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Quality Newspapers vs. Populism

Shaping pro-immigration attitudes in five EU Member States

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Executive Summary

What's the role of the media in shaping attitudes towards Europe as a "continent of immigration"? This policy paper focuses on widely read quality newspapers in France, Germany, Poland and Sweden as well as on the special case of Hungary where press freedom has been largely dismantled. We show that quality newspapers are a bulwark against far-right populism and crucial contributors to the strengthening of pro-immigration attitudes in accordance with the core values of the EU.

Much of the current debate about immigration, far-right populism and the future of the EU is centred on the increasingly complex relationships between media and political attitudes. While research on populism is mostly about the negative attitudes towards Europe, immigration or the "elites", this policy paper focuses on news media that presumably strengthen pro-immigration attitudes among the European public. This is relevant because positive attitudes towards immigration are predictors of positive attitudes towards the European Union. We show that quality newspapers constitute a "media membrane" which is often impervious to the demonizing rhetoric of far-right populists. For precisely this reason, the free press has come under attack from governments controlled by populist leaders. Against the backdrop of large and growing differences within the EU with regard to civil liberties, this policy paper aims to identify, compare and contrast media discourses on refugee and immigration policies across a range of EU Member States. These discourses have to be understood in the context of specific national histories and imaginaries. All Member States are part of Europe as a "continent of immigration", although this doesn't necessarily imply that individual countries are willing to accept this reality or that they formulate adequate policies regulating the flow of migrants and accommodating their needs in light of the European Charter of Fundamental Rights and its ideals: the universal values of human dignity, freedom, equality and solidarity.

We show that quality newspapers are indispensable sites and sources of self-reflection for national publics coming to terms with the reality of their own societies. Throughout the EU, they reflect and shape the transition from a de-politicized consensus for or against immigration to a more polarized public debate. By and large, national quality newspapers tend to be pro-European and pro-immigration, though with reservations. In spite of their diversity, quality newspapers in Europe are a bulwark against far-right populism, Islamophobia and radical anti-immigration attitudes. Even if the [European Charter of Fundamental Rights](#) or, for example, [Article 67 of the Lisbon Treaty](#) is rarely invoked explicitly, quality newspapers defend the spirit of the Treaties and the Charter, both against the governments of Member States and against individual EU policies.

Since quality newspapers and other media are a crucial factor in shaping attitudes towards immigration and hence to the EU itself, their freedom must be protected by all means. The EU should continue and intensify its efforts to protect Europeans core values in all member countries. The independence of the judiciary, academic freedom and press freedom are closely intertwined, which makes legal action against "rogue" members such as Hungary all the more necessary. The very future of the EU depends on the existence of a free press.

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Abstract

Much of the current debate about immigration, far-right populism and the future of the EU is centred on the increasingly complex relationships between media and political attitudes. While research on populism is mostly about the negative attitudes towards Europe, immigration or the “elites”, this policy paper focuses on news media that *strengthen* pro-immigration attitudes among the European public. This is relevant because positive attitudes towards immigration are predictors of positive attitudes towards the European Union. We show that quality newspapers constitute a “media membrane” which is often impervious to the demonizing rhetoric of far-right populists. For precisely this reason, the free press has come under attack from governments controlled by populist leaders. Against the backdrop of large and growing differences within the EU with regard to civil liberties, the policy paper aims to identify, compare and contrast media discourses on refugee and immigration policies across a range of EU Member States. These discourses have to be understood in the context of specific national histories and imaginaries. All Member States are part of Europe as a “continent of immigration”, although this doesn’t necessarily imply that individual countries are willing to accept this reality or that they formulate adequate policies regulating the flow of migrants and accommodating their needs in light of the European Charter of Fundamental Rights and its ideals: the universal values of human dignity, freedom, equality and solidarity.

1. Introduction: News Media and Attitudes towards Immigration Society

“In this new world always on the move, I learned to get rid of the old atavistic suspicions [against immigrants] which are so much a pointless worry and a waste of time.” (Monnet, 1978, 45)

Much of the current debate about immigration, far-right populism and the future of the EU is centered on the increasingly complex relationships between media and political attitudes. Political attitudes including the norms and values held by the public are to some extent shaped by news media. The content and use of media contribute to the consolidation and perpetuation of attitudes and behaviours. At the same time, pre-existing attitudes of citizens influence their choice of media. What the public considers to be important is strongly influenced by the issues highlighted by the news media. We also know that the framing of issues plays a role in shaping attitudes. Normative attitudes can be transformed through media, but equally important is the reinforcement of already existing attitudes in society (see the overview in Hoewe and Peacock, 2020).

Research on populism is mostly about the sources and development of negative attitudes towards Europe, immigration or the “elites”. By contrast, this policy paper focuses on news media that presumably strengthen pro-immigration attitudes among the European public which are typically connected with pro-European attitudes. We show that quality newspapers constitute a “media membrane” (Alexander, 2006, 304) which is often impervious to the demonizing rhetoric and alarmist narratives of far-right populists. For precisely this reason, the free press has come under attack from governments controlled by populist leaders.

Against the backdrop of large and growing differences within the EU with regard to civil liberties, the policy paper aims to identify, compare and contrast media discourses on refugee and immigration policies across a range of EU Member States. These discourses have to be understood in the context of specific national histories and imaginaries. All Member States are part of what has been described by EU officials as a “continent of immigration” (Frattini, 2007). This doesn’t necessarily imply that individual countries are willing to accept this reality, that they perceive themselves as immigration countries or that they formulate and execute adequate policies regulating the flow of migrants and accommodating their needs in light of the European Charter of Fundamental Rights and its ideals: the universal values of human dignity, freedom, equality and solidarity, among others.

The following analysis focuses not on the empirical reality of migration in selected Member States, but, first, on how individual countries have historically debated immigration and emigration, how immigrants were labelled and categorized in the past, and what assumptions were made about their needs, values and political attitudes. Second, we ask how quality newspapers have shaped the political communication about migration and the migration policies of the EU. Note that our analysis only looks at the public rhetoric of national pro-immigration positions and how this rhetoric relates to European norms and values. The basic assumption is that media both reflect and shape attitudes towards immigration which are in turn predictors of attitudes towards the European Union (Brosius et al., 2019).

2. Quality Newspapers and Immigration Society

2.1 France

The first media analysis focusses on pro-immigration arguments expressed in two of the largest newspapers circulated in France – *Le Monde* (LM) and *Libération* (Lb) – over the period 2013-2017. It asks how pro-immigration rhetoric is framed and how it relates to European norms and values. LM and Lb are two of the largest selling quality papers in France with a centre left editorial line. LM is second only to *Le Figaro*, a right-wing outlet in which we assumed it would be unlikely to find a large number of pro-migration articles. LM claims to be unaligned and to have no political editorial line. Nonetheless most of its readers (63 percent) are identified as being “on the left”. LM is the most read French newspaper abroad. For pragmatic reasons, we decided to select only two major newspapers. Lb was founded by Jean-Paul Sartre in 1973 and was then a far-left publication. Since then, it moved to the centre-left.

The framework of analysis

The media coverage of immigration and refugee policies is dominated by four frames: the *prosperity frame* and the *dignity frame*. In many EU Member States, quality newspapers welcome immigration to the extent that migrants contribute to economic prosperity. An equally powerful media frame focuses on the human dignity of immigrants and asylum seekers. Two other frames are also important: the *cultural anxiety frame* which highlights the perceived threats posed by immigrants and refugees to national or European values, and the *affirmative diversity frame* which emphasizes and celebrates the positive effects of immigration on the growing cultural diversity.

The prosperity and dignity framework are largely represented in both LM and Lb. The affirmative diversity framework is quite marginal, although not fully absent. Several instances of pro-migration discourses are difficult to fit within those three frames as they do not explicitly claim that migrants and migration are economically beneficial and do not explicitly use a precise moral language. We thus classified some pieces of discourses within four additional frames: the *critical frame*, the *empathy frame*, the *integration frame* and the *identity frame*. The critical frame includes discourses that “take the side” or speak on behalf of migrants and refugees’ interests by criticizing official policies (of France or the EU) or discourses from anti-migration agents (politicians, political parties, other media, civil associations, intellectuals, etc.). In this category, we only include criticisms of asylum and migration policies that reflect or promote positive attitudes towards migrants and migration. This frame partly overlaps with the dignity frame and prosperity frame, since criticisms of government policies, official discourse and anti-immigrant discourse often appeal to moral norms and values and to the material benefits of immigration. When this is the case, we classified the article in both frameworks. The dignity and prosperity frameworks do not fully overlap with the critical framework as they are not necessarily based on the negative assessment of actual policies or discourses.

The empathy frame includes articles that provide in-depth analyses of the conditions in which migrants and refugees live, travel and integrate into the host society or of the situation of people helping migrants and refugees. Although such discourses may be seen as objective news reports that do not carry any editorial stance or positioning, many of the pieces we placed in this category do not report on any specific news. We are inclined to believe that such articles reflect a pro-migration attitude and can shape readers’ attitudes by making them understand the difficult and complex situations of

migrants and their helpers. The number of such portraits or sociological analyses is quite large compared to other frames.

The integration frame of pro-migration discourse contains articles that assert or highlight the possibility of integration and the success stories of integration. The integration framework of pro-migration discourse, implicitly or explicitly, endorses a liberal, multiculturalist and migrant-friendly understanding of integration, that is, one that links integration to full participation in economic, social, cultural and political life, the development of a subjective feeling of belonging and of acceptance on the part of migrants (Kymlicka, 2010; Bilodeau et al., 2018).

Finally, the (national) identity framework contains articles that assert the view that France (or the EU) is a country of immigration or asylum, that it is part of its collective identity to welcome immigrant, tolerate their difference, assist them and so on. This framework includes articles appealing to fundamental societal commitments and elements of collective self-representation. The identity framework appeals to the meaning of being French or European or to the already existing demographic make-up of France or the EU and to the existing practices of welcoming migrants.

Quantitative analysis

We searched articles from LM and Lb published between 1 January 2013 and 31 December 2017. We used the *Europresse* data base at the National Library of France. We did a first selection by using this combination of keywords: *immigration* OR *migrant+* OR *réfugié+* OR *demandeurs d'asile*.

At this first stage, around 3,000 articles showed up as a result of the search. 785 have then been selected on the basis of their title (in 2013: 110 articles; 2014: 109; 2015: 225; 2016: 183; 2017: 158). We identified 391 articles as instances of a pro-migration discourse.² There is a clear peak in the production of pro-migration discourse in 2015 and 2016. The yearly distribution of those articles is as follows (with numbers for Lb/LM within brackets):

Year: No. of articles	No. for Lb	No. for LM
2013: 41	20	21
2014: 59	26	33
2015: 123	51	72
2016: 99	42	57
2017: 69	26	43
Total: 391	165	226

Table 1: Overview articles LB and LM, period 2013-2017

We classified those articles by using the framework explained in the previous section. Some articles were placed in two categories (for instance, an article criticizing EU migration policy by appealing to human rights was placed both in the critical and dignity frameworks).

² In the analysis, we refer to a few articles that are not counted in those numbers. Those articles are relevant for other reasons than for displaying a pro-migration position – for instance, we were inclined to mention a few articles criticizing or answering pro-migration discourses.

	Prosperity	Dignity	Diversity	Critical	Empathy	Integration	Identity
2013	6	9	0	26	8	1	8
2014	6	10	1	19	22	3	12
2015	13	28	2	63	27	1	9
2016	6	16	2	39	30	7	11
2017	7	17	1	24	19	3	5
Total	38	80	6	171	106	15	45
(Lb)	(7)	(33)	(2)	(73)	(49)	(6)	(19)
(LM)	(31)	(47)	(4)	(98)	(57)	(9)	(26)

Table 2: Number of articles in each framework 2013-2017

Qualitative analysis

Discourses in each framework contain important variations. In this section, we provide more depth to our analysis by explaining how French media discourse displaying positive attitudes towards migration fills each framework and by providing examples.

Identity (National and European) – The land of immigration and asylum

We found no article mentioning that France is an “immigration society” (*société d’immigration* or *société d’immigrants*). Nonetheless, many articles use the expression ‘land of immigration’ or ‘land of asylum’ (*terre d’immigration*³ or *terre d’asile*⁴ or *terre d’accueil*⁵ or *terre de refuge*⁶ or *terre d’immigration et d’asile*⁷). Some use the phrase ‘land of human rights’ (*terre des droits de l’homme*)⁸ or assert that France is a “pluricultural country”⁹ or make the point that the presence of migrants in France is now a reality.¹⁰

44 articles adopting the identity framework might seem to suggest that the “immigrant society” type of discourse is well alive in France. However, 22 articles are not about France, but rather about the EU (16), Germany (3), Paris (2) or the US (1). Moreover, discourses linking the idea of a “land of migration and asylum” to the identity and history of France or the EU are often critical. Many articles claim that although France presents itself as the land of human rights, it is as a matter of fact neither a land of immigration¹¹ nor “a great country of refuge” (“*la France n’est pas un grand pays d’asile!*”).¹² Others adopt the view that France used to be a land of asylum or migration, but ceased to be.¹³ Discourses on Europe as a land of migration and asylum are slightly more positive. Many indeed claim that it is part

³ “Pour une Europe ouverte”, Lb, 8 September 2015.

⁴ “L’asile, un naufrage Européen”, Lb, 16 September 2014.

⁵ “Redevenir une terre d’accueil”, LM, 12 October 2015.

⁶ “Les migrants sont une chance pour l’Europe”, LM, 11 September 2015.

⁷ “Rester une terre d’immigration”, Lb, 23 July 2014.

⁸ “La stratégie du déminage sur l’immigration et l’asile”, LM, 16 July 2013.

⁹ “Mgr Poitier: ‘Notre société est devenue pluriculturelle’”, LM, 14 October 2016.

¹⁰ “Vivre avec l’immigration”, LM, 9 July 2016.

¹¹ “Benjamin Stora: ‘Les Français ont du mal à se voir comme les descendants d’une immigration’”, 16 September 2014; “Immigration: l’Hexagone loin derrière l’Allemagne”, Lb, 2 December 2014.

¹² “Les migrants ou la faillite des politiques”, LM, 9 May 2016.

¹³ “Immigration: des droits à petits pas”, Lb, 20 July 2015; “L’impasse du communautarisme”, Lb, 31 March 2016.

of European identity to welcome refugees fleeing totalitarianism. Yet, many adopt the position that the EU should *become* a land of immigration and asylum.¹⁴

We found that only four articles clearly assert that France is a land of migration and/or asylum. The same number applies for the EU.

Prosperity

Discourses in the prosperity framework usually take the form of “myth-debunking” articles. They react to anti-migration discourses appealing to the allegedly negative impacts of migration on the economy. Articles in this framework typically claim that migration does not have a negative impact on the wages of native workers,¹⁵ does not impose a fiscal burden on host societies,¹⁶ that it has a positive impact on employment,¹⁷ that it fills a labour gap linked to demographic decline,¹⁸ or that it stimulates innovation.¹⁹

Affirmative diversity

The affirmative diversity framework is largely absent from the media discourses analysed in this study. Articles highlighting the positive benefits of diversity within France show that many famous writers, singers, actors have a migrant background.²⁰

Dignity

Although articles in LM and Lb appeal to the notion of dignity only rarely,²¹ many appeal more broadly to various moral concepts and intuitions. Several articles appeal to the value of human life and/or establish a causal connection between French or European migration an asylum policy and the death of migrants in the Mediterranean sea.²² Those discourses are already present in 2013. Another strand in this framework makes the case that helping migrants is a matter of moral obligation. Articles in this vein talk about a “moral obligation to help refugees”,²³ about the “duty to assist migrants” and the “rejection of egoism”,²⁴ call to “end the suffering of migrants”,²⁵ or call for compassion: “finding some compassion for the wretched of the sea”.²⁶ Several articles draw on the notion of “humanity” (*humanité*), saying that the EU-Turkey deal “lacks humanity”,²⁷ that “there needs to be more humanity

¹⁴ “L’asile, un naufrage Européen”, Lb, 16 September 2014; “Europe, terre d’asiles”, Lb, 30 March 2016; “Pour une Europe ouverte”, Lb, 8 November 2015.

¹⁵ “Utilisons les chiffres disponibles sur les migrants pour dissiper les fantasmes”, LM, 10 September 2015.

¹⁶ “L’OCDE met de l’avant les vertus fiscales de l’immigration”, LM, 14 June 2013; “Les comptes de l’immigration”, LM, 13 October 2015; “Les migrants pain béni pour les pays d’accueil”, LM, 20 April 2017.

¹⁷ “L’immigration favorise l’emploi”, LM, 2 May 2015.

¹⁸ “Immigration : la funeste myopie européenne”, 14 May 2014.

¹⁹ “Non, les migrants ne sont pas un fardeau!”, Lb, 14 July 2015.

²⁰ “Les écrivains européens : tous migrants”, LM, 30 October 2015; “De la diversité dans la variété”, Lb, 26 January 2016.

²¹ One of the only (if not the only one) instances of a discourse on dignity is a piece in LM by Jean-Claude Juncker and Martin Schultz: “Le Pape François, symbole d’une Europe unie”, LM, 6 May 2016.

²² “Pour une autre politique migratoire”, LM, 9 October 2013; “Immigration: l’Europe au péril de la vie”, LM, 7 May 2014; “L’Europe, insensible aux migrants? L’UE doit cesser d’être hostile à l’accueil des réfugiés”, LM 26 April 2015.

²³ “Aider les réfugiés syriens est une obligation morale”, LM, 6 January 2015.

²⁴ “L’Europe, insensible aux migrants? Non à l’égoïsme face à l’exil”, LM, 28 April 2015.

²⁵ “Pour que cessent les souffrances des migrants”, Lb, 5 November 2014.

²⁶ “L’Europe, insensible aux migrants? Retrouvons de la compassion pour les damnés de la mer”, LM, 28 April 2015.

²⁷ “L’Europe va-t-elle trier les réfugiés?”, Lb, 25 March 2016.

in the treatment of migrants”.²⁸ Starting in 2015, a discourse on hospitality also emerges. Some depict hospitality as a Christian value to be honoured alongside republican fraternity while others claim that there is a strict duty of hospitality²⁹ or that certain policies are inhospitable to migrants and refugees or mark the “end of hospitality”.³⁰ Finally, some articles frame their moral discourse on migrants and refugees in terms of human rights. Habermas speaks of a fundamental right to asylum, others assert that there is an “essential right to migrate” and that France should remember that “it is the country of the Declaration of Human Rights”.³¹

Criticisms of anti-immigrant discourse and migration and asylum policies

The critical framework contains articles denouncing policies and discourses that harm or disrespect migrants. This framework is the most important in terms of number of articles, but it is also quite heterogeneous. Critical discourses have different targets: the policies and official discourse of the French government and of the EU; the policies and official discourses of other countries and the discourses of public intellectuals, political parties, of other newspapers and media. Table 3 breaks it down into distinct categories.

Articles criticizing the French government take many roads. Some denounce the inaction of the French government during the refugee and migrant crisis.³² The mayors of seven major cities signed a letter condemning the central government for its lack of initiative while they (the municipalities) were mobilized to welcome migrants and refugees.³³ Several articles also condemn the French government (Holland’s as much as Macron’s) for being too strict with regard to detention and return of asylum.³⁴ Many denounce the brutality of the expulsion of migrants from camps in Paris, Calais and Lyon.³⁵ Critical articles also voice allegations that the discourse of the Holland and Macron governments are vague because they try to satisfy both pro and anti-migration segments of the population.³⁶

²⁸ “Qu’on les renvoie chez eux défendre leurs terres », Lb, 3 October 2016; “Trois France face à l’accueil des migrants”, LM, 21 January 2017; “L’humanitaire est (enfin) une politique”, Lb, 11 September 2015; “Migrants. Où est passée notre humanité?”, LM, 2 May 2016; “Nous, Calaisiens, ne nous reconnaissons pas dans ce discours de rejet”, Lb, 19 July 2017.

²⁹ “La ‘crise des migrants’ est aussi une crise des mots”, LM, 16 September 2015.

³⁰ “Fabienne Brugère et Guillaume Le Blanc: ‘Cette politique de la peur marque la fin de l’hospitalité envers les migrants’”, Lb, 14 January 2017.

³¹ “La France et l’Allemagne doivent rester à l’avant-poste”, LM, 10 September 2015; “Le droit de migrer est essentiel dans un monde indépendant”, Lb, 26 October 2013; “Comment la France décourage la demande d’asile”, LM, 12 April 2017; “Le rendez-vous manqué avec l’asile et l’immigration”, LM, 13 May 2017.

³² “La gauche n’a pas le courage de celle des années 1980”, LM, 18 December 2014; À Paris « on sait défendre les salariés, mais pas les réfugiés », LM, 29 August 2015; “Migrants: Nous sommes exaspérés par l’inertie de nos décideurs politiques”, Lb, 7 September 2015.

³³ “Face aux flux migratoires, nous, les maires, sommes au pied du mur”, LM, 18 December 2017.

³⁴ “Immigration illégale, le grand écart de Manuel Valls”, LM, 14 March 2013; “Immigration, sécurité: les deux visages de Manuel Valls”, LM, 18 November 2013; “Michel Agier: We have a dream”, 3 December 2016.

³⁵ “Les migrants sont otages de la campagne électorale”, Lb, 28 October 2016; “Paris: les migrants chassés sans relâche”, Lb, 10 August 2016; “Une crise humanitaire délibérément fabriquée”, LM, 3 December 2016.

³⁶ “La stratégie du déminage sur l’immigration et l’asile”, LM, 16 July 2013; “Plan sur l’asile: ferme et flou”, Lb, 13 July 2017; “La France se montre réticente à accueillir des réfugiés syriens sur son territoire”, LM, 4 September 2013; “Réfugiés: les arguties déplorables du gouvernement”, LM, 22 May 2015.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total (Lb/LM)
France	15	3	18	10	9	55 (22/33)
EU	4	4	16	12	4	40 (17/23)
Other discourses	6	7	25	7	7	52 (29/23)
Other countries	1	5	4	10	4	24 (5/19)
Total	26	19	63	39	24	171 (73/98)

Table 3: Targets of the articles in the critical framework 2013-2017

After 2015, some articles attack the French government for lacking solidarity with other EU countries and for leaving Germany and Merkel alone.³⁷ Despite such a stark critical stance both LM and Lb have praised the French government on certain occasions and they have let its protagonist and supporters answer to their critiques.³⁸ With regard to the EU, the strongest criticism links the migration and asylum policies directly with the loss of human lives in the Mediterranean Sea. Some criticisms bluntly assert that the EU kills migrants.³⁹ Another recurrent line of critique is that the EU is unable to coordinate a sound and common asylum plan to face the crisis.⁴⁰ After 2015, many highlight that lack of solidarity among EU Member States.⁴¹

Criticisms of the discourses from politicians that are not in power in LM and Lb usually target right wing politicians, mostly Marine Le Pen and the FN/RN or Sarkozy and UMP/Les Républicains. Marine Le Pen, for instance, is said to lie about the dangers linked to migration and to monger fear by using a language connecting migration to an “invasion” or a “submersion”,⁴² to be “brutal” and insensitive to the plight of migrants and to hold views that are incompatible with the state of law.⁴³ Similarly, Sarkozy is criticized for lying about migration, for comparing the arrival of migrants in France and Europe to a “water leak” and for promoting irrational fears of migration.⁴⁴ Criticisms addressed to Le Pen are harsher and more numerous.⁴⁵ In addition, a strand of articles worries about the radicalization of the right and targets the drifting (*dérive*) of right-wing discourse from public intellectuals.⁴⁶ Several articles take the form of fact-checking articles confronting various affirmations made by politicians or well received ideas in the population to facts, statistics and research results.⁴⁷ Le Pen and Sarkozy are the most recurring targets of those fact-checking missions.

³⁷ “Le souverainisme haineux équivaut au djihadisme”, LM, 23 October 2015; “Le couple franco-allemand en panne sur les réfugiés”, LM, 7 March 2016.

³⁸ “Le jour où Hollande s’est souvenu des immigrés”, Lb, 15 December 2014; “Immigration: la contre-offensive de Hollande”, LM, 16 December 2014; “La France a une politique de l’asile ambitieuse”, Lb, 9 March 2016.

³⁹ “Si l’Europe refuse l’asile aux migrants, elle les noie”, LM, 10 September 2015; “Pour une autre politique migratoire”, LM, 9 October 2013; “L’Europe choisit de laisser les migrants mourir en Méditerranée”, LM, 4 November 2014.

⁴⁰ “UE: le minimum pour sauver les migrants”, LM, 4 November 2014; “L’Europe en fait trop peu, trop tard”, Lb, 10 September 2015.

⁴¹ “Migrants: l’échec des Européens, pas de l’Europe”, LM, 25 April 2015; “Migrants: l’égoïsme dangereux des membres de l’UE”, Lb, 27 February 2016; “Réfugiés: la mort clinique de l’Europe”, LM, 27 February 2016.

⁴² “Réfugiés: la bataille de l’opinion”, Lb, 17 November 2015; “Le modèle français rebute les réfugiés”, Lb, 28 September 2015; “Le Front national se déchaîne sur les migrants”, LM, 5 October 2015.

⁴³ “À Marseille, Mme Le Pen fulmine contre le ‘fardeau’ de l’immigration”, LM, 8 September 2015; “Marine Le Pen, première décliniste de France, par Alain Duhamel”, Lb, 10 September 2015; “Immigrations: les vraies-fausse solutions”, LM, 3 April 2017.

⁴⁴ “Sarkozy, de la fuite dans les idées”, Lb, 20 June 2015; “L’imaginaire des migrants”, Lb, 3 July 2015.

⁴⁵ “À Marseille, Mme Le Pen fulmine contre le ‘fardeau’ de l’immigration”, LM, 8 September 2015.

⁴⁶ “Surenchère à l’UMP contre l’immigration”, Lb, 14 November 2014; “On peut encore distinguer un électeur UMP d’un électeur FN”, Lb, 14 November 2014.

⁴⁷ “L’immigration, une machine à fantasmes”, Lb, 16 December 2014; “Les migrants, au-delà des clichés”, LM, 31 August 2016.

Empathy

The empathy framework is the second largest in terms of number of articles. It is more homogeneous than the critical framework. Most articles in this category focus on describing the dangers that migrants face on their journey.⁴⁸ Articles describing such conditions either take the form of close-up portraits of specific migrants or they adopt a more sociological point of view describing the general conditions of migrants in sending countries, on the road, in camps, or in their host society. Over a third of the articles in this framework discuss the difficulties of citizens and NGOs helping migrants. Illustrating such “narratives of solidarity”, several articles discuss famous figures such as Damien Carême, mayor of Grande-Synthe,⁴⁹ Cédric Herrou, a citizen accused of the “crime of solidarity”,⁵⁰ or the captains of boats doing rescues in the Mediterranean, such as Klaus Vogel and Philippe Martinez.⁵¹ Several articles also talk about ordinary citizens, militants and NGOs working in the camps in Paris and Calais.⁵² Those articles present migrants and the people who help them in a sympathetic light. By contrast, very few articles present the work of Frontex agents or national coastal guards in a neutral or sympathetic light.⁵³

Successful and possible integration

Articles in this category present the process of migrant integration in a positive light by documenting cases of successful integration where migrants were able to find jobs, make friends in their new neighbourhood and contribute to the cultural, social and political life in their host society. Other articles in this framework highlight the facilitating conditions helping integration as well as the role of various actors from the host society in helping migrants and refugees to integrate.⁵⁴

2.2 Germany

In the German case, two of the frames introduced at the beginning of the section on France are particularly relevant: the *prosperity frame* and the *dignity frame*. We can show that the most influential centre-left and centre-right quality newspapers in Germany welcome immigration to the extent that it contributes to the economic prosperity of Germany and the European Union in general. An equally powerful media frame focuses on the human dignity of immigrants and asylum seekers. Two other frames are of lesser importance: *the cultural anxiety frame* which highlights the perceived threats posed by immigrants and refugees to established German or European values, and the *affirmative diversity frame* which emphasizes and celebrates the positive effects of immigration on the growing cultural diversity of the German population.

⁴⁸ “Rester ou s’exiler, le dilemme des réfugiés chrétiens”, LM, 12 August 2014; “La tentation de l’exil”, LM, 13 December 2014; “A Ceuta, les lames tranchantes n’arrêtent pas les migrants tentés par l’Europe”, LM, 24 March 2014; “Vogue la galère”, LM, 8 February 2015; “Des migrants abandonnés à la nuit”, Lb, 16 June 2015; “Les difficile intégration des réfugiés sur le marché du travail”, LM, 17 November 2016.

⁴⁹ “Damien Carême, le ‘héros’ des migrants”, LM, 14 March 2016.

⁵⁰ “Défi de solidarité”, LM, 10 February 2017.

⁵¹ “Klaus Vogel, cœur en stock”, Lb, 6 June 2017; “Ces ombres étrangères qui effraient nos politiques”, Lb, 29 June 2015.

⁵² “Les engagés, de Paris à Calais”, Lb, 21 August 2015; “Migrants: les bénévoles en première ligne”, LM, 24 August 2016.

⁵³ “Surveiller ou sauver, le dilemme Frontex”, LM, 17 January 2015; “Sauveteurs amers”, LM, 15 October 2015.

⁵⁴ “Réfugiés, le bon exemple américain”, LM, 22 November 2016; “L’immigration, au-delà de l’histoire coloniale”, Lb, 13 October 2017.

The sources

Apart from a few meta-analyses and opinion polls, we searched the archives of the two largest selling quality newspapers in Germany:

Süddeutsche Zeitung (SZ), the number one in terms of circulation and readership among daily quality newspapers. SZ also boasts a relatively high circulation abroad. The editorial stance of the newspaper is liberal or centre-left.

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ), the second largest selling quality newspaper in Germany. Its outlook is liberal-conservative or centre-right. It is the German newspaper with the widest circulation abroad, with its editors claiming the newspaper is delivered to 148 countries.

From the archives of these two daily newspapers we collected editorial articles and opinion pieces covering the period from 1 January 2003 to 30 April 2019. From the archives of these two daily newspapers we collected editorial articles and opinion pieces covering the period from 1 January 2003 to 30 April 2019. To identify relevant texts, we have searched 1,029 items for the following keywords (the numbers in brackets refer to the results for SZ and FAZ respectively):

Keywords	SZ	FAZ
Immigration society (" <i>Einwanderungsgesellschaft</i> ")	32	26
Immigration country AND Germany (" <i>Einwanderungsland</i> ")	75	83
Immigration AND economy	80	129
Immigration AND Europe	148	206
Refugees AND human dignity	35	9
Refugees AND human rights	113	93
Total	1,029	

Table 4: Number of articles collected from SZ and FAZ

The moderate conservative mainstream

A key result of our analysis suggests that there is a broad consensus across both newspapers that, in principle, Germany and the EU should be open to immigration both from within and outside of Europe. Not a single article from our sample is denying the reality and the desirability of immigration to Germany. Only against this backdrop of a shared premise differences emerge. Unsurprisingly, these ideological differences largely map onto the general differences between the editorial stances of the two papers. Three examples deserve a closer look. Unlike the more left-leaning SZ, the FAZ insists in numerous articles (a) on the distinction between refugees and other migrants, or between irregular and regular migration, (b) on the sovereign right of nation states to control their borders and select migrants according to their economic needs, and (c) on a sustained critique of the privatization of migration as exemplified by human smuggling or search and rescue operations in the Mediterranean launched by NGOs such as Sea Watch, Médecins Sans Frontières or Jugend Rettet.

A good example to begin with is the article "Singing the Praises for Immigration Society" which criticizes current laws and practices of asylum for blurring the line between asylum and immigration. Seeking asylum has become "a new and quite substantial form of immigration".⁵⁵ The same article praises "traditional" immigration countries such as Canada, the United States and Australia for their

⁵⁵ "Loblied auf das Einwanderungsland", FAZ, 16 October 2014.

longstanding policies of “flexible isolation” (*flexible Abschottung*) and of picking and choosing their immigrants. In other pieces, Switzerland is also praised as a role model. Immigration is welcome as long as immigrants are skilled and the receiving state is in control. If things go well, migrants contribute to the prosperity of the country and make sure that Germany isn’t becoming a fast ageing “republic of retirees” (*Rentenrepublik*).⁵⁶ If things go awry and the sovereign state or the European community of states are unable to manage and control immigration, Europe is threatened by an intractable new “migration of peoples” (*Völkerwanderung*).⁵⁷ Without becoming populist and anti-European, the discourse of the FAZ is articulating and reinforcing precisely this fear of a general loss of control.

If we look for who is blamed and who is seen as responsible for seemingly negative developments connected to migration, it is not migrants themselves, but two other groups: on the one hand, “nationalists and preachers of hatred”,⁵⁸ in particular the governing political parties in Italy and Hungary; on the other hand, “self-righteous moralists”,⁵⁹ who advocate unconditional hospitality, and non-governmental “Samaritans”⁶⁰ running search and rescue operations in the Mediterranean, who are alleged to be more or less in cahoots with international human smugglers. Whereas nationalists are criticized for jeopardizing the very existence of the EU, pro-refugee forces in German civil society are represented as closing their eyes to the reality of irregular migration and its consequences.

It is worth emphasizing, however, that the conservative polemic against pro-migrant NGOs and activists is tempered by the dignity frame and an emphasis on the moral importance of humanitarianism. For example, a commentator defended a ruling by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) in January 2019 against the Italian Government whose interior minister had unlawfully blocked the rescue ship Sea Watch 3 from entering the port of Syracuse, Italy, and from disembarking the refugees: “The ignoble wrangling over the fate of migrants on board of the Sea Watch 3 reveals another danger for the idea of Europe: that humanitarian behaviour is becoming of secondary importance”.⁶¹ Interestingly, after the arrest of the captain of the Sea Watch 3 in June 2019 by the Italian coast guard, the newspaper has modified its sceptical attitude towards private rescue missions in the Mediterranean, declaring that for Europe, the protection of human rights should be “more important”⁶² than the fight against illegal immigration.

Over the last 15 years or so, the FAZ has consistently invoked “human dignity” and Article 1 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union as a benchmark for any German or European immigration policy. As one commentator argues, it does befit Germany, in particular, to protect the human dignity of refugees, regardless of whether others make similar commitments.⁶³ Again, after the ECHR ruled in February 2012 that Italy’s decision to send fleeing refugees and African migrants crossing the Mediterranean back to Libya was a violation of fundamental human rights, the newspaper declared that “Europe” as a “Community of values” must not be sacrificed to the demands of realpolitik (Nielsen, 2012; FRA, 2013).⁶⁴

⁵⁶ “Flüchtlinge und Rente”, FAZ, 31 January 2016.

⁵⁷ “Afrika und die Fluchtursachen”, FAZ, 27 December 2017.

⁵⁸ “Lagerbildung”, FAZ, 30 August 2018.

⁵⁹ “Loblied auf das Einwanderungsland”, FAZ, 16 October 2014.

⁶⁰ “Nichtregierungen”, FAZ, 15 August 2017.

⁶¹ “Humanitäres Europa”, FAZ, 31 January 2019.

⁶² “Die Sea Watch hat die Moral auf ihrer Seite”, FAZ, 30 June 2019.

⁶³ “Risiken der Einwanderung”, FAZ, 31 January 2019.

⁶⁴ “Opfer”, FAZ, 24 February 2012.

Still, what is striking is the carefully calculated ambiguity of the overall message of moderate conservatism in Germany. Human dignity is the supreme value of the German Constitution and the EU Charter, but it should not be used by civil society actors as an “all-purpose glue” to apply to every human misery on earth.⁶⁵ The EU must not seal itself off from the rest of the world, but there is also something to say in favour of Fortress Europe: “The image of a fortress [Europe] is not entirely wrong”.⁶⁶ If mentioned at all, the German word “*Überfremdung*”, or foreign infiltration by immigrants, is only used in scare quotes or referred to as an outdated term.⁶⁷ Nevertheless, editorial comments occasionally express deep concern about Germany becoming not only an immigration country, but also a “multi-ethnic state” (*Vielvölkerstaat*).⁶⁸

Left-liberal (and green) voices

Opinion makers of both the FAZ and the SZ share the view that Germany is an immigration country, and that Europe as a whole is a continent of immigration, even though many think that it is lacking a proper policy to regulate immigration. The SZ also agrees that Germany “needs” immigrants and should welcome them as future citizens. “Farewell to the *Gastarbeiter*”⁶⁹ is a typical older headline summarising this editorial stance. To a large extent, immigration policy is seen as part of an “industrial policy” aimed at “strengthening the core” of the German economy.⁷⁰ Unlike the liberal-conservative FAZ, the left-leaning SZ has a lot more to say about (a) legal and non-legal barriers to a more inclusive policy towards migrants, (b) the ideal of a more open, cosmopolitan European Union, and (c) the shortcomings and disappointments of current EU policies in the field of migration.

With regard to Germany, the SZ has over the years insisted that growing cultural diversity in the wake of mass immigration has not only to be accepted and advertised, but also to be dealt with and actively accommodated in everyday life.⁷¹ The paper has also raised its voice for a more transparent and generous immigration legislation which would make it easier, for example, to recognize foreign vocational training certificates.⁷² Germany should not only welcome immigrants; it should also send out the *signal* to would-be immigrants that they are welcome.⁷³ This can only be done by changing both the law and moral attitudes among the population.

What’s more important is the paper’s consistent reference to European norms and values in advocating a European Union open to immigrants and refugees from all over the world. Already in 2011, after the Arab Spring, an editorial argued that an important “yardstick for the legitimacy of Europe” is how the Union deals with refugees. The EU cannot be a “role model” for the countries on the southern shores of the Mediterranean if it continues to brush off the hopes and expectations of non-Europeans looking up to the Union as a special place of hope.⁷⁴ In calling for an open arms policy towards refugees, the paper has repeatedly invoked “human dignity”, but also, more specifically, the EU Charter and the general provisions of Title V of the Lisbon Treaty which stipulates that the EU

⁶⁵ “Menschenwürde als Alleskleber”, FAZ, 26 October 2018.

⁶⁶ “Festung Europa”, FAZ, 8 July 2008.

⁶⁷ See, e.g., “Der Schweizer Ausländer-Filter”, FAZ, 1 November 2006.

⁶⁸ “Der verspätete Vielvölkerstaat”, FAZ, 3 September 2015.

⁶⁹ “Abschied vom Gastarbeiter”, SZ, 16 July 2008.

⁷⁰ “Den Kern stärken”, SZ, 25 September 2010.

⁷¹ See, e.g., “Unterhaken allein reicht nicht”, SZ, 14 January 2015.

⁷² See, e.g., “Ein Meilensteinchen”, SZ, 3 April 2013.

⁷³ “Ohne Zuwanderer wird es nicht gehen”, SZ, 4 November 2010.

⁷⁴ “Die selbstzufriedene Kälte der Flüchtlingspolitik”, SZ, 20 June 2011.

constitutes an “area of freedom, security and justice” not only for its own citizens but also for migrants and refugees.⁷⁵ The EU is called upon to honour these commitments, and is fiercely criticized for failing to do so. When the refugee crisis reached its peak in the fall of 2015, the EU was lambasted as a “Europe of hypocrites”.⁷⁶ Specifically, the Union and its Member States were called “polluted” by the death of thousands of migrants who drowned in the Mediterranean.⁷⁷ They were charged with the failure to give assistance to persons in grave danger and for proving unable to impose European norms and values on non-cooperative governments such as Hungary.⁷⁸ Overall, the SZ enthusiastically embraces the promises laid down in the founding documents of the EU, and expresses frustration with the shortcomings of the Union in the field of migration and refugee policies.

Meta-analyses and opinion polls

The news coverage and the pro-migration opinions spread by liberal media have, of course, been challenged, not only by newspapers on the right (like *Die Welt*), but also by right-wing populists outside the established media world. Mainstream media are nowadays rejected by some sections of the public as “liar press” and purveyors of “fake news”. With the rise of populism, ostentatiously “angry” citizens and new digital media, the interaction between the public, media and politics becomes much more unpredictable (Brants and van Praag, 2017; Heins and Unrau, 2020). In light of this development, it is interesting to ask two questions: do liberal media in Germany misrepresent the reality of immigration? And are they in tune with public opinion?

The first question can be answered by drawing on the findings of two meta-analyses of the media coverage of the refugee crisis. Marcus Maurer and his team at the University of Mainz have analysed 5.000 TV programmes and articles from the FAZ, the SZ and other outlets which appeared between May 2015 and January 2016. The findings suggest that the contributions were often biased, but not always in favour of migrants, and mostly factually correct. The researchers did not find evidence for the popular belief, shared by about half of the German population, that the media distort or suppress facts (Maurer et al., 2019). A more critical study by media scientist Michael Haller (2017) highlights and criticizes the “euphemistic and persuasive style” of German mainstream media during the refugee crisis.

To what extent do the editorial positions of the major German pro-migration newspapers reflect popular opinion? There is ample evidence that the two major quality newspapers in Germany give voice to the majority of citizens which supports immigration, basic human rights for migrants and the admittance of refugees, at least up to a certain point. Without denying the rampant and worsening racism in Germany (for reliable data, see the Berlin-based Amadeu Antonio Foundation), two recent studies show that the population, on average, has become more open not only to immigration, but also to those citizens whose parents came as migrants to Germany (SVR, 2018, 15; Zick and Preuß, 2018). With regard to refugees, a majority of Germans believes that refugees will contribute in a positive way to the economy and culture. Among those who don’t have a migration background, more than 71 percent agree or tend to agree that cultural life in Germany will benefit from the recent arrival of refugees; more than 78 percent agree or tend to agree that in the past Germany has benefitted

⁷⁵ See, e.g., “Kein Platz im Boot”, 7 October 2013.

⁷⁶ “Das Europa der Heuchler”, SZ, 6 September 2015.

⁷⁷ “Tod am Kanal”, SZ, 31 July 2015.

⁷⁸ “Orbán’s Trojanisches Pferd”, SZ, 9 March 2017.

culturally from immigration. Similar answers are given when people were asked about the economic benefits of immigration (SVR, 2018, 15-16).

In a survey conducted in July 2019, 72 percent of Germans supported private search and rescue missions in the Mediterranean, only 27 supported the position of the Italian government which claimed a right to block rescue vessels from entering Italian ports.⁷⁹

Are these attitudes specific for Germany or do they reflect a broader trend among European citizens? Here are some interesting findings from a recent survey by MEDAM (Mercator Dialogue on Asylum and Migration): survey data from 13 EU Member States show that today Europeans – with the exception of Hungarians – see immigration in a more positive light than they did at the beginning of the millennium (MEDAM, 2018). Outside of Hungary, the refugee crisis did not change this fundamental attitude.

2.3 Hungary

Populist leaders present themselves as the defenders of an aggrieved “people” against liberal elites including the institutions of the EU. They argue that the interests of the people should override democratic principles like press freedom and open debate. Hungary is a dramatic example of what happens when populists rule. According to Freedom House’s *Freedom in the World Index*, Hungary is now only a “partly free” country and hence in the same category as, for instance, Lebanon or Zimbabwe (Freedom House, 2019). According to researchers at the University of Gothenburg, Hungary is an “electoral authoritarian regime” and the first “non-democracy” inside the EU (V-Dem Institute, 2020).

Hungary is also the prime example of a country that has endured a massive reduction in press freedom over the past years. Table 5 shows how Hungary, in comparison to the other EU Member States discussed in this policy paper, scores on the 2019 World Press Freedom Index. The ranking is calculated by Reporters Without Borders on the basis of the following factors: pluralism, media independence, media environment and self-censorship, legislative framework, transparency, and the quality of the infrastructure that supports the production of news and information. To get a sense of where the EU Member States of our sample stand in relation to other countries worldwide, note that Ghana receives a score of 27 out of 180, South Africa 31, Botswana 44, Haiti 62, Kyrgyzstan 83 and Bulgaria 111 (Reporters Without Borders, 2020).

Country	Rank
Sweden	3
Germany	13
France	32
Poland	59
Hungary	87

Table 5: 2019 World Press Freedom Index

As a consequence of this development, there are hardly any pro-immigration positions to be found in the restricted sphere of Hungarian news media. State propaganda has succeeded in monopolizing the

⁷⁹ “Knapp drei Viertel der Deutschen finden private Seenotretter gut“, FAZ, 5 July 2019.

media space with regard to migration issues. There is currently no daily newspaper that rejects the anti-immigration agenda of the government (Bálint et al., 2016). The daily news portal *444*, as well as some printed weekly papers, such as *Élet és Irodalom*, *Magyar Narancs* and the *Heti Világgazdaság* are critical of the government. The first two appear with a little delay online as well, while the latter publishes daily news reports on the Internet. There is also Klubrádió, a left-liberal news radio station based in Budapest and available online.

Journalists and editors working in state media now need permission before they start writing about “sensitive” topics such as the European Union, climate activism or, in fact, “migration” (Bayer, 2020). Viktor Orbán personally directed the change of ownership of *Népszava*, previously affiliated with the socialist party, in 2016. *Népszabadság*, the largest Hungarian opposition paper and the number one daily with the widest circulation in Hungary, was closed down in 2016 under pressure from the government. Critical anti-government and pro-migration voices shifted to online news websites such as *Origo*. However, in 2016, *Origo* was purchased by individuals close to the governing party and has since then adopted the official line of extreme anti-migrant rhetoric (Get the Trolls Out, 2018).

The closing of the media space has consequences reflected by opinion polls. In 2014, 39 percent of Hungarians expressed xenophobic attitudes, but the number increased to 67 percent in October 2018. According to the Pew Research Center, 72 percent of Hungarians have strong anti-Muslim feelings compared to the already high EU median of 43 percent (Krekó et al., 2019). Vera Messing and Bence Ságvári have presented data showing that in Hungary the extreme anti-migrant norms of the governmental discourse are systematically transformed into negative behavioural and policy outcomes. Negative attitudes are turned into explicit rejection and exclusion of migrants who want to settle in Hungary (Messing and Ságvári, 2019: 12-13).

In addition, previous media research suggests that the traditional racism of anti-Roma attitudes can easily be shifted onto immigrants. The issue of migrants and asylum seekers has deliberately been connected with the Roma issue in order to garner votes (Tremlett and Messing, 2015). The state propaganda represents migrants as “invaders” and systematically conflates “economic” and “illegal” migrants. Migrants are frequently depicted in contradictory ways, for example as unwilling to work and at the same time taking “our” jobs. Some these contradictions have been ridiculed in street art campaigns by groups such as the Hungarian Two-tailed Dog Party (Bocskor, 2018, 563; Simonovits, 2019; Gábor and Messing, 2015).

The anti-immigration discourse of the government unfolds against the backdrop of an ageing society and massive emigration. According to OECD estimates, 1 million Hungarians left the country between 2008 and 2018. This has led to labour shortages affecting the provision of public services such as healthcare and the pension system. In response to this, the government has announced a new pro-natalist policy to promote the country’s declining birth rate. Laszlo Kover, speaker of parliament, declared that “having children is a public matter, not a private one” (cited in Hopkins, 2019).

Pro-migration voices in academia argue that the Hungarian labour shortage must be filled with foreign immigrants. This would require making the country more attractive to immigrants, and cultivating an attitude of open arms to welcome foreigners from outside of Europe (Lajos, 2015). However, such a pragmatic utilitarian attitude is not backed by the wider population. Only 22 percent of Hungarians believe that immigration might be good for the economy (Hunyadi, 2019, 20).

Some social research indicates that widespread desire to remain an ethnically homogeneous country and the animosity towards Roma people and Muslim immigrants does not materialize on an interpersonal level where Hungarians appear to be much less hostile than opinion polls suggest (TÁRKI,

2016). Conversely, however, friendly attitudes at the level of everyday life do not translate into public opinion and media frames.

Migration-related discussions mainly take place at universities, international think tanks and polling companies such as TÁRKI. Academic interventions are characterized by a double asymmetry: there is much relevant research by scholars such as Attila Melegh, Vera Messing and others which has no impact on public policy; and political power interferes with academic freedom by defunding institutions or launching smear campaigns against individual scholars (Botos, 2018; Ziegler, 2019).

2.4 Poland

We now present an analysis of two Polish daily newspapers: *Rzeczpospolita* and *Gazeta Wyborcza*, newspapers representing centre-right and centre-liberal opinions, respectively. Both papers have large circulation with 70,000 and 180,000 copies,⁸⁰ publish articles by well-known journalists, which are widely shared on social media. The analysis covers the period of January 2013 and May 2019. Search words included: immigration (*imigracja*), immigrants (*imigranci*), refugees (*uchodźcy*), Ukrainians (*Ukraińcy*). The analysis includes also opinion polls and reports on migrants and refugees in Poland.

General context

Immigration became a divisive topic in 2015 when the public debate about refugee reception and relocation began. It coincided with presidential and parliamentary campaigns. Politicians involved in both campaigns used anti-immigrant rhetoric in political debates and speeches portraying refugees as criminals and terrorists threatening national security and European Christian values, and migrating to gain access to social benefits (Mikulska-Jolles, 2019). They emphasized refugees' cultural and religious alterity, which would undoubtedly lead to social tensions (Krzyżanowska and Krzyżanowski, 2018). Poles were warned that accepting the relocation deal would mean submitting to the West, especially Germany, and surrendering Polish sovereignty. The discussions were very turbulent and the language was radicalized, emotional, and aimed at feeding fears (Łaciak and Frelak, 2018).

The topic of refugee relocation became contentious while in reality the number of asylum seekers remained minuscule. Between 2007 and 2018, 108,000 individuals applied for international protection in Poland. Only 1,853 were granted refugee status, including 589 Russians and 446 Syrians. Additionally, 4,896 individuals received subsidiary protection, and 5,985 "tolerated stay".⁸¹

While Poland is not welcoming to refugees, it remains open to economic migrants, mainly because of labour shortages. These shortages are filled by Ukrainians, Russians, Belarussians, Moldovans, Armenians, and Georgians who are eligible for employment without work permits as well as by other labour migrants from the former Soviet bloc and migrants from Vietnam, China, India, Turkey, Nepal, and Bangladesh. At 1.25 million people, Ukrainians (especially since the Russian aggression in 2014) constitute the largest group (Mikulska-Jolles, 2019, 8).

Even though foreigners have become part of the Polish labour market, the government would rather see Polish return migrants filling the labour shortages estimated at 1.5 million workers needed by 2030. The government plans to proceed with the repatriation of Poles from western Europe to avoid recruiting foreign workers. It also insists that migrants should be given the right to stay in Poland only

⁸⁰ See <https://www.wirtualnemedia.pl/artykul/sprzedaz-gazet-codziennych-i-kwartal-2018>, 6 June 2019.

⁸¹ Statistics of the Office for Foreigners: <https://udsc.gov.pl/statystyki/raporty-specjalne/top-5-ochrona-miedzynarodowa/>, 6 June 2019.

if they “accept Polish cultural and religious values as their own”⁸² and indicates that Islam presents a threat to Polish culture and that Muslims are unable to integrate.

Poland did not accept any refugees as part of the EU relocation scheme. Moreover, it is increasingly difficult to claim asylum at the Polish eastern border (Szczepanik, 2018). The governmental rhetoric of helping refugees “in situ” (outside Poland) prevails. At the same time, support for refugees and migrants already in the country has been seriously hindered by financial difficulties experienced by civil society organizations as funds from the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund have been blocked.

The refugee crisis combined with negative media narratives and lack of integration activities contributed to increased xenophobia. Negative attitudes towards foreigners resulted in increased racist attacks perpetrated in recent years.⁸³ Opinion polls by the Centre for Public Opinion Research show that Poles became less open to supporting refugees. In May 2015, 72 percent of respondents declared that Poland should accept refugees, but three months later the number fell to 56 percent (Bożewicz, 2018). April 2018 reports indicate that 60 percent of respondents are against receiving refugees while 29 percent support temporary and five percent permanent settlement of refugees in Poland (Bożewicz, 2018, 2). Interestingly, 56 percent of the surveyed respondents said that they would accept refugees from Ukraine (Bożewicz, 2018, 6). Meanwhile, general attitudes towards Ukrainians are not very positive either: 2019 opinion polls show that only 31 percent of respondents have positive opinions about Ukrainians, while 41 percent expressed negative attitudes. Poles are even more hostile toward Arabs; only 13 percent declared positive attitudes while 65 percent admitted to antipathy (Omyła-Rudzka, 2019). Nevertheless, positive voices towards immigration still exist and can be found in newspapers.

Rzeczpospolita

Articles on refugees and migrants published in *Rzeczpospolita* between 2013 and early 2015 focused mostly on the changes in administrative and legal procedures, e.g. the recognition of foreign degree or eligibility for disability benefits. Some articles focused on civil society organizations protesting procedural irregularities or proposing changes in migration governance.⁸⁴ Other articles signalled that more and more Ukrainians were willing to move to Poland to escape the harsh economic situation in Ukraine and seek refuge from the war and military conscription.⁸⁵ These articles indicated that Ukrainians should be accepted because “Poland could use them to improve its difficult demographic situation”.⁸⁶ Other authors expressed similar opinions about Ukrainian workers (“It is in our interest to help Ukrainians”).⁸⁷

Since 2015 the topic of refugees appeared more frequently in the paper. The majority of articles were negative and stressed that Poland was being forced to participate in the relocations plans.⁸⁸ In many articles, the emphasis was on “us” rather than on the refugees: there were very few human interest stories that would include refugees’ voices and allow readers to understand refugees’ situation. Some

⁸² Polish Migration Policy, Department of Migration Policy of the Ministry of Interior: <https://interwencjaprawna.pl/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Polityka-migracyjna-Polski-wersja-ostateczna.pdf>, 10 June 2019.

⁸³ “Rośnie liczba śledztw ws. Przepływów na tle rasistowskim”, Rp, 7 April 2017.

⁸⁴ “Polska nie respektuje praw uchodźców do sądu, Rzeczpospolita”, Rp, 4 September 2013.

⁸⁵ “Uciekają od wojny i służby w armii”, Rp, 7 September 2019.

⁸⁶ “Polska ziemia obiecana”, Rp, 17 November 2014.

⁸⁷ “Michał Szuldrzyński: Pomoc dla Ukraińców jest w naszym interesie”, Rp, 28 January 2015.

⁸⁸ “Polska musi się przygotować na tysiące uchodźców”, Rp, 11 May 2019.

articles reported tragic events (drownings in the Mediterranean Sea⁸⁹ or deaths of people smuggled in trucks). However, these accounts presented news without any commentary.

Attempts to analyse the root causes of the crisis focused on the perceived hypocrisy of Western countries – their connections to the military industry profiting from the wars in Syria and Iraq as well as their colonial past in the region (Poland, as it was often stressed, was never a part of).⁹⁰ Accusations directed at Poland for not showing solidarity were dismissed by stressing that the EU has not shown much solidarity with Poles and has ignored issues important to Poland while prioritizing the needs of the original Member States.⁹¹ The European Union was heavily blamed for its lack of procedures and general incapability to deal with the situation.⁹² Poland's membership in the EU, however, was never questioned. What was desired, were regulations, which would allow states to make their own decisions. It was also suggested that openness to refugees and multiculturalism are "radical"⁹³ ideas, supported by Western politicians.⁹⁴ The prevailing opinion was that migrants coming from different cultural and religious backgrounds are not able to integrate.⁹⁵ It was emphasized that Islam is dangerous and Poland needs to fight for its national and religious integrity and remain resilient to alien cultural elements.⁹⁶

Despite the fact that the vast majority of articles questioned Poland's duty to become actively involved in tackling the crisis, some articles described supporting refugees in terms of moral obligations. Their authors stressed, however, that Poland's solidarity should lie with refugees coming from Ukraine and return Polish migrants.⁹⁷ Many also stressed that Christians are the most vulnerable group in the region and should be supported in the first place.⁹⁸ Those fleeing persecution should be helped, but only in the places where they currently reside. Polish organizations such as Caritas or PCPM helping in these locations were often mentioned and the readers were encouraged to support them financially.⁹⁹ Accepting refugees in Poland was taken into consideration rarely and mostly in relation to the economy: "the current wave of refugees is not only a challenge for Polish society, but also a huge potential benefit. We all know how unfavourable demographic trends in Poland are".¹⁰⁰ These kinds of statements were made cautiously: "At the same time, I would like to warn against overprotection by the state and the risk of having a group perpetually dependent on state charity".¹⁰¹ Another piece indicated that refugees would not be a solution to Poland's problems because they differ from Ukrainians who "agree to low wages, and often very modest living conditions".¹⁰²

Pro-refugee attitudes were apparent in some articles representing views of the Catholic Church hierarchy who stated that "accepting refugees is our obligation"¹⁰³ and "cultivating hospitality should

⁸⁹ "Morze Śródziemne znowu cmentarzem dla uchodźców", Rp, 6 August 2015.

⁹⁰ "Nieczyste sumienie Europy", Rp, 20 April 2015.

⁹¹ "Barbarzyńcy to też są ludzie", Rp, 10 September 2015.

⁹² "Muzułmanie nie muszą uciekać", Rp, 3 September 2015.

⁹³ "Polska będzie musiała przyjąć kilkadziesiąt tysięcy uchodźców", Rp, 31 August 2015.

⁹⁴ "Multikulti już się przeżyło", Rp, 20 September 2015.

⁹⁵ "Ziobro: Muzułmanie to terroryzm i gwałty", Rp, 11 September 2015.

⁹⁶ "Hall: Europejska ślepotą", Rp, 16 October 2015.

⁹⁷ "Polska nie czeka na Polaków ze Wschodu", Rp, 26 September 2015.

⁹⁸ "Dr Wojciech Wilk: Będziemy mieli więcej uchodźców w Polsce", Rp, 13 July 2015.

⁹⁹ "Zimowy dramat uchodźców", Rp, 9 January 2015.

¹⁰⁰ "Ostatni moment na opracowania inteligentnej polityki migracyjnej", Rp, 5 September 2015.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² "Pracy dla imigrantów nie powinno zabraknąć", Rp, 7 September 2015.

¹⁰³ "Bp Pieronek: Przyjęcie uchodźców to obowiązek", 18 May 2017.

be an expression of Christian sensitivity and national tradition”.¹⁰⁴ They were also visible in the unambiguous statements made by Pope Francis.¹⁰⁵ The Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights strongly objected to the general resentment against refugees and provided detailed information about the legal regulations and procedures, pointed to the harm stemming from governmental actions, and urged Poland to accept refugees.¹⁰⁶

Simultaneously to the debate about refugees, numerous texts published during this time warned about labour shortages in Poland.¹⁰⁷ The presence of Ukrainians (at first perceived as “storming the country”¹⁰⁸) was presented as an ideal solution. Their recruitment began to be described as a “fight among Polish entrepreneurs for workers”¹⁰⁹ and their possible departure to Germany in 2020, framed as a “great nightmare for Polish employers”.¹¹⁰

Gazeta Wyborcza

The rhetoric used in *Gazeta Wyborcza* differs significantly from the one of *Rzeczpospolita*. The general position of the newspaper is expressed in headlines which often take a form of direct appeals to the readers such as “Don’t throw us away! Refugees in Poland”,¹¹¹ “Show that refugees are welcomed here”,¹¹² „Let’s accept refugees from Aleppo!”¹¹³

Unlike *Rzeczpospolita*, *Gazeta Wyborcza* does not comment exclusively on political discussions and events, but also presents a variety of human interest stories about refugees, showcasing their background, motivations, fears, and hopes. Refugees are often depicted as people without a choice, fleeing unimaginable horrors¹¹⁴. Represented are both refugees who came to Poland before the crisis (mostly from Chechnya)¹¹⁵ and those who sought refuge in the country as a result of the Syrian war¹¹⁶. Their personal stories are intertwined with the stories of people who supported them during their flight and in the new environment. Readers are, thus, able to witness refugees’ struggles. In these stories, refugees have a chance to express themselves.

Another group of articles addressed common misperceptions about refugees (“Is it okay for a refugee to own a smartphone?”¹¹⁷), corrected misleading information circulated by public figures and the general public (“Refugees are not fanatical Islamists engaged in jihad”¹¹⁸) or referred to state actors’ (in)actions regarding integration.¹¹⁹ Various events – happenings, demonstrations, and discussions

¹⁰⁴ “Wiara przegrywa z polityką”, Rp, 28 June 2017.

¹⁰⁵ “Grzechem jest rezygnacja ze spotkania, nie wątpliwości”, Rp, 14 January 2018.

¹⁰⁶ “HFPC: Polska ma zobowiązania ws. Uchodźców”, Rp, 25 March 2016.

¹⁰⁷ Do Polski przyjadą pielęgniarki spoza EU, Rp, 16 June 2015.

¹⁰⁸ Ukraińcy szturmują, Rp, 29 January 2015.

¹⁰⁹ “Firmy walczą o Ukraińców”, Rp, 12 June 2017.

¹¹⁰ “Zły sen polskich pracodawców. Widmo odpływu Ukraińców”, Rp, 29 October 2018.

¹¹¹ “Nie mówcie nam won! Uchodźcy w Polsce”, GW, 9 September 2015.

¹¹² “Pokaż, że uchodźcy są tutaj mile widziani”, GW, 12 November 2015.

¹¹³ “Przyjmijmy uchodźców z Aleppo!”, GW, 16 December 2016.

¹¹⁴ “Utopieni, zastrzeleni, uduszeni - imigranci giną w drodze do lepszego życia”, GW, 20 June 2018.

¹¹⁵ “Ci starsi uchodźcy, czyli Grotniki dla Polaków”, GW, 19 November 2015.

¹¹⁶ “Syrjyjscy uchodźcy w Gdańsku – voraz więcej wsparcia”, GW, 16 September 2015.

¹¹⁷ “Czy uchodźcy wypadają mieć smartfona?”, GW, 26 September 2015.

¹¹⁸ “Uchodźcy porywają dzieci w Toruniu? Ostrzegamy przed legendą miejską”, GW, 25 December 2016.

¹¹⁹ “NIK: Uchodźcy integrowani tylko zasiłkiem”, GW, 13 November 2015.

about migration and refuge were also extensively covered to promote openness and tolerance¹²⁰ or facilitate meeting refugees.¹²¹ Other journalists wrote about what could be done to ease the situation and provided readers with concrete ideas.¹²² The newspaper engaged in campaigns to expose wrongful deportations and promoted different petitions.¹²³

Many of the articles are suffused with references to the value of dignity. Attitudes and actions undertaken by Poles are presented as a “test;”¹²⁴ refugees are considered a “mirror that reveals who we really are;”¹²⁵ somethings has to be done “so we can call ourselves ‘humans’”.¹²⁶ Many people, whose actions are presented in these articles, stress that their involvement emerged in defiance to the prevailing negative attitudes: “We decided to take part in this campaign [“Varsovians are not afraid of refugees”] because of the rising tide of hatred towards people who look different and are therefore blamed for the worst things”.¹²⁷ Discrimination is also framed as something “un-Christian and incompatible with traditional Polish hospitality”.¹²⁸ Religion-based values indicate that what refugees deserve first and foremost is respect of their human dignity.¹²⁹ Another argument to support refugees is related to the fact that Poles also experienced wars and were refugees.¹³⁰ Solidarity needs to be shown toward both refugees as well as other European countries since Poland became part of the EU and needs to carry out its obligations.¹³¹

Presence of Ukrainian immigrants in Poland is mostly framed in their relation to Polish economy. It is stressed that they became an important part of the labour market. However, *Gazeta Wyborcza* indicates that they play an important role both as workers and employers as many are entrepreneurs. These portrayals convey the diversity of immigration and present immigrants as agentic individuals. Many journalists write about illegal employment of Ukrainians and resulting abuse¹³² and frequent xenophobic attacks.¹³³ Unlike *Rzeczpospolita*, *Gazeta Wyborcza* makes an effort to present immigrants’ voices.¹³⁴

Gazeta Wyborcza wrote about the fear that Ukrainians would leave Poland to take employment in Germany.¹³⁵ The newspaper indicated that it would be a great loss to the Polish economy and that “Poland could [also] lose a historical opportunity to recreate the multicultural state and build a bridge to the East”.¹³⁶

¹²⁰ “Pokaż, że uchodźcy są tutaj mile widziani”, GW, 12 November 2015.

¹²¹ “Uchodźcy od kuchni. Zbliżenie przez jedzenie”, GW, 21 July 2016.

¹²² “Uchodźcy to ludzie, nie liczby. Tak możemy pomóc uchodźcom”, GW, 20 June 2017.

¹²³ “Presja społeczna się liczy. Razem możemy nie pozwolić na deportację torturowanej kobiety do Czeczenii”, GW, 23 June 2019.

¹²⁴ “Uchodźcy - test dla Polaków”, GW, 10 July 2015.

¹²⁵ “Uchodźcy to nasze lustro. Pokazują, kim naprawdę jesteśmy”, GW, 7 July 2017.

¹²⁶ “Przyjmijmy uchodźców z Aleppo!”, GW, 16 December 2016.

¹²⁷ “Warszawiaci nie boją się uchodźców”, GW, 17 February 2018.

¹²⁸ “Rada społeczna przy arcybiskupie broni uchodźców”, GW, 12 January 2017.

¹²⁹ “Arcybiskup Gądecki apeluje o szacunek dla uchodźców”, GW, 8 October 2017.

¹³⁰ “Uchodźcy z Polski, Francji, Włoch i Serbii. 100 lat temu Europejczycy uciekali przed wojną”, GW, 19 June 2017.

¹³¹ “Bogaci mają obowiązki, nie tylko przywileje. Uchodźcy potrzebują wsparcia, a my odwracamy się plecami i do nich, i do tych, którzy im pomagają”, GW, 13 January 2018.

¹³² “Śmierć i szantaż w fabryce trumien. Ujawniamy nowe szczegóły w sprawie Ukraińca Wasyla”, GW, 9 July 2019.

¹³³ “Ukraińiec szuka mieszkania. Co ósme z dopiskiem: ‘obcokrajowcom dziękuję’”, GW, 1 October 2018.

¹³⁴ “C’o Ukraińcy myślą o Opolu? Początki trudne, ale potem...”, GW, 12 July 2019.

¹³⁵ “Alarm dla budowlanców i sadowników. Co czwarty Ukraińiec może wyjechać z Polski. Co ze zbiorami i budowlami?”, GW, 2 September 2019.

¹³⁶ “Do przyjaciół Ukraińców”, GW, 24 December 2018.

No noticeable changes in the general attitude toward immigration at the national level are reported. Moreover, Paweł Choraży, deputy minister of investment and development, after an interview where he stressed that immigration is a “necessity to guarantee economic growth”¹³⁷ and “bringing immigrants from Asia or Ukraine is cheaper and easier than recruiting Polish repatriates”¹³⁸ was dismissed from his post. The Prime Minister’s office commented: “Someone with such an extremely different opinion than the government cannot work in it.”¹³⁹

Different articles reported that local governments have a very different approach. During the 2019 Congress of Regions, the mayors of the biggest cities emphasized: “Polish big cities already are multicultural”.¹⁴⁰ They also discussed strategies to make cities more open to foreigners. Rafał Trzaskowski, the Mayor of Warsaw admitted: “The PiS government uses foreigners to scare people, says they will not be allowed into Poland. In practice, however, the number of permits issued has increased tenfold. 120,000 foreign-born already live in Warsaw. Our task is to integrate those who have a more difficult life situation.”¹⁴¹ Also, other cities are active in this regard: the “Open Krakow” campaign focused on making Ukrainians feel welcome by introducing Ukrainian language in cinemas, theatres, and public transportation.¹⁴²

The articles published in *Rzeczpospolita* and *Gazeta Wyborcza* clearly differ in how they portray immigration and immigrants. *Rzeczpospolita* does not affirm social diversity. It writes about refugees and migrants as threats to social cohesion or economic benefits the state can reap. It emphasizes that Poland is ready to accept foreigners as long as they contribute to the national economy. The newspaper does not focus on culture in articles about Ukrainian migrants. However, cultural, religious, and linguistic differences are brought up in reference to refugees. Ukrainians are depicted as a solution to demographic and economic challenges, while refugees as a threat and problem Poland is not ready or willing to handle. Even though the call for foreign workers seems to be omnipresent, there is no explicit debate about Poland as a country of immigration or immigrant integration.

Gazeta Wyborcza also stresses the importance of immigration for the Polish economy, but it also publishes articles praising cultural diversity. It presents nuanced debates about migrants and refugees, focusing on individuals, and provides a venue for refugee voices. The newspaper’s attitude towards refugees is positive and proactive, based on the promotion of human dignity, and contextualized in Polish war and emigration experiences, and a sense of solidarity with both refugees and the EU Member States. Despite no acknowledgment of this fact by the national government, the newspaper—through diverse articles about local initiatives—demonstrates that Poland is gradually becoming a country of immigration.

2.5 Sweden

This section presents an overview of how the Swedish mainstream media has portrayed immigration from 1 January 2003 to 31 August 2019. The objective is again to look for pro-immigration arguments

¹³⁷ “Dymisja wiceministra inwestycji i rozwoju. Po debacie o imigracji?”, GW, 14 September 2018.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Ibid

¹⁴⁰ “Prezydenci miast chcą, by nasze metropolie były otwarte na cudzoziemców”, GW, 12 June 2019.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² “Kraków otwiera się na Ukraińców. Wprowadza ukraiński w kinach, teatrze”, GW, 31 January 2019.

and references to European values. We analyse the editorial pages of two of Sweden’s largest newspapers with nation-wide coverage:

- *Aftonbladet* (AB) (“The Evening Paper”), independent social democratic, evening paper.
- *Svenska Dagbladet* (SvD) (“The Swedish Daily Paper”), independent conservative, morning paper.

All the data collection and analysis has been conducted through the database Retriever Mediearkivet using the following search words and hit frequencies:

Search Words	No. of articles in AB	No. of articles in SvD
Immigration AND Sweden	133	239
Immigration AND EU	42	76
Immigration AND economy	29	37
Immigration AND solidarity	9	10
Immigration AND human rights	4	5
Immigration AND human dignity	0	0

Table 6: Search words and No. of articles in Retriever Mediearkivet database

As can be seen, the highest frequencies correspond to the three keyword searches on the top, although the combinations are largely overlapping. In fact, neither of the search words feature as prominent themes in themselves, but tend to pop up in combination with other themes and issues. This is especially the case for the more value-oriented search terms – solidarity, human rights and human dignity. All the articles have been read and qualitatively coded with a few keywords per article. These keywords have then been used to reconstruct the main trends and patterns for each newspaper. We will now proceed in three steps. We start by giving a short overview of previous research and news coverage of immigration in Sweden. We then present the analyses for *Aftonbladet* and *Svenska Dagbladet*, respectively.

Swedish media and migration

Studies of the Swedish media’s coverage of immigration are fairly scarce. There seems to be a widespread opinion that migration is “special” in the sense of not being covered in the same way as other subjects of public interest. A study by Niklas Bolin et al. (2016) investigated editorial pages in Sweden’s four biggest newspapers between 2010 and 2015 – the same papers as in our study plus *Dagens Nyheter* and *Expressen* (both independent and liberal). They found that the newspapers do write a lot about immigration and integration, and increasingly so over the studied period. Furthermore, they did not find any support for the claim that papers give an overly positive view of immigration. According to them, most articles are neutral and balanced, while the negative dominate over the positive among the articles – *Svenska Dagbladet* and *Expressen* stand out in the negative respect and *Aftonbladet* in the positive. However, some of these things are very relative and subjective. For instance, what constitutes a normal coverage of a particular subject? In relation to what? To answer such questions, different subjects need to be compared. Another difficulty concerns neutral/balanced versus subjective/biased – assessments that to some extent presuppose comparison with facts and existing knowledge.

A UNHCR funded study by Mike Berry et al. (2015) compares the media coverage of migration on the verge of the refugee crisis in five countries: Sweden, Germany, United Kingdom (UK), Italy and Spain. The authors find that Swedish press stands out as the most immigration-friendly, while the UK stands out in the opposite respect. In Sweden, humanitarian themes were prominent combined with calls for more humane and liberal immigration and asylum policies in the EU, while threat themes (criminality, social welfare abuse, and so on) were less prominent in Sweden than the other countries. Interestingly, the report also finds a high degree of homogeneity across the left-right media spectrum in Sweden, with papers converging on the terminology, explanations and responses to the refugee situation. Moreover, Sweden and Germany display the greatest tendency to seek solutions and place blame on the EU and other Member States for the suffering and deaths of refugees and asylum-seekers. In addition to this, both Swedish and German press stood out as more likely to cover refugee immigration as beneficial to the receiving societies.

The study by Berry et al. (2015) is highly valuable, in that it puts the Swedish case in a wider, comparative context, which enables better understanding of how Swedish media differs and overlaps with that of other countries. The findings confirm the results of other studies with respect to the Swedish media's relatively positive image of migration and unwavering criticism of anti-immigration movements and parties (Hellström 2010; Hellström and Lodenius 2016). It also confirms the notion of Swedish popular opinion as being *comparatively* welcoming and free from polarizing tensions between openness and solidarity, on the one hand, and economic prosperity and social cohesion, on the other hand (Andersson and Bendz 2015; Demker 2015). But it only covers the initial phase, or even pre-phase, of the refugee crisis. One aim of this section, then, is to see if the overall conclusion still holds, or if there are signs of a shifting opinion and growing divergence between left and right media outlets.

Aftonbladet

Aftonbladet's editorial profile is clearly anti-racist and pro-immigration. It tends to frame most immigration related issues as questions of racism vs. humanitarianism, intolerance vs. tolerance, and so on. The paper defends a very generous immigration policy, especially with respect to refugees and asylum-seekers, and dismisses most opposing views as racist and intolerant. Being pro-immigration is regarded as the natural standpoint for anyone who is open-minded and tolerant. The paper devotes most of its editorial space to criticism of other viewpoints, and rarely develops a constructive and elaborate vision or model of immigration. Populism in general and the Sweden Democrats in particular are a consistent enemy over the years. To the extent that the paper engages with societal conditions and developments (as opposed to opinions and political organizations), the topics mostly relate to diversity, integration and majority-minority relations, not migration and mobility as such. This, by the way, seems to be a general media tendency that only begins to change with the 2015 refugee crisis.

A few subject changes and re-framings are noticeable over time. The first of these is the slight change of focus from integration to migration, which is a direct effect of the refugee crisis in 2015. Before 2015, there is hardly any talk of the actual conditions and processes of migration. Sweden is assumed to be open to all (in need), and most questions boil down to how migrants are received and treated by mainstream society. A second subject change is the alleged trade-off between liberal immigration rules and a sustained generous social welfare system, as well as the economic consequences of refugee immigration more generally. The paper invariably refutes the existence of such a dilemma, arguing that immigration has always been beneficial to Sweden, but also insists that refugee reception is an act of humanitarianism. The newspaper is consistently against the alarmist warnings of a "system collapse" of Swedish society in the face of the refugee crisis. While admitting the shortcomings of

reception and accommodation processes, it calls for a better developed welfare state with proper housing, education, health care and other public services.

A third and related subject is the alleged obsession with migration that has come to define politics and the public debate. The paper is reluctant to engage with that debate, because that would favour the populist interests in society, and prefers to trace the causes of the current “crisis” to years of privatization and dismantling of social welfare systems. Inequality and poverty are the root causes of failed integration, segregation and growing criminality, according to several editorials. The Brexit vote in 2016 and the election of Donald Trump for president the same year, triggered a series of editorials on populism and xenophobia as global phenomena. They also bring about new debates on populist myth-making and fake news and, more specifically, the distorted image of Sweden as a multicultural dystopia.

The editorial profile of *Aftonbladet* is characterized by critique of ideological foes from a leftist and antiracist standpoint, and largely devoted to struggles of the image and general perception of immigration and integration, rather than immigration itself. The values and norms of liberal immigration policies are rarely spelled out, let alone explicitly developed and defended. However, there are a few exceptions that deserve a closer look.

Solidarity has for long been a cherished value in social democratic Sweden, first with respect to the domestic working class, and later with oppressed and colonized people abroad in the era of Olof Palme – Vietnam, Chile and so on. To a left-leaning newspaper as *Aftonbladet*, solidarity constitutes a given attitude (although only explicitly mentioned in nine editorials) vis-à-vis migrants and especially refugees and asylum-seekers. The success of the Swedish model, the paper maintains, is the ability to combine solidarity with the destitute and vulnerable, with openness to the world and diversity. In fact, they go hand in hand. You cannot have one without the other, as one editorial puts it and warns of the “slippery-slope when refugees are made into scapegoats”.¹⁴³

The EU features prominently in the wake of the refugee crisis (2015 and onwards) and the Brexit referendum in the UK (2016 and onwards). While the paper does not harbour strong EU sympathies, it is deeply critical of the leave vote in the UK, mostly because of the reasons and what they symbolize – petty bigotry and xenophobia in combination with the elites’ delusion and betrayal of the people: “The referendum was a revolt, in large degree by the British working-class, against an establishment that has stopped listening and with which people cannot recognize themselves”.¹⁴⁴

The articles on the 2015 refugee crisis are characterized by sorrow and disappointment over the shortcomings of the EU, especially the unwillingness of most Member States to live up to the commitments of EU asylum policy and to share the burdens with Sweden and Germany. The paper stands behind the Swedish border controls, but not the restrictions on family reunifications and the harsher discourse on refugee and asylum reception. Sweden needs to stand by its humanitarian norms and values despite developments in the EU at large, several editorials maintain: “Sweden cannot on its own uphold the right to asylum. In history, our humanitarian position has worked thanks to the EU borders. In a situation where these are not maintained in practice and where other countries refuse to take responsibility, Sweden has to formulate its own strategy”.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ K. Pettersson, “Inte flyktningarnas ansvar, Reinfeldt”, *Aftonbladet*, 9 October 2012.

¹⁴⁴ A. Lindberg, “Myten om den europeiska superstaten dör”, *Aftonbladet*, 1 July 2016.

¹⁴⁵ K. Pettersson, “Sverige ska vara ett invandrarland”, *Aftonbladet*, 26 January 2016.

Svenska Dagbladet

Conservative *Svenska Dagbladet* has a more extensive and scrutinizing coverage of immigration than *Aftonbladet*. While the editorial profile is unequivocally positive to immigration, it is also more eager to compare and discuss the forms and consequences of immigration. A consistent theme in this respect is the economic consequences, and more specifically the connection between reception, work and integration. The paper devotes a lot of ink to the large employment gap between native and foreign-born residents – especially non-European immigrants and refugees – which is seen as a gravely polarizing malice to society. It burdens the welfare state and threatens to create a permanent “ethnic underclass” on the fringes of society. The employment gap is a humanitarian and social cost as much as an economic one. A number of more specific issues and problems are connected to the gap, such as parallel societies and no-go areas, criminality and (to lesser degree) terrorism, dropping school results, and of course the rise of right wing populism. None of this is blamed on migration and the migrants, nor on racism, but on the political system, i.e. Swedish integration policy and practice. The paper advocates a more flexible and less regulated labour market, with easier jobs, lower minimum wages and stronger incitements to get off welfare. It occasionally also favours stricter integration measures in language training, civic orientation and economic self-sufficiency. But the main focus is employment, and the main enemy the left (social democrats) and the trade unions. A liberal and open migration policy requires a less regulated and more inclusive labour market, the argument typically goes. The so-called Canada model is frequently mentioned across the period, as a way to combine large immigration, effective inclusion and economic prosperity.

The tension between immigration-numbers-solidarity and social welfare-rights-prosperity is prominent in the paper, although seldom treated as a trade-off or dilemma. While recognizing the importance of human capital for labour market integration, the paper prefers to focus on the (in)efficiency of the system. On the verge of the refugee crisis, however, this view begins to shift. In 2014 the paper officially declares that the “volume question” is real and matters. In the face of growing numbers of asylum-seekers and inefficient reception and integration policies, Sweden must reconsider its open asylum policy. The benevolence of a system that creates a growing and increasingly marginalized ethnic underclass under the banner of humanitarianism and solidarity, is questioned and criticized. Of the big newspapers in Sweden, *Svenska Dagbladet* is the first and most willing defender of the temporary border controls and asylum legislation that were introduced in the refugee crisis.

A number of related shifts in tone and opinion are noticeable from the mid-2010s. One of these is the “debate on the debate”, i.e. the dispute over the media’s coverage of migration. This is clearly an issue that the paper engages much more with in the final years of the period. The general opinion in this respect, is that mainstream media in general and the left-wing media in particular have failed to objectively and critically cover migration issues the same way they do with regard to other subjects. A misguided “goodness” and fear of being called out as a racist or SD-enabler, creates a very narrow “opinion corridor” that blocks out dissenting opinions and probing questions. In the spirit of knocking down the “walls” of the corridor, *Svenska Dagbladet* questions some of the assumptions in the established migration debate: Should asylum-seekers have the same social rights as Swedish citizens? Why should we not make cost-benefit analyses of migration? Does ethnic diversity undermine social trust in society? Is liberal humanitarianism best served by dismissing the concerns of populists? And so on.

Another important shift is the paper’s position on the Sweden Democrats and populism in general. Following the 2014 election, which brought additional mandates to the Sweden Democrats, the paper seems to adopt a more direct approach to the concerns of populist voters; an approach that becomes

more consistent over time with the parliamentary deadlock, the refugee crisis and the U-turn in asylum policy. The paper charges against the allegedly “hypocritical openness” of political elites, the militant antiracism of the left and the “taboos” of the migration debate, all of which have aided the electoral successes of the Sweden Democrats, it is argued. A number of articles describe the increasing voter support for the Sweden Democrats as a natural reaction to the political and cultural establishment’s reluctance to talk about the challenges of migration.

Overall, the editorial profile of *Svenska Dagbladet* is clearly pro-migration, but with increasing qualifications over time. The nexus between reception, work and integration is central, as is the causal connection between openness and prosperity, but the paper becomes more critically engaged with the details and conditions of these over time, especially after 2015. Although the norms and values of immigration are seldom spelled out and developed, a few things deserve to be highlighted.

The economics of migration is a recurring theme in the editorial pages of SvD. The subtle shift in focus and position before and after the refugee crisis can be illustrated through a few quotes. Before the refugee crisis the generous immigration policy is portrayed as a challenging but righteous policy, because it is “right and important to offer persecuted people a safe haven” and because it is “an expression of our openness to the surrounding world, which is both a factor of success for a modern economy and a cornerstone of the free society”.¹⁴⁶ In the wake of the refugee crisis, however, the picture analysis is more sceptic: “There is a cost of political decisions. Sometimes the price tag is measured in political prestige, other times citizens pay. That is obvious, and that is why it is so strange when cognitive drop shots are rolled out that say we must not discuss the cost of immigration”.¹⁴⁷

The reactions to Brexit are similar to those of *Aftonbladet*, although the paper’s support of the EU project is more general. The belief in the EU’s ability to confer order and stability in refugee and asylum policy has been damaged by the refugee crisis, but not destroyed: “If we wish to have regulated immigration with the rest of the EU, border controls are needed. Otherwise, the flows of migration will be unevenly distributed across the EU”.¹⁴⁸

Before the parliamentary elections in September 2018, *Svenska Dagbladet* ran an article series called “Sweden from the outside”, which invited authors and journalists from European countries to comment on the state of Sweden. The commentators were selected both because of their interest in (and in some cases affection for) Sweden, and because of their critical views on the Swedish philosophy on immigration, diversity and minorities. A recurring theme in these interviews is the opinion that Sweden is an outlier in migration debates and should align itself more with the alleged general European trend of scepticism towards migration: “The branding of every natural discussion of this [migration and integration] as ‘fascist’ or ‘racist’ has created a dangerous climate”.¹⁴⁹

To conclude, we can confirm some of the findings from previous research on the Swedish media: namely, strong convergence around the positive effects of immigration and support of generous asylum and refugee policy, and a high salience of migration-related issues over time. Despite *Aftonbladet* and *Svenska Dagbladet* being on opposite sides of the mainstream media political spectrum, they overlap on many issues. Over time and especially around and after 2015, there are signs of divergence. Centre-right Svenska Dagbladet has been more supportive of restrictions, and much more prone to discuss the economic aspects of immigration, while *Aftonbladet* has continued to

¹⁴⁶ P. Santesson, “En hög ambition ställer höga krav”, SvD, 17 June 2012.

¹⁴⁷ T. Lifvendahl, “Kan vi nu tala om kostnaderna?”, SvD, 3 December 2017.

¹⁴⁸ I. Arpi, “Asylrätt betyder inte asylgaranti”, SvD, 25 October 2016.

¹⁴⁹ Interview with Elin Örsjäsater, “Sveriges fulaste ansikte – gör direkt ont att se”, SvD, 8 July 2018.

defend openness and solidarity with refugees and asylum-seekers. *Aftonbladet* also displays a strong fixation on meta-debates – i.e. critical analyses of the migration debate – while this fixation only becomes visible in recent years in *Svenska Dagbladet*. Arguably, it is in these debates about the debate that the two papers stand most at odds with one another. Finally, while the two papers clearly approach migration and integration from different viewpoints – one more economic and utilitarian, the other more minority-focused and anti-racist – these positions are rarely explicitly traced back to different values. By and large, such normative foundations are implied and assumed, or disguised as common sense.

3. Summary: Findings and Recommendations

3.1 Findings

Our search for pro-immigration arguments in European quality newspapers testifies to the massive rise of “value talk” in the context of the refugee crisis in 2015 and afterwards. As a result of the crisis, values have been activated and are more fiercely invoked today than before the crisis. None of the newspapers of our sample argues in favour of immigration exclusively from a utilitarian perspective, even though demographic trends and labour shortages play a role in media discourses both in Germany and in Poland, to name just these two countries.

However, the overt invocation of values has also led to serious conflicts both within and between EU Member States over their meanings and implications. Quality newspapers identify and interpret European values, even when they do not refer explicitly to them. They are crucially important value agents as well as stages for public controversy. The critical role of some of the newspapers covered by our research consists in insistently reminding European politicians and policymakers of the normative promises Europe rests on.

References to European values are strong in countries where those values resonate with national values such as, for example, “dignity” in Poland and Germany, or “solidarity” in France. Newspapers are translators between national and European normative vocabularies. Also, they are indispensable sites and sources of self-reflection for national publics coming to terms with the reality of their own societies. Throughout the EU, they reflect and shape the transition from a de-politicized consensus for or against immigration to a more polarized public debate. At the same time, they are a moderating force in national debates. All the newspapers analysed by us are adamant against the project of imposing ethnic and cultural “super-homogeneity” (Michał Buchowski) on European societies.

In spite of their diversity, quality newspapers in Europe are a bulwark against far-right populism, Islamophobia and radical anti-immigration attitudes. Even if the European Charter of Fundamental Rights or, for example, Article 67 of the Lisbon Treaty is rarely invoked explicitly, quality newspapers defend the spirit of the Treaties and the Charter, both against the governments of Member States and against individual EU policies.

Public opinion as reflected and shaped by quality newspapers varies across EU Member States. Variation arises from fundamentally different attitudes towards the benefits and the morality of admitting immigrants and refugees. However, our analysis also shows that not even the most

conservative papers are strictly against any kind of immigration or against the core values of the EU. Hungary is the only exception.

All EU Member States have in common that at least at some point in their history they were open to immigrants and home of national minorities, even if today some of them are critical of immigration and culturally more homogeneous than in the past (Poland, Hungary). Others have been immigration countries for a long time without, however, acknowledging this fact (France, Germany). Sweden is one of the few countries where openness to immigration is itself a traditional value.

3.2 Recommendations

1. *Defend press freedom*

Since quality newspapers and other media are a crucial factor in shaping attitudes towards immigration and hence to the EU itself, their freedom must be protected by all means. The EU should continue and intensify its efforts to protect European core values in all member countries. Hungary should not get away with its systematic assault on press freedom. The independence of the judiciary, academic freedom and press freedom are closely intertwined, which makes legal action all the more necessary. The very future of the EU depends on the existence of a free press.

2. *Promote and protect independent journalism*

The EU should expand financial support to independent journalism in Member States where media freedom and media pluralism are threatened. For example, the EU should strengthen projects such as *Journalismfund.eu* aimed at promoting independent investigative journalism in Europe. When the governments of countries make it difficult for domestic or foreign journalists to do their work, the EU should double down on its efforts in supporting professional journalists interested in cross-border investigations and research on the nexus between migration policy and European affairs.

3. *Support NGOs and citizen initiatives*

Apart from legal action, the EU should continue to fund and closely collaborate with NGOs and citizen initiatives which act to protect civil rights including press freedom in the spirit of European norms and values. It is of crucial importance to strengthen the support for groups such as Reporters Without Borders and the European Centre for Press and Media Freedom (ECPMF). We also recommend developing new ways of supporting local opinion-formers in illiberal democracies.

4. Launch EU information campaigns

The EU should launch massive information campaigns in Member States whose governments violate European norms and values. These campaigns, to be organized together with domestic NGOs and citizen initiatives, should highlight the positive sides of the EU, including its core values. It is crucial that such information campaigns avoid any paternalistic tone. The message to be conveyed is that we Europeans belong together and that "being European" is constituted by fundamental EU norms and values.

5. Reject calls for a differentiated European asylum system

The press coverage of migration issues mirrors the fact that, on average, Europeans are more accepting of immigrants today than 15 or 20 years ago. Also, the acceptance of immigrants is higher in places with a high percentage of immigrants and their descendants than in places with few immigrants. Since in these places migration seems to generate its own acceptance, the EU should reject calls for a differentiated European asylum system and insist instead on common rules and standards in accordance with EU law and the European Charter of Fundamental Rights.

6. Move the conversation to issues other than immigration

Migration is often a salient issue in places where people don't have everyday experiences with migrants. We recommend that instead of migration, political conversations involving the EU and its citizens should focus on issues such as housing, welfare, employment and crime that affect daily lives. Where appropriate, the conversation should move away from migration which is often invoked by far-right populists as the bogeyman responsible for a whole host of social ills.

Annex: Converging National Histories of Immigration?

France. Historians of migration agree that France has been an immigration country for a very long time, although French citizens tend to be in denial about it. Immigration is an integral part of the nation's history (Weil, 2005; Héran, 2007). The history of France as a country of immigration can be divided into several phases. Phase I is characterized by massive immigration, first from neighbouring countries and eastern Europe, then from the French colonies. In the 1930s, the country received more immigrants than the United States (Green, 1991). Immigration has played a key role in the making of contemporary France, but its presence and role have remained mostly invisible in the French national imaginary until the Second World War (and it has not yet been fully acknowledged as a crucial component of national identity). This paradox can be explained by the assimilationist logic that inspired the public philosophy of France. Citizenship depends not only on the acquisition of a legal status but also on the incorporation of a common culture, based on the ancestral history of the French people. French republican intellectuals, like Jules Michelet and Ernest Renan, have typically insisted on the need to ground the civic project on the sharing of a national narrative, grounded on the memories of great ancestors (Vercingétorix, Jeanne d'Arc, etc.) and of founding political events. Public schools provided the privileged institutions where the *roman national* was supposed to be transmitted to French citizens whose submission to a mandatory conscription would achieve to transform into good patriots.

Historian Gérard Noiriel (1996) has shown that this conservative component of French republicanism is at the root of immigrants' invisibility in the national imaginary. In spite of their massive role in the making of contemporary France, their presence and contributions have been erased from urban landscape, national monuments, or school programs, the republican elites assuming that immigrants had just melted in the French society and conformed to its cultural norms, without having any impact on them.

The indifference of political elites towards immigrants was confirmed by the modality of their economic inclusion, which mostly occurred in the private sphere outside of public control. Here it is worth noting that during the era of assimilation, no public policy of immigration was formally institutionalized, since the state delegated to private companies the management of migration fluxes, a French specificity that lasted until the 1970s. Employer's organizations, unified in 1924 in the *Société Générale d'Immigration*, contracted with foreign workers in their country of origin and organized their collective transportation to the French territory. One exception to such a logic concerned the workers coming from the French colonies, mostly Algerians and Vietnamese, who were not foreigners but subjects of the French Empire.

The era between 1945 to 1981 was marked by restricting immigration and establishing a formal politics of integration. Given that France, in terms of its discursive power, has arguably been the most influential nation in the process of European unification after the Second World War (Parsons, 2006), it is important to understand how the French redefined themselves in the course of this period. The defeat of Nazi Germany contributed to the rise of anti-racist political mobilizations. French immigrants – mainly from Algeria, Portugal and Spain, but also from Morocco, Tunisia and Turkey – benefited from the delegitimization of xenophobic and racist prejudices and from their indispensability for the economic reconstruction of France. The French government passed the 1945 decree, which sets for the first time the guiding principles of the French politics of integration. The decree created the National Office of Immigration (NOI) and the legal document "*carte de séjour*", delivered by the NOI and granting regular residency to immigrants. This important decree then expressed the responsible

view that French officials took on immigration: it admitted the right to family reunion, envisioned as a human right, and combined the social rights of immigrants to the length of their residency in France, thus acknowledging the perspective of a durable settlement of immigrants and taking seriously the duty of institutions to integrate them.

The economic crisis of the early 1970s marked the end of massive immigration to France, as in other countries. The unprecedented rise of unemployment, which touched primarily immigrants and deteriorated their housing conditions, led French public officials to restrict immigration as much as possible and to encourage the return of immigrants to their country of origin.

After 1981 we have seen the rise of the ethno-nationalist National Front and the rejection of multiculturalism (*communautarisme*) in favour of a Republican “model of integration”. Against the backdrop of economic crisis, racist and xenophobic discourses gained more support among the general public and the political class. Centrist political parties thus tended to adapt their discursive position to the “*lepénisation des esprits*”,¹⁵⁰ named after Jean-Marie Le Pen, the first leader of the National Front, and contributed to the mainstreaming of the assumption according to which immigration was a “problem” for the French society.

The *hijab* affair which started in 1989 and passionate debates about the principle of *laïcité* were crucially about the relationship between French identity and immigration. A republican discourse about the unwillingness of Muslim migrants to integrate and adapt to French manners and mores gained significant popularity in the public opinion and political class. The ideological underpinnings of this republican position were officially acknowledged with the creation of the High Council for Integration (*Haut Conseil à l'intégration*) in 1989. The various reports published by the HCI before its dissolution in 2012 set the terms of a French “model of Integration”, which exerted institutional influence in the next two decades. All reports described integration as a process of adaptation to the republican political principles that does not require immigrants to entirely abandon their cultural differences – thus distinguishing “integration” from “assimilation”. While tolerating cultural differences in the private realm, the French model of integration resolutely distinguishes itself from the model of civic multiculturalism, by refusing to grant any public and positive recognition to ethno-religious differences.

The collective dismissal of “immigrants” as people unwilling to integrate, was emphasized by the religious turn of multicultural issues in the 2000s. As religious differences started to be at the centre of discussions regarding immigrant integration during the two Islamic scarf affairs (1989 and 2004), religion became the main identity marker and partly eclipsed race, ethnicity, nationality and culture as the fundamental source of tensions between migrants and the native population. Moreover, the French tradition of *laïcité* has been reinterpreted since the first Islamic scarf episode through the lenses of the Republican model of integration commanding the privatisation of cultural (now religious) differences. *Laïcité*, originally a progressive principle of institutional separation, has thus been turned by nationalists (not only those on the far right) into a core component of French national identity (Baubérot, 2012). This shift was reinforced in the post 9/11 era. With the revival of Islamic fundamentalism in French suburbs, postcolonial immigrants tended to be viewed in religious terms. “Immigrants” were now mostly “Muslims”. This was seen by many as being in line with French cultural traditions. After all, it is a sign of being enlightened to be critical of religion. The new anti-immigrant hostility is taking the shape of what sociologists call “islamophobia” (Hajjat and Mohammed, 2013).

¹⁵⁰ The expression was coined by the philosopher and anti-racist activist Pierre Tévanian.

Germany. Like France, Germany is a particularly striking example of an “old” immigration country (Fassmann and Reeger, 2012) that only two decades ago began to recognize its own societal reality. Phase I is characterized by the transition from a country of emigration – between 1816 and 1914 about 5.5 million Germans emigrated to the United States – to a country that became the second largest importer of foreign labour after the United States. In 1914, the number of foreigners employed in the German economy reached its peak with around 1.2 million migrant workers. Many of them were Polish. In fact, the largest population movement in the nineteenth century was the immigration of Poles to Prussia’s western provinces. Coal production in the industrial Ruhr area (*Ruhrgebiet*) increased tenfold between 1870 and 1914, leading to a growing demand of foreign labour, in particular from Silesia and other Polish territories. Polish migrants in the mining areas of the Ruhr, the so-called *Ruhrpolen*, numbered around half a million out of 3 million inhabitants of the Ruhr before the First World War. The Polish miners offer an interesting case of a sizeable minority which preserved a distinct ethnic identity and associational network from which they were able to build a place for themselves in the increasingly diverse industrial towns of the region.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, anti-Polish prejudices were quite similar to those directed against other categories of migrants today. Germans made fun of the traditional dark blue *maciejówka* caps worn by men and the colourful dresses of women. The alleged messiness of Polish homes, the imagined sexual waywardness of Polish women and religious practices like the intense cult of the Blessed Virgin were exoticized and often caused offence (Haida, 2012, 202-203, 278-280). Still, all things considered, the history of Polish workers in Germany before the two world wars is often regarded as a pluralist success story, in which Poles retained their own culture while at the same time learning from the associations of German Catholic miners and ultimately integrating their own class interests into the broader German labour movement (Kulczycki, 1997).

Nazi Germany replaced voluntary migration in and out of Germany with large-scale labour trafficking as a widespread form of modern-day slavery. Historians have pointed out that, ironically, this was also the period when the greatest number of foreigners so far lived on German territory. An estimated 13 million forced labourers (*“Fremdarbeiter”*) from the occupied territories all over Europe contributed to the German economy before and during the Second World War. And of course, many of those who survived the regime stayed in Germany as displaced persons. The importation of millions of foreigners almost entirely filled the demographic gaps left by millions of Germans killed in the course of the war. According to Alexander Schunka, „the years around 1945 in Germany and central Europe show probably the greatest extent of mobility ever witnessed in this region. After the end of the Nazi regime, approximately 25 million migrants from abroad (10-12 million displaced persons and around 14 million German refugees from the east), in addition to returned exiles and about 10 million people who had evacuated and thus survived the destruction of German cities” (Schunka, 2016, 15).

Unlike neighbouring France, Germany was for most of its history primarily a country of emigration. If we disregard the Nazi period and the coercive importation of labourers from abroad, this changed only in the late 1950s when net migration showed a clear upward trend. Since then, the total number of foreign citizens immigrating to Germany tended to be higher than the number of Germans leaving the country (for data, see the German Federal Statistical Office: <https://www.destatis.de>). In the beginning, however, this new trend did not change what James Hollifield called the “premise of immigration policies in Germany” (Hollifield, 1992, 50) which was to prevent foreigners from settling permanently in the country and obtaining citizenship rights.

At the same time, the (West) German Federal Republic committed itself to a policy of recruiting foreign workers in order to sustain the high rate of growth of the economy (for the entirely different situation

in the much smaller German Democratic Republic, which never became an immigration society, see Oltmer (2010, 8-9, 54-55). The result of this strategy of attracting foreign workers without allowing them to become Germans were “guest worker” (*Gastarbeiter*) programs implemented by recruitment offices in major sending countries such as Italy, Greece, Turkey and Yugoslavia. Until around 1970 there was very little public criticism or even debate about the growing numbers of guest workers who were seen as helping to reconstruct the German economy. But once it dawned on everyone that the guest workers were not a dispensable commodity, but de facto immigrants, public opinion began to diversify and change.

In 1973, responding to the xenophobic and racist backlash, the German government reasserted state control over immigration by introducing new regulations aimed at curbing the employment of foreign workers. Most importantly, employers could no longer privately hire foreign workers, but had to go to official recruitment commissions (Hollifield, 1992, 70). The term used at the time was “recruitment stop” (*Anwerbestopp*). Like France, Germany tried to stop labour immigration altogether and even hoped to convince foreigners to “go back” to their original countries (or, by now, to the countries of their parents). With this goal in mind, the German state cooperated closely with those major sending countries that were still outside the European Community. None of these efforts, however, were effective. In 1983, the German government of Helmut Kohl considered offering substantial monetary incentives to Turkish migrants to induce them to repatriate (Hecking, 2013). Similar views were held by prominent Social Democrats such as former Chancellor Helmut Schmidt (Lauer, 2015). This was a milder version of the policy of forced return (*Rückkehrzwang*) employed by Prussian Germany before the First World War against Polish migrants who had to leave the country every year in winter. But Kohl’s return policy went nowhere. To the contrary, and ironically, more foreign workers, encouraged by church groups, civil rights advocates and the German Constitutional Court, decided to settle in Germany and seek family reunification (Hollifield, 1992, 83-84). In other words, 1973 spelled the end of the *Gastarbeiter* period of German immigration. As a consequence, new expressions emerged to characterize the increasingly normalized status of second-generation migrants, especially the oxymoron “foreign fellow-citizens” (*ausländische Mitbürger*).

An important watershed event which helped turning the tide in favour of accepting the reality of an emerging immigration society was the fall of the Berlin Wall and the prospect of uniting with East Germany. Before 1990, the memory of the Holocaust made a broader discussion on inclusion and exclusion in German society extremely difficult. Only in the post-unification era, Germans were forced to reconsider their perception of “foreign” minorities and the laws pertaining to them (Wilhelm, 2013). Also, by 1990, migrants and their children had become more and more aware of their rights and were supported by large sections of civil society. In this situation, the German Parliament passed a new law that expanded the right of foreign residents with valid residency permits to stay in the country. It also created greater opportunities for family reunification. Until then, the *Länder* of the Federal Republic had considerable powers to make decisions about the resident status of foreigners. Worried about the prospect that these powers were soon to be wielded by potentially fiercely xenophobic regional governments in the east, the federal government simply removed them (Hollifield, 1992, 87).

Around the year 2000 Germany finally and officially accepted being an immigration society. This was the year when the federal government, led by a Social Democratic-Green coalition, set up an Independent Commission on Immigration (*Unabhängige Kommission Zuwanderung*), known as the Süssmuth Commission. In 2001, the Commission presented a report which acknowledged not only the reality of immigration but called for systematically attracting immigrants. Rita Süssmuth, the convener of the commission, mentioned the minimum figure of 50,000 immigrants needed every year to sustain

the economy and the welfare state. She also called Canada a role model for Germany (FAZ, 2001). The report presented by the commission called for comprehensive new legislation and became in fact the basis for the 2005 Immigration Law, which replaced the Citizenship and Nationality Law of 1913. Since 2005, things have accelerated. Only ten years later, the influential Bertelsmann Foundation added a zero to Süßmuth's figure of 50,000, claiming that Germany should prepare for half a million of immigrants each year, many of whom would arrive from outside the European Union (Borstel, 2015). Even critical scholars note that today Germany appears to be "the most migration-friendly country in Europe" (Hamann and Karakayali, 2016, 73). This rings even more true after 2015 and the "welcome culture" surrounding hundreds of thousands of refugees. However, the reputation of being migrant-friendly is fragile as we witness the rise of a massive anti-immigration movement and an associated new far-right political party, the Alternative for Germany (AfD). Like in other European countries, the enemy identified by anti-immigrant activists is the Muslim community or, more generally, the "Islamization" of the West by way of Muslim immigration (Heins and Unrau, 2020). Muslims have thus replaced "foreigners", "guest workers" and other categories as negative antipodes to mainstream German society.

Hungary. With regard to immigration, Hungary is a radical outlier among EU Member States. Its government explicitly rejects the very idea of Europe as a continent of immigration and pursues an extremely restrictive policy with regard to refugees and asylum seekers. This is surprising when we consider that historically Hungary was a melting pot of different cultures. Phase I begins around 1700, when the long Ottoman presence in Hungary came to an end, and many immigrants arrived from what is today Slovakia and Romania as well as from Germany and Austria. In the nineteenth century, many Jews arrived from Russia and Poland, escaping pogroms and anti-Semitism. This trend continued during industrialization. In 1900, Hungary was a multinational and multi-confessional country where the dominant ethnic group (Hungarians) and the dominant religion (Catholicism) was less than 50 percent. The modern sector was largely represented by German and Hungarian Jews, German Catholics and Lutherans as well as Hungarian Lutherans and Calvinists. In the long nineteenth century large numbers of Hungarians emigrated for political and economic reason. Between 1890 and 1900 about 10 percent of Hungarian citizens, mostly peasants, left for the United States.

After the First World War, the multinational Austro-Hungarian Empire dissolved, and the Peace Treaty of Trianon created a smaller and ethnically more homogenous Hungary. The mass killing of Hungarian Jews during the Second World War and the mass evictions and resettlements following the war further homogenized the country's population. Emigration continued throughout the 1930s and 1940s. After the communist takeover in 1949, borders were sealed and migration, including emigration, was strictly controlled. During the 1956 anti-Soviet uprising, the borders were opened and nearly 200,000 people fled the country, mostly skilled workers and professionals. Borders were closed again after the uprising was ruthlessly suppressed.

According to census data from 2011, only 3.9 percent of the population was born outside the country. 93.6 percent of the population called Hungarian their mother tongue. Only 0.4 percent named another language as their first language. In 2015 only 146,000 foreign citizens were registered as residents in Hungary, most of them EU citizens (Kiss, 2016). During and after the migration crisis of 2015, the Orbán government called immigrants not only a cultural threat, but also a threat to public health. Immigrants are not present in significant numbers in Hungary. Muslim immigrants constitute approximately 0.4 percent of the population. However, in spite of its massive anti-immigration propaganda, the Orbán government launched a settlement bond programme in June 2013, through which some 20,000

foreigners from outside the European Union were granted the right to settle in Hungary and, by extension, the entire Schengen region, including a large number of individuals from China, Russia, central Asia, and the Middle East. The programme was ended in March 2017 due to pressure from the European Commission and other actors (Field, 2017).

Poland. Poland's self-perception is shaped not by the encounter with immigrants, but by often painful memories of emigration due to a long history of suffering at the hands of its powerful neighbours Germany and Russia. As a result, there are currently approximately 20 million Poles and people of Polish descent living beyond the country's borders (Pacek, 2005). Many Poles continue to be very mobile, especially since the country's accession to the European Union, and consider living abroad to be a natural part of Polish reality.

Modern Poland began as a multi-ethnic and multireligious state. According to the 1931 Census, in the revived Second Polish Republic Poles constituted not more than 69 percent of the population. Poland was also inhabited by a large number of Ukrainians (15 percent), Jews (9 percent), Belarusians (5 percent), Germans (2 percent), Russians, Lithuanians, Czechs, and others (Davies, 2005, 301). In some eastern regions, Poles constituted a minority whereas Ukrainians, Belarusians, and Lithuanians prevailed. Jews were concentrated in cities, where they often accounted for half of the population. In Warsaw, the number of Jews exceeded one-third of all inhabitants. Large numbers of Germans lived in the country's western regions.

The Treaty of Versailles, signed by Poland after the First World War, imposed on the country very restrictive standards regarding treatment of national minorities: it guaranteed civil and political rights to all Polish citizens regardless of their ethnicity or religion, and prohibited their discrimination in any form. These groups possessed an actual political power and representation. In 1922, delegates of four minority groups established an electoral committee called Bloc of National Minorities, which was a successful initiative in two consecutive elections before being dissolved in 1930.

In the 1930s, minorities began to fall victim to the increasingly active Polish nationalist groups, primarily the National Radical Camp (active again nowadays). The organization openly proclaimed anti-Semitic and racist slogans, postulated the introduction of bench ghettos to limit the number of Jewish students, and attacked shops run by people of non-Polish origin. After the Second World War, the Holocaust, and the redrawing of its state borders, Poland's population decreased by around 6 million people and the country, which was ethnically and religiously diverse in the past, became extremely homogeneous.

Population movements which took place after the end of the Second World War included the transfer of Poles from the eastern territories, which used to belong to Poland, as well as the relocation of Ukrainians to the Soviet Union, and the expulsion of Germans from regions which became Polish after the Second World War. In order to describe what became characteristic of Poland as a consequence of the plan to remove pluralism and enforce uniformity, anthropologist Michał Buchowski (2016) proposes a new term: *superhomogeneity*. Both immigration and emigration were strictly regulated. Still there was increasing mobility. In the late 1980s, millions of Poles travelled for trade and work, and hundreds of thousands left the country for good (Stola, 2010). The few immigrants and refugees from places such as Chile, Greece or Vietnam were seen as "exotic guests" rather than as fellow citizens (Łodziński and Szonert, 2016).

The political and economic changes after 1989 heralded Phase III which is characterized by the abolition of strict control of personal movement and the opening of borders to the citizens of other countries. People were no longer hindered from leaving Poland. At the same time, immigration and

transit migration leading to Western Europe became part of Polish reality. Even though the gap between the outflow of the population and the inflow was narrowing, the former still prevailed. Nevertheless, Poland as a result of the transformation and opening up, was facing a new challenge in the form of an imperative to establish a suitable immigration policy. In 1991, Poland joined the main international law instruments in the field of refugee protection by signing the Geneva Conventions and the New York Protocol on Refugees, and in 1997 the Polish Parliament adopted a new Act on Foreigners, based on human rights (and relevant international regulations) and aiming at ensuring free movement of people.

Aspiring to become a member of the EU, Poland began to “europeanize” its immigration and exclusion policies. It engaged in adapting to its standards (including the legal basis of the Schengen Agreement) and strengthening the protection of the eastern border of the country as the future external border of the Community. For example, the 2003 Act on Aliens introduced visa requirements for citizens of Russia, Belarus and Ukraine, who until then were able to freely enter the country.

After becoming part of the European Union in 2004, Poland proceeded with the adoption of further EU regulations. In 2007 Poland also became a member of the Schengen Area. Polish accession to the EU (and gradual admission to the Western European labour markets) was followed by mass emigration – 2015 up to 2 million Poles lived in other EU countries (Klaus et al., 2018). Polish migration policy had to pay greater attention to the protection of Poles abroad, sustain relations with the diaspora and support the return migration of those who decided to go back to Poland. Simultaneously, it had to deal with the emerging challenge of filling the gap on the Polish labour market. One of the ways to handle this was to try to attract back emigrants. This, however, was largely unsuccessful.

In the years 2006-2012, access to the Polish labour market was liberalized. The costs of issuing documents were lowered and the number of groups who did not need work permits was gradually increased. As a result, around 13,000 work permits were issued in 2004 while in 2011 the number rose to 40,000 (Matkowska, 2013). Poland continued to make it easier for potential migrants from outside of the EU to work. Since 2006 it was possible to temporarily employ workers from Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia who do not need to apply for a work permit. At the same time the issue of integration has been largely neglected and according to some scholars, the country can therefore not be considered “an immigrant-friendly state” (Bulandra and Kosciółek, 2014, 91).

Still, research shows that in the early 1990s Poles were quite open and tolerant towards immigrants and ethnic minorities, which may have resulted from the political situation: the optimism caused by the opening of borders and the hope of improving the living conditions of many people. At the beginning of the 21st century, the press presented the subject of migration in a rather positive light. Research carried out in Poland (shortly before its accession to the EU) clearly showed that compared to many other EU countries, immigration did not seem to be a very controversial issue: among all the respondents, who were asked to indicate the most challenging issues ahead of Poland, only 1 percent pointed to immigration (Malinowski and Pauka, 2012).

On the negative side, however, Poland – like other EU Member States – is obsessed with the phantom of the Muslim “Other”. Konrad Pędzwiatr (2017) estimates that the number of Muslims in Poland is somewhere between 25 000 and 40 000 people. Among them are Tatars, whose presence dates back to the 14th century, Poles of Syrian, Egyptian and Turkish origin, whose families came to Poland in the 1970s as part of the Soviet bloc scheme to attract non-European young people to communist ideas, and Chechen, Afghan and Iraqi refugees settled in Poland after 1989 (Goździak and Marton, 2018). Even though they do not exceed 0.1 percent of the total population, Poles’ attitudes towards this group are not particularly positive. In fact, a European survey carried out in 2011 among citizens of 8

countries revealed that Poles are the most critical ones. Pedziwiatr (2017) calls this *Islamophobia without Muslims*.

Sweden. Sweden's first experience of large-scale migration began in the mid-19th century. Poverty, famine and the pursuit of a better life caused a mass exodus with 1.5 million out of roughly 5 million Swedes (in the year 1900) emigrating between 1850 and 1930. Most of them ended up in North America where many settled as farmers in the Western Great Lakes area. The great emigration to America, with peaks around 1870, the 1880s and early 1900s, had a tremendous impact on the demography and self-image of the nation. It has been immortalized in numerous literary works, in drama and film, as well as museums and expositions, in both Sweden and North America.

The period between 1860 and 1917 was what we today would call a period of liberal immigration policy, a time of economic growth, industrialization and international trade with open borders and no passport regulations. Swedish law did not require any residence and work permits for foreigners who wished to settle on Swedish soil, although so-called vagrants, beggars, gypsies and criminals could be (and often were) sent away. Immigration to Sweden was negligible and did not call for explicit regulations. This changed towards the end of the First World War. Not because of a massive increase in immigration, but for security reasons and a stronger urge to control the borders. In 1917, the Swedish police started to reject immigrants without passport and residence permit at the border. In the 1920s, the economic recession led many European countries to introduce stricter immigration laws, and Sweden followed suit. In order to protect the Swedish labour force, the Swedish government introduced stricter regulations of work permits for foreigners in the 1927 and 1937 foreigner laws. The Swedish refugee policy was restrictive with and only 3,000 Jews were allowed to enter the country between 1930 and 1940 (Lundh and Ohlsson, 1994).

The image of the immigrants during the war is complex and variegated. The 1930s were a decade of widespread antisemitism, pro-German and pro-Nazi sentiments, and racial biology, not the least in academia and among intellectuals. Decision-makers and officials from left to right generally believed that the Swedish stock had to be protected from too much contact and mixture with culturally and racially foreign elements.

Sweden's transformation into a country of immigration begins after the Second World War. Although net migration had shown a small surplus for immigration since the 1930s, the government and trade unions had regarded immigration as a potential problem and pursued a very restrictive policy to exclude "foreign elements" and workers from the population and labour market. After the war, however, rapid economic growth generated a demand for labour that could not be satisfied by the domestic work-force. Consequently, immigration became the solution, not the problem. Immigration policy entered a new phase of liberalization that would last until the late 1960s. While the passport and visa requirements remained in place, as did the residence and work permits, their application became much more relaxed and generous. Migrants could enter the country on a tourist visa, apply for work, and settle down and bring over their families once they were hired. In 1954, all such requirements were dropped for Nordic nationals (Boguslaw, 2012).

Most labour migrants who came to Sweden in the post-War era entered on tourist visas and found work on the own. Others were recruited "on site" by Swedish employers in collaboration with the Employment Board, although this was not always appreciated by the sending countries. The annual immigration oscillated between 20,000 and 30,000 with notable peaks around 1965 (50,000) and in 1969–70 when almost 80,000 Finns came as a result of the economic recession in Finland. Overall, approximately 60 percent of the immigrants in the 1950s and 1960s came from the Nordic countries.

The first immigrants from Southern Europe came from Italy in the late 1940s, followed by Greeks and Spaniards in the 1950s and 1960s. Immigrants from Portugal started to arrive in the 1960s. By the year 1970, about 24,000 South European labour migrants resided in Sweden (Lundh and Ohlsson 1994).

Unlike Germany, Sweden never adopted a guest worker system with temporary employment contracts and limitations on access to social services and family reunification. Still, the need for explicit and formal integration measures gradually dawned on Swedish policy makers. The challenges of integration led not only to a more restrictive immigration policy, but also to the development of the country's first general policy for effective integration of immigrants. An overarching integration policy was decided in 1975, when the parliament (unanimously) passed the bill *On the guidelines for immigrant and minority policy*. The bill, which had been prepared through two commissioned reports, signified a definite break with the prior, implicit assumption of (spontaneous) assimilation. Instead, Sweden became the second country in the world after Canada (also being a source of inspiration) to adopt an official "multicultural" policy on integration. The policy rested on a philosophy of cultural pluralism.

Between 1970 and 1990, non-European immigration to Sweden grew from 10 percent to almost 50 percent, while immigration from the Nordic countries shrank from 60 percent to 20 percent. An overwhelming majority of the new migrants have come as refugees and for family reunification. In the 1980s, roughly 200,000 residence permits were issued to migrants, of which 47 percent corresponded to refugees and 47 percent to family reunification migrants (Dahlstedt, 2017, 21). Over time, a growing portion of the refugees have come as asylum-seekers, while quota and convention refugees account for a decreasing share – although no precise records exist before the mid-1980s. Most of the refugees in the 1970s and 1980s came from Chile, Vietnam, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Turkey and Ethiopia (Dahlstedt, 2017, 22). By 1990, Finns were still by far the largest foreign-born immigrant group (217,600), followed by migrants from Norway and Denmark (52,700 and 43,900 respectively) former Yugoslavia (43,300), Iran (40,100), Germany (36,500), Poland (35,600), Chile (25,600) and Turkey (25,500) (Hellström et al., 2011, 21).

Throughout the 1970s and well into the 1980s, the policy field of immigration was characterized by a de-politicized consensus. The transition from labour immigration to refugee immigration in the 1970s and 1980s dissolved the corporatist model and moved power from unionized interests to the government and the parliament, relatively speaking, but without obvious signs of polarization. Immigration remained a question of national concern, but without significant party political controversy or electoral salience. Overall, the 1970s and 1980s were decades of liberalization with respect to refugee and asylum policy. From the mid-1980s a more restrictive turn is noticeable, however. The changing nature of immigration and immigrants raised concerns about long-term integration effects.

The parliamentary debates on the new Aliens Act of 1989 revealed growing polarization over immigration. While the main motive of the new law was to streamline the rules and make the assessment process more efficient, it also brought about restrictions on residence permits. As the decade drew to a close, further and drastic restrictions were made through the so called "Lucia decision", named by the day, 13th of December (of the Saint Lucia), when the decision was made. Fearing a massive inflow of asylum-seekers, especially ethnic Turks from Bulgaria, the government decided to grant residence permits only to asylum-seekers who met the conditions of the Geneva Convention. The decision made it impossible for most refugees to get asylum in Sweden. Hundreds of asylum-seekers were denied entry and immediately sent back to Bulgaria. The government referred both to the extraordinary circumstances, which according to the new Aliens Act permitted drastic

measures without parliamentary support, and the shifting public opinion, which had grown more sceptic of immigration in general and refugee reception in particular (Johansson, 2005).

In 1991, a new centre-right government entered office. It consisted of the conservative, liberal, centre and Christian democrats, most of whom supported a more restrictive immigration policy. It also relied, however, on the support of a new party, New Democracy, which combined a neoliberal, market-oriented populist ideology with an explicitly anti-immigrant, xenophobic agenda. Although it soon disappeared, this party managed to once and for all put immigration on the political agenda, and to give voice to the xenophobic undercurrents in society.

In the present century, the political salience of immigration has continued to grow, along with immigration to Sweden. 711,000 residence permits were issued between the years 2000 and 2009, as opposed to 427,000 the previous decade, and 632,000 between 2010 and 2015 (Dahlstedt, 2017, 23). The overall consensus on Sweden's defining commitment to a humanitarian migration policy has remained, from left to right, albeit with disagreements on settlement and integration. In 2001, Sweden adopted an official policy of dual citizenship, only opposed by the conservatives. The main cause of controversy, however, derives from the emergence and steady growth of a right-wing populist party, the Sweden Democrats.

Still, unlike most other European states, there has not been any "civic turn" in Swedish immigration policy. No stricter rules for residence and citizenship, no mandatory integration and language courses, no compulsory oath or contract for Swedish citizenship. Although both the liberal and the conservative party have proposed a language test, the overall support is weak and Sweden has maintained its liberal naturalization rules: five years of residence (four years for refugees and two years for Nordic nationals) and "good behaviour". Through the Citizenship Act of 2001, Sweden formalized a policy of dual citizenship, which had been practiced for several years *de facto* (Gustafsson, 2002). The latest Citizenship Act of 2014 made access to citizenship even easier through the introduction of a simplified process of naturalization via notification for Swedish-born descendants of foreign nationals (Fernández, 2019; Jensen et al., 2017). This comparatively generous policy has consolidated Sweden's position on place 1 of the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) which compares, among other things, the labour market mobility of immigrants in receiving countries, family reunion, access to nationality and anti-discrimination measures.

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About NOVAMIGRA

Several, partly interconnected crises have profoundly challenged the European project in recent years. In particular, reactions to the arrival of 1.25 million refugees in 2015 called into question the idea of a unified Europe. What is the impact of the so-called migration and refugee crisis on the normative foundations and values of the European Union? And what will the EU stand for in the future?

NOVAMIGRA studies these questions with a unique combination of social scientific analysis, legal and philosophical normative reconstruction and theory.

This project:

- Develops a precise descriptive and normative understanding of the current “value crisis”;
- Assesses possible evolutions of European values; and
- Considers Europe’s future in light of rights, norms and values that could contribute to overcoming the crises.

The project is funded with around 2.5 million Euros under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme for a period of three years.

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