sport) focussed on sports as an area of significant investment by the media and where issues of fairness in reporting is critical. MARS developed training and provided practical tools (available online) for journalists in an attempt to support the promotion of non-discriminative approaches in the ways media cover sports. The two projects built on the CoE Speak Out Against Discrimination Campaign, which derived its mandate from the CoE's White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue "Living together as equals in dignity". The campaign primarily targeted media industry professionals and was built around three main objectives: (i.) Training media professionals; (ii.) Writing, seeing and hearing diversity in the media; (iii.) Producing and disseminating innovative and inclusive information. A number of other national and regional guidelines also exist, including those developed most recently by UNHCR (2016).

Furthermore, recent reports produced through systematic and ethical reporting with refugees and migrants in Europe and beyond, such as those developed by the Ethical Journalism Network (White 2015) and BBC's Media Action (Hannides et al. 2016) represent examples of good practice in reporting "the crisis" in fair and responsible ways, especially while giving voice to all parties involved.

Conclusions and recommendations

In light of the above evidence and existing recommendations, the CoE is well-placed to develop a targeted strategy and to take important and much needed action in support of the media in their continued coverage of "the refugee/migrant crisis". It is important to recognise that the new arrivals and their settlement in Europe present new and complex challenges. The opportunities of integration of refugees and migrants into national/European societies interweave with small and large scale changes and potential risks within specific countries and across the continent. Both opportunities (for migrants, for citizens, for European countries) and risks (individual and structural; socioeconomic, cultural, political and moral) need to be seen in the context of global and historical developments.

Thus, the role of the media emerges as crucial in providing a platform for those complex issues to be unpacked, problematized and presented to the public. In particular, the responsibility of the media to provide fair reporting is higher than ever. For example, the complexity of contextualising specific conditions (such as the rise of extremist/racist parties and terrorist attacks or eminent threats for attacks across Europe) makes the role of the media yet more important. As we have shown in this report, media frames through which newspapers narrate the "crisis" are largely limited, and it is in this context, that the CoE has the opportunity to further enhance its contribution to fairer and more inclusive coverage of refugees and migrants across Europe. We identify six targeted areas for developing such a strategy. This strategy can benefit from existing and expanded collaborations with other important European and international institutions, such as the EFJ, the EU and UNHCR.

1. **Initiatives and campaigns for more inclusiveness in the media:** The Council of Europe should continue to monitor the situation with a view to identifying needs for further activities for the promotion of fair reporting on migrants and refugees, that could complement existing initiatives (such as MEDIANE and MARS). There is a need to (i.) boost these initiatives' promotion where relevant, while also (ii.) providing further support, especially as media professionals are moving from covering a crisis, to covering stories of new populations now settling in European societies and the new challenges this presents to national and European media. Such campaigns should be aimed to reach all quarters of Europe and its media and the Council of Europe should collect and make available online resources on refugees and migrants that promote ethnical reporting and counter hate speech. On a specific level, these resources can include examples of good practices in coverage of refugees and migrants, including media access to refugee and migrants' own voices. In the light of the data presented, campaign recommendations should urge media to go beyond simple geopolitical frames of risks and anxieties towards inclusionary, positive language of shared challenges and common aims.

2. **Contextual reporting of the crisis**: The Council of Europe should sponsor and engage with training that enhances professional understanding of reasons behind refugee and migrant mobility towards Europe through journalism workshops on, for example, war and crises in refugees' countries of origins and on refugees' journeys to Europe. This may also include online information packages on backgrounds of main groups of refugees and migrants. The Council of Europe should collaborate with European and national organisations (e.g. EFJ; national journalist unions) to develop and promote such initiatives.

3. **Inclusion of diverse voices**: Such efforts should promote monitoring, tools and good practice cases on recognition of migrants and refugees as more than mere mass and/or victims and/or perpetrators of crime and terrorism in media coverage. Our recommendation for the Council of Europe is to compile refugee stories but also to compile national lists of organisations or directories, which the media can contact/work with in order to get information on the main interests and concerns of new migrant communities. This can also serve as the first step in initiating contact between migrants/refugees and the media and capacity building in order to make them participants in rather than objects of media coverage.

4. **Support and dissemination of information on migrant and refugee media and communication practices**: There is significant talent and passion behind emerging initiatives of independent journalism among refugees and migrants. The Council of Europe should make an effort to identify some of these initiatives and promote links between mainstream media and refugee and migrant journalists. This could be achieved, for instance, by co-organising and co-funding training for migrant and refugee journalists, and, more broadly, proactively supporting refugees' engagement with variety of media outlets (such as already existing community media in some Member States).

5. **Share research on media coverage of "the refugee/migration crisis"**: Media organisations and professional associations alike can benefit from furthering their knowledge in regards to patterns of unfair and stereotypical reporting of migrants and refugees. The Council of Europe could sponsor the dissemination of such research and consider media-friendly workshops and publications that share research findings.

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Newspapers analysed (overall more than 1200 articles)**:**

Arabic-language press: Al-Hayat, Al-Araby Al-Jadeed

Czech Republic: Pravo, Lidove Noviny

France: Le Monde, Le Figaro

Germany: Süddeutsche Zeitung, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung

Greece: EFSYN, Kathimerini

Hungary: Magyar Nemzet, Népszabadság

Ireland: Irish Independent, The Irish Times

Serbia: Vecernje Novosti, Blic

UK: The Guardian, The Times, The Independent, The Daily Telegraph

Resources

Council of Europe

- Journalism at Risk, 2015: https://book.coe.int/eur/en/human-rights-and-democracy/6675-journalism-at-risk.html
- Country monitoring work of ECRI: http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/library/publications.asp
- General Policy Recommendations (GPR) of ECRI: http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/activities/GeneralThemes_en.asp
- Commissioner for Human Rights, 3rd quarterly activity report 2015: https://wcd.coe.int/com.instranet.InstraServlet?command=com.instranet.CmdBlobGet&InstranetImage=2839690&SecMode=1&DocId=2327362&Usage=2
- Commissioner for Human Rights, Without papers but not without rights: the basic social rights of irregular migrants: http://www.coe.int/en/web/commissioner/-/without-papers-but-not-without-rights-the-basic-social-rights-of-irregular-migrants
- Commissioner for Human Rights, work on media freedom, independence and diversity: http://www.coe.int/en/web/commissioner/thematic-work/media-freedom
- European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, Reports and recommendations by country: http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/minlang/Report/default_en.asp
- Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, Country-specific monitoring: http://www.coe.int/en/web/minorities/country-specific-monitoring

- List of Committee of Ministers Recommendations, Resolutions and Declarations adopted in the media field: http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/media/Doc/CM/CM_texts_en.pdf
- MARS (Media Against Racism in Sport) http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/mars/default_en.asp
- Mediane (Media in Europe for diversity inclusiveness) http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/mars/mediane/default_en.asp
- Recommendation 2075 (2015) and Resolution 2066 (2015) Media responsibility and ethics in a changing media environment
- Recommendation 2062 (2015) and Resolution 2035 (2015) Protection of the safety of journalists and of media freedom in Europe
- List of Council of Europe documents concerning hate speech: http://www.rgsl.edu.lv/uploads/files/RGSL_Konference_Cela_uz_ieklaujosu_sabiedribu_241012_List.pdf
- Speak out against discrimination Campaign http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/anti-discrimination-campaign/default_en.asp

European Court of Human Rights

- PERİNÇEK v. SWITZERLAND
- KHURSHID MUSTAFA AND TARZIBACHI V. SWEDEN
- Hate speech factsheet: http://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/FS_Hate_speech_ENG.pdf

International Organisations

- UNHCR, 2016, Reporting on refugees: By and for journalists. http://www.unhcr.ie/images/uploads/pictures/pdf/reportingonrefugees.pdf
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- Media-Friendly Glossary on Migration, UNAOC, 2014: http://www.panoseurope.org/sites/default/files/production_files/UNAOC-Panos-Europe-Institute_Media-Friendly-Glossary-on-Migration.pdf

Media have played an important role in framing the public debate on the "refugee crisis" that peaked in autumn of 2015. This report examines the narratives developed by print media in eight European countries and how they contributed to the public perception of the "crisis", shifting from careful tolerance over the summer, to an outpouring of solidarity and humanitarianism in September 2015, and to a securitisation of the debate and a narrative of fear in November 2015.

Overall, there has been limited opportunity in mainstream media coverage for refugees and migrants to give their views on events, and little attention paid to the individuals' plight or the global and historical context of their displacement. Refugees and migrants are often portrayed as an undistinguishable group of anonymous and unskilled outsiders who are either vulnerable or dangerous. The dissemination of biased or ill-founded information contributes to perpetuating stereotypes and creating an unfavourable environment not only for the reception of refugees but also for the longer-term perspectives of societal integration.

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