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Editors' Introduction

We have with this Fall Issue of the Central European Journal of Communication completed a three-year-term performance of the new editorial team. Starting in late 2019 we could not predict how the world would change in such a short period of time. First, the COVID-19 pandemic and then the war in Ukraine have affected personal and professional lives of many people and focused communication scholars' attention on basic values such as freedom, democracy, media autonomy, and quality journalism. Under such circumstances, we appreciate more than ever before an opportunity to collaborate with each other across borders in order to capture and try to understand the reality we are facing these days.

We open the Fall Issue of CEJC with two papers covering journalism issues, one in Turkey (authored by Ali Çağlar Karabıyık) and one in Estonia (co-authored by Marju Himma-Kadakas and Signe Ivask). The first reflects on the way the mainstream Turkish newspapers framed the social movement in Iran, using qualitative framing analysis building on Entman's (1993) approach to frames as defining problems, diagnosing causes, making moral judgments, and suggesting remedies. The second paper reports on the pressure for self-censorship of Estonian journalists in response to attacks and introduces the phenomenon of "unperceived collective self-censorship", using a multi-method approach: content analysis, expert survey, and in-depth interviews. The authors conclude that the public media criticism leads to an overall impression that there is a considerable amount of pressure leading to journalists (self) censorship.

The next two papers deal with the COVID-19 pandemic, from two different angles. Liis Auväärt analyzes the international Sigma Awards competition for data journalism, to see to what extent and in what particular ways the projects listed in the prestigious international competition used data to fight the COVID-19 crisis. The author argues for a shift in journalism practice towards using data, which requires new skills and practices. In the other paper, Dariusz Tworzydło, Sławomir Gawroński, Mateusz Lach, and Kinga Bajorek use expert surveys with public relations specialists to investigate how crisis management PR and digital PR practices have been strengthened during the COVID-19 pandemic in Poland.

An interesting piece by Patryk Wawrzyński analyzes discreet emotions (pride or compassion) as emotional strategies of political storytelling. Reporting on data from an experiment conducted in Poland on the topic of collective

memory, the author concludes that the appeal to either of the two emotions depends on prior support for the practices related to collective memories, with compassion-related narrative being the most successful strategy. If this paper refers explicitly to non-populist political communication, in the next one Rémi Almodt solely focuses on right-wing populist discourses, in a cross-country comparison. The author reports on data from 2015-2021 posts scraped from Facebook pages (party, movement, and partisan news media pages) in Austria, Germany, Hungary, and Poland. The paper concludes that there are common narratives and frame construction details of populist discourse across countries, especially concerning international institutions, government, and opposition actors, as well as migration and refugees.

In the section on Methods and Concepts, Aylin Ecem Gürşen introduces the term of "intellectual influencer", at the intersection of two other already established concepts: "influencer marketing" and "public intellectual". The author argues that the intellectual influencers could make an impact in various domains, from art and design, to hobbies, travels, or cuisine, but also in politics, as sometimes such public figures are politically engaged.

Employing an interdisciplinary approach to the studies on the contemporary media was also suggested in the Interview with Daniel C. Hallin. A co-author of a seminal book on "Comparing Media Systems: Three Models of Media and Politics" (2004) shares his insightful observations on changes that have been occurring in the US media system in last two decades. He also offers his suggestions how to design and conduct a comparative research on media systems in democratic and non-democratic regimes in the era of digital media.

This issue offers two book reviews, one focused on media systems around the world, and one of the public broadcaster in Poland. In the former review, Bence Varga and Marton Demeter offer an overview of *Global Journalism: Understanding World Media Systems*, an edited book by Daniela Dimitrova published by Rowman & Littlefield Publishers in 2021. In the latter review, Maria Wąsicka-Sroczyńska analyzes Węglińska Agnieszka's book *Public Television in Poland. Political Pressure and Public Service Media in a Post – communist Country*, published in 2021 by Routledge.

At the end of the current issue, we report on four events. First, we provide a general overview of the 6th Congress of the Polish Communication Association, entitled "Media and Society in the Age of Platforms, Algorithms and Data", held at Gdańsk, Poland on September 22-24, 2022. It is followed by a detailed report on the event entitled "Establishing Effective Media Self-Regulation in Poland", organized by a newly established working group „Independent Self-Regulation in Poland" during the 6th Congress of the Polish Communication Association on September 24, 2022. This year's Spring issue presented the nominees for the Karol Jakubowicz's Award of 2022—now in this Fall issue we introduce the winner,

professor Urszula Doliwa from the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, Poland. The awards ceremony took place within the above-mentioned Congress of the Polish Communication Association in Gdańsk. Finally, we summarize a performance of the CEJC editors and the Polish Communication Association members at the ECREA conference in Aarhus (Denmark) on October 19-22, 2022.

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Polarization in the Turkish Press: Framing the Social Movement in Iran

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Abstract: This study examines the framing of the social movement in Iran launched on 29 December 2017, by analyzing the news texts of six national Turkish newspapers. It discusses the movement in the context of news framing, focusing on problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and treatment recommendation. The findings suggest that each newspaper has reported the social movement in Iran quite differently. The most obvious difference is that the left-wing, anti-government press mainly explained the events in terms of political, economic, and social factors while the right-wing, pro-government press attributed the events to 'foreign forces' and reflected the dominant discourse of political power while framing the news. Thus, the way Turkish newspapers frame a social movement outside the country reveals the intense polarization in the Turkish press.

Keywords: News framing; news discourse; polarization; social movement in Iran; Turkish press.

INTRODUCTION

This study analyzes how the Turkish press has framed social events that started in Mashhad, Iran, in the last days of 2017 before spreading rapidly throughout the country. It has been reported that about 42,000 people participated in demonstrations across 80 Iranian cities, at least 20 people died, hundreds were wounded, and about 3,700 people were arrested. On 29 December 2017, a group of people in Iran started protests against the government. Over the following days, two opposing groups were formed after government supporters also got involved.

On the one hand, these events can be assessed in relation to a transformation in social movements. According to Della Porta and Diani (2006, p. 66), "[s]ocial movements not only aim at specific policy changes or the replacement of specific political elites but at broader transformations in societal priorities, in the basic mechanisms through which a society operates." Whereas 'old' social movements

(identified by Marxist theory) were mainly based on the working-class and focused on economic interests, 'new' social movements go beyond economic issues to gender, race, environmentalism, human rights, etc. (see Buechler, 1995). From this perspective, events in Iran can be evaluated in relation to other new social movements, such as the 'Arab Spring' in the Middle East and North Africa, or the Gezi Park Protests in Turkey.[1]

On the other hand, events in Iran can be discussed from the perspective of a power struggle, specifically the conflict between reformists and conservatives. The Iranian Islamic Republic has a complex state administrative structure that includes the President (Hassan Rouhani) and the Supreme Leader (Ayatollah Ali Khamenei). In response to the protests, Rouhani, known as a reformist, said, "The Government should open space for criticism and protest" whereas Khamenei rejected concessions to the demonstrators to protect the Islamic Republic and to intervene with the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps if necessary (BBC, 2017).

Carragee and Roefs (2004, p. 228) argue that "analyzing the interaction between the news media and social movements helps to expose ideological struggle and contestation." Accordingly, the main objective of the study is to show how the Turkish press framed the development of events in Iran, especially the extent of differences in news frames between pro – and anti-government newspapers. The findings indicate that specific newspapers had very different discourses on the nature of the events, their causes, and the identification of the events' actors. Thus, this study reveals once again the existing polarization in the Turkish media regarding a social movement occurring outside the country.

TURKEY'S POLARIZED MEDIA ENVIRONMENT

The Turkish media sphere is characterized by a deep polarization between pro – and anti-government press. Many studies (e.g. Bayram, 2010; Çarkoğlu & Yavuz, 2010; Çarkoğlu et al., 2014; Doğu & Mat, 2019; Iseri et al., 2019; Özçetin & Baybars-Hawks, 2018; Panayırcı et al., 2016; Yıldırım et al., 2021) have shown that the Turkish media is sharply polarized, especially in terms of press-party and political parallelism. Parallelism means that "media tend to be structured and aligned according to competing parties and ideologies in the country concerned" (McQuail, 2010, p. 241). Press-party parallelism, coined by Colin Seymour-Ure (1974), describes the degree of partisanship whereby the structure of the media system parallels the political system. Hallin and Mancini (2004, p. 28), who refer more broadly to political parallelism, argue that this concept has

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[1] The Gezi Park Protests, which started in Istanbul in late May 2013, became one of Turkey's largest social movements.

several different components, including media content, organizational connections between media and political parties or other kinds of organizations, the tendency for media personnel to be politically active in political life, the partisanship of media audiences, and the role orientations and practices of journalists.

It is appropriate to briefly mention the aforegoing studies related to polarization in Turkish media. Bayram's (2010) article "Political Parallelism in the Turkish Press, a Historical Interpretation" reviews political parallelism in the Turkish press from a historical and comparative perspective, covering the period from the 1830s to the 2002 elections. He states that, overall, political parallelism in the Turkish press is at moderate to high levels.

Çarkoğlu and Yavuz's (2010) article "Press–party Parallelism in Turkey: An Individual Level Interpretation" aims to measure the level of partisanship for readers of major newspapers in Turkey. Their findings suggest that the Turkish newspaper coverage appears to become more partisan within the first five years of the AKP[2] tenure.

The article "Press-Party Parallelism and Polarization of News Media during an Election Campaign: The Case of the 2011 Turkish Elections" by Çarkoğlu et al. (2014) examines press-party parallelism during the 2011 national elections in Turkey. The Authors focus on two indicators of press-party parallelism: (1) respective "voice" given to the two leading parties, calculated as the ratio of news that quoted sources from the incumbent Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (AKP) to the leading opposition party Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi[3] (CHP), and (2) news articles' tones toward AKP and CHP. The results indicate that there is a clear divergence in voice given to respective parties by opposition and conservative newspapers.

Doğu and Mat's (2019) article "Who Sets the Agenda? Polarization and Issue Ownership in Turkey's Political Twittersphere" analyzes the correspondence of issues between the media and political agendas, with a particular focus on polarization. The authors compare the issues on the media and political agendas in Turkey through Twitter. Findings indicate political parallelism is the major factor in defining the relationship between the issues and accounts.

The article "The Sphere of Consensus in a Polarized Media System: The Case of Turkey During the Catastrophic Coup Attempt" by Iseri et al. (2019) examines how The July 2016 coup attempt in Turkey has shaped the editorial policies of news media outlets in a highly polarized media system. This article hypothesizes that, mainly due to the peculiarities of the Turkish media system, even at the time of a catastrophic event, the framing strategies of media outlets converge only to a limited degree on a sphere of consensus.

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2 Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (AK Parti / AKP), Justice and Development Party (ruling party).

3 Republican People's Party (CHP, main opposition party).

Özçetin and Baybars-Hawks's (2018) paper "Framing the Russian Aircraft Crisis: News Discourse in Turkey's Polarized Media Environment" analyzes how the downing of a Russian aircraft by a Turkish F-16 jet on 24 November 2015 was framed by pro-government and anti-government newspapers. The analysis of the news frames utilized by four Turkish newspapers underlines the fact that in a polarized media environment news frames are highly politicized and the distinction between news frames and official discourse is frequently blurred. The Authors state that in more polarized and less free media environments news frames of pro-government news outlets tend to follow and be directed by the way events are framed by political actors and dominant political discourses.

The article "Political Agency of News Outlets in a Polarized Media System: Framing the Corruption Probe in Turkey" by Panayırcı et al. (2016) aims to determine the stances of media outlets during the critical 17 December corruption probe in Turkey. This study investigates Turkey as an under-studied mediascape with polarized characteristics, with particular reference to the political scandal caused by the 17 December 2013 corruption probe, which is predicted to have increased political parallelism dramatically. The findings not only confirm earlier studies on 'press-party' parallelism, but also reveal 'press-sociopolitical camp parallelism' in Turkey's polarized media system.

Yıldırım et al. (2021) analyze the content of news coverage of political parties across four consecutive national election campaigns in Turkey (2002, 2007, 2011, and 2015) to track changes in press-party parallelism in their article "Dynamics of Campaign Reporting and Press-Party Parallelism: Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism and the Media System in Turkey." According to Yıldırım et al. (2021, p. 18), their analyses provide evidence for rising press-party parallelism over 13 years, from the first election that brought the AKP to power in 2002 through the three subsequent election campaigns that witnessed the rise of the AKP to a dominant position.

Turkey has also emerged as a key country in discussions over polarization (Aydın-Düzgit & Balta, 2019; Somer, 2019) both politically (e.g. secular/Islamist) and socially (e.g. Turkish/Kurdish). As Siebert et al. (1956) point out, the press adopts the form of the political and social systems in which it operates. Hallin and Mancini (2004) identify three types of media systems: *democratic corporations*, *liberal*, and *polarized pluralist*. According to Panayırcı et al. (2016, p. 552), Turkey's media system matches the characteristics of the 'polarized pluralist model' including high media integration into party politics (or political parallelism) and state intervention, along with low media commercialization and journalistic professionalism. Several factors that influence press-party parallelism and partisanship in a media system are in play in Turkey, such as commercialization, clientelism, political polarization, ties between media and political

institutions, and newspapers' judgments about reader preferences (Çarkoğlu et al., 2014, p. 299).

In the 1980s, there were significant political, social, and economic transformations in Turkey, which also affected the media sector. With the implementation of neoliberal economic policies, traditional media ownership, such as family-owned companies whose main profession was journalism, was replaced by major media conglomerates who principally operate in finance, trade, banking, etc. According to Kaya and Çakmur (2010, p. 533), the media in Turkey is sharply concentrated in two major camps. On one side, is the mainstream media, primarily concerned with increasing profits through higher circulation and ratings; on the other side, is a conservative, Islamist, pro-government media that chiefly functions to dissiminate these viewpoints. Since the mid-2000s, Turkey's media, whether Islamist or mainstream, has become strongly pro-government. One of the most important factors in the formation of the Turkish media industry is government-induced changes to media ownership structure, specifically because a significant portion of the mainstream media was acquired by pro-government groups. As Özçetin and Baybars-Hawks (2018, p. 39) put it, the ruling AKP / AK Parti has created its own media.

Media polarization should also not be considered separately from the challenges to democracy and freedoms. Yesil (2016, p. 13), who defines Turkey's political system as an 'authoritarian neoliberal order', notes that "Turkey's media system is marked by the combination of state power with the power of capital, and authoritarian state control with neoliberal elements." Similarly, Akser and Baybars-Hawks (2012) define the Turkish media system as 'a model of neoliberal media autocracy'. Freedom of the media and media independence are weak in Turkey (see Çarkoğlu & Yavuz, 2010; Çarkoğlu et al., 2014). According to Çarkoğlu and Yavuz (2010, p. 618), ensuring media independence in Turkey would require two changes: "first, [the] media has to be free from political pressures in order to function well. Secondly, it has to be distanced from partisan loyalties as much as possible for the purposes of objectivity." International organizations and think tanks have criticized Turkey's situation. Freedom House's (2022) global freedom scores, for example, rate Turkey's status as "Not Free" in terms of political rights and civil liberties while the RSF[4] (2022) World Press Freedom Index for 2022 ranked Turkey 149 out of 180 countries in 2022.

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4 Reporters Sans Frontières / Reporters Without Borders.

FRAMING THEORY AND RESEARCH

Framing theory grew out of cognitive psychology (Bartlett, 1932), anthropology (Bateson, 1972), and sociology (Goffman, 1986 [1974]). According to Nelson et al. (1997, p. 567), "[f]raming is the process by which a communication source, such as a news organization, defines and constructs a political issue or public controversy." In media and communication studies, framing assumes that the way an issue is characterized in news reports can influence how it is understood by audiences (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007, p. 11), It can also help us to understand how citizens make sense of political, social, and economic issues (Chong & Druckman, 2007; de Vreese et al., 2011).

The principal elements of the framing concept are selection, salience, and, if necessary, exclusion. In Entman's frequently quoted words, to frame an item is to "select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation" (1993, p. 52). According to Goffman (1986, p. 21), frames enable us "to locate, perceive, identify, and label" information and events. A media (news) frame is a "central organizing idea for news content that supplies a context and suggests what the issue is through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion, and elaboration" (Tankard, 2001, p. 100). Gamson and Modigliani (1989, p. 3) suggest that "media discourse can be conceived of as a set of interpretive packages that give meaning to an issue." In other words, meaning and reality can be reconstructed in many different ways.[5] As media packages, frames shape news content.

Despite the increasing popularity of framing research, theoretical and methodological disagreements and problems continue (see Borah, 2011; Hertog & McLeod, 2001), so that no widely accepted methodological approach has yet emerged. Framing studies draw on both quantitative (e.g. traditional content analysis, Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000) and qualitative methods (e.g. discourse analysis, Pan & Kosicki, 1993). There are two basic approaches to defining news frames: *deductive* and *inductive* (de Vreese, 2005; Matthes & Kohring, 2008; Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). The deductive approach examines frames that are predefined and applicable to different topics whereas, in the inductive approach, the frames are obtained from the data during the analysis. Frames

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5   For example, in his seminal work, Robert Entman (1991) compared two similar air disasters. One was the Korean aircraft (KAL 007) shot down in 1983 by a Soviet plane; the other was an Iranian civil flight (Iran Air 655) shot down in 1988 by a US naval vessel in the Persian Gulf (McQuail, 2010, p. 381). Entman reached striking findings. The reasons, reporting tone, and identification of the air incidents were framed quite differently in the US media.

that are only pertinent to specific topics or events can be labeled 'issue-specific frames'[6] (de Vreese, 2005, p. 54).

Framing theory is very fashionable for social movement research for many years. Moreover, a substantial literature, called the movement framing literature, has emerged. As Benford (1997, p. 415) states that "the term 'frame' has become a cliché in the study of social movements." According to Benford and Snow (2000, p. 612), not only has the framing concept been applied most extensively to the substantive study of social movements, but interest in framing processes in relation to the operation of social movements has animated an increasing amount of conceptual and empirical scholarship.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The data for this study comprise reports from six daily national newspapers belonging to media groups representative of the Turkish press: *Evrensel*, *Cumhuriyet*, *Hürriyet*, *Habertürk*[7], *Star*, and *Yeni Akit*. The samples were news reports about Iran over a 10-day[8] period between 30 December 2017 (one day after the events' began) and 8 January 2018, when the issue lost prominence. The reports were all from the front pages of each newspaper since this page is particularly significant (Clayman & Reisner, 1998, p. 178). The newspapers were chosen by considering two main criteria: *ideological positioning* and *political intimacy*. Yetkin (2011) was used as the reference to define ideological positioning as follows: *Evrensel* (radical left), *Cumhuriyet* (left-of-center), *Hürriyet* and *Habertürk* (centrist), *Star* (right-of-center), and *Yeni Akit* (radical right). Each newspaper's political intimacy was defined in relation to previous studies of Turkey's media industry and media-state relations, particularly Adaklı (2013), Gencel Bek (2011), Kaya (2009), Kaya and Çakmur (2010), Sönmez (2014), and Topuz (2003): *Evrensel* and *Cumhuriyet* (anti-government), *Hürriyet* (unclear)[9], *Habertürk*, *Star*, and *Yeni Akit* (pro-government). Table 1 summarizes the ideological positioning and political intimacy of the newspapers in this study.

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6 See Benford (1997, pp. 414–415) for an extensive list of specific movement frames.

7 It has ceased newspaper publishing.

8 The events began on Friday, December 29, 2017. Among the examined newspapers, *Hürriyet* published the first news report about the events on December 30, 2017, whereas the other newspapers first reported it on December 31, 2017, or later.

9 Not being anti-government or pro-government prominently. Sönmez (2014, p. 101) mentions *Hürriyet*, which belonged to Doğan Media Group until April 2018, as "resisting AKP power, partly." *Hürriyet* sometimes supported the government and adopted a concept of broadcasting that varies according to the political situation. *Hürriyet*, regarded as the 'flagship' of the Turkish press, was acquired by the Demirören group in March 2019, known for its closeness to the government.

Table 1. Ideological positioning and political intimacy of the newspapers

political intimacy	ideological positioning		
	radical left left-of-center	center	radical right right-of-center
anti-government	*Evrensel* *Cumhuriyet*		
unclear		*Hürriyet*	
pro-government		*Habertürk*	*Star* *Yeni Akit*

Source: Author

HYPOTHESIS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research hypothesizes that Turkish media organizations will take a polarized stance even in a social movement abroad due to the press-party parallelism in the context of news framing. The following three research questions were addressed to understand how the Turkish press framed the social movement in Iran:

- *RQ1*: Are there similarities/differences between pro-government and anti-government newspapers in framing events in Iran?
- *RQ2*: Are the ideological positioning and the political intimacy of the newspapers visible in their news framing practices?
- *RQ3*: Do the differences in framing between newspapers reveal polarization in the Turkish press?

METHOD

There is neither a coherent theory nor any consensus about analyzing media content (McQuail, 2010, p. 340). However, framing research in media and communication studies provides a rich theoretical area, especially for analyzing the news. Moreover, as Benford (1997, p. 410) states "the framing perspective has made significant contributions to the social movements field", which is why the present paper benefits from framing theory and its methodology. This study was inspired by Entman's (1993) framing conceptualization, which argues that frames define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgments, and suggest remedies. Accordingly, the four basic functions of news framing are, respectively,

problem definition[10], causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and treatment recommendation. From this perspective, it is clear that several framing elements or devices can constitute a frame. Scheufele and Scheufele (2010, p. 120) note that "problem definition and its causal interpretation are likely to be core elements of a media frame at the textual level (e.g. a newspaper article)". In this study, *problem definition* includes what the issue is or how the movement and its actors are labeled. *Causal interpretation* identifies the actors who are responsible for the incidents and their reasons. *Moral evaluation* refers to the moral arguments (e.g. moral judgments, justifications, accusations, etc.) articulated in the news. Finally, *treatment recommendation* refers to propositions for resolving the crisis.

ANALYSIS

The analysis is based on Entman's linguistic approach for measuring media frames (see Matthes & Kohring, 2008). Scheufele and Scheufele (2010, p. 112) also call it the 'journalistic approach' to framing. In this approach, "frames are identified by analyzing the selection, placement, and structure of specific words and sentences in a text" (Matthes & Kohring, 2008, p. 260). Entman adds that,

> frames can be detected by probing for particular words and visual images[11] that consistently appear in a narrative and convey thematically consonant meanings across media and time (Entman 1991, p. 7)

This study presents a qualitative analysis of news frames, focusing on the discursive structures of news texts. Special attention was given to news report headlines and leads, following Pan and Kosicki (1993, p. 59), who argue that "a headline is the most salient cue to activate certain semantically related concepts in readers' minds; it is thus the most powerful framing device of the syntactical structure. A lead is the next most important device to use".

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10 Problem definition as a framing function is equivalent to Snow and Benford's (1988, p. 200) diagnostic framing which refers to the identification of the problem.

11 Only news articles were considered; opinion columns, news photographs, and cartoons were excluded.

FINDINGS

FREQUENCY OF THE NEWS

An aggregate of news reports (N=34) about the new social movement in Iran during the 10 days between 30 December 2017 and 8 January 2018 were revealed in the six newspapers: *Hürriyet* (n=8), *Star* (n=7), *Evrensel* (n=6), *Cumhuriyet* (n=5), *Habertürk* (n=5) and *Yeni Akit* (n=3).

NEWS SOURCES

In news framing research, the news source is crucial to reveal the media's political stance: "sources and the information they provide in the news story – either directly in quotes or sound bites or indirectly to the reporter covering – undoubtedly influence news framing" (Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2011, p. 608). News sources are also 'frame sponsors' (see Entman, 1991; Gamson et al., 1992; Reese, 2001) which define whose voices are heard in the news. The political elites are particularly prominent sponsors of news frames (Entman, 1991, p. 7).

Almost half of the identified news reports (n=16) were based on the statements of political actors in Iran, such as government authorities, political elites, and state officials. The most frequently quoted figures were President Hassan Rouhani and Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Thus, these newspapers frame the issue mostly through the words of official authorities, followed by non-governmental actors (experts, institutions, etc.), and finally citizens. Indeed, citizens were never used as sources for the reports in *Hürriyet*, *Star*, and *Yeni Akit*. There was also wide variation: *Star* referred to official persons and institutions in 5 out of 7 news texts whereas *Evrensel* did this in only 1 out of 6. Overall, pro-government newspapers tended to exclude alternative or critical voices about the events in Iran.

FINDINGS RELATED TO FRAMING ELEMENTS

PROBLEM DEFINITION: DEFINITION OF EVENTS AND ACTORS

The newspapers defined the movement quite differently, although the events were mostly framed as 'action' and 'protest' or at least as a 'street movement'. *Hürriyet* most frequently used the 'action' frame, and it appeared in all the other newspapers except *Evrensel*. Whereas anti-government newspapers framed the events from the protesters' perspective as 'people's action', 'rebellion', and 'street movement', pro-government newspapers preferred more aggressive frames like 'attempt', 'dirty trick', and 'sedition'.

Considering the definition of the actors, the most framed actors were 'pro-government' or 'pro-regime' supporters, particularly in *Habertürk* and *Star*, whereas *Evrensel* did not use these terms at all. The next most frequent frames were 'regime' and 'agent'. *Hürriyet*, and the pro-government *Star* and *Yeni Akit* used 'agent' to describe supposed bad actors leading the events whereas anti-government newspapers used 'regime' to describe Iran's government. More neutrally, all newspapers except for *Yeni Akit* framed the social movement actors as 'protesters' at least once. However, pro-government *Habertürk* and *Star* also framed them negatively as 'armed activists' and 'vandals'. The least used actor frame was 'pillager minority', which only appeared in *Hürriyet*.

CAUSAL INTERPRETATION: ATTRIBUTION OF RESPONSIBILITY

Three main factors influenced the events: *local dynamics*, *foreign forces*, and *political factors*. Regarding local dynamics, the primary responsible actors were pro-government or anti-government groups. *Yeni Akit* was the only newspaper that did not attribute the causes of the events to these local dynamics. Most frequently, the newspapers drew on 'pro-government supporter' and 'protester' frames to explain the causes of the events in terms of local factors. However, these were used positively or negatively depending on the newspapers. For example, the report headlined "Millions support the Regime" (*Rejime milyonluk destek*, Star, January 6, 2018) used the 'pro-government supporter' frame positively in stating that pro-regime millions have condemned the US administration that supports the protests in the country. Conversely, the news headlined "Iran's Mullahs take to the streets" (*İran'da mollalar sokağa çıktı*, Cumhuriyet, December 31, 2017) used the 'pro-government supporter' frame negatively because of the Mullahs' show of strength against the Regime's opponents.

About one-third of stories (n=10), especially in pro-government newspapers (*Star* and *Yeni Akit*), also attributed responsibility for the events to foreign forces, such as the USA, the UK, Canada, Saudi Arabia, Israel, or agents controlling non-state elements. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs took the same view, for example when *Hürriyet* (January 4, 2018) quoted Turkey's Minister of Foreign Affairs Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu: "The supporters are Trump and Netanyahu." The most important components of these alleged foreign forces were actors framed as 'agents', as can be seem in the following headlines: "Agent bullets for activists in Iran: 2 dead" (*İran'da eylemcilere ajan kurşunu: 2 ölü*, Star, January 1, 2018), "Mike[12] the Muslim! started quickly" (*Müslüman! Mike hızlı başladı*, Star, January 1, 2018), "Trump's stooges in Iran" (*Trump'ın İran'daki maşaları*, Star, January 4, 2018), "The Lawrences[13] now on stage in Iran as well" (*Lawrence'lar şimdi*

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12 Referring to Michael D'Andrea.
13 Referring to Thomas Edward Lawrence, also known as "Lawrence of Arabia".

de İran'da sahnede, Yeni Akit, January 3, 2018). Conversely, leftist and anti-government newspapers claimed emphatically that foreign forces played no role in the incidents.

Political factors represented by the government or politicians were less frequently held responsible for the progression of the events than local dynamics and foreign forces. Only anti-government newspapers *Evrensel* and *Cumhuriyet* blamed the political authorities, framed as the 'regime'. They also framed Iranian government policies as antidemocratic, oppressive, and outdated. In contrast, *Star*, *Yeni Akit*, *Habertürk*, and *Hürriyet* ignored political factors when explaining events in terms of either local or foreign factors.

According to the reports, the movement can be explained in terms of three issues: *economic problems*, *regime disaffection*, and *social demands*. Except for *Yeni Akit*, which ignored the economic background to the events, the newspapers frequently referred to economic problems and regime disaffection. Pro-government newspapers, especially *Star*, gave regime disaffection as the most important reason for the events whereas anti-government newspapers referred to social demands as the trigger. Among these demands, *Evrensel*, *Cumhuriyet*, and *Hürriyet* mentioned freedom, democracy, and human rights. These demands were often associated with young Iranians, such as, "Iranian students say freedom" (*İranlı öğrenciler özgürlük diyor*, Cumhuriyet, January 1, 2018).

MORAL EVALUATION

Morality is a relative concept, especially regarding cause-effect relationships as each newspaper's perspective on these reflects its moral assessment. Accordingly, anti-government newspapers emphasized the natural and expected side of events in Iran whereas pro-government newspapers justified the government's harsh attitude towards the social movement. Therefore, the anti-government press normalized the protests as 'people's action' while suggesting that protesters were threatened with death by pro-regime groups and the government. In contrast, pro-government newspapers highlighted that protesters had occupied state institutions, set many workplaces and vehicles on fire, and clashed with the police.

TREATMENT RECOMMENDATION: SOLUTION TO THE CRISIS

Only 6 out of 34 reports mentioned solutions to the crisis or suggestions for normalization. Any possible solutions were related to the causes. Pro-government newspapers, which blamed the events to foreign forces, reported Iranian government statements like 'no tolerance for vandals' or 'no opportunity to focus on evil'. That is, government suppression of the protests would prevent foreign forces from achieving their goals. Conversely, anti-government newspapers, which blamed the events on economic problems, regime disaffection, and social demands, emphasized the discourses of US President Donald Trump, such as "time

to change" or the Iranian Labor Party, such as "the call for organized struggle" or "reform is not enough, the Regime must be changed". Turkey's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which supported Iran's government, made moderate statements intended to reduce tension.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This study investigated polarization in the Turkish press through its reporting of the social movement in Iran that started on 29 December 2017. Framing analysis was used on 34 front-page news stories covering a 10-day period during the events from six Turkish national newspapers belonging to different media groups and different ideological trends. The language of the news reports was analyzed in terms of four framing functions: problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and treatment recommendation.

Overall, leftist and centrist newspapers allocated more space to these events in Iran than Turkey's right-wing press. Regarding the sources of discourse, newspapers generally based their reporting on official sources whereas there was little use of civilian sources. This indicates that journalists in Turkey report such events from a limited perspective.

Despite being frequently described as a 'protest' and 'action', the movement was often framed with highly negative expressions like 'attempt', 'dirty trick', 'sedition' in right-wing and pro-government newspapers: – e.g. "Dirty trick in Iran this time" (*Kirli oyun bu kez İran'da*, Star, January 2, 2018). Frames associated with leftist jargon, such as 'people's action', 'rebellion', and 'street movement', were naturally only preferred by the left-wing press. According to left-wing newspapers, the main actor responsible for the events was the current 'regime', framed as an 'oppressive' and 'pro-capital regime'.

The right-wing and centrist newspapers framed the actors as 'agents' in the context of foreign forces. These foreign forces appeared in the background while economic problems or freedom demands were presented as their pretext. Newspapers differed regarding the causes of the events. One perspective was that the events had turned into an anti-regime movement due to economic, social, and political demands. Another was the desire of the foreign forces to overthrow the government. The right-wing and pro-government press attributed the events either to foreign forces or anti-regime forces. From this perspective, economic and social reasons or demands were not the main factors behind the movement; they were softened by right-wing / pro-government press through descriptions like "so-called innocent wishes" (Star, January 1, 2018), or "the show started with rebellion against egg prices" (Habertürk, January 2, 2018). It seems that the 'foreign forces' discourse is also adopted by the pro-government press,

as it is a political discourse frequently used by the ruling party in Turkey. For instance, especially during the election campaigns President Erdoğan regularly points out that 'foreign forces' and the opposition as the reasons for the failures or negativities while appropriating the successes to himself and his party's policies in his political discourses (Karabıyık, 2021, p. 6).

While the newspapers mostly explained the new social movement in terms of local dynamics, they clearly diverged regarding the specific factor. Leftist and anti-government newspapers focused on political factors, e.g. "The cause of the rebellion in Iran: the pro-capital Islamic Regime" (*İran'da isyanın nedeni: sermaye yanlısı İslamî Rejim*, Evrensel, January 3, 2018) whereas centrist, right-wing and pro-government newspapers blamed foreign factors, e.g. "The West is behind the sedition in Iran" (*İran'daki fitnenin arkasında Batı var*, Yeni Akit, January 2, 2018) or "The Western origin copied coup" (*Batı kaynaklı kopya darbe*, Star, January 2, 2018). Thus, our analysis revealed a meaningful relationship in the right-wing and pro-government press between framing the events as 'attempt', 'dirty trick', or 'sedition' and the actors as 'agents', 'armed activists', 'vandals', or 'pillager minority'.

The pro-government press also occasionally associated the Iranian movement with the Arab Spring, – e.g. "Trump Spring in Iran" (*İran'da Trump Baharı*, Star, December 31, 2017) or the Gezi Park Protests in Turkey, – e.g. "Streets witness Gezi-like uprising scenes" (*Gezi kalkışması benzeri manzaralara sahne olan sokaklar*, Star, December 31, 2017), "The Gezi spirit rose from the grave" (*Gezi ruhu hortladı*, Star, January 2, 2018), "Soros'[14] Gezi protesters now in Iran too" (*Soros'un 'Gezi'cileri şimdi de İran'da*, Yeni Akit, December 31, 2017). Significantly, these six newspapers had previously framed the actual Gezi Park Protests in 2013 with similar lexicalizations as the movement in Iran, – e.g. "Dark forces at work" (*Karanlık güçler iş başında*, Yeni Akit, June 3, 2013) or "The people resist" (*Halk direniyor*, Cumhuriyet, May 31, 2013). In other words, Turkey's anti-government press regarded both Iran's new social movement and Turkey's Gezi Park Protests as legitimate people's movements whereas Turkey's pro-government press evaluated them as Western-backed revolts that used local collaborators. Erbaysal Filibeli (2016), who analyzed news reports on the Gezi Park Protests, concluded that the Turkish media mostly used conflictive and discriminative language while the news discourse of the pro-government press mirrored the government's own discourse. This approach is also evident in their news framing regarding the Iranian movement.

This study showed that the events in Iran that could be addressed in the context of new social movements were framed quite differently by specific Turkish newspapers. This sharp difference reflects polarization and press partisanship

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14 Referring to George Soros.

in Turkey. Levendusky (2013, p. 612) describes partisan media as opinionated media that not only report the news but offer distinct perspectives. At least two conclusions can be drawn from our study. First, the Turkish newspapers analyzed here reported events in Iran without properly scrutinizing their economic, social, or political background. Besides, their news coverage rarely mentioned the political responsibilities and solution proposals of the Iranian government. Second, the news framing practices of each newspaper depended strongly on its ideological positioning and political intimacy. Thus, the Turkish newspapers convey political discourses whether or not they support the government.

LIMITATIONS

The present study had several limitations. First, it only analyzed a few newspapers while neglecting other mass media. Thus, the findings cannot yet be generalized. To extend the findings and conclusions of this study, the reporting of other events should be examined and comparative studies should be considered. Such a comprehensive research will contribute to literature concerning framing and social movements.

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Journalists under attack: self-censorship as an unperceived method for avoiding hostility

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Abstract: This study investigates journalists' self-censorship and introduces a phenomenon of unperceived collective self-censorship that demands a combination of detection methods. We conducted a content analysis of media critique texts (N=156) that discuss attacks on Estonian journalism. These results were combined with the content analysis of journalistic roles in the news (N=2409) and a survey on journalists (N=99) and completed with semi-structured interviews (N=14). The findings showed that accusations against journalists were frequently related to discourses regarding journalists' interventionist or watchdog roles. Juxtaposing these results with quantitative data, it became evident that when aspects of interventionist and watchdog roles were criticized in the media texts, the performance of these roles decreased in the news. However, journalists' self-assessment does not show the perception of this change. We argue that self-censorship was created unknowingly within the newsroom. External pressures – such as politically motivated attacks on journalism – may promote unperceived self-censorship.

Keywords: self-censorship; journalistic role performance; journalism; attacks on journalism

INTRODUCTION

Media freedom in European Union countries stem from the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights which considers media freedom is a fundamental right. Similar to other constitutions, Estonia's states there shall not be any censorship, following the definition according to which it means suppression or prohibition of ideas and free speech by the institutions and authorities. However, the concept of self-censorship differs from censorship. Censorship relies on censors (e.g., the state, an organization) which use direct measures on the censored to suppress

their freedom of speech. By comparison, self-censorship is individual-centered, or as Bar-Tal (2017) posits is an act when people intentionally and voluntarily suppress information from others when formal impediments are absent. The individual-centered aspect of self-censorship ensures its process and motivation are complex and difficult to comprehend. It is also why concepts explaining the phenomenon are severely diffused (Davis, 2020; Hughes, 2017; Iordanidou et al., 2020).

For example, it can be public or private (Cook & Heilmann, 2010); it can be confused with following norms (e.g., ethics) and therefore directing oneself accordingly, including dropping a newsworthy topic (Schimpfössl et al., 2020). Therefore, we partly rely on Bar-Tal (2017), who emphasizes that self-censorship means withholding information that has a wider societal value; however, when referring to withholding it, we rely on explaining the motivation behind it. According to Gans (1979), self-censorship is a method for preventing the potential reaction from 'non-journalists' (p. 250), including receiving hostility from the sources, audience members, and dealing with litigation (Ivask 2020). We argue, and rely on Gans (1979), that self-censorship can be an unrecognized method for preventing consequences among journalists. Unrecognizability can be explained with the help of the emotion management concept, according to which people can adapt practices at the workplace without recognizing it – Hochschild (1983, p. 35) calls it "deep acting". We argue that deep acting is possible with self-censorship as well, as Gans (1979) points out.

Journalism studies scholars have done much-appreciated work delving into the causes that lead to self-censoring practices and analyzing the implications self-censorship brings (Fadnes et al., 2020). Intimidation and harassment have shown to have consequences on journalists' autonomy and self-censorship in authoritarian and democratic countries alike, where journalists choose silence over fulfilling the watchdog role (Ivask, 2020; Löfgren Nilsson & Örnebring, 2016; Riives et al., 2021). Additional to physical threats and violence, digital hostility has been revealed as a substantial way of pressurizing journalists (e.g., United Nations, 2021). But there are also pressures of political power (Barrios & Miller, 2021; Yesil, 2014), the commercial interests of the publishers (Balčytienė & Lauk, 2005) or media organizations' conditions (e.g., Kotisova & Waschková Císařová, 2021), which all, in one way or another, influence journalists. The motivation behind self-censorship is not only to avoid abuse and uncomfortable situations, but also to please the management for possible promotion (e.g., Lee & Chan, 2009). However, in this article we focus on influencing pressures outside the newsroom – the audience and sources of information.

Research of the self-censorship phenomenon has diverse approaches, all of which have limitations, which illustrate why it is challenging to study self-censorship. Quantitative methods lead to challenges with the sample (who

gets the survey, who provides answers, how to keep the sample balanced); the researchers do not know who is answering the survey and how understandable the survey questions/statements are to a respondent (e.g. Bodrunova et al., 2021; Löfgren Nilsson & Örnebring, 2016). Other researchers have used qualitative questionnaires or e-mail interviews, where respondents are expected to be motivated to report on the issues (e.g., Jungblut & Hoxha, 2017); there are issues with follow-up questions that the journalists might not answer. Additionally, the researchers do not know exactly who provides the answers. Face-to-face interviewing seems to provide more certainty in avoiding some of these issues (Iordanidou et al., 2020). However, journalists might not want to admit to self-censoring to an interviewer as it is not an accepted practice, everywhere.

A few studies use a mixed-methods approach (Morris, 2017; Rožukalne, 2020); however, even in those cases, there are limitations. The first limitation is to balance qualitative and quantitative data when presenting results; the second is the data compatibility and suitability – whether the quantitative and qualitative methods and data support each other.

Hence, several studies show the presence of self-censorship and indicate its causes and implications. However, very few of them contribute to methodological approaches to detecting any subtypes of private self-censorship. Our research raises the issues about what kinds of methods are most suitable for studying self-censorship and what are the additional failings of these methods. This study aims to empirically analyze and frame the potential detection mechanisms of unperceived self-censorship (USC) of journalists by describing one more subtype of self-censorship and contributing to the overall methodological observation of the phenomenon. Based on the findings, we argue that both public and private instances of self-censorship may have subtypes, with USC describing one potential type. More specifically, this study sheds light on USC, which may be left unnoticed under the conventional auditing of newsroom practices. We conceptualize the USC term with empirical findings and discuss the occurrence of USC in the context of broader implications.

For a clearer understanding of this study's scope and contextual position, we take the liberty to explain the Estonian and Eastern European contexts in a self-censorship discussion.

SELF-CENSORSHIP IN ESTONIA AND EASTERN EUROPE

Although this study was conducted among Estonian journalists and incorporated international data only as a reference indicator, the findings are significant and generalizable to other countries with similar socio-cultural backgrounds. The study by Schimpfössl and Yablokov (2020) shows that self-censorship in Central

and Eastern Europe (CEE) is just as severely affected by economic constraints, oligarchic influences and new authoritarianism as they are by their Communist pasts. According to Schimpfössl and Yablokov (2020), this becomes particularly intense when a media system faces rising populism and authoritarianism, paired with oligarch-dominated ownership. Rožukalne (2020) conducted a mixed-method study on Latvian journalists and finds that while journalists consider themselves responsible for contributing to their media organization's commercial interests, media companies merge the existing editorial values with collaboration, adaptation and business thinking. This finding resonates with the notion that commercial interests function as pressure mechanisms that condition self-censorship (Balčytienė & Lauk, 2005), and journalists may not consider editorial restrictions in the newsroom self-censoring (Lauk & Harro-Loit, 2017; Tapsell, 2012). Lauk & Hoyer (2008) studied censorship in Estonia and Norway during the authoritarian and totalitarian regimes and argue there are more differences than similarities in how journalists and media systems react to censorship and liberation from it. Therefore, while similar historic trajectories enable scholars to compare the current and the past, especially in the CEE countries, any that differ in context must always be considered.

Estonia is a Post-Soviet Eastern European country with a media market serving a population of 1.3 million habitants. Drawing from Hallin and Mancini's (2004) model of media systems, Estonia's can be described as belonging to the Nordic democratic corporatist model. Most countries using this model also belong to the *media-supportive, more consensual* cluster (Humprecht et al., 2020), which demonstrates high resilience to online disinformation and, for this reason, have not been significantly affected by the effects of information disorder. This is relevant because Estonia, like Poland, Hungary and other Eastern European countries, has experienced increasing pressure from populist political forces and digital hostility despite rising to fourth position in the global ranking of press freedom (Reporters Without Borders, 2022). During the pandemic, political pressures intensified as several politicians cultivated their political capital, similar to the neighboring Baltic states of Latvia and Lithuania (Aljas et al., 2022).

The year 2020 was an exceptionally challenging year for Estonian journalists – besides the COVID-19 pandemic, the right-populist government repeatedly attacked journalism. The 50th government cabinet of Estonia was in office from April 29, 2019 to January 14, 2021. It was a centre-right coalition of the *Centre Party*, right-wing populist *Estonian Conservative People's Party* (EKRE) and the conservative party *Isamaa*. During this coalition, on several occasions, the politicians threatened to censor certain journalists and reduce funding for Estonian Public Broadcasting because of critical coverage of EKRE and the ministers (Donauskaitė et al., 2020). A penal code amendment that allowed courts to ban journalists from covering court cases entered into force and was actively used

by judges in 2020. Right-populist government ministers refused to provide information to journalists at press conferences without giving any valid reason. All this culminated in Estonia dropping down three positions in the World Press Freedom Index (RSF, 2021).

Furthermore, 2020 was also when the international project *Journalistic Role Performance* (JRP) of journalistic cultures collected data for the second wave across 365 news media outlets in 37 countries, including Estonia. The project is based on Claudia Mellado's (2015) operational model of six journalistic roles. The JRP project compares journalistic role performance in news texts (N=148,474) and role perception expressed in surveys or interviews with journalists (N=2615). The project aims to analyze how the performance of journalistic roles varies across societies. The data focuses on journalistic role performance and role perception and embraces content analysis of Estonian news texts (N=2409) and a survey among journalists (N=99). The survey gives a relatively representative insight into the Estonian journalists' community as the labor market comprises approximately 900 active journalists. We conducted a preliminary analysis of the survey data on journalistic autonomy and censorship variables. The results indicated a somewhat unusual discrepancy between journalists' answers in all JRP countries and Estonia.

The JRP project survey data showed that 26% of Estonian journalists and 23% of all journalists in JRP countries use self-censorship practices at work (Figure 1), which indicates that the self-censorship level in Estonia is somewhat like other countries. The project data also showed that Estonian journalists have greater liberty to develop a story idea or cover a topic with 92% of the Estonian respondents expressing they have this liberty always or often compared to the 71% for all JRP countries. This indicates a significant difference between Estonia and other JRP countries showing that journalists perceive more freedom in selecting the stories for covering. Compared to other JRP countries, Estonian journalists perceive they have somewhat more freedom to select the news-stories they work on (76% and 87%, respectively). Regarding verbal and physical attacks from external individuals, 79% of Estonian journalists tend to feel safer than the 70% of JRP journalists.

Figure 1. Characteristics of journalistic autonomy and censorship.
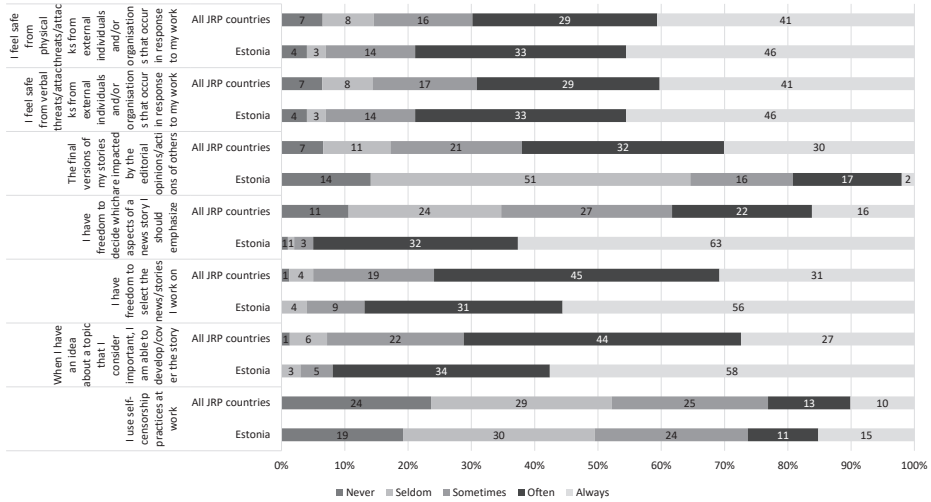
Overall, this data enables us to conclude that Estonian journalists perceive a higher level of press freedom and safety than journalists in all other JRP countries. From that, it would be natural to deduce that the level of self-censorship of Estonian journalists would be lower. However, the results indicate a somewhat similar level of self-censorship than in other JRP countries. This urges us to seek an explanation of the finding. We contextualize the issue in the events in 2020 and juxtapose this with the role performance of journalists in the news collected at the same time and complete it with semi-structured interviews with journalists.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The roots of self-censorship exist in the spiral of silence in which an individual promotes self-preservation by limiting the expression of political opinions (Noelle-Neumann, 1974). Hence, the foundations of media self-censorship are much more universally applicable to individuals rather than tight professional conduct. Contextualizing self-censorship in journalism, Herbert Gans' (1979) conceptualization approaches the phenomenon from external pressure factors (political, ideological and commercial). Gans (1979) notes that self-censorship is not always a conscious decision and may appear in several practices, e.g., framing a story. The invisibility of self-censorship makes it exceptionally difficult to study, but Gans's (1979) conceptualization enables us to incorporate these three pressure factors to delimit the scope of actions that could indicate self-censorship.

Cook and Heilmann (2010) propose a five-element model which diversifies the dimensions in which self-censorship may occur. Their model consists of elements such as (1) a suitable fit between a conception of permissible expressive attitudes and those attitudes actually expressed; (2) the content of the conception of permissible expressive attitudes; (3) the enforcement of the fit according to the conception of permissible expressive attitudes; (4) the censor and censored; and (5) their interaction. The model elements do not constitute necessary and sufficient conditions for censorship to exist (Cook & Heilmann, 2010, p. 4).

Drawing from the theoretical foundations of self-censorship, we set one of our research focuses on the public criticism of journalism that set the scene in 2020. Although politicians' negative critical comments on journalists and journalism may be interpreted as verbal attacks, we refer to this sort of text as media critique. This enables us to incorporate media texts that are also constructively critical of journalism. The first research question concerns the content analysis of media texts criticizing journalists and journalism negatively: *RQ1: What patterns of media critique characteristics emerged over 2020 in media texts criticizing journalism?*

Studying self-censorship is tightly related to factors influencing news work and journalistic role performance in the broader sense. Hanitzsch et al. (2010) analyzed six dimensions of hierarchical categories where organizational, professional, and procedural influences were perceived as more powerful limits to journalists' work than political and economic influences. These categories are valuable indicators of what aspects to consider when analyzing self-censorship. These results can be incorporated with another journalism culture study, the JRP project (Mellado 2015). The common ground between the six dimensions (Hanitzsch et al. 2010) and the six domains (Mellado 2015) are in the interventionism, the watchdog, and the loyal-facilitator roles.

From this knowledge, we derived the research focus that bridges the media critique and juxtaposes it with journalistic role performance. The second research question aligns journalistic role performance in news with media critical texts of 2020 to see changes and potential mutual influences: *RQ2: How did the occurrence of media critique juxtapose with journalistic role performance in 2020 news texts?*

The third research question exploits the aforementioned Cook and Heilmann's (2010) five-element model and seeks a qualitative explanation of the self-censorship of journalists with the purpose to bridge the quantitative and qualitative findings and to fill the gap by outlining the nature of self-censorship: *RQ3: How do journalists implicitly and explicitly express self-censorship in describing their work situations?*

METHODOLOGY

We use various samples and datasets to combine quantitative content analysis of media texts, a survey and semi-structured interviews with journalists. The following gives an overview of the samples according to the methods that support answering the research questions.

MEDIA CRITICAL TEXTS

The articles of media critique were collected from the web archives of *Estonian Public Broadcaster*'s news portal ERR.ee, Delfi.ee and Postimees.ee. These three are the most significant media organizations comprising over 80% of the Estonian media market. We used web archives because they also incorporate newspapers (*Eesti Päevaleht* and *Postimees*), television and radio content (ETV and *Kanal 2*). We used the search terms "journalism", "journalist", "media", "media critique", "freedom of speech", and "censorship" to collect data articles. Only articles regarding Estonian journalism were included. All the articles were then read, and the texts that did not directly relate to media criticism were excluded. This enabled us to extract 156 texts, including opinions, news and feature articles. In the revision process, we also outlined the categories for topical categorization.

The texts were then coded, using variables that detected 1) genre of the text, 2) mentioning of an attack or 3) criticism towards journalist or journalism, 4) recommendations for change in journalistic conduct, 5) mentioning of censorship or (limiting) freedom of speech and 6) occurrence of call for regulating censorship (both warning and promoting it). These variables were developed stemming from the purposes of this study, aiming to provide an overview of the tendencies in media criticism in 2020. As the aim of the content analysis of media critical articles was to supplement the sample of news texts in the JRP sample, the content analysis uses mainly descriptive analysis. This enabled us to get an overview of general tendencies in media critique and content that was not covered in the role performance sample and variables.

ROLE PERFORMANCE IN THE NEWS

Using the constructed week method, a stratified-systematic sample of two weeks was selected for each media outlet in each of 37 JRP projects' partner countries from January 2 to December 31, 2020. The Estonian data was collected by analyzing news content from 11 media outlets covering all four mediums and all national media organizations. Altogether, 2409 news items were coded on the *Socisurvey* platform provided by the JRP Project.

The unit of analysis was the news item. We relied on the operationalization proposed by Mellado (2015) to measure professional roles in news content. The coding manual included operational definitions of the performance of the

watchdog, interventionist, loyal-facilitator, service, infotainment, and civic roles based on the relationship between journalism and the de facto power, the presence of the journalistic voice in the story, and the way the journalists address the audience. Each of these roles-dimensions was characterized by various measures of professional practices, reporting styles, and narrative schemes. An aggregate of indicators (N=22) measured the three performance roles: interventionist (n=5), watchdog (n=9), loyal-facilitator (n=8).

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

We carried out 17 semi-structured interviews with reporters working in converged newsrooms. We used purposive sampling combined with snowball sampling. We selected the journalists based on our previous knowledge of them having public experiences with attacks, insults and hostile comments. After having conducted a couple of interviews, journalists approached us, recommending interviewees with similar experiences to our sample. Altogether, the sample consisted of 10 female and 7 male journalists aged 23 to 46 years. Their work experience varied from 2 to 20+ years and most (13 of 17) had gained experience in multiple newsrooms, not just the one they worked for at the time of the interview. Regarding the theme of the news beat that the journalists covered, our sample is rather diverse because our interviewees seldom had one particular thematic beat to cover. In addition to covering the general news beat, some also wrote or edited opinion articles and advertisements, and some occasionally contributed to the work of the investigative newsroom.

The interviews were carried out from June to December 2021; the prolonged period was caused by the Covid pandemic, with both respondents and researchers battling with the virus. Interviews were carried out by three researchers who followed the same research questions and interview guide. We conducted the interviews face-to-face or using video conversation apps like Skype and Teams. Although there were differences in data gathering (online communication vs. face-to-face) and subtle differences in how the interview plan was followed, the data is comparable as they were systemized by the principal researcher, who worked closely with the other two.

By the time we had finished collecting the data, 4 of the initial 17 journalists had left the field. The interviewees were from all types and sizes of media organizations, but to protect the journalists from potential attacks, we do not distinguish them in more detail that would enable any recognition.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The characteristics of media critique were thematically divided into five categories. The categories *covering attack* and *covering criticism* embraced either directly attacking or criticizing or mentioning an attack or critique related to either a journalist or journalism. Both categories mentioned above apply to both negative and constructive contexts. We based this notional split on the comprehension that a general attack or criticism on journalism may be more straightforward for the journalist to cope with, whereas the personal naming of a journalist or media outlet could be interpreted as more severe and hurtful. Although we did not include contextual data that would have shown us the potential event that evoked the criticism, it is possible to say that the onset of the stories was diverse. To bring out just few examples, the articles stem from attacks of politicians provoking conflict, journalism's role in the COVID-19 crisis, the defense of anonymous sources and courts limiting journalistic coverages. Hence, it cannot be generalized that the media critiques were drawn from any particular type of current affairs events.

The analysis shows that journalists were personally referred to in 7% of all articles (Figure 2). In 15% of the texts, the journalist's name or media outlet was mentioned. More than half of the articles that covered attacks mentioned the outlet's name or targeted journalism in general. Therefore, the frequency of the severest attacks on journalists personally in media critique texts was relatively rare, and most media critique covering attacks on journalism was rather general. While this finding emphasizes that journalists may not be personally attacked in public texts criticizing media, it does show that the objects of journalistic attacks are diverse and aimed at undermining journalism as an institution.

In the texts that covered media criticism, 12% mentioned a particular journalist's name, and 22% mentioned the outlet's name. The majority (57%) of media critique articles focus on the criticism made on any media outlet or journalism in general. Similar to covering attacks, the coverages of media critiques target the journalistic institution rather than an individual journalist. As constructive criticism is related to making a recommendation for a solution, we also analyzed if the media critical texts recommend one. Almost two thirds (74%) of the articles in our sample did suggest a solution. This finding shows that media critical texts – may they be negative or constructive – have the purpose of suggesting a change. The changes may, for example, be a call for news media to be more diverse or be more balanced in coverage. Both recommendations depend on the potential interest and aim of the recommender and how journalists interpret the advice. The journalists or newsrooms may interpret the call for changes or recommendations as interventions, and therefore the critique may start to function as a pressure mechanism for public or private self-censorship.

As censorship, in general, was frequently stressed by politicians in their public statements, we were interested in finding out how this is expressed in media critique. It must be disclosed that in the preliminary reading of the sample, we struggled with differentiating mentions of censorship and self-censorship in the texts because the texts often used the term censorship in an evidently wrong manner or meaning or talked about (self)censorship although not explicitly using the term. Therefore, we interpreted both explicit and contextual mentioning of censorship or self-censorship as the presence of a reference to censorship. An aggregate of 76% of the media critical texts mentioned censorship, and 33% included a call for (self)censorship. This finding indicates that censorship discourse dominates most media critical texts. While the terms self-censorship and censorship may be wrongly used and overused in the wrong contexts, they may put public pressure on journalism and journalists.

Figure 2. Occurrence of characteristics of media critique in media critical texts of 2020.
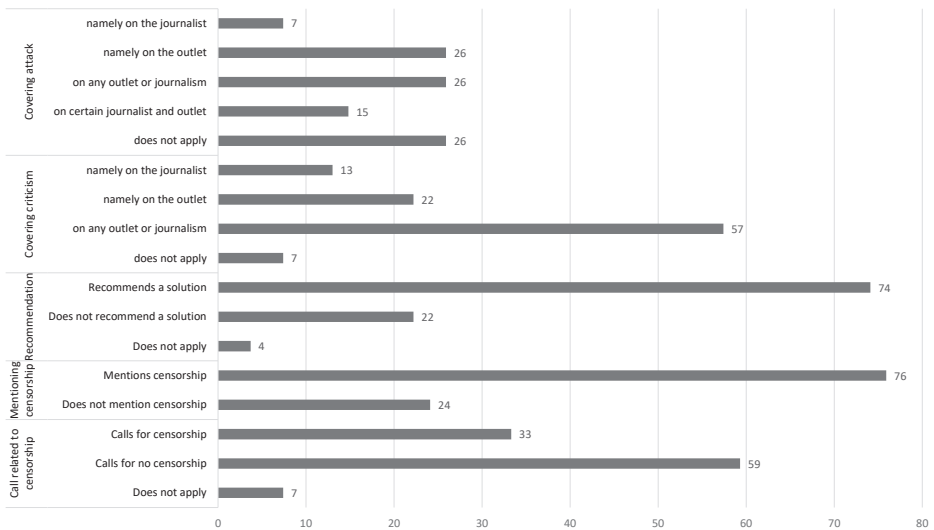
Source: Authors

While censorship is related to institutional power and ideological impact on journalism, it is often assumed that the media critique, especially on calling for (self)censorship, comes from politicians. Our analysis showed that in 52% of the media critical texts, the author of the opinion or the primary source of the critique was a journalist or media manager. Politicians were the main sources or authors of 15% of the articles. Therefore, the media critique in our sample was led by the discussions proposed within the profession.

Because we aimed to get a descriptive overview of the media critical texts in 2020, the sample is small and does not enable a significant analysis of relations between variables. However, it does give us general indications of the themes

that dominated media critique in 2020 and potentially influenced journalists' perception of self-censorship.

JUXTAPOSING MEDIA CRITIQUE AND JOURNALISTIC ROLE PERFORMANCE

The performance of journalistic roles that express power relations (watchdog and loyal facilitator) indicate the journalists' distance from politics and governance and show the fulfilling of the critical monitoring of power. The interventionist role shows the presence of a journalistic voice but is relevant also for self-criticism of the profession, hence related to discussions over (self)censorship. Based on the content analysis of the JRP data set on Estonian news articles (N=2409) we were able to show the change in the presence of these roles in the news (Figure 3).

It must be recalled that at the beginning of 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic broke. The first case of COVID-19 was confirmed in Tallinn on February 27. On March 13, the Estonian government declared a state of emergency. Therefore, the changes in role performance were also influenced by the social factors related to the pandemic. Previous analysis has shown a negative correlation between the occurrence of watchdog and interventionist roles and the number of COVID-19 cases (Männilaan, 2021).

The analysis of media criticism texts and their correlation to the performance of journalistic roles shows that before the active phase of the pandemic in March 2020, the number of articles criticizing journalism was higher than in other months (Figure 3). Simultaneously, the occurrence of the watchdog role in news texts decreased in April and May. In August, the right-populist coalition party EKRE declared that they would not answer any questions from *Delfi*, one of the three most significant new media organizations. This statement and the actual boycott by EKRE's politicians triggered discussions over the forced censorship of journalism. This sequence of events explains the slight increase in the occurrence of the watchdog role and media critical texts in the news from August till October. However, November and December were exceptionally modest in all three journalistic roles of this analysis, as well as media criticism. This may have been conditioned by the sharp escalation of the pandemic that overshadowed the profession-related discussions.

As the watchdog role opposes that of the loyal facilitator, the low occurrence of it in the news is in accordance with the contextual profile of Estonian media – relatively high freedom and distance from governmental power. Nevertheless, we highlight the increase in the presence of the loyal facilitator role in July, when the news texts seemed to contain more of this than the watchdog role. This may be explained by the usual low news season of summer months when both investigative and political analysis journalists take a summer vacation. However, while this may explain the low representation of the watchdog role, it does not clarify the sudden rise of that of the loyal facilitator. Hallin et al. (2022) analyze

the same JRP data and are able to show that the occurrence of loyal facilitator role increased in ten countries, especially in COVID-19 stories and this finding was independent from the level of press freedom or other societal factors. Hence, the shifts in power related roles are partly explainable by COVID-19 conditions. On the other hand, the combination of factors (e.g. pressure from media critique, political tensions, pandemic crisis) may explain the changes in role performance. This suggests more thought is needed on how combining these factors in the long term may influence the role performance, perception and practice of self-censorship.

Figure 3. Journalistic roles and media critique.
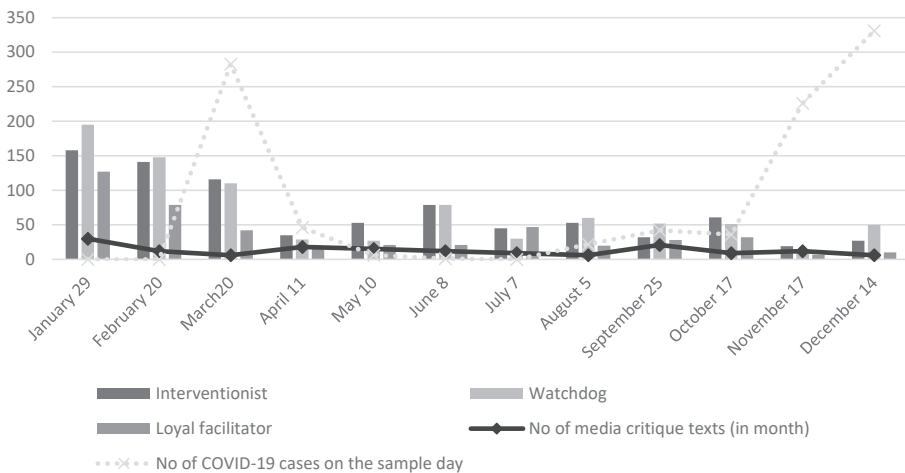
Source: Authors / Journalistic Role Performance Project

Our analysis showed no explainable alignment between the occurrence of the interventionist role and media criticism. The performance of the interventionist role was relevant for our study because it shows the journalistic voice in the news. The interventionist role consists of indicators that may explain the content but may also serve the journalist's aim for advocacy or expressing their views and opinions. The latter may be the basis for accusing journalists of being prejudiced or biased. However, it is also a significant indicator of news organizations' trust in their journalists to give them freedom and autonomy to express their viewpoints.

Although the number of media critique articles is too small to show any correlation, it shows a theme that also contextualizes the journalistic role performance. While the limitations mean this study is unable to conclude that media critical texts directly or solely influenced journalistic role performance or self-censorship practices, it may exemplify one potential cause that contributes to the pressures leading to unperceived self-censorship. By contrast, while

media critical texts may be a factor pressuring self-censorship practices, they function in combination with several other topical impact factors (e.g., health crises, conflicts, political disturbances) and should be observed consistently for an extended period.

PERCEIVED AND UNPERCEIVED SELF-CENSORSHIP

We differentiate between experiences with self-censorship, the ones that journalists explicitly state and the ones journalists do not label as self-censorship (the phenomenon we label unperceived self-censorship, USC), but which have signs of self-censorship according to the theoretical framework.

Self-censorship came up in the interviews when journalists talked about how they manage stress caused by attacks toward them or negative experiences with sources and audience members. Therefore, journalists described self-censorship as a preventive strategy to keep them safe from harmful stress. Journalists stated explicitly they had directed themselves away from newsworthy topics that are connected to past negative experiences, which could come at three levels. First, from the sources; secondly, from audience members (as a reaction to a polarizing topic – e.g., trolling – and thirdly, from a combination of both sources and audience members. Interviewees felt that attacks from both audience members and sources were a relatively new trend. There were several occasions when an influencer with alternative views had encouraged their followers to attack the journalist on social media or in the comment section of the news outlet. Therefore, journalists admitted to being more careful when covering topics such as dangerous criminals, alternative medicine representatives, and influencers.

The following quote from a female journalist illustrates cases where the managing editor had encouraged self-censorship, especially when sources or audience members (or both) were possibly attacking the journalist. Although the idea for discarding the news coverage came from a manager, the journalist started doubting herself after the idea was brought up and adapted. It also shows the lack of organizational measures and responsibility for keeping the journalist safe from digital hostility.

> The managing editor said that maybe it is a good idea to leave the topic and source aside for my mental well-being. They said I might not be able to handle the hate. They might have been right… [Female 2]

The lack of protection in the newsroom against such attacks was also revealed by a journalist, who said that self-censorship was usually an individual strategy of journalists for protecting themselves because no one else would do it. A similar strategy became evident in a previous study that included female journalists (Ivask, 2020).

Attacks and insults, and not being protected had led journalists to become disappointed in the media organization, which again encouraged journalists to lower their journalistic standards as the job was not worth it. Interviewees said that they no longer covered as many conflicts as they used to, and consequently they occasionally focused more on softer and entertaining topics.

> I do not get paid enough for getting insulted and attacked all of the time, and the organization is doing nothing./…/ I feel that no matter what I say or do, I will get insulted and attacked, I have learned from this to say less and less… [Female 4]

Journalists were not only avoiding the topics and sources because they might receive a lot of hateful and insulting reactions but also because they could have received threats. Interviewees described incidents where their family members had been approached and threatened. Also, there had been incidents where journalists were threatened by using their personal information (children's names, photos, spouse's name, etc.).

> I am hiding all personal information on the internet. There are no connections to relatives, to my spouse. Everything is hidden, so they could not be included in the attacks. [Male 3]

> The worst attacks have been when someone threatens my family, my children. There have been sleepless nights. [Female 3]

> They have used photos of me and my spouse when attacking me… I do not know where they got those photos from. My accounts are closed to outsiders. [Female 4]

An earlier study conducted in Estonia's newsrooms found that journalists did not have the time or professional support for analyzing neglected newsworthy topics (Sommer, 2021). Our analysis showed that there were newsworthy topics that journalists discarded without any explanation. It leads to the topic of unperceived self-censorship among journalists in our study. In some cases, journalists described "being extra careful when choosing and carrying on with a topic" [Male 2; Female 3] because they were unsure if they were ready to deal with the negative consequences. Furthermore, if journalists were not prepared to face the consequences, they chose not to cover the topic or assessed very carefully how to frame and present it. They also expressed the possibility of putting the topic aside and waiting until they were psychologically ready to deal with the consequences and then either do the coverage or hand it over to a colleague. One

journalist described how negative experiences had made him more precautious in covering some topics (e.g., stories concerning populist parties [as they were able to mobilize people for attacking the journalist], alternative medicine and conspiracies), with whom they had had negative experiences. Some interviewees expressed rethinking coverage on already chosen topics. This finding substantially contradicts the JRP survey finding, according to which 65% of Estonian journalists expressed that the final versions of their stories are seldom or never impacted by the editorial opinions/actions of other newsroom members (Figure 1).

The discrepancy between the results of the survey and the interviews becomes even more evident, as 97% of Estonian journalists expressed always having or often having the freedom to select the stories they work on. The interviews enabled us to conclude that the assessment of self-censorship may be impacted on by the professional image and pride in in the press freedom ranking, yet the descriptions of practices indicate unperceived self-censorship. Journalists said that on professional grounds, it was helpful to be doubtful as it made them more precise in their work and protected them from potential libel cases:

> But maybe it is a good thing that I am unsure about the reporting? It makes me check and go back over every little detail. [Male 1]

However, factual reporting did not protect them from litigation, as the interviewees described situations where sources or opponents would sue journalists – for covering prohibited topics – with the aim of causing stress and putting pressure on the journalist and damaging the media organization. Additionally, using and protecting anonymous sources was expressed to be under threat, causing the abandonment of topics of public interest. Litigation is a form of intimidation not only in Estonia but also globally (Borg-Barthet et al. 2021). Actions like litigation, public attacks and causing stress to induce abandonment and avoidance of specific topics are external pressure factors that indicate the potential causes for self-censorship, but it can be detected only by studying these activities. Otherwise, the journalists may not explicitly express the implications of these actions as self-censorship.

Interestingly, after some time, some journalists who avoided using the term *self-censorship* mentioned that what they describe *might be self-censorship*. Their discussions led to them recognizing that they did not previously see the described situations and actions as self-censorship. For them, censorship was too solid and dramatic and felt exaggerated. Estonian journalists often compared themselves and suppressed colleagues in authoritarian countries who are known to be censored by governmental institutions. This contextual comparison led the interviewees away from admitting to self-censoring or that something or someone had such an impact on them. The journalists who did not see their

practices as self-censorship also tended to normalize attacks and being "thick skinned". This finding should be interpreted in the context of Estonia being a Post-Soviet country. The Soviet press system was completely replaced by the liberal and market-oriented media system (Lauk & Hoyer 2008). Nevertheless, the journalists' social and cultural practices may have created professional attitudes to rigidly avoiding the acceptance and perception of censorship in any form. Drawing from Lauk and Hoyer (2008) and combining this with our results, we argue that the rejection of censorship is one potential explanation to have conditioned blindness to self-censorship, leading to USC.

CONCLUSIONS

This study observed and detected the existence of unperceived self-censorship (USC) among Estonian journalists. We argue that both public and private instances of self-censorship have subtypes, of which USC can be interpreted as a subtype of private self-censorship conditioned by several factors, This subtype may remain unnoticed while auditing the newsroom's (self)censorship practices with conventional methods (e.g., surveys). However, USC becomes explicit through nuanced observations of actions and situations that journalists experience and describe, but which they do not perceive as self-censorship because for several reasons, the main one being that to journalists, "self-censorship" is a somewhat an alien term. Also, considering any form of the term censor goes against the professional standards and norms of journalism, would make respondents careful to admit it practicing 'self-censorship'.

While the literature has interpreted public attacks on journalists as a potential pressure factor conditioning self-censorship (Fadnes et al., 2020; Walulya & Nassanga, 2020), our results conclude that public media criticism may set the scene for the overall impression of journalism being under censorship pressure. While public attacks on individual journalists are rare in the media critical texts, private personal attacks are more frequent but also more disclosed and may thrust journalists toward self-censorship since journalists do not perceive the cause-and-effect relationship between these acts and private self-censorship. One solution to prevent the escalation of private self-censorship would be to systematically observe and recognize these attacks on an organizational level and support journalists in dealing with these pressure situations.

Although the media critical texts often explicitly use work censorship or implicitly refer to it, the term is frequently misused. Due to the Soviet past, censorship and self-censorship carry strong cultural and social connotations (Lauk & Harro-Loit, 2017; Lauk & Hoyer, 2008), ethical sensitivity (Bucholtz, 2020) as well as commercial intentions (Balčytienė & Lauk, 2005; Rožukalne, 2020),

which make the use of the terms a veritable taboo. Therefore, the USC should always be studied, taking into account the country's specifics and media system (e.g. history, the performance of journalistic roles and journalistic culture).

This study has its limitations. The sample of media critical texts is small because of the miniscule size of the Estonian media market. While the small sample does limit any rigorous analysis, it opens opportunities for comparative research in other countries. Collecting more samples across media environments and extending the sample for a longer period would give a more nuanced insight into the factors conditioning USC.

While the categorizations of self-censorship are more diverse than discussed in the literature or the current study, there are avenues for further research. Our results indicated not only the existence of unperceived self-censorship, but the empirical material also revealed the potential presence of perceived hidden self-censorship. By this, we mean self-censorship acts that journalists make but do not express to the researcher or their peers. As this form of self-censorship emerged only as asides during the interviews, we could not delve into it more deeply. However, future research with creative and novel methodologies could make significant discoveries on hidden self-censorship.

As censorship is closely related to journalists' work-related security and well-being, the unperceived self-censorship could be further explored in these contexts. How do security and well-being influence self-censorship? We believe there is a niche for a comparative study on the matter.

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Fighting COVID-19 with data: An analysis of data journalism projects submitted to Sigma Awards 2021

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Abstract: The COVID-19 health crisis has been heavily reported on an international scale for several years. This has pushed news journalism in a datafied direction: reporters have learnt how to analyse and visualise the statistical effects of COVID-19 on various sectors of society. As a result, in 2021, the international Sigma Awards competition for data journalism highlighted coverage of the pandemic. Using content analysis with qualitative elements, this paper analyses the shortlisted works covering COVID-19 from the competition (n=73). It focuses on the data references made by the teams – sources, type of both reference and data used – showing statistics from official institutions to be the most used type of data. It also lists the main problems journalists had to face while working on their projects. Most often these problems fell into two categories: specific characteristics of the project, mostly 'time consuming', and issues with data.

Keywords: COVID-19, data journalism, data literacy, datafication, journalistic skill

INTRODUCTION

In early 2020, reports on the COVID-19 virus claimed their place as the top news throughout the world. In the context of journalistic skills, the pandemic highlighted the need to keep pace with worldwide datafication, which can be phrased as the "quantification of aspects of life previously experienced in qualitative, non-numeric forms" (Engebretsen et al., 2018, p. 1). To datafy a phenomenon is to put it in a quantified format, so that it can be tabulated and analysed (Mayer-Schönberger & Cukier, 2013) – health being a highly datafied field.

Coverage of the coronavirus has posed challenges to journalists everywhere, as careful news production has been required to guide people and reduce uncertainty, but also to create balance and avoid the increasing spread of health mis

– and disinformation (Casero-Ripolles, 2020; Catalan-Matamoros & Elías, 2020). Analysing and visualising the spread of the virus, daily death numbers, the progress of vaccination procedures, etc. became a daily task for media outlets. Phrases such as 'mathematical model', 'flatten the curve', 'peak infection' and various other mathematical terms appear in both media and public discourse (MacDonald, 2021; Stephan et al., 2021).

In 2021, the data journalistic challenge of COVID-19 was highlighted by the Sigma Awards – an annual large-scale international competition for data journalism projects, successor to the discontinued Data Journalism Awards. In brief, the Sigma Awards aims to empower and enlighten the global community of data journalists by offering a platform, on which they can compete and discuss their work. As for the 2021 competition, the organizers openly declared the goal to spotlight the pandemic.

Emphasising the volume of work done covering COVID-19, the competition was indeed dominated by projects tied to coronavirus. In total, 545 data journalism projects from 68 countries were submitted. Thereafter, a pre-jury shortlisted 140 of these projects with more than half – 73 projects, 52% – reporting on issues tied to COVID-19.

The literature notes that little has been written about journalists regarding data skills and choice of sources (Wihbey, 2017). This paper aims to look at the data sources used by the teams. As background variables, the location and size of the teams will be analysed, then the geographical focus and topic of the projects will be described and data sources – number and types of source as well as types of data – used in the project. Finally, the main problems the journalists had to face while working on their project, as described by themselves, will be reviewed, thus helping better understand the skillsets currently possessed by data journalists and their level of technical and data literacy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A SHIFT TOWARDS DATA JOURNALISM: NEW SKILLS AND PRACTICES

Nowadays, newsrooms are saturated with data. On the one hand data have become a tool that, through audience metrics and advertising revenues, shapes media industry. On the other hand, data provide the possibility for countless journalistic projects, which combined with increased computing power will help us reach a new level of understanding about the world (Marconi, 2020). Datafication has caused not only hybrid roles such as programmer-journalist, journalist-developer and hacker-journalist have come into play (Parasie & Dagiral, 2013; Royal, 2012) but has also transformed news media editors from being

hybrid journalist-information officers (Marconi, 2020). Throughout this paper, phrases like 'data journalism' will be used to mark the process of either or both reporting on data and using data for reporting. In newsrooms, data journalists represent a combination of traditional journalistic values and the values of open-source culture (Widholm & Appelgren, 2020).

The claim that data-driven journalistic practices are gaining momentum in newsrooms all over the world is supported by the growing corpus of research literature. In recent years numerous studies have been published discussing on various aspects of data journalism. From Europe, for example there was a representative quantitative overview of data journalism activities in German newspapers and by public broadcasters, which concluded that data journalism in Germany is well established (75% of media outlets) and mostly performed by individuals or small teams (Beiler et al., 2020). A study in Italy, based on interviews with full-time data journalists, highlighted the need for better journalistic education but also shed light on strategies for how data journalists generate and collect their own data (Porlezza & Splendore, 2019). Research from Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales, applies the prism of material, performative and reflexive conceptual lenses to data collected from interviews with data journalists and data editors (Borges-Rey, 2020). A quantitative analysis of news produced by specialised data desks in Sweden's public service organisations, concludes that in data journalism hard and soft news attributes often appear close together in hybrid forms (Widholm & Appelgren, 2020). These studies, among others, confirm growing journalistic interest in data – with data journalists emerging, data teams created and journalists and programmers teaming up to work on stories. They also address the issue of data journalism being largely determined by public datasets – most often as freely available data from statistical offices.

For a journalist, a professional storyteller, data hold power. Several studies point out that interpreting data in a news piece has a psychological effect because it helps the journalist emphasize the importance of the issue and improve the quality of the story (Wihbey, 2017). Quoting data signifies the story due to the culturally embedded belief that "measured knowledge, expressed in numbers, represents undebatable truth that cannot be argued with" (Van Witsen, 2020, p. 1061).

Focusing on stories supported by or hidden in data presents an opportunity for the media to remain relevant and even strengthen their role in informing the people. Understanding the business of news is connected to the feeling of 'value' people get from reporters (Lewis, 2020). Scholars have proposed that journalists may reconceive themselves as 'knowledge brokers', who illuminate the process of expert knowledge production to their audience (Nisbet & Fahy, 2015). Coverage of COVID-19 has presented the media with this role very clearly,

as vast amounts of pandemic-related data and issues need to be addressed and presented in a way that is easily understandable to the public. The pandemic switched journalism into crisis mode, but unlike other crises, this one had "a direct and immediate impact on journalists themselves, their work routines, economic and technological resources, media as institutions and the societal and political environment" (Quandt & Wahl-Jorgensen, 2022, p. 924).

Undoubtedly, COVID-19 has been a highly datafied issue exemplified by the use of a variety of data such as: (a) healthcare-related statistics describing the situation locally and worldwide and (b) medical expertise to explain the nature of the virus; (c) spatial data that show the spread of the pandemic and (d) census data determining the areas in which hospitals might fall into crisis due to the number of potential patients; (e) financial data on government expenses for masks and medicine and (f) measurements of the loss felt by sectors of the economy.

This is where the 'expert knowledge' referred to earlier truly shines. Gathering and cleaning the data, collating and visualising them requires several skills; therefore, from a data journalist's point of view, data literacy and at least some technical knowhow is vital.

DATA LITERACY AND JOURNALISTIC SOURCES

The OECD (2016) defines information processing skills as consisting of literacy, numeracy and problem-solving in a technologically saturated environment. In data journalism research, the term is defined in a similar way: a mixture of statistical, numerical and technical capacities – being data literate means "being able to access, analyse, use, interpret, manipulate and argue with data-sets in response to the ubiquity of (digital) data in different fields" (Gray et al., 2018:, p. 2).

This definition misses the word 'quickly'. On any given day, the environment of a newsroom dictates the need to interpret data quickly yet accurately, which was amplified when COVID-19 struck. Although health and science have been common topics in data journalism since data is routinely available in these domains (Cushion et al., 2016; Loosen et al., 2020), the volume of health-related expert data that came with COVID-19 was a journalistic challenge. There was, and still is, a lot of data being published about the pandemic – for example, it was noted that Web of Science alone published more than ten COVID-19 related papers per hour (Makri, 2021) and in 2020 alone, researchers are estimated to have published 100,000–200,000 papers related to the virus (Stoto et al., 2022). Tackling the issues at hand requires reporters to be skilled in understanding data and finding reliable expert sources.

Building a network of trustworthy data sources, a peer review so to speak, helps save time, too because reporters aim not only to be accurate, but they also want to break the news before their competitors (Makri, 2021). Research by Stalph

(2018) analysing European quality news websites indicates that data journalists mainly rely on pre-processed data drawn by domestic governmental bodies. The literature shows this notion to be common. In analysing the relationship between data owners and journalists, several researchers have remarked in the past decade that there is a strong dependence on data provided by government institutions and other non-commercial organisations (NGOs, research institutes, etc.) – data which are publicly available or available upon request (Beiler et al., 2020; Parasie & Dagiral, 2013; Van Witsen, 2020; Young et al., 2018).

One can expect that the pandemic further solidified government bodies, universities and other research institutes as data sources. For example, this has proven true in the case of the COVID-19 vaccination process in Spain (Catalan-Matamoros & Elías, 2020). Covering COVID-19 presented an issue so novel that journalists had to start explaining it to the public from scratch because "common knowledge" about it did not yet exist. Thus, reliance on public datasets and help from various expert sources to interpret them from various angles seems only logical. Furthermore, creating a dataset on your own might require time, skills, people and funding that are not available to all data journalists on a regular basis. It can be argued that this also shapes the variety of stories being published on the matter of the pandemic.

Although the pandemic was a grim subject, the COVID-19 global health crisis offers the chance to look at worldwide data journalism projects focusing on a mutual theme. In doing so, it provides an opportunity to better understand the current state of data journalism. An analysis of pandemic-related projects shortlisted by Sigma Awards proves useful in several aspects. First, the analysis gives an overview of what data projects by journalists value; secondly, the analysis sheds light on the data-related practices and data literacy skills of journalists working in this field; and thirdly, it extends the line of academic work analysing major national or international data journalism competitions (Chaparro-Domínguez & Díaz-Campo, 2021; Ojo & Heravi, 2018; Young et al., 2018). One of the latest valuable pieces in line of this work being a thorough analysis of projects nominated for Data Journalism Awards 2013–2016 (Loosen et al., 2020).

Most of the studies mentioned above use content analysis to look at reoccurring topics for notable data journalism projects, the actors producing them, types of data commonly used etc, proposing ways to define an 'ideal data story' (Ojo & Heravi, 2018) or 'gold standard' (Loosen et al., 2020) for data journalism projects. But they also deal with data verification, transparency and privacy related issues (Chaparro-Domínguez & Díaz-Campo, 2021). The analysis of Sigma Awards 2021 continues this work, offering a recent base of comparison, but also adds to previous studies, because this novel dataset offers a valuable opportunity to map the problems journalists faced while completing their projects – as they described when presenting their finished works.

To sum up, looking at an international dataset of data journalism projects related to COVID-19, offers valuable information for a variety of audiences: media researchers, data holders, journalists and universities. An overview of which COVID-19-related topics were most often covered and on what type of data these projects were based (statistics, medical expertise, etc.) (RQ1) helps comprehend and describe the role journalists took during the pandemic, and the type of data used offers input to further discuss the level of data literacy the journalists currently have, thus providing valuable practical information for educators of journalism updating academic curriculum. This insight is strengthened further by analysing the hardships data journalists encountered while working on their projects (RQ4) – once again reflecting the problems with data, but also reflecting on the skills they needed to work with this data.

Looking at how many and what types of data sources were named in the projects (RQ2) and how many and what types of sources were used in the projects to comment on an aspect of the data presented in the project (RQ3), helps further explore the notion, that data journalism is largely determined by public datasets. The dataset at hand uniquely brings together projects with a united theme. The focus on the shared topic of reporting COVID-19 provides an opportunity for practitioners from different fields – researchers, journalists and data providers – to look at ways data is collected and presented to the public and how to improve the quality of this information.

In addition to focusing on these questions, an overview that maps the Sigma Awards competition of the remarkable pandemic years for future researchers will be given of the background variables of the projects.

METHOD

The dataset for this study is projects submitted to Sigma Awards 2021 and shortlisted by the competition jury (N=140). The projects were submitted as single projects or as portfolios – both could consist of several articles, links to web portals, project-related databases, data visualisations and presentations. For study purposes, sub-sampling was used and only projects related to COVID-19 were selected for further analysis (using keywords: "COVID-19", "corona", "coronavirus", "virus" and/or "pandemic"). The sub-sampling was based on submission info, which is publicly available on the Sigma webpage through the projects database section and is downloadable in .xlsx format via GitHub (*The Sigma Awards Database.*, 2023). Links leading to the projects are also included in the submission info. This process led to the shortlisting of topical pandemic-related projects (n=73). These projects were analysed using manual content analysis, a central method in communication research (Krippendorff, 2018; Lacy et al., 2015).

As mentioned, each individual project or portfolio in the dataset presented one or several weblinks leading to a pandemic-related data journalistic piece. In each case, the initial weblink was used to determine the unit being coded – unless that link led to a presentation about the project, in which case the next link leading to the project was used. Applicants were able to enter multiple projects in the competition, which enabled a few data journalists despite being a member of a project team, to submit their personal portfolios. In these instances, if the story was already coded in the single project category, the first available unique weblink was used to find another pandemic-related piece from that portfolio.

Most of the projects presented to the contest were written in or translated into English. In the case of the project being in a language other than English (for example Chinese or Spanish), the project was read and coded with the help of Google Translate. The length of the projects varied greatly as did their types: from infographics accompanied by a few lines of explanatory text, to feature stories that would take up several pages in print. To conduct the content analysis, the whole text corpus was as an initial step thoroughly read by the author. Next, the author created a preliminary codebook, which was tested on a sample of the dataset for necessary corrections in categories and descriptions. The results were recorded in a tabular format following the codes identified by the codebook. After the pilot coding, the codebook was reviewed and discussed with a second researcher. The author and the second researcher then randomly selected 9 of 73 (approximately 12%) of the shortlisted projects and coded each of them. A comparison of recorded results, tracing differences in codes attributed and then calculating the number of concurrences, showed an intercoder reliability of 88%. The author completed the rest of the coding, after which the dataset was double-checked for possible coding errors.

As 'data' and 'sources' are keys to the codebook and presented analysis, a short clarification of the terms is necessary. Both terms are used throughout the codebook to mark categories – the number of data sources in the project at hand, type(s) of named data sources, type of data used for the project, number of named sources used to comment on an aspect of the data presented as well as the type of these sources. 'Data' is understood here as quantitative information, such as different types of statistics or other numerical knowledge, but because the topic, COVID-19, deals largely with medical expertise, qualitative estimates phrased as "frequent", "large amount", "a little", etc. were also valid for coding. 'Data sources' are people or institutions accredited by name in the project as owners of the data. If the source was referred to by anonymous or unaffiliated 'experts', 'scientists', etc., the source was coded as "not indicated". This was also done in the case of unspecified hyperlinks tied to phrases from the text and acting as additional sources directing outwards from the story.

This analysis also looked at named sources used to comment on an aspect of the data presented in the COVID-19 project. To be coded in this category, a clear connection to the data used for the journalistic piece was sought. This was done by evaluating the way, in which each source was used by the journalist: was it to illustrate the story or give context to specific data?

Journalists who submitted a single project (n=42) were also asked by Sigma to describe the hardships encountered during their work process. These texts, written in their own words, were read to pinpoint and code defined problems. These data collected by Sigma present a valuable opportunity to get "behind the scenes" of data journalism work and systematise and list the main hardships encountered while reporting the pandemic.

Finally, background variables – project title, type of project (single or portfolio), geographical location of the submitter(s) and their organization size (big or small) – were coded to add general context concerning the Sigma Awards competition.

RESULTS

OVERVIEW OF TOPIC AND FOCUS

Overall, the projects in the COVID-19 dataset were mainly (74%) from big newsrooms – where 'big' means consisting of 35 or more journalists (including freelancers and contractors) or done collaboratively. This trend has been noted in international data journalism competitions before – projects found to name over five people as authors or contributors (Loosen et al., 2020). This can be explained by the complex and labour-intensive nature of data journalism projects in general, but even more so in the case of projects chosen to compete for an international award. The dominance of bigger newsrooms is visible, with *Reuters*, *The New York Times* and *The Economist* submitting multiple projects to Sigma Awards. Large media houses have the necessary resources and editorial commitment to invest in cross-disciplinary data teams; however, smaller, regional newspapers can make up for lack of resources via the skilful use of sophisticated tools and approaches (Young et al., 2018).

Geographically speaking, the competition of 2021 indicates that data journalism is gaining momentum worldwide. An analysis of Data Journalism Awards 2013–2016 shows that nearly half of the nominees came from the United States (Loosen et al., 2020). The COVID-19 dataset in the Sigma Awards did have the top three nominee regions: 34% of nominees (from North America), 26% (Europe and 12% (Asia).

Analysing the focus and topic of the projects, two trends emerged. Looking at Table 1 below, the majority of projects focused on the national aspect of the pandemic. This was also supported by the choice of topic: over half of the projects reported on the victims of COVID-19, offering the audience the latest information on infection rate, death toll, etc.

Table 1. Geographical focus and main topic of data journalism projects submitted to Sigma Awards 2021 (%, multiple coding)

Geographical focus (%)		Most common topics (%)	
National aspects of the pandemic	63	COVID-19 victims	52
Global aspects of the pandemic	23	Geographical spread of the pandemic	36
Local aspects of the pandemic	14	Explaining the nature of the virus	15
Semi-global aspects of the pandemic	8	Short-term preventative measures	15
Non-specific to a location	7	Long-term preventative measures	15
		Current state of the medical sector and/or medical care issues	14
		COVID-19 testing	12

Source: Author

DATA SOURCES AND TYPES

Most of the projects named either 2 data sources (22%) or 10+ (26%), which shows the dual nature of the projects. On one hand, COVID-trackers presenting dashboard maps and graphs (these could be built on data from a couple of sources such as the National Ministry of Health and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control). On the other hand, long in-depth feature stories (e.g. looking at which US cities have the biggest racial gaps in access to COVID-19 testing or how overcrowded housing spreads the virus among essential and service workers). Consequently, a third of the projects (33%) coded did not involve sources commenting on the data at hand, as so many of the projects were intended as a quick overview of statistics, where the journalistic text was dominated by visualisations (e.g. the coronavirus map of *The New York Times*).

Most of the projects relied on COVID-19-related healthcare statistics and/ or medical expertise – one or both of which were used in 66% of projects coded. Thus, the pattern was to cite official institutions (named as data sources in 66% of the projects). In almost half of the cases, the source could be specified as an organisation dealing with health – such as national health ministries, state health departments, etc. Frequently, data also came from national statistics bureaus (e.g., the US Census Bureau, the UK Office for National Statistics, the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics).

The second most popular group involved universities, scientists and academics, think tanks (most often Johns Hopkins University, but also Oxford University,

University of Washington, etc.). Combined with the citing of scientific journals, these groups comprised 17% of all named data sources.

As for the other half of the data sources – the media and journalists emerge. Numerous projects cited their own company as a source, referring to their own dataset, collated data and analysis (e.g., collating data from Google Maps and location of schools to determine how many businesses a new government measure affects). Additionally, some data were quoted from other media – news stories and interviews – as well as from social media posts (e.g., projects covering pandemic disinformation). Together, these two categories comprise 23% of the data sources cited by name. The use of other data sources, such as non-commercial organisations, private companies or clinicians, was rare compared to those mentioned above.

Although the majority of projects relied on healthcare-related statistics, using multiple types of data was common (44%) – a result in line with data journalism research from previous years (Loosen et al., 2020). A typical example of this is healthcare statistics combined with census data to show pandemic numbers in relation to population numbers across regions. This paper does not focus on the visualisations used in the projects, but it is safe to say that dashboard maps collating data on COVID-19 were highly popular (Koch, 2021).

Table 2. Type of data used in data journalism projects submitted to Sigma Awards 2021 (%, multiple coding)

Most frequent type of data, %	
Healthcare-related statistics about COVID-19 situation	60
Medical expertise	16
Census data	15
Results of a poll/questionnaire/survey	12

Source: Author

Against this background, several examples of rarer data are noted. Examples are obituaries, eviction filings, fact checks performed per month or emoji usage data from messaging apps. Often, the data journalistic project concluded with a reference list citing data sources. There was only 1 case out of 73 coded where the journalistic piece did not cite a source.

As for other types of sources, i.e., those used to comment on an aspect of the data presented – the most common were researchers. Scientists were relied upon to offer expert knowledge on a variety of COVID-19-related issues from medical knowhow to information warfare strategy. Thus, they made up roughly 34% of the coded data sources that could be identified through their name. In second place were public institutions or their spokespersons (19%), which were most often used when the focus of the story was related to issues of the state, such as government spending on medical supplies, creating testing access for the public, etc.

HARDSHIPS ENCOUNTERED BY PROJECT TEAMS

All the authors of single projects were given an extra question by the Sigma Awards team. When submitting their work, they were asked about the difficulties encountered during their work process. This provides an opportunity to further look at 42 single projects dealing with COVID-19.

Analysing the difficulties described, most reoccurring problems can be divided into three larger categories as shown below.

Table 3. Most common problem sets in single projects submitted to Sigma Awards 2021

Specific characteristics of project	For example: time consuming, sensitivity, legal issues, security reasons.
Issues with data	• Lack of available data, research • Problems obtaining data from data holders • Inconsistent distribution timewise by data holders of available data • False data, imperfect data, disinformation • Verifying the quality of available data, checking (changes in) data • Language or format in which available data is presented, messy data • Collating gathered data, creating algorithms • Technical challenges keeping project available to public, challenges updating data
Prepping project for public	Technical challenges working with data before making project public Visualising data for projects Large volume of data, size of project

Source: Author

Most often the problems described fell into the first two categories – either specific characteristics of the project (most often about 'time consuming') or issues with data. Either or both of these arose in most single projects.

The time consuming aspect was often associated with other problems, such as obtaining the data (e.g., a project pointing out signs of corruption involving public spending on respirators, a platform publishing data on illicit wildlife trade). Another feature of the time consuming aspect was the sheer volume of data the team had to sort and process: individual microdata of more than 15 million deaths in one project, hundreds of thousands of tweets for another, more than 9000 fact-checking reports for a third project, etc. Of course, an international data journalism competition such as Sigma Awards is prone to receive submissions where the projects are resource-consuming timewise, need more human resources working on them, etc. However, the datafied and complex topic of COVID-19 itself dictated the workload. For example, a project where data journalists worked side-by-side with mathematical modelling academics and epidemiologists for several months with the aim of visualising the effects of vaccinations.

An interesting find was the frequent mention of journalists having trouble obtaining data from data holders and data presented in a 'messy' or unsuitable or uncomfortable language or format to work with. The latter was especially

mentioned by teams working with COVID-19 healthcare data. Data holders, primarily official channels like national health departments, were mentioned to have released some data for a few weeks and then have stopped and changed data definitions or publication times. Relevant data were also frequently scattered across several websites and platforms, and several teams pointed out that health-care data were released in an unsuitable format – such as .jpg charts – which led to data journalists spending even more time rewriting the data manually themselves.

Data handling issues were mentioned frequently by the authors of the projects – the most popular of them being a) verifying the quality of available data and checking the data for changes; b) collating the gathered data and creating algorithms for the project.

Working on the COVID-19 projects, several teams mentioned the sensitivity of the topic. As described in a recent study looking at UK journalists and how they managed their COVID-19 trauma: "On one level the journalists /--/ had never been more separate from their sources; on another level, they had never been closer" (Jukes et al., 2021, p. 15). Finding ways to visualise death tolls was a jour-nalistic challenge – one of the 2021 winners, the project entitled 'No Epicentro', described the situation: "the numbers were faceless". 'No Epicentro' combined census data with the number of COVID-19 deaths to create an interactive simu-lation placing all the deaths in the neighbourhood of the reader, thus creating closeness to the tragedy.

A variety of other hardships were described but none of them as frequently as those mentioned above. Examples of this would be financial issues (e.g., lack of funding for the project, having to find funds or unexpected financial expenses), establishing relationships with potential sources, the authors feeling the pres-sure of time while working on their project and the lack of people working on the project.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Looking at the various data journalism projects submitted to Sigma Awards 2021, there is no doubt that a great deal of data journalism work has, since 2020, been focused on COVID-19 issues. Analysis shows that 73 of the 140 projects shortlisted for Sigma Awards 2021 had an angle related to COVID-19. It's a topic where data journalism can prove its worth to the audience – health being a heavily datafied area on any given day – and data journalism "with its ambition to use statistics and visualizations for precise and careful investigations" seems "partic-ularly well equipped for covering COVID-19" (Pentzold et al., 2021, pg. 5). The pandemic offered the chance for data journalists to take on the role of knowl-edge brokers and raise public awareness.

Hence, most of the COVID-19-related projects focused on the national aspect of the pandemic. Although the health crisis is worldwide, the top priority for journalists has been to report accurate and balanced information to their home audiences, thus geographical closeness is the central aspect. Furthermore, the virus has had an immediate or indirect effect on numerous areas of all societies. This is echoed in the works submitted to Sigma Awards, whose topics ranged greatly from government spending to the spread of fake news, from homelessness to change in emoji usage, from virtual memorials to wildlife crime, etc. The variety of genres and story angles support the claim that health news as a genre has always carried elements of "both hard (government decisions about public health strategies) and soft (how to take care of one's personal health) forms of journalism" (Hanusch, 2022, p. 1136).

The analysis shows (RQ1) that the most reoccurring theme was COVID-19's infection rate and death toll – covered by over half of the projects – and this topic was often combined with reporting the geographical spread of the virus. Most often, these specific projects can be described as COVID-19 monitors – quick-to-grasp visualizations of healthcare-related statistics, which in several cases were regularly updated by the data teams, wishing to provide their audience accurate information on the unfolding crisis. Logically, the most heavily used type of data was healthcare-related statistics about COVID-19: drawing on measured values has been a standard combination in data journalism projects covering health issues (Loosen et al., 2020). These findings point at several aspects of data journalistic practices in the newsrooms. First, that journalists reporting COVID-19 relied on data in the form of statistics – and that the role of the project was to visualise the data in an easily readable and informative way. Thus, a data journalist needs not only to have a varied skill-set to make sense of the data, but must also be a visual thinker. This skill profile is something to be considered by those designing curriculum to train future journalists.

As for the hypothesis that the pandemic has further solidified government bodies, universities and other research institutes as data sources, because national healthcare statistics are most often gathered by official institutions, the connection is evident. Analysing the dataset (RQ2), while the most dominant type of cited data source was indeed official institutions like national health ministries or state health departments, in second place were universities, scientists, think tanks and scientific journals. It is evident that Johns Hopkins University has been a great source for data journalists due to their continuously updated COVID-19 dashboard, which collates healthcare data from numerous databases. Cited by name in every fifth project, Johns Hopkins University released their global COVID-19 tracker map – one of the first available – in January 2020 (Dong et al., 2020) and their effort has since grown to gather data from more than 260 sources (*Johns Hopkins University*, 2022). TIME magazine named Johns

Hopkins University the "de facto clearinghouse for pandemic stats", listing it as one of the top inventions of 2020 (Korn, 2020). The data from the Sigma Awards 2021 emphasizes that it is best to serve the public with fast and accurate information in a time of crisis such as COVID-19. To do this, societies would benefit from open discussions between journalists, official bodies and research institutes, focusing on efficient ways of data collection and distribution.

As for the number of named data sources cited, two groups emerged from analysis of the dataset. First, projects citing one to two data sources by name; and second, projects citing more than 10. This in an indicator of the variety of genres covered by data journalists – from short news pieces to in-depth feature stories. In the case of COVID-19, visualizations often proved more important than text, as is evident in a variety of web-based dashboards.

Likely due to the latter, the data in the projects were often presented without commentary on additional sources. As for the projects that added comments concerning the data presented, the most dominant group by far was universities, scientists and academics and think tanks (RQ3) – these were identified by name in roughly a third of the projects. Thus, the dataset underlines the need for public speaking skills for the scientific community.

The dataset also provided an opportunity to look at the difficulties journalists encountered while working on their projects (RQ4). The conclusions presented here are drawn from brief written information provided by the journalists themselves – researching this area further by means of structured interviews would be the next step forward.

Most often the problems described by the data journalism teams fell into two categories – the specific characteristics of the project at hand (most often time consuming) or issues with data. Amplifying the need for a data journalist to use data literacy skills, the problems with data most often had to do with verifying their quality or checking them for changes, but also collating them. Adding to the problem, epidemiologists and other researchers themselves struggled with data issues that, if addressed, could threaten the validity of their results (Stoto et al., 2022). This pressing need to make sense of data falls in line with how Marconi (2020) describes changes facing journalists working in newsrooms: they are also asked to be technologists, making use of new tools at their disposal. Analytical skills to look at data, performing data-mining and generating appealing data-driven projects are necessary traits for current and future data journalists, "new entrants in an increasingly digitised field" (Zhang & Wang, 2022, p. 1128), creating further expectations for journalism education. As explained above, data journalists needs a varied skill set: skills of a data analyst, but also story telling and visual thinking.

Another common problem rising from Sigma Awards dataset, as well as validating the technical aspects of the job, were journalists' mentions of creating

algorithms for the project as well as the technical challenges in keeping the project available to the public and updating the data. At least one of the difficulties listed above was mentioned in every other submission text for COVID-19-related single projects.

An interesting find was the frequent mention of journalists having trouble obtaining data from data holders and data presented in a "messy" format. Again, this highlights the complex relationship between the media and data sources in the time of datafication, which should be a vital topic for future media research. In the cases of official institutions where public interest is of the highest priority, an open dialogue with journalists concerning data formatting and availability seems especially beneficial for all parties.

Finally, some limitations of the current study should be pointed out. The entries of the Sigma Awards, especially the shortlisted projects, present the highest level of data journalism currently done in the world. Most of the projects analysed came from big newsrooms and large teams – this could impact the complexity of the projects (number of sources used, intricacy of theme etc.), but also the problems they encountered, because of a greater potential variety of data-related skills in a bigger team.

Beyond doubt, coverage of COVID-19 has amplified the public need for fast and accurate data journalism. But how this stressful time has affected journalists themselves is a topic worth researching further – worldwide and on a skills assessment level.

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Changes in Crisis Management PR and Digital PR Caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract: This article aims to show to what extent and in which areas the COVID-19 pandemic changed the services available on the public relations (PR) market. In particular, the paper focuses on crisis management and digital PR. The article was based on data obtained from 242 PR specialists. The research was carried out using the CAWI technique in the period April-May 2020, during the largest lockdown restrictions that were recorded in Poland in connection with the coronavirus pandemic. The collected data enabled the verification of a hypotheses stating that during the COVID-19 pandemic in Poland, the role of those two PR task spheres was strengthened.

Keywords: public relations, digital PR, crisis management, media, COVID-19

INTRODUCTION

The changes that have been taking place recently in many areas of the economy, especially those related to the COVID-19 pandemic particularly affect the area of communication. The pandemic had an impact on communication processes but also on the involvement of institutions and organizations (Kim & Kreps, 2020). As a result, public relations (PR) departments had to react to the unprecedented situation of the pandemic. During the first wave of COVID-19, companies informed employees about operational changes and new working conditions, their rules on holidays, working time, free time, overtime, etc. (Camilleri, 2020). Communication has become a priority, a key element supporting management processes in companies and organizations. Undoubtedly, the pandemic can be considered a turning point for communication in terms of relations with various social groups, ethical dialogue and responsibility in the face of a threat, which should be examined in terms of its complexity or disturbance (Lovari et al., 2020).

Widely published research reports show that changes in the use of digital media are particularly visible in connection with the pandemic. This is mainly due to the constraints caused by the closing down of economies. Lockdown, restriction of mobility, the need to work from home, have all contributed to changes in the growth of the interest and use of social media for communication (Kothgasser, 2020; Madianou, 2020; Cellini et al., 2020).

The proliferation of videoconferencing applications and programs has also become unprecedented. Research conducted in the USA shows that the significant increase in digital communication was a natural phenomenon. Text messages sent by respondents rose by 43%. In just a few months, there was an increase in the number of voice calls (36%), social networking (35%) and video calls (30%) compared to the period before the pandemic. Almost a quarter of respondents used an e-mail communication more often (24%), and slightly more than a fifth played online games more frequently (22%).

Overall, 46% of respondents increased their commitment to digital communication without reducing the use of any of the methods (Nguyen et al., 2020). These changes were visible not only in the USA market, but also in other countries affected by the pandemic. Changes affect not only people, but also companies and several other institutions from almost every sector of the economy, including those related to communication (Bârgăoanu & Durach, 2020).

At the same time, the professions that are related to the creation and distribution of messages to specific groups of the internal and external environment have been growing significantly (Sévigny & Lamonica, 2020). Thus, for the above-mentioned reasons, PR is one of the most widespread and developing professions in the world. Various organizations, whether service or commercial,

public or private, political, non-profit, tourist or sports, need communication employees, practitioners and PR specialists (Kamil, 2020).

The practice of PR is a link between the organization and its audience in order to achieve a mutual full understanding: this is how two-way delivery and reception of messages and information is ensured (Gawroński & Jakubowski, 2018). It is also worth mentioning that PR comprise multidisciplinary activities (Kamil, 2020; Gawroński 2016). Specifically, in order to reach and influence the audience of an organization, a PR practitioner must use social sciences, of psychology, sociology, and communication.

This paper aims to exploring to what extent and in which areas the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the services on the PR market in Poland. In particular, the paper focuses on crisis management and digital PR.

LITERATURE OVERVIEW

The literature shows there are no other similar studies on the transformation of the PR industry because of COVID-19. A group of authors observed the changing tasks and activities for PR-managers (Islam et al., 2022; Mio et al., 2022; Ridzuan et al. 2021), but these are not publications that allow comparative results with those presented in this article. There are also popular science publications containing the voices of the PR community on the evolution of communication management, which is taking place because of the pandemic conditions (Morley, 2021; Oleary, 2021; Samways, 2021; Mahler 2022).

Considering all the types of crises, the economic one related to COVID-19 is very complex and can be considered on many levels. This particular crisis affects all economic spheres and covers a number of areas related to both economic and typically image-related issues. Furthermore, the economic crisis is considered both on a macro and micro scale. The image crisis, on the other hand, is a phenomenon illustrating changes in a organisation, disrupting the normal rhythm of its functioning, having a significant impact on the entirety of the processes taking place in it (Tworzydło, 2017, p. 77).

Crisis situations usually have negative consequences, although when dealt with properly, they can strengthen the affected entity. On the other hand, any successful transition through the socio-health-economic crisis of the pandemic may be the consequence of preparatory and educational activities and the creation of a comprehensive immune system within the business, which will include such elements as cyclical training or a crisis manual (Tworzydło, 2019, p. 129). Bearing this in mind, however, it is important to be aware that preparation in the context of creating an organization's immune system does not guarantee complete protection.

The crisis we experienced in the context of the SARS-COV-2 virus pandemic created enormous social and economic problems at all levels. Therefore, we observed not only social phobia (Arpaci et al., 2021), but also changes in macroeconomic indicators such as unemployment, inflation and supply chain disruptions, unfavourable changes in the stock markets, economic blockade and deglobulisation (Alves et al., 2020).

Enterprises are generally unable to stop a crisis, even with procedures in place and a properly prepared immune system. However, if they can detect a crisis in time, they can apply an appropriate response strategy while reducing its negative effects (Obrenovic et al., 2020). Pre-crisis planning is „the art of removing much of the risk and uncertainty that promotes greater control" (Fink, 1986, p. 15). Thus, the entire system of preparedness in the event of a crisis should be considered and while it is supportive, it is certainly neither a guarantee nor an offer of full security.

Crises are becoming more common. They are the result of both actions and omissions. One of the important factors that influence their formation and dissemination is the development of information technologies and tools that are used in PR. Therefore, digital media is used increasingly for ongoing communication within the environment, but also in crisis situations (Trishchuk et al., 2020).

This means that institutions and organizations are taking advantage of the opportunity to include digital and social media in their communication and crisis management plans. This enables them to engage in credible and transparent communication based on the principle of dialogue with the various stakeholders in a better way (Camilleri, 2020). Good communication can be supportive even in difficult situations, especially those that may threaten the reputation of the subject concerned.

The coronavirus pandemic has had an impact on all economic and social events. The pandemic changed political and socio-economic structures and influenced communication processes and has also as Kakonge (2020) argues affected the involvement of institutions and organizations. As a result, their communication and PR departments had to react to the unprecedented pandemic situation.

Businesses are expected to communicate clearly and simply as often as possible, especially about their social and financial activities (Camilleri, 2020). Therefore, COVID-19 forced several changes in the area of communication methods and techniques, but also accelerated a few processes that were taking place. Nevertheless, the pandemic did force an immediate adaptation to the new reality, such as in the context of online working, home-to-office and video communication.

THE STUDY

The aim of this study was to verify a hypothesis stating that the roles of crisis management PR and digital PR were strengthened during the COVID-19 pandemic in Poland. The aim of the research was also to define PR strategies undertaken by the Polish enterprises during the pandemic.

In order to achieve that aim, we used data obtained during the implementation of a research project aimed at understanding the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the PR industry and gathering opinions on the future of the industry after the COVID-19 situation has been dealt with. The conducted research aimed to show the changes that have been taking place in companies' demand for particular types of activity on the part of PR agencies.

The survey was conducted with the use of the CAWI technique (Computer-Assisted Web Interview, which consisted of a computer-assisted interview on a website, using an electronic survey form). The selection of the sample was deliberate and was based on the snowball technique. Statistical inference was based on the frequency analysis and correlation analysis based on demonstrating statistically significant relationships with the use the Spearman's rho correlation.

Data was collected in the period April-May 2020, i.e. in the period of the strictest restrictions recorded in Poland in connection with the coronavirus pandemic. Ultimately, the project involved 242 PR specialists, dealing with PR both in private enterprises (26% of the research sample), state-owned (14%) and NGOs (3%), as well as freelancers (9%), scientists from universities (13%) and PR agency employees (35%). Most of the research sample were women (58.7%) compared to men (41.3%). The average length of respondents' employment in the PR industry was 11.5 years. Membership in the PR industry was not verified and was based only on the declarations of the respondents. It must also be noted that since the size of the general population is unknown, the research sample is not representative. Consequently, it does not allow us to do any extrapolation.

FINDINGS

The PR industry specialists participating in the study were asked to indicate what, in their opinion, the demand for various areas of PR activities after the end of the coronavirus pandemic would be.

As Figure 1 shows, more than three-quarters of respondents (76%) believed that after the pandemic, the demand for crisis management PR activities may increase or it will increase significantly. Seven out of ten respondents said it would be possible to increase the demand for digital PR. Excluding the answers „I don't know, hard to say", on a scale from 1 to 5, these measures were average

at the level of 3.99 and 3.98, respectively, significantly different from the rest of the listed ones.

Figure 1. Changes in companies' demand for individual areas of PR activities after the COVID-19 pandemic, N = 242 (%)
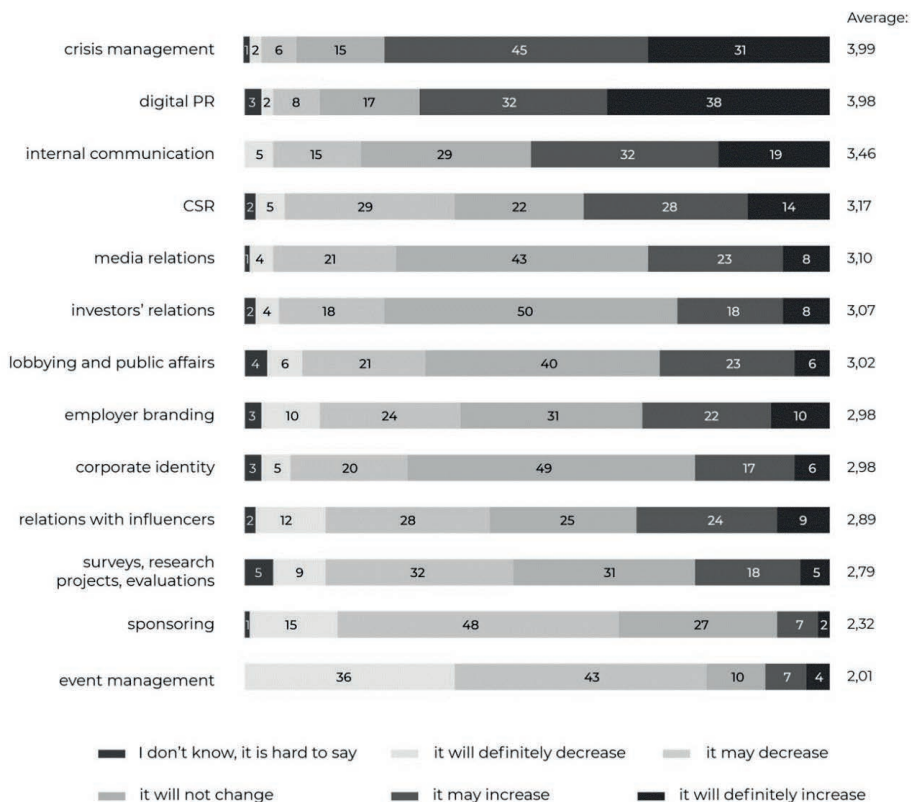
Source: Authors.

In comparison, an increase in the demand for the third activity, which is internal communication, was declared by slightly more than half of the respondents (51%). It is also worth noting here that the largest drop in demand, according to the respondents, should be related to sponsorship and event organization, which was indicated by 63% and 79% of respondents respectively.

The demand for PR activities presented in Table 1 has been juxtaposed, detailing the issues related to crisis management PR and digital PR. While generating the list of activities, a model of the division of PR activities into „task spheres" was based, considering their description and characteristics (Tworzydło et al. 2003).

**Table 1. Correlations related to changes in the demand for areas
of individual PR activities after the COVID-19 pandemic**

	Crisis management PR		Digital PR	
	rho	p	rho	p
Crisis management PR	–	–	0.346	0.000
digital PR	0.346	0.000	–	–
media relations	0.340	0.000	0.244	0.000
Internal communication	0.471	0.000	0.375	0.000
corporate identity	0.270	0.000	0.319	0.000
event management	0.036	0.580	0.146	0.024
investors' relations	0.200	0.002	0.267	0.000
surveys, research programmes, evaluations	0.184	0.005	0.200	0.003
CSR	0.263	0.000	0.214	0.001
lobbing and public affairs	0.176	0.008	0.238	0.000
Sponsoring	0.129	0.047	0.054	0.416
relations with influencers	0.194	0.003	0.369	0.000
employer branding	0.235	0.000	0.078	0.242

Source: Authors

Data analysis revealed a correlation between the declared changes in the demand for crisis management PR and the need to change industries caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. It turns out that over one fifth of people declaring an increase in demand for crisis management PR (20.1%) turned out to believe they would definitely not be forced to look for a job in a sector other than PR. In the case of the respondents indicating a decrease in the demand for crisis management PR, the percentage of such people was 5.6%. The analysis of Spearman's correlation showed that the more often the respondents indicated a possible increase in the demand for activities covered by the term crisis management PR, the less often they were inclined to change the sector in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic (Spearman's rho = -0.197, p = 0.002).

In the following part of the analyses, various statements regarding work in the PR industry in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic were compared with the declared changes in the demand for crisis management PR and digital PR.

Table 2. The need to change industries in terms of changes in the demand for crisis management PR activities after the end of the COVID-19 pandemic[1] (data in%)

		Demand for crisis management			In total
		It will decrease	It will not change	It will increase	
I will be forced to look for employment in a different branch than PR (a need to change qualifications)	Definitely not	5.6	18.4	20.1	18.8
	Rather not	27.8	34.2	41.8	39.6
	It is hard to say	44.4	31.6	27.7	29.6
	Rather yes	16.7	15.8	7.6	9.6
	Definitely yes	5.6	0.0	2.7	2.5
In total		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Chi-square = 9.491, Cramer V = 0.141
Source: Authors

Data analysis revealed a correlation between the declared changes in the demand for crisis management PR and the need to change industries caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. It turns out that over one fifth of people declaring an increase in demand for crisis management PR (20.1%) turned out to believe they would definitely not be forced to look for a job in a sector other than PR. In the case of the respondents indicating a decrease in the demand for crisis management PR, the percentage of such people was 5.6%. The analysis of Spearman's correlation showed that the more often the respondents indicated a possible increase in the demand for activities covered by the term crisis management PR, the less often they were inclined to change the sector in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic (Spearman's rho = – 0.197, p = 0.002).

The declared changes in the demand for crisis management PR also correlated with the assessment of business opportunities for PR agencies after the end of the COVID-19 pandemic (see Table 3).

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[1] Excluding the answer "I don't know, it's hard to say".

Table 3. Assessment of business opportunities for PR agencies in relation to changes in the demand for crisis management PR activities after the end of the COVID-19 pandemic[2] (%)

		Demand for crisis management			In total
		It will decrease	It will not change	It will increase	
The current situation is more a business opportunity than a threat for a PR agency	Definitely not	16.7	5.3	6.5	7.1
	Rather not	33.3	23.7	22.3	23.3
	It is hard to say	33.3	23.7	26.6	26.7
	Rather yes	16.7	36.8	34.8	33.8
	Definitely yes	0.0	10.5	9.8	9.2
In total		**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Chi-square = 7.406, Cramer V = 0.124
Source: Authors

Subsequent analyses showed that almost every tenth PR specialist participating in the survey, who indicated an increase in the demand for crisis management PR (9.8%), firmly agreed with the opinion that the current situation is more a business opportunity for a PR agency than a threat for them. In comparison, none of the respondents indicating a decrease in the demand for crisis management PR, agreed with the opinion that the current situation is a business opportunity for PR agencies rather than a threat.

The analysis of Spearman's correlation additionally showed the presence of statistically significant relationships between the variables. It turns out that the more often the respondents indicated the forecasted increase in the demand for crisis management PR, the more often they agreed with the statement that the current situation is more a business opportunity for PR agencies than a threat to them (Spearman's rho = 0.152, p = 0.018).

The assessment of the future of the PR industry after the control of the COVID-19 pandemic in relation to the state before the declaration of the pandemic is also an interesting topic raised in our research (see Table 4).

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2 Excluding the answer "It is hard to say".

Table 4. Assessment of the future of the PR industry in relation to changes in the demand for activities related to digital PR after the end of the COVID-19 pandemic[3] (%)

		Demand for digital PR			In total
		It will decrease	It will not change	It will increase	
The future of the PR industry after pandemic in comparison to the condition before the COVID-19 pandemic	Much worse	29.2	11.6	8.9	11.4
	Rather worse	29.2	32.6	24.9	26.7
	It is hard to say	33.3	34.9	39.1	37.7
	Rather better	8.3	18.6	24.3	21.6
	Much better	0.0	2.3	3.0	2.5
In total		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Chi-square = 12.102, Cramer V = 0.160
Source: Authors

The issue of changes in the demand for digital PR activities after the end of the coronavirus pandemic significantly correlated with the assessment of the future of the PR industry. More than a quarter of respondents declaring an increase in demand for digital PR believe that the future of the PR industry after the coronavirus pandemic has been brought under control will look rather or better than the state before the pandemic was announced (27.3%).

On the other hand, among the respondents leaning towards a decline in demand for digital PR, the percentage of people assessing the future of the industry in a rather or positive way fluctuated at the level of 8.3%. It can therefore be presumed that the respondents accept this direction as a positive and expected change that may take place in the PR industry. As mentioned, the differences in the respondents' answers turned out to be statistically significant. The applied Spearman correlation test showed that the more often the respondents indicated an increase in demand for digital PR, the better they assessed the future of the PR industry after the COVID-19 pandemic was brought under control (Spearman's rho = 0.153, p = 0.019).

Another important piece of information from the survey was noted in connection with the need to look for a job in a sector other than PR in the context of changes in the demand for digital PR activities (see Table 5).

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3   Excluding the answer "It is hard to say".

Table 5. The need to change industries in terms of the demand for activities related to digital PR after the end of the COVID-19 pandemic[4] (data in%)

		Demand for digital PR			In total
		It will decrease	It will not change	It will increase	
I will be forced to look for employment in a different branch than PR (a need to change qualifications)	Definitely not	4.2	2.3	24.9	18,6
	Rather not	45.8	32.6	39.6	39,0
	It is hard to say	33.3	39.5	27.2	30,1
	Rather yes	12.5	25.6	5.9	10,2
	Definitely yes	4.2	0.0	2.4	2,1
In total		**100,0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Chi-square = 29.530, Cramer V = 0.250
Source: Authors

As was the case with the need for crisis management PR, the need to change the sector significantly correlated with the demand for digital PR activities declared by the respondents, after the end of the COVID-19 pandemic. It turns out that almost a quarter of the respondents declaring an increase in demand for such activities (24.9%) strongly disagree with the opinion that they will be forced to look for a job in a sector other than PR. For comparison, among people forecasting a decrease in demand for digital PR after the end of the coronavirus pandemic, the percentage of such indications was only 4.2%. As indicated, the differences in the respondents' answers were statistically significant. The Spearman correlation test showed that the more often the respondents indicated an increase in the demand for digital PR activities after the end of the pandemic, the less often they agreed with the opinion that they would be forced to look for a job in a sector other than PR (Spearman's rho = − 0.313, p = 0.000).

The impact of the pandemic on the activities of the PR industry in Poland is also reflected in the relationship between the assessment of business opportunities for PR agencies and changes in the demand for activities related to digital PR (see Table 6).

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4 Excluding the answer "It is hard to say".

Table 6. Assessment of business opportunities for PR agencies in relation to changes in the demand for digital PR activities after the end of the COVID-19 pandemic[5] (%)

		Demand for digital PR			In total
		It will decrease	It will not change	It will increase	
The current situation is more a business opportunity for PR agencies than a threat to them	Definitely not	25.0	9.3	4.1	7,2
	Rather not	37.5	25.6	21.3	23,7
	It is hard to say	20.8	30.2	26.0	26,3
	Rather yes	12.5	32.6	37.3	33,9
	Definitely yes	4.2	2.3	11.2	8,9
In total		100,0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Chi-square = 23.514, Cramer V = 0.223
Source: Authors

The issue of the need for digital PR activities also significantly correlated with the business opportunities that PR agencies face after the end of the COVID-19 pandemic. Almost half of the respondents indicating a possible increase in demand for digital PR activities, rather or agreed with the opinion that the current situation is more a business opportunity for PR agencies than a threat to them (48.5%). In the case of respondents inclined to a decrease in demand for such activities, the percentage of such responses was at the level of 16.7%. The analysis of the Spearman correlation showed the occurrence of statistically significant relationships between the variables. Namely, the more often the respondents indicated an increase in demand for digital PR, the more often they agreed with the statement that the current situation is more a business opportunity for PR agencies than a threat to them (Spearman's rho = 0.268, p = 0.000). The declared changes in the demand for activities related to crisis management PR and digital PR were also compared with the metric questions relating to the length of service of the respondents in the PR industry, their gender and place of employment (Table 7).

Table 7. Correlations related to changes in the demand for crisis management PR and digital PR in relation to seniority in the PR industry

	Demand for crisis management PR		Demand for digital PR	
	rho	p	rho	p
Work experience in the PR industry	-0.141	0.030	0.136	0.037

Source: Authors

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5   Excluding the answer "It is hard to say".

The only variable regarding the profile of respondents, which statistically significantly differentiated the issues related to the demand for crisis management PR and digital PR, turned out to be seniority in the PR industry. It turns out that the longer the length of work experience in the PR industry, the more often the respondents indicated an increase in demand for digital PR and a possible decrease in demand for crisis management PR activities after the end of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the next question, the respondents were asked to define, based on their observations, what strategies companies would choose after the coronavirus pandemic (see Figure 2). When analysing the responses related to the subject of this article, just over one fifth of the respondents stated that digital PR activities will be carried out by companies on their own (21%). Using mainly external support in this aspect was indicated by 33% of respondents, while combining both forms – 44%. Moreover, 2% of the respondents turned out to believe companies will not undertake any activities related to digital PR.

Considering the activities related to crisis management PR, 26% of the respondents indicated that tasks were mainly performed on their own. More than every fourth respondent (28%) stated that these activities would be implemented mainly with the help of external support, while 44% of people opted to combine both their own activities and outsourcing. Moreover, 2% of PR specialists participating in the survey indicated no action in this area. It is also worth noting that, according to a very significant part of the respondents, companies will carry out activities related to internal communication (79%) on their own, and they will mainly use external support in terms of research, research projects and evaluation (36%). Combining your own activities with outsourcing will mainly concern media relations (50%), while the lack of acting will be mostly related to the organization of events (19%).

**Figure 2. Strategies of PR activities adopted by companies
after the COVID-19 pandemic? N = 242 (data in%)**
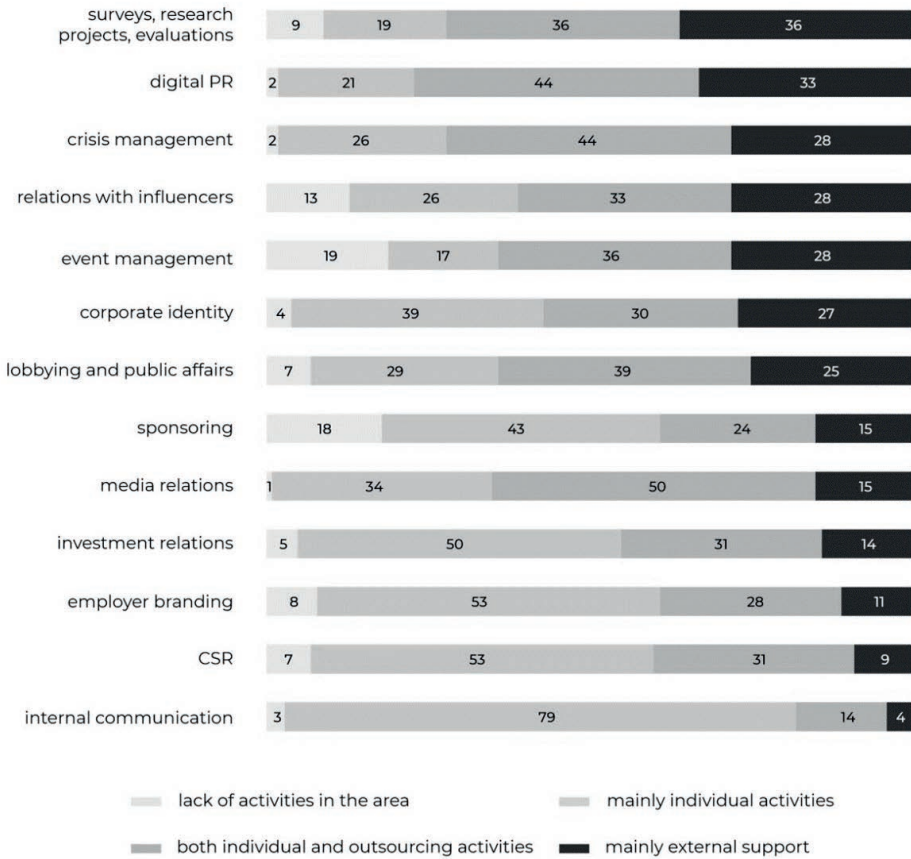
Source: Authors

The strategies for PR activities that can be adopted by companies after the end of the coronavirus pandemic presented in Figure 2 have also been compared with statements regarding the assessment of the PR industry in the pandemic era.

An interesting relationship is provided by the list of changes in the reduction of employment in the PR industry in the context of the strategy of actions related to crisis management PR (see Table 8).

Table 8. Changes in the reduction of employment in the PR industry in relation to the action strategies adopted by companies in terms of crisis management PR[6] (%)

		Action strategies related to crisis management			In total
		Mainly individual activities	Both individual activities and outsourcing	Mainly external support	
There will be a significant reduction in employment in the PR industry	Definitely not	1.6	1.9	1.5	1,7
	Rather not	14.3	18.7	31.3	21,1
	It is hard to say	27.0	16.8	17.9	19,8
	Rather yes	42.9	53.3	46.3	48,5
	Definitely not	14.3	9.3	3.0	8,9
In total		**100,0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Chi-square = 13.007, Cramer V = 0.166
Source: Authors

It is worth noting that 14.3% of respondents, who turned out to believe companies after the pandemic will conduct crisis management PR activities mainly on their own, strongly agreed with the statement that there will be a significant reduction in employment in the PR industry. It should also be noted that among people who indicate that activities are carried out both with their own and external resources, the percentage of such indications was 9.3%, while among respondents inclining to use mainly external support in crisis management PR; it reached the level of only 3%.

Due to the use of the Spearman correlation, the above relationships were found statistically significant. It seems that the greater the scope of external activities undertaken by companies in carrying out tasks related to crisis management PR, the less frequently was it in agreement with the statement that after the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, there will be a significant reduction in employment in the PR industry (Spearman's rho = − 0.132, p = 0.043).

The conducted analyses allowed the authors to observe another statistically significant correlation relating to the assessment of the crisis in the PR industry caused by the COVID-19 pandemic (Table 9).

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6 Excluding the answer "It is hard to say".

Table 9. Assessment of the crisis in the PR industry caused by the pandemic in relation to the action strategies adopted by companies in terms of digital PR[7] (%)

		Action strategies related to digital PR			
		Mainly individual activities	Both individual activities and outsourcing	Mainly external support	In total
The current pandemic is the most serious crisis the PR industry in Poland has ever had to deal with	Definitely not	14.0	2.8	7.6	6.8
	Rather not	16.0	14.8	15.2	15.2
	It is hard to say	22.0	25.0	13.9	20.7
	Rather yes	34.0	33.3	31.6	32,9
	Definitely yes	14.0	24.1	31.6	24,5
In total		100,0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Chi-square = 13.264, Cramer V = 0.167
Source: Authors

Almost one-third of respondents who indicated that companies mainly use external support during digital PR activities (31.6%) strongly agreed with the statement that the current pandemic is the most serious crisis the PR industry in Poland has ever had to deal with. In the case of the respondents leaning towards their own activities and outsourcing, the percentage of people strongly agreeing with this thesis amounted to 24.1%, while among the respondents indicating mainly their own activities, it oscillated at only 14%. As mentioned above, the differences in responses turned out to be statistically significant. Thus, the greater the scope of external activities the respondents assigned to digital PR strategies, the more often they declared that the current pandemic is the most serious crisis the PR industry in Poland has ever had to deal with (Spearman's rho = 0.133, p = 0.041).

CONCLUSIONS

The conducted research has shown that the areas of activities related to PR, for which the greatest increase in demand will occur after the coronavirus pandemic, turned out to be crisis management PR and digital PR. Their significant or moderate growth after the pandemic is forecast by 76% and 70% of respondents, respectively. It is worth emphasizing that the more often the respondents indicated the forecasted increase in the demand for crisis management PR, the more often they agreed with the statement that the current situation is more a business opportunity for PR agencies than a threat to them, and they were less likely

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7   Excluding the answer "It is hard to say".

to have to change related to the COVID-19 pandemic. In turn, the more often the respondents leaned towards a potential increase in demand for digital PR activities, the better they assessed the future of the PR industry after the pandemic was brought under control, and more often agreed with the statement that the current situation is more a business opportunity for PR agencies than a threat to them, and less frequently agreed with the opinion that they would be forced to look for a job in a sector other than PR.

Considering the strategies of actions that will be taken by companies after the coronavirus pandemic, the largest percentage of respondents inclined to combine their own activities and external support – 44% of responses in both digital PR and crisis management PR. Conducting activities related to digital PR mainly on their own was declared by every fifth respondent, while 33% of respondents opted for outsourcing in this respect. On the other hand, carrying out tasks related to crisis management PR on their own was declared by every fourth respondent, while 28% of respondents indicated that they mainly used external support. It is also worth noting that in both analysed areas, only 2% of respondents said that after the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, companies would not take any action. Two interesting statistically significant relationships were also observed.

According to the respondents, the greater the scope of external activities in the conduct of crisis management PR activities will be, the less frequently did they agree that after the end of the pandemic a significant reduction in employment in the PR industry should be expected. On the other hand, the greater the scope of external activities the respondents attributed to the expected changes in digital PR, the more often did they declare that the current pandemic is the most serious crisis that the PR industry in Poland has ever had to deal with. The main manifestations of this crisis (similarly to many other countries) were real or forecasted: reduced revenues, declining profits of the industry, reduction of expenditure on social communication management by market entities (Sudhaman, 2020, 2021; Kroliczek 2020). Summing up the considerations presented in this article, it should be noted that PR professionals agree that after the pandemic is over, the demand for crisis management PR (76%) and digital PR (70%) will increase. The organization of events and sponsorship, where a decrease in demand is forecast by 79% and 63% of respondents, respectively are place at the other end of hierarchy in this respect.

The demand analysis was supplemented with additional information about the outsourcing potential of individual services. PR industry specialists indicated the tasks to be carried out mainly with the external support: research and evaluation (36%), digital PR (33%), relations with influencers (28%), organization of events (28%) and crisis management PR (28%).

When interpreting these responses, it should be noted that research and evaluation, as well as the organization of events, which are highly rated in terms

of outsourcing, could be facing a decline (forecast by specialists). On the other hand, digital PR and crisis management PR discussed in detail in this article are the areas where high outsourcing potential is combined with the forecasted increase in demand for services. Due to the lack of similar research in other countries, it is difficult to relate the diagnosis of the opinion of the PR community in Poland to similar groups and industries in the world. Possible comparative studies will emerge along with the potential diagnosis of similar issues in other countries.

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Pride and Compassion: How Emotional Strategies Target Audiences in Political Communication?

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Abstract: The paper discusses appeals to pride and compassion as emotional strategies for mobilization in political communication, developing the Emotional Rescue Model of enthusiasm, anger, and fear. Exploring general results of brain activity, facial expressions, cognitive responses, attitude change, and prosocial behavior, it examines how compelling pride-related and compassion-related narratives are. Moreover, it considers the possibilities of targeting emotional content to specific audiences, verifying how results correspond with participants' empathy, political preferences, and attitudes toward collective remembrance. The paper explores age, gender, and election attendance as other possible factors correlated with the outcomes of manipulation. In conclusion, it suggested that appeals to pride should target supporters of the cause, but compassionate narratives can address non-supporters and undecided recipients.

Keywords: pride; compassion; empathy; political preferences; collective remembrance

INTRODUCTION

Political communication involves signaling emotions, sharing opinions, and integrating them into committing relations between politicians and their supporters. Thus, it provides opportunities to disseminate information, express public feelings, and present intents (Jensen, 2018). Emotions regulate political communication as they increase social mobilization and provide a tool for targeting audiences (Kazlauskaitė & Salmela, 2022). Stronger emotions promote the effectiveness of simplified arguments, reducing and adding bias to information assessment and helping populist movements utilize anger, shame, disappointment, resentment, and pride as instruments of political influence (Verbalyte et al., 2022). Salmela and von Scheve (2017) identify two main strategies, how populists successfully target vulnerable audiences, transforming anxiety and repressed shame into

hatred toward *enemies* and reframing negative emotions into hubristic pride and collective narcissism (p. 587).

Populists reduce emotional communication to negativity and hostility, engaging their audiences in politics of anger (Rico et al., 2017). Their persuasion is rooted in expressive dynamics combining anger and promise—the first strategy moderates conflictive appeals, while the second emotion facilitates advocative statements (Wirz, 2018). Wildmann (2021) proves that populist and non-populist political communication have distinct emotional dynamics. Populists appeal to anger, fear, disgust, and sadness, while democratic politicians prefer joy, enthusiasm, pride, and hope (p. 176). However, social media made non-populists more dependent on anger, disgust, and fear as they mimic adversaries with emotionality and framing (Jäger, 2020).

Does this mean society cannot prevent further political radicalization because stronger emotions in communication serve populist agendas? Vafeiadis and Xiao (2021) argue that the emotional dynamics of storytelling might be utilized to counter fake news on social media. Anger and hostility are over-represented in political debates because people consider them to mobilize and activate targeted audiences (Wollebæk et al., 2019). In this paper, we consider non-antagonistic emotions as an alternative and discuss if addressing them might influence recipients and inspire mobilization. We believe non-populist appeals to emotions are not limited to mirroring populist narratives in that, as Wawrzyński (2017) suggests, stronger emotions might also strengthen democratic societies and promote prosocial behaviors although the act of doing so should not, as Kazlauskaitė (2022) argues involve the white-washing of wrongdoings.

POLITICAL COMMUNICATION AND THE EMOTIONAL RESCUE MODEL

The manner in which recipients react to a political narrative does not merely result from emotional valence. Coping with political stimuli depends on emotional regulation strategies and vulnerability to a call for action in the narrative, differentiating strong reciprocators from passive citizens. People with more robust political opinions tend to respond with more anger than fear and more aggressive than defensive behavior (Mackie et al., 2000), yet the sense of being in control seems to be a differentiating factor of the response (Moody-Adams, 2017).

The distinctions between emotional responses to distress alter strategies of political storytelling. In the Emotional Rescue Model, Groenendyk and Banks (2014) describe two separate routes to collective action. They observe that **anger** increases participation, and **enthusiasm** affects political behavior and cognitive processes. Moreover, they write that **fear** is a strategy for demobilization, which targets undecided voters and opponents, whereas reciprocators have anxious

concerns that transform into rituals of anger (p. 360). Anger and fear are two sides of the same coin.

The emotional communication of political leaders explores primary human reactions to threats. There are, however, two parallel systems to address the issue—the defensive survival circuit produces physiological responses, and the cognitive circuit creates conscious fearful feelings (LeDoux, 2015). The human surveillance system controls attention, cognitive and sensory processing, decision-making, and behavior, making individuals ready to act but cautious and anticipatory until they make strategic choices (Groenendyk & Banks, 2014, p. 362).

To freeze or avoid are the initial options in flight-or-flight responses (Webster et al., 2016). Politicians assume that the public reacts to a crisis with shock, apathy, or panic (Wester, 2011, pp. 210–211), but the effect of fear is far less controllable. Scheller (2019) notes that "when political actors can evoke people's fears, people's reliance on partisan habits decreases, and they become more open to new information" (p. 601).

Groenendyk and Banks (2014) explain that "in contrast to fear, anger and enthusiasm should facilitate collective action because they encourage reliance on heuristic processes" (p. 362). But what are the effects of these strategies? Positivity indicates emotional comfort, safety, and pleasant conditions and, as Fredrickson (2001, p. 224) explains, it fosters curiosity and transforms "people for the better, giving them better lives in the future". Furthermore, positivity may broaden attention, increase creativity, reduce stress, and promote human development (Fredrickson & Branigan, 2005). Studies indicate that enthusiasm influences cognition, attitudes, openness, behavior, emotional regulation and resilience, social relations, and brain activity (Fredrickson, 2013).

Anger represents a willingness to act against the threat, even if it may cause some risks. Luxon (2016) notes that "anger in politics arises from the exquisitely clear conviction that something is wrong and that the existing order – the politics, the culture, the morals of the moment – must change for its inhabitants" (p. 155). The stimulating effect of anger reduces cognitive effort and risk avoidance because it promotes biased cherry-picking for confirmation of existing opinions, but while fear increases information-seeking, anger promotes close-mindedness (Weeks, 2015, p. 702). Furthermore, Hasell and Weeks (2016) contend anger motivates anti-social and risk-seeking behaviors, inspires moral judgments, increases hostility and distrust, and encourages radicalizations and violent confrontations.

The fear, enthusiasm, and anger model addresses passions involved in political communication strategies. The model explains how populist appeals to emotions might change political preferences, increase polarization, and radicalize society with prejudice, conspiracy theories, and emotional negativity (Wirz et al., 2018; Landau et al., 2009). However, it reduces emotional communication to

mobilization and demobilization strategies most popular in campaigning. We believe that political appeals to emotions regulate storytelling and provide an instrument for a commitment of targeted audiences. Thus, we argue for considering other motivational circuits related to prosocial behavior and broadening the Emotional Rescue Model with other emotions: (authentic) pride and compassion.

Like enthusiasm, **pride** is positive emotion; however, it relates to encouragement rather than playfulness (Hu et al., 2019, p. 5), and increased activity in the medial prefrontal cortex (mPFC) as a self-relevant emotion (Van Cappellen & Rimé, 2014). Moreover, pride is related to networks responsible for empathy, reward, emotion regulation, and self-awareness, including the ventrolateral prefrontal cortex (vLPFC), dorsolateral prefrontal cortex (dLPFC), posterior superior temporal gyrus (STG), temporoparietal junction, insula, striatum, and left temporal lobe (Tracy et al., 2020). Kong et al. (2018) show that neuroscience could differentiate authentic pride, associated with accomplishment and confidence, from hubristic pride, constituted by arrogance and narcissism, because the former is associated with the activity of the posterior STG, while the latter associates with the left orbitofrontal cortex and posterior cingulate cortex.

How do recipients respond to appeals to pride, which influences cognition and attention, openness, creativity, and prosocial behavior? Pride increases memorization, learning abilities, and engagement and improves perceptions of a discussed topic (Amran & Bakar, 2020), as well as mediating attitude change, creating a positive loop between preferences, behaviors, and pride and promoting coherent actions (Adams et al., 2020). Appeals to pride reduce stress and thus, they encourage prosocial behavior, reducing aggressiveness, violence, and hostility (Sandi & Haller, 2015, p. 299).

On the other hand, **compassion** seems to be an alternative to appeals to fear and anger and because it develops sadness, it might like fear be associated with low arousal but increased cognitive processing and openness to new arguments. However, like anger, compassion does not reduce activity, overcoming the negative effect of low arousal on political engagement and willingness to act (de León & Trilling, 2021). This dualism is deeply rooted in compassion as it includes concerns for the suffering or the need of another person, feeling moved and touched, a desire to alleviate the suffering, a judgment about an antecedent, and activation of neural circuits of social affiliation, caregiving, and motivation. Compassion bridges emotional negativity with positivity by transforming stressful experiences into prosocial and protective behavior (Goetz & Simon-Thomas, 2017).

Feeling compassionate integrates empathy-related networks and cognitive reappraisal in a motivational strategy. Empathy activates the amygdala, hypothalamus, ventral striatum/ nucleus accumbens, globus pallidus, anterior insula, anterior cingulate cortex (ACC), and ventromedial prefrontal cortex (vMPFC)

and simultaneously reappraisal involves the supramarginal gyrus, temporo-parietal gyrus, temporoparietal junction, middle and superior temporal gyrus, inferior frontal and middle frontal gyrus (Chierchia & Singer, 2017). The former network is responsible for planning positive reactions to distress, while the latter reduces emotional negativity (Klimecki et al., 2013), resulting in the prosocial behaviors of helping and charity (Weng et al., 2013). In their meta-analysis, Kim et al. (2020) suggest that the compassion-related network in the human brain should be limited to the anterior insula, ACC, the basal ganglia, thalamus, midbrain periaqueductal regions, and inferior, medial and middle frontal gyri.

How do recipients respond to appeals to compassion, bearing in mind as Bloom (2017, p. 28) argues it improves responsiveness, promotes inclusiveness and openness, fosters attitude change, and provides a cognitive transformation of negative feelings into altruism?. Compassion influences attention regulation, working memory, impulse control, motivation, and engagement. Moreover, appeals to compassion increase prosocial behavior as a response to the suffering of others in the form of emotional regulation, preventing emphatic distress or fatigue (Stevens & Taber, 2021; Singer & Klimecki, 2014).

Table 1. Responses to emotional appeals on cognitive, attitude, and behavioral levels.

Appeals to	Cognitive response	Attitude change	Behavior
anger	decreased	limited	antisocial
enthusiasm	rather increased	possible	rather prosocial
fear	increased	very probable	avoidant
pride	rather increased	possible	prosocial
compassion	increased	very probable	prosocial

Source: Authors

We believe that the developed model of emotional strategies might be used to improve the targeting of political communication (Clifford, 2019) and so we focused our research on between-group differences in responding to emotional storytelling in politicized conditions. Investigating appeals to pride, we expected activation of the superior temporal gyrus (STG) associated with the inspiration of authentic pride. We also predicted that pride would promote (1) better memorization of presented information, (2) a change of attitudes toward a subject of appeal, and (3) influence prosocial behavior. Moreover, we anticipated loop-effect consolidation of the narrative's influence on recipients. Considering the appeals to compassion, we assumed activation of the compassion-related network, as Kim et al. (2020) discuss. We also predicted that compassion would increase (1) memorization of presented information, (2) positive attitude change, and (3) prosocial behavior. Moreover, we considered that negative emotions would have

a more substantial impact on the audiences as negativity tend to be perceived as more robust than pleasant experiences.

METHODS AND THE DESIGN OF EXPERIMENTS

In the experimental study, we wanted to test how appeals to nonviolent emotions influence recipients of political narratives and verify if engagement may be achieved without emotional radicalization (van Stekelenburg, 2017, p. 938). We tested whether pride and compassion can be used in the instrumentalization of passions to prevent indifference and promote empathetic responsiveness, as Crawford (2014) discusses in her paper on the role of fear in politics. Thus, we designed experiments on associations between the emotional dynamics of political narratives and their influence on audiences, exploring the effects of the logic of emotional intensification in controlled terms.

We established different emotional dynamics of the same story using emotionalized language and compared it with a neutral narrative (Kazlauskaitė, 2022, p. 702). We used the Nencki Affective Word List (Riegel et al., 2015) that measures phrases associated with pride and compassion. The list enabled us to edit three parallel versions of a story about a hero of the Polish anti-communist movement, which ends with an evaluation of Poland's political transformations in the 1990s. The story narrated by a professional actress was recorded and edited into six paragraphs (each approximately 30-seconds long) with alternative conclusions (each 6–10 seconds long) providing experimental manipulation. The objective was to mimic informative communication. Thus, while the alternative conclusions covered 22.5% of the story, they were included in the common thread as separation might have influenced the audience's attention. Participants were randomly assigned to individually watch one of the three versions, which we worded: neutrally for the control group, positively for the pride-related group, and negatively for the compassion-related group.

Subject characteristics. There were no exclusion criteria for consensual adults in the general study, while medical and psychological contraindications were listed as exclusion criteria for the fMRI study in the recruitment survey (CAWI). We recruited 364 participants and randomly assigned them to each of the three groups pride-related (n=121), compassion-related (n=122), and control group (n=121). Each group in the fMRI study comprised 25 people. Our sample was predominated by young adults (age in years: 18–64, M=28.7, SD=8.48) and women (222 females, 141 males, and one undisclosed). The randomization procedure was effective as there were not any significant differences between participants in the control and experimental groups on the tested variables.

Table 2. The most relevant for emotional dynamics of phrasing
options for the endings of each paragraph.

Paragraph	Pride-Related Narrative	Compassion-Related Narrative	Neutral Narrative
Anti-communist movement in Poland	heroes, honest optimism, courage, talent, victory	caring for Poland, concerned, the future of the exhausted nation	structure, different people, showing a vision of Poland
Description of the hero	good and sincere, defeating communists	lonely widower, melancholia	the man, objections against communists
Involvement of the hero	successful ideas, guaranteeing security and peace	lack of reward, experiencing despair and disappointment	everyday work, operating under a permanent control
Achievements of the hero	accomplishments, inspiration, hope	difficulties, sacrifices, nameless oppositionist	organization, objectives, plans
Assessment of the hero	the only hope, dreams, free Poland	the lost chance, another dissatisfaction,	method, despite flaws, common goals
Assessment of Poland's democratization	the most important goals achieved, pride, hope for the future	forgotten objectives, failure, injustices	partially successful, some achievements, some failures

Source: Authors, based on the Nencki Affective Word List (Riegel et al., 2015)

Experimental procedure. Participants completed questionnaires in Polish (CAWI) on attitudes toward collective remembrance, empathy, and political preferences. Responses were standardized and measured from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Participants were invited to the lab at least one week after completing the first stage, where they separately watched, in silence, the 3-minute-long recordings of the narrative. Later, we asked them to complete the second set of questionnaires. It included a self-report on interest, engagement, and experienced emotions (also used as a manipulation check), the test of information presented in shared parts of the story (six questions, one per paragraph), and the retest of attitudes toward collective remembrance (to observe an attitude change). Finally, to measure their prosocial behavior, participants were informed that they could voluntarily donate any amount of their reward (0–100) to support a foundation caring for former anti-communist activists – participants selected their choice secretly from the experimenter.

For each of the three groups, 30 participants were randomly selected from the recruited to be video recorded during the experiment to provide a resource for coding their emotional behavior (Ekman & Friesen, 2003). However, in the fMRI study, participants listened to the recording of the narrative with headphones inside the scanner, followed by a resting state analysis; besides the different delivery of stimulation, we used the same experimental procedure as in the general experiment.

Measurement. The study explored three dependent variables in the general experiment. The cognitive effect was observed in the memorization test of

presented information (0–6 points, multiple-choice close-ended questions). The attitude change was measured as a difference between the test and retest of attitudes toward collective remembrance (22–110 points, 5-point Likert Scale with four reversed questions). The prosocial behavior was observed as a decision to donate any amount from the reward (0–1), while the amount was also recorded (0–100 PLN). In the facial expression study, we automatically coded emotional signals, arousal, and valence (rate: 1/10s) in addition to three dependent variables by applying FaceReader 8.1. The system is based on the Facial Action Coding System, recognizing human emotions with 88% accuracy (Lewinski, 2015). In the fMRI study, we analyzed participants' brain activity using Discovery MR750 3T System and FLS FEAT v. 6.0 for data processing and analysis. It covered the auditory experimental stimulation and the resting state analysis. In this paper, we applied basic statistics to describe the results, analysis of variances for between-group differences, and Pearson correlation coefficient for associations between variables to standardize them with results acquired in the fMRI FLS FEAT analysis.

Moreover, we controlled additional factors relevant to targeting audiences with political communication – demographics included age, gender, education, and voting behavior. We asked participants about their interest in history, and – besides using it to measure an attitude change – we considered the initial result in the questionnaire on collective remembrance as a measure of attitudes to public commemoration. We controlled empathy and political preferences to understand profiling appeals to emotions better. The first questionnaire measured Empathic Concern (EC), Personal Distress (PD), and Perspective Taking (PT) (Kaźmierczak et al., 2007). The second questionnaire assessed religious fundamentalism, xenophobia, acceptance of capitalism, and anti-interventionism as a reflection of political affiliation in Poland (Czarnek et al., 2017).

GENERAL RESULTS

In the fMRI study, the compassion-related narrative was the most effective in incitement of brain activity, producing the most significant in-group similarities. The version activated (posterior and anterior) middle and superior temporal gyri, left temporal pole, left planum temporale, right middle frontal gyrus, right inferior frontal gyrus, and the right precentral gyrus. In the pride-related condition, brain activity was lower and limited to the posterior middle temporal gyrus, right (posterior) superior temporal gyrus, left planum temporale, and left Heschel's gyrus (primary auditory cortex). In the control group, brain activity was close to the effects of appeals to pride. Nevertheless, in-group similarities were reduced

– the story activated left (posterior) middle temporal gyrus, posterior and anterior superior temporal gyrus, left planum polare, and left Heschel's gyrus.

The results suggest that the compassionate narrative successfully stimulated the compassion-related and reappraisal-related networks; these effects were missing in other groups. Appeals to negative emotions caused shared activity in three significant brain areas – pars opercularis processing emotional dynamics of speech (Patel et al., 2018), dLPFC responsible for emotional regulation (Li et al., 2021); and temporal pole involved in threat recognition and empathetic responsiveness (Herlin et al., 2021). It proves that compassionate reappraisal might be an effective strategy in even brief political communication; thus, compassion may be an alternative to appeals to fear or anger as a public response to distress.

All groups experienced authentic pride as posterior STG was activated in three conditions (Kong et al., 2018). The area's highest *local maxima* (Z) in the control group ranged from Z=3.24 to 2.95. Appeals to pride in a narrative were slightly more powerful, variating from 3.27 to 3.17, while a compassionate story caused the most potent effect with activation of posterior STG between 4.48 to 3.85. We did not observe neuroactivity specific to experiencing hubristic pride or narcissism in any condition. However, significant stimulation of dLPFC occurred only in the compassion-related group, which suggests a more profound empathetic response to feelings of pride (Tracy et al., 2020).

In the study of facial expressions, we noticed relevant differences between the experimental groups, yet, in general, emotional signaling tended to represent negative feelings. In the control group, the average valence reached – .1129; in the pride-related group, the result was similar, – .1243, but in the compassion-related group, emotional negativity was more visible on the faces of participants, reaching – .1901. The neutral story inspired the highest arousal (31.43%), more robust than in pride-related (26.73%) and compassion-related (27.27%) groups. It means that the emotional versions of the story had a more calmative influence on recipients.

Sadness was the most represented emotion in facial expressions, with averages of 10.90% in the control group, 12.89% in the pride-related group, and 16.82% in the compassion-related group, corresponding with results of the fMRI, which suggested similar differences in processing emotions. Pride significantly reduced signals of anger – 2.91% compared to 4.66% in the control group and 4.50% in the compassion-related group, while the neutral story lowered disgust – 0.72% compared to 1.65% for appeals to pride and 1.80% for compassion. Smiling differed among conditions – in the control group, signals of happiness had the highest average of 2.44%, slightly higher than in the pride-related group (2.03%) and more robust than in the compassion-related group (0.88%), where smiling was instead associated with regulating anger than experiencing happiness. Moreover, in the control group, the intensity of emotional expressions

was stable over time, and it promoted increasing neutrality; however, in both experimental groups, the trend was the opposite: following paragraphs stimulated more signals of emotions – sadness in the pride-related and anger in the compassion-related narrative.

In the general experiment, regarding the combined influence of emotional strategy (*memorization* x *attitude change* x *behavior*), we observed that watching short recordings with parallel versions of the same story resulted in different outcomes (ANOVA, F=3.528, p<.05). Thus, the results demonstrate that even three minutes of political storytelling may influence the audience, its motivations or preferences. The compassion-related narrative was the most effective strategy – participants scored slightly better on the memorization test (4.51 points, 75%) than in the control group (4.31 points, 72%) and the pride-related group (4.33 points, 72%). It significantly influenced attitude change, promoting increased support for collective remembrance (+8.5%, compared to +4.5% in the control group and +4.3 in the pride-related group) among the highest share of participants (74%, compared to approx. 60% in other groups). Considering prosocial behavior, between-group differences in the presence of donation were insignificant (65% in the control group, 62% in the pride-related group, and 66% in the compassion-related group), but appeals to compassion augmented the average amount of contribution (24.10 PLN, compared to 19.18 and 20.65). The results correspond with recent findings on the mediating role of empathy and compassion in charity (Kumar & Chakrabarti, 2021).

In their self-reports, participants suggested that the compassionate story was more engaging and exciting than the parallel versions. At the same time, appeals to pride promoted the assessment of a story as easy to comprehend (but not increasing memorization as we noticed in the previous paragraph). Participants considered the pride-related narrative more positive and reported the highest arousal of happiness and pride. Negative emotions were assessed as more robust in the compassion-related condition; at the same time, in the study of facial expression, we noticed similar levels of anger in the control group and disgust in the pride-related group. Thus, it shows that the conscious processing of emotions and emotional self-awareness might not cover all unconsciously experienced feelings, which mirrors some remarks on the nature of emotions presented by Barrett (2017, pp. 25–41).

TARGETING AUDIENCES WITH PRIDE AND COMPASSION

In this paper, we started with emotional strategies in populist communication; then suggested that politicians may find appeals to emotions that promote the nonviolent mobilization of recipients outside the ERM. We focused on authentic pride and compassion, as past studies indicated that they might match our criteria: political mobilization without radicalization and polarization. We wanted to test if political appeals to emotions might be effective if we resign from anger, contempt, and disgust (van Stekelenburg, 2017). The general results proved that it is possible in experimental conditions due to the short presentation of a three-minute-long recording. We observed different neuroactivity and distinct timelines for facial expressions, noticing differences in cognitive response, attitude change, and behavior.

How can we use the findings in targeting political communication? We need to search for factors that may differentiate participants and their responses. Considering memorization appeals to pride targeted better male and older participants and active voters, appeals to compassion were more successful among educated recipients. At the same time, the neutral story supported cognitive response in male and educated participants and active voters. We may notice that a gender bias in memorization was missing only in the compassion-related group. Some information was better learned in a particular condition – the control group better memorized the narrator's opinion on the primary failure of democratization, the pride-related group was best at recalling the hero's name and achievements, and the compassion-related group memorized the hero's age and motivations. In both emotional conditions, participants better remembered the suggested inspirations of the anti-communist movement.

Attitude change was more successful in the compassion-related group, but the effect was correlated with engagement and interest in the story, not the audience's demographics. In the pride-related group, females, more educated and less interested in history participants, experienced greater attitude change. In the control group, it was associated with a lower level of education and decreased electoral participation.

In the compassion-related group, prosocial behavior was not influenced by discussed factors. In contrast, the effect in the pride-related group was associated with reported engagement, but it also targeted females and active voters more successfully. The presence of donations in the control group was linked to similar factors, mirroring the gender bias in the memorization results. The compassionate narrative targeted female and male participants, but the appeals to pride and the neutral story strengthened memorization among men and decreased their prosocial mobilization.

Age was irrelevant in responding to the narrative in the control and compassion-related groups. However, it increased memorization (r=.199, p<.05; PCC) and the value of donations (r=.289, p<.01) in the pride-related group. In that condition, the interest in history also influenced the amount of prosocial behavior (r=.194 p<.05). It proves that appeals to pride have some limitations in effectively influencing audiences; however, they are highly successful when efficiently targeted. In that group, the strongest predictor of the influence was self-reported pride – pride-related narratives work with recipients who endorse this emotion due to political communication.

Empathic Concern. The first emotional component of empathy promoted attitude change (r=.241, p<.01) in the control group, increasing reported compassion. The pride-related group responded with better memorization (r=.196, p<.05). Only the compassion-related group correlated with declared engagement, interest in the narrative, and experienced pride. The results suggest sympathy and altruism are not essential in political communication (Feldman Hall et al., 2015).

Personal Distress. The second emotional component of empathy also correlated with memorization (r=.309, p<.01) in the pride-related group, while it was irrelevant in the control group. However, it influenced the effectiveness of appeals to compassion, increasing attitude change in the group (r=.191, p<.05). We observed that a self-focused, aversive response to other's feelings influences political communication only when it appeals to emotions; however, it has no significant impact on prosocial behavior to alleviate own distress (Eisenberg & Eggum, 2009). Personal distress influenced emotional expressions, as it reduced signals of sadness (r=-.611, p<.01) in the control group and promoted happiness and smiling in the pride-related group (r=.307, p<.10).

Perspective Taking. The cognitive component of empathy was not correlated with dependent variables in the general experiment. However, we observed that PT reduced facial expressions of sadness (r=-.307, p<.10) and promoted positivity in valence (r=.357, p<.10) in the pride-related group and slightly increased arousal (r=.339, p<.10) in the compassion-related group. It shows that empathy may influence the unconscious processing of emotions and affect emotional valence or arousal.

Religious fundamentalism. Conservative participants preferred emotional narratives, claiming more experienced pride, happiness, and compassion in the pride-related condition and more happiness and pride in the compassion-related group. Moreover, appeals to pride increased the neutrality of expression in religious participants (r=.507, p<.01), reducing their signaling of emotions and arousal (r=-.335, p<.10), which suggests a calmative effect of the presented narrative consistent with their preferences.

Xenophobia. Nationalist participants experienced negative attitude change after watching the pride-related recording (r=-.180, p<.05) and reported experiencing

more sadness (r=.203, p<.05). They found it harder to comprehend (r=.184, p<.05), probably because positive assessment of Poland's transformation was not meeting their expectations. In the compassion-related group, xenophobia correlated with reported happiness (r=.186, p<.05). The study of facial expressions showed that nationalist participants were less aroused (r=-.537, p<.01) and less angry (r=-.316, p<.10) when assigned to the pride-related group. The result proves that appeals to nonviolent emotions may be considered to prevent nationalist radicalization and successfully reduce expressions of anger and arousal.

Acceptance of capitalism and anti-interventionism. The economic orientation of political preferences was somewhat irrelevant to responses to emotional communication. A more liberal approach to state involvement in the economy reduced memorization in the pride-related group (r=.294, p<.01), increasing interest in the presented narrative (r=.180, p<.05). In the compassion-related condition, it lessened reported pride (r=-.294, p<.01). The acceptance of capitalism correlated with reduced expressions of anger (r=-.444, p<.05) in the pride-related group proving that optimistic storytelling may have a calmative influence of that audience.

Support for collective remembrance and interest in history. In general, participants who scored high in the collective remembrance tended to experience weaker attitude change than participants less interested in the issue. It confirms the results of our previous research, which suggested the instability of high support for collective remembrance over time (Wawrzyński & Schattkowsky, 2015). However, the negative effect was more substantial when participants were assigned to watch emotional stories. Moreover, in the pride-related group, the donated amount in prosocial behavior was correlated with the support for collective remembrance (r=.275, p<.01). It supports the previous conclusion that appeals to pride require adequate targeting of recipients.

Interest in history was correlated with the support for collective remembrance; thus, it is not surprising that it also influenced prosocial behavior (r=.194, p<.05) in the pride-related condition, but the effect was weaker. Besides that, it had no other relevant impact on observed variables: memorization, attitude change, or facial signaling; thus, unexpectedly, it cannot be applied in targeting recipients of a history-related political narrative (Gallego & Oberski, 2011).

CONCLUSION

The results suggest that compassion and pride can be successfully applied as emotional strategies for political mobilization. We argue that emotional positivity may be proliferated in appeals to pride, hope, or harmony. The human brain is wired to overcome the biological limitations of the flight-or-fight response

system; therefore, humans can transform negativity and distress into caring and empathetic responsiveness. Political communication provides nurturing conditions for compassionate narratives, as seen in the results of our experiments.

The study delivers new arguments to support the hypothesis on the over-representation of anger and hostility in political communication, even if there are effective emotional alternatives that also increase the mobilization of audiences (Wollebæk et al., 2019). Among female participants, appeals to pride and optimistic choice of wording proved to be highly efficient in promoting prosocial behavior. The same effect of pride was present when participants expressed more support for collective remembrance. Compassionate storytelling overcame a gender bias in responding to the narrative and, in general, would help to collect 25% more donations than in the control group. Appeals to compassion targeted participants with lower support for public commemoration almost as successfully as appeals to pride influenced its strong supporters – in the first group, the average donation reached 26.22 PLN. In the second, it was 26.71 PLN.

The experimental design helped us to understand what may differentiate recipients' responses to political communication. The fMRI study showed that compassionate narratives activate the compassion-related and the reappraisal-related networks in the brain, while – in general – the network related to processing authentic pride was stimulated by addressing national history in all groups. In the study of facial expressions, we noticed that mobilization was associated in the control group with more anger signals, but in the compassion-related group, prosocial behavior correlated with decreased expression of this emotion.

The limited size and scope of the study, its experimental design, and the context of manipulation should be considered when generalizing the results. We believe that our findings may lead to the following suggestions – appeals to pride should target specific audiences which support a promoted political cause, but addressing compassion is also effective when targeting non-supporters and undecided recipients. Among the radicalized participants, the compassion-related and the pride-related narratives were more efficient in promoting prosocial behavior with only one exception – the neutral story inspired donations among the highest share of subjects high in xenophobia. However, almost 4/5 of radical anti-capitalists contributed in the compassion-related group, and 3/4 of religious fundamentals did so in the pride-related condition – far more than in the general sample.

Considering all analyzed levels, we assume that emotional dynamics influence the possible results of political persuasion and its impact on audiences. The results suggest that the effectiveness of emotional appeals is not limited to populist communication but can be adopted in democratic and nonviolent storytelling. Therefore, we endorse further replications that benefit our understanding of emotional mobilization in political communication.

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The Right-Wing Perspective: Populist Frames and Agenda on Facebook in Central and Eastern Europe

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Abstract: Political and public debates unfolding online provide various spaces for interaction between political actors, citizens and media outlets. This environment can be employed for diverse agendas, frames and biases, especially within populist narratives. This work examines the discourse of Central and Eastern European right-wing populists from Austria, Germany, Hungary and Poland (2015-2021). To identify discursive patterns within public Facebook posts (n=192,057) by 31 party, movement and partisan news media pages, created by API interrogation, right-wing discourse is analyzed through semi-automated quantitative content analysis based on text mining, in conjunction with qualitative content analysis of messages that generated the highest engagement-rates (n=80). Key findings indicate both national and international narrative patterns with a focus on political, social and ethnic opponents, by incorporating Engesser et al.'s (2017) core elements of right-wing populist discourse within Master Populist Frame building (Heinisch & Mazzoleni, 2017), thus marking the contemporary agenda of European right-wing discourse.

Keywords: Social media, alternative media, populism, right-wing

INTRODUCTION

Political communication has been reshaped considering new media, Web 2.0 and the social web. Information, ideology, opinion and a broad variety of contents can be easily engaged with and disseminated by millions of people from all over the world. Different formats and types can be accessed on websites, dedicated to various ideologies, news sites and their applications, or through social media, which also offer producers and consumers a much livelier and interactive environment, enabling political actors (politicians and parties) to directly interact with voters or audiences (Stieglitz & Dang-Xuan, 2012). "Networked digital media technologies are extending the ability of news consumers to both create

and receive personalized social news streams" (Herminda et al., 2012, p. 821), highlighting the observed success of right-wing populists (RWPs) in both traditional and digital media in recent years (Wodak, 2015).

The structure and social character of these services allow content producers easy access to large audiences, thus bypassing traditional news media. Especially parties, alternative and partisan news media and social movements have discovered and profited from these tools and channels, generating and interacting with larger audiences (Holt et al., 2019; Marwick & Lewis, 2017). This highlights the idea of networking among right-wing groups in civil society and the organized political sphere within Web 2.0 and digital media infrastructure (Druxes & Simpson, 2015). These networks of Euro-sceptics, critics of immigration and refugees, Islamophobic and anti-Semitic sentiments, mixed with conspiracy theories (Mazzoleni, 2018), can be found at the core of anti-establishment narratives, creating political in-groups, as opposed to out-groups, resulting in an 'us-versus-them' discourse (Albertazzi & McDonnell, 2008).

The proposed research considers not only political actors but also partisan media, activists and movements, given the pursuit of influence over policy (Eberwein et al., 2015) and applies an actor-centric approach, mapping a large spectrum of actors involved in political communication. This includes written social media contents of various RWP actors as a contemporary arena of discourses. Similar studies have examined shorter periods with broad topic modelling approaches on European and US far-right networks (Schroeder, 2019), mapped the main topics addressed by specific parties and movements on Facebook (Stier et al., 2017), examined alternative or right-wing news media (Boberg et al., 2020) or specific politicians (Berti, 2020; Lipiński & Stępińska, 2018). More constrained and western international contexts have been examined (Klein & Muis, 2018), as well as the RWP party agenda on Facebook during the European Elections (Heft et al., 2022), far right networks (Caiani et al., 2012) and topic-based networks (Ahmed et al., 2020).

The present study aims at determining frames within discursive patterns of several types of RWP actors involved in agenda setting, proposing a new approach by operationalizing core elements of right-wing discourse (Engesser et al., 2017) within frame building stages (Heinisch & Mazzoleni, 2017). The study addresses an underexplored geographical context by comparing social media communication in Central and Eastern Europe over a period of six years in four countries, analyzing network agenda of parties, movements and partisan news media within an extensive data sample (192,057 Facebook posts) published between January 1st 2015 and December 31st 2021.

This research employs a mixed method analysis of content and publishing activity, with the purpose of conducting a national and international comparison between actors identified in the data sample. The aim here is to hone-in on right-wing

populist narratives and determine whether a common agenda and recurrent narratives and frames exist between actors from various spheres of public life and across countries. In order to understand the scale of right-wing populist endeavors and publishing activity regarding key events, this study's quantitative analysis provides the numbers-based context, while the qualitative analysis will further exemplify and broaden the image.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Agenda setting and agenda building theory outline the focus on certain issues in terms of attention (Elder & Cobb, 1984), and public perception, exposure and reception (Rössler, 2013). Media audiences' reception of such topics can be further influenced by online media consumption, possibly contributing to fragmented audiences (Brubaker, 2008). Social media analysis allows for a certain degree of audience perception, by analyzing messages with high engagement and distribution (reactions and shares). Politicians and parties can be their own agenda setters through steadily evolving new media products and channels, bypassing news media filters (Siapera, 2017), or by creating a general agenda through censorship or control (Lindgren, 2022) such as in Poland or Hungary (Surowiec et al., 2019).

Guo (2016) defines three levels of agenda-setting: 1) prioritizing objects of importance; 2) creating attributions or characteristics attached to them; and 3) the creation of networks relating those objects and characteristics. At the third level, Guo's Network Agenda Setting is a pertinent concept for analysis, as it applies to both news media and political actors, so that certain issues can serve as indicators for the latter (Guo & Vargo, 2015). Immigration for instance could be prioritized and presented as a pressing, urgent issue, as incompatible in terms of language, culture or identity and, as a reoccurring narrative, directly associated with far-right actors.

Network Agenda Setting analysis also allows for the most dominant subjects are tracked based on codes that include issues and their attached attributions, thus mapping how these are interconnected in both national and transnational narratives. In a similar context, Hunt et al. (1994) merge frames with group identity. They identify key agenda setting figures (protagonists: RWP politicians, activists), the collective *we*, and opponents (antagonists: elites, opposition parties and politicians, government). They also identify the citizen audiences who can be convinced of the right cause. Later research points towards right-wing network agenda through prioritization (Alonso-Muñoz & Casero-Ripollés, 2018), and frequency of coverage and the perception of those elements as connected can lead to issue ownership, resulting in further interrelatedness of issues and actors (Guo & Vargo, 2015). This study endeavors to examine the relationships

between categories of narratives and frames. Cases of issue ownership by far-right actors can be their frequently addressed topics, such as immigration, refugees (Mazzoleni, 2018), Euro-skepticism (Abts et al., 2016) or national, ethnic and cultural identity (Hentges et al., 2014).

Frames can describe the orientation of an issue in terms of representation enabling political actors to encourage their potential electorate to perceive these issues in a specific way (Chong & Druckmann, 2007). Such frames can function as mechanisms, triggering a specific understanding of an issue (Scheufele & Tewskbury, 2009). Ideologically, they can serve as symbols or identifiers within certain narratives (Zald, 1996). The *Master Populist Frame* (Heinisch & Mazzoleni, 2017) provides a suitable adaptation in terms of framing analysis. Here, three stages are defined by referencing a collective under threat (first stage), defining the source of the threat, like ethnic, social or political opponents, elites or institutions (second stage), and providing solutions, such as a promised liberation from such opponents (third stage). Nissen (2020) observes such mobilization frames (Snow & Benford, 1988) within movement actors. The study's use of a text-mining approach aims at identifying these collectives, threats and solutions by incorporating core elements of RWP discourse, and mapping the connection of the proposed codes.

RIGHT-WING POPULISTS AND THE MEDIA

Scholars dispute the understanding of populism, as appealing to fears and emotions (Priester, 2012), especially when it comes to the collective struggle of groups (Panizza, 2005) oppressed by certain elites and dangerous others in the fight for sovereignty, values and identity (Albertazzi & McDonnel, 2008; Reinemann et al., 2017). This highlights the emphasis on cultural, political, social or ethnic identity, yet ideologically flexible (Priester, 2012), "more fragmented, personalized and medially staged" (Puhle, 2003, p. 16). Five core elements of right-wing populist narratives and framing can be seen in "popular sovereignty, pure people, corrupt elite, and dangerous others", as well as "the heartland" (Engesser et al., 2017, p. 1111).

Globalization, immigration, and corruption mark core points of current right-wing populist narratives in Europe and the US (Mazzoleni, 2018), perceived as successful regarding exposure not only within traditional media but also digital media (Pajnik & Sauer, 2017). News media play an important role in incentivizing the success of populist actors (Wodak, 2015). Research has pointed towards an agenda around anti-Islam and anti-Refugee stances, Euro-skepticism and globalization (Abts et al., 2016), exemplified by parties such as Austria's FPÖ or France's Rassemblement National [formerly Le Front National] (Heinisch, 2004).

This connects to identity formation, most visibly within movements such as Generation Identity (GI), stemming from France but active also in Germany, Austria and Hungary. Their focus on "identity, ethno nationalism and liberation nationalism" (Hentges et al., 2014, p. 3) is reflected within mediated events and video productions of their actions, promoting civil protest and activism. Such movements portray themselves as victims of gender, sexual or ethnic minorities (Lewis, 2018), displaying a threatened homogeneous identity. Within such groups, a distinction can be seen between democratic radical right-wing actors, opposed to liberal ideals, and undemocratic extreme right-wing actors, with the radical right as the placeholder between the two (Mudde, 2007).

Concluding on reflections on populism, this work considers populism as a form of political communication (in line with master populist frames), in this case, of a right-wing nature, especially considering observations on Euro-skepticism, ethno nationalism, anti-immigration and Islam stances, paired with general observations on anti-elite and 'us-versus-them' narratives.

RIGHT-WING ALTERNATIVE AND PARTISAN NEWS MEDIA

Alternative media can be incorporated into the context of activism and partisan press, as the main goal is not to inform objectively but partially, through ideologically-infused content (Atton, 2007). Alternative media can share common characteristics with activist structures and movement communications (Wimmer, 2015), connecting alternative and general media skepticism (Haller et al., 2019). Criteria for alternative media can be seen in political contents and motives, such as truth and accuracy, non-commercial approaches to publication, content-based interaction with audience, a low profile in terms of paid editors, the creation of an alternative society, and networking within a broad landscape of various formats (Ladstätter, 2001; Schroeder, 2019).

Such media can be understood in their radical approach to specific topics but can be placed all over the political spectrum. Harcup (2012) exemplifies this with a less radical ethnic minority press and alternative realities created by more radical far-right organizations. These alternative media combine approaches used in brand influencing and social networking, establishing alternative news and financial success. As such, alternative media encompasses anti-mainstream, anti-elitist contents and attitudes, which can also be seen as "self-appointed correctives of traditional media" (Haller & Holt, 2019, p. 1666), even defining the public discourse and agenda (Frischlich et al., 2020). Consequently, the term partisan (news) media will be used for the included media organizations in this research, as the terminology alternative media is too generalized.

SOCIAL MOVEMENT COMMUNICATION

Social movements are a "means of organizing for social change" (Staggenborg, 2016, p. 4). Scholars have identified general movements, aiming at general values, and specific social movements, concerned with clear objectives of change, which are observable within political and social movements rhetoric (Blumer, 1995; Cathcart, 1972). Right-wing social movements act as key sources of interest for news media (Virchow, 2017), especially their representatives such as Lutz Bachmann (PEGIDA), Martin Sellner (GI), Paweł Kukiz or Robert Bąkiewicz (Poland).

In Germany, social movements like PEGIDA (Patriotic Europeans against the Islamization of the Occident), Generation Identity and the political party AfD show strong overlaps (Rucht, 2017). In the case of PEGIDA, Haller and Holt (2019) observe media attention for the movement, yet a communication almost exclusively via social media, exemplifying Chadwick's (2013) 'hybrid media system', bypassing traditional media, yet obtaining sufficient attention to gain exposure and public attention. PEGIDA exemplifies the importance of social media for movements, as the group originates from a Facebook community (Haller & Holt, 2019). As the conjunction of right-wing alternative media and social movements has already been examined earlier in this work, political parties can also profit from attention that topics gain, which are communicated by social movements (Stier, et al., 2017).

In the case of right-wing social movements, some even make use of symbolism and similarities. PEGIDA, for instance, adapted the *Montagsdemos* (Monday protests), popular prior to the fall of the GDR, even using the slogan 'we are the people' (wir sind das Volk), online and offline (Richardson-Little & Merrill, 2020). Polish groups such as *Młodzież Wszechpolska* (All-Polish Youth), *Roty Marszu Niepodległości* (Independence March) and their key figure Robert Bąkiewicz adapt symbolism around Polish resistance during World War II. The research at hand considers social movements as groups with no direct implication in policy making, but rather indirect, through street protests and activism. Social movement communication not only serves or stems from cultural memory but also consists in mobilization, organizing of events and rallies, spreading ideas, ideology and narratives (Cammaerts, 2015), further perpetuated by partisan media discourse.

METHODOLOGY

The proposed research aims to analyze narratives generated by RWP partisan media, political actors, and social movements from Central and Eastern Europe (Table 1), to establish what their frames are and determine the larger agenda behind narratives and frames. Furthermore, the scope is to compare findings on national levels and draw conclusions on an international level, which might help towards understanding the internationalization of right-wing populists in Europe and explore a possible network of similar narratives and its shape under different national circumstances.

Facebook use lies at 58% in Austria, 81% in Hungary, 70% in Poland , and 41% in Germany (Newman et al., 2022), and represents a highly relevant platform for the analysis of narratives and activities of actors. Considering the platform's high usage for news consumption in Hungary (60%) and Poland (49%), mapping the adjacent news media discourse can provide important insights on how discursive patterns are constructed. Besides a thorough literature review, the political relevance of parties by representation in parliaments and election results, the size of movement events, the distribution numbers for media organizations, as well as numbers of followers on Facebook were considered during sampling.

Table 1. Facebook pages by country, actor and followers, anglicized nomenclature, type, of actor and number of documents (number of posts featuring written text)

Country	Actor (followers)	Translation	Type	N of Documents
Austria	FPÖ (183,841)	Freedom Party Austria	Party	8,240
	PEGIDA Graz (8,335)	PEGIDA Graz	Movement	5,744
	PEGIDA Österreich (4,125)	PEGIDA Austria	Movement	5,672
	PEGIDA Wien (14,959)	PEGIDA Vienna	Movement	5,962
	Unzensuriert,at (59,176)	Uncensored	Media	12,185
	Wochenblick (79,910)	Weekly view	Media	428
	ZackZack (34,768)	ZackZack	Media	4,665
	Total			**42,896**
Germany	AfD (544,459)	Alternative for Germany	Party	4,761
	Blaue Narzisse (8,953)	Blue Daffodil	Media	2,540
	Hallo Meinung (141,701)	Hello Opinion	Media	2,865
	Junge Freiheit (130,194)	Young Freedom	Media	12,022
	LEGIDA (3,542)	PEGIDA Leipzig	Movement	5,311
	PEGIDA Berlin (4,029)	PEGIDA Berlin	Movement	3,948
	Sezession (5,443)	Secession	Media	1,362
	Total			**32,809**

Country	Actor (followers)	Translation	Type	N of Documents
Hungary	Civil Összefogás Fórum (26,429)	Civil Solidarity Forum	Movement	1,310
	Fidesz (338,454)	Alliance of Young Democrats	Party	8,760
	Magyar Demokrata Hetilap (55,333)	Hungarian Democratic Weekly	Media	11,648
	Magyar Idők (51,700)	Hungarian Times	Media	12,184
	Magyar Nemzet (25,800)	Hungarian Nation	Media	5,225
	Total			**39,127**
Poland	Bądźmy Razem, TVP (687,491)	Let's be Together TVP	Media	6,347
	Kukiz 15 (245,427)	Kukiz 15	Party/ Movement	8,058
	Media Narodowe (21,902)	National Media	Media	1,170
	Młodzież Wszechpolska (49,534)	All-Polish Youth	Movement	3,279
	Nasz Dziennik (16,156)	Our Journal	Media	6,030
	Paweł Kukiz (357,763)	Pawel Kukiz	Movement	5,338
	Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (314,514)	Law & Justice	Party	7,033
	Radio Maryja (123,234)	Radio Maria	Media	12,104
	Robert Bąkiewicz (46,557)	Robert Bakiewicz	Movement	1,202
	Roty Marszu Niepodległości (20,738)	Independence March	Movement	2,409
	Tygodnik Lisickiego (101,529)	Lisicki's weekly	Media	12,119
	wPolityce.pl (104,089)	wPolitics	Media	12,136
	Total			**77,225**

Studies conducted broad topic modelling approaches on European and US far-right networks, mapped main subjects addressed by specific parties and movements on Facebook or examined right-wing news media specifically. Therefore, this research asks: How do frames integrate into discursive patterns within the agenda-setting process of RWP actors (RQ1)? Considering this, the study proposes a new methodological approach by combining and operationalizing the core elements of right-wing discourse within the frame building stages proposed by Heinisch and Mazzoleni (2017).

Based on such discursive patterns, an analysis of possible common agenda was conducted. Research has studied political parties' agenda on Facebook during key events, specific politicians, or compared right-wing agenda in specific European countries with the US (Heft et al., 2022; Berti, 2020; Schroeder, 2019). The Eastern European context remains neglected regarding social media case studies. The study asks: How does contemporary right-wing agenda compare between the four Central and Eastern European countries from 2015 until 2021 (RQ2)?

Lastly, studies have addressed right-wing networks and network agenda in different international contexts, within smaller sample size and on different

platforms (Ahmed et al., 2020; Caiani et al., 2012). However, the present research aims at examining a possible network agenda, not the network per se. Therefore, this research asks: How do common discursive patterns and frames integrate into a possible transnational network agenda (RQ3)?

The data consists of public Facebook posts (2015-2021) acquired through API interrogation, using Facepager, and includes the initial message of the post, the date, number of comments, shares and reactions, and was collected on February 7th and 8th, 2022.

A semi-automated quantitative data analysis (text mining) was conducted on the posts' contents (Higuchi, 2016). The software (KH Coder) filtered the contents, excluding stopwords for each language. The remaining corpus was analyzed based on tokenized term frequency and position within the corpus. This facilitates term frequency analysis, words co-occurrence networks, and code co-occurrences and cross tabs. Codebooks were prepared and adapted for each country. Results were validated through concordance/text view, which helped map the contents into narrative categories (Table 3) by establishing codes for *Actors* and *Issues* (Caiani & Della Porta, 2011), based on an approach of conducting an analysis of right-wing discourse in Germany and Italy. Table 3 provides an overview of subjects for the codes, based on topic-specific literature (see annex for coding sheets). A qualitative content analysis was conducted on the top ten rankings of posts by engagement (N=80), which was used to map narratives and frames (based on user interaction numbers) and compare those to the findings of the text mining analysis to validate the quantitative analysis results.

Table 2. Discursive fields for semi-automated quantitative analysis with codes

Actors		Issues	
Us, we	Migrants	Referendum, voting	History
The people	Refugees	EU integration	Culture, Language, Tradition
Right-wing populist actors	Sinti & Roma	Terror	Security, border, protection
Demonym (common term)	Jews	Violence, criminality	Truth, disinformation
Citizens	Muslims	Generational issues	Debt
They (the others)	Homeless	Family	Guilt
Foreigners	LGBTQ	Religion	COVID pandemic
Domestic politicians (opposition)	International institutions	Dictatorship	Restrictions
The media	NGO	Homeland	
Business	The church		

Actors encompass the in-group, RWP key figures, organizations and the people, but also the out-group, such as political, social and ethnic adversaries, opposition politicians and civil society groups or national/international organizations and institutions. Issue fields show contemporary politics topics and right-wing discourse: the homeland, borders and sovereignty or culture and traditions. These elements will provide the basis for a further analysis of frames that could help determine a possible national/international agenda when comparing all actors.

FINDINGS

Publishing activity (Figure 1) during political events reveals sharp increases in output during the "refugee crisis" (2015-2016), with a high level of activity in Austria, Hungary and Poland. During the 2016 "UK Independence Referendum" period, which marks an international trigger, posting increased in Germany, Hungary and Poland. Another activity-relevant temporal context was given by the EU Elections (2019), spiking increases in all countries. The COVID-19 pandemic beginnings generated increasing publishing numbers in Germany, Hungary and Poland but also in Austria towards the end of 2020.

Figure 1. Publishing activity by country 2015-2021, showing increased output during the 'refugee crisis' (Poland, Austria, Hungary), the Brexit campaign and referendum (Poland, Hungary, Germany), EU Parliamentary Elections (all countries) and the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic (all countries).
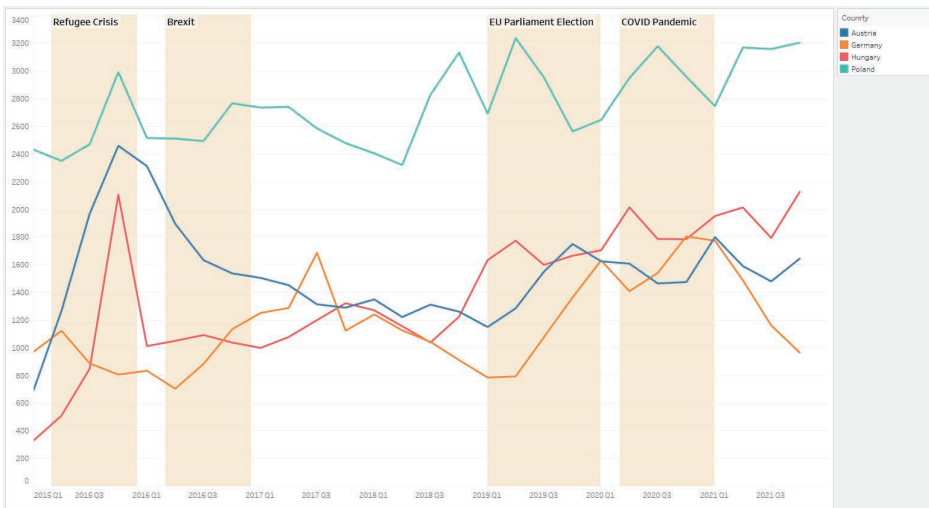
Source: Author

THE MASTER POPULIST FRAMES

COLLECTIVE UNDER THREAT

In all four national contexts, references to the collective, the people and ordinary citizens, us-and-we narratives and RWP key actors can be found. Narratives referencing these identity actors are predominantly used by all three types of pages, except for Poland (Figure 5) where *Nasz Dziennik* (Our Journal) and *Bądźmy Razem. TVP* (Let's be together, TVP) show only a small number of references to these identity actors. This component of the collective further connects the narratives about the homeland and the people in the first stage of the frame.

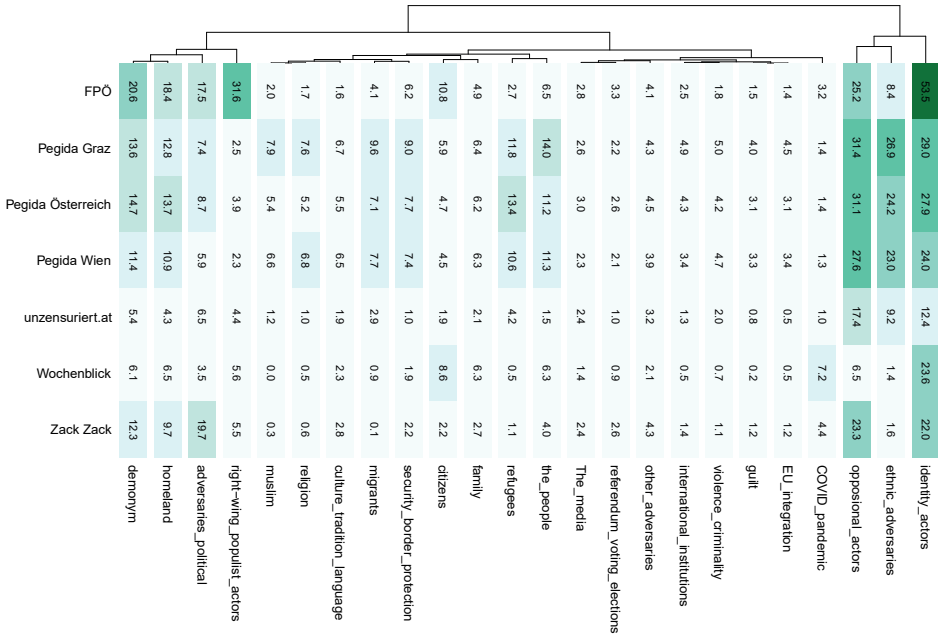Figure 2. Cross tab of discursive fields by actors and issues, Austria. Identity actors, ethnic adversaries and oppositional actors are frequently connected. Results indicate a demonym and homeland frame, connected to political adversaries and right-wing actors.

	demonym	homeland	adversaries_political	right-wing_populist_actors	muslim	religion	culture_tradition_language	migrants	security_border_protection	citizens	family	refugees	the_people	The_media	referendum_voting_elections	other_adversaries	international_institutions	violence_criminality	guilt	EU_integration	COVID_pandemic	oppositional_actors	ethnic_adversaries	identity_actors
FPÖ	20.6	18.4	17.5	31.6	2.0	1.7	1.6	4.1	6.2	10.8	4.9	2.7	6.5	2.8	3.3	4.1	2.5	1.8	1.5	1.4	3.2	25.2	8.4	53.5
Pegida Graz	13.6	12.8	7.4	2.5	7.9	7.6	6.7	9.6	9.0	5.9	6.4	11.8	14.0	2.6	2.2	4.3	4.9	5.0	4.0	4.5	1.4	31.4	26.9	29.0
Pegida Österreich	14.7	13.7	8.7	3.9	5.4	5.2	5.5	7.1	7.7	4.7	6.2	13.4	11.2	3.0	2.6	4.5	4.3	4.2	3.1	3.1	1.4	31.1	24.2	27.9
Pegida Wien	11.4	10.9	5.9	2.3	6.6	6.8	6.5	7.7	7.4	4.5	6.3	10.6	11.3	2.3	2.1	3.9	3.4	4.7	3.3	3.4	1.3	27.6	23.0	24.0
unzensuriert.at	5.4	4.3	6.5	4.4	1.2	1.0	1.9	2.9	1.0	1.9	2.1	4.2	1.5	2.4	1.0	3.2	1.3	2.0	0.8	0.5	1.0	17.4	9.2	12.4
Wochenblick	6.1	6.5	3.5	5.6		0.5	2.3	0.9	1.9	8.6	6.3	0.5	6.3	1.4	0.9	2.1	0.5	0.7	0.2	0.5	7.2	6.5	1.4	23.6
Zack Zack	12.3	9.7	19.7	5.5	0.3	0.6	2.8	0.1	2.2	2.2	2.7	1.1	4.0	2.4	2.6	4.3	1.4	1.1	1.2	1.2	4.4	23.3	1.6	22.0

Source: Author

SOURCE OF THREAT

In line with the *Master Populist Frame*, the source of perceived threats is attached to the collective. The different findings on each national level indicate that for German and Austrian actors, ethnic adversaries (i.e., foreigners, migrants, refugees, Muslims) and oppositional actors (i.e., ethnic adversaries, homeless, LGBTQ, political adversaries, the media, businesses) are the main target for the

source of the perceived threat. Within Austrian narratives, oppositional actors are further tied to discourse about refugees, immigration and migrants, where the frame is pervaded by discourse on territorial security, borders and protection of the country. A similar framing process can be observed in Germany, where other frequent narratives about Muslims and Islam are added to the frame. For German narratives, national security and borders represent a binding issue for the collective and the perceived threat. The Hungarian and Polish pages mostly reference opposition, with fewer narratives involving ethnic adversaries. The Hungarian narratives connect Muslims with discourse about terror and religious motivation, but also migrants. The results indicate that oppositional actors are tied to international institutions framed as a threat to identity actors. The Polish actors also tie political adversaries to international institutions, yet here, the media are also framed as a potential threat.

Figure 3. Cross tab of discursive fields by actors and issues, Germany. Identity actors, the homeland and demonym are frequently connected, such as ethnic adversaries and oppositional actors. Results also suggest a discursive pattern connecting refugees, migrants and violence related narratives.
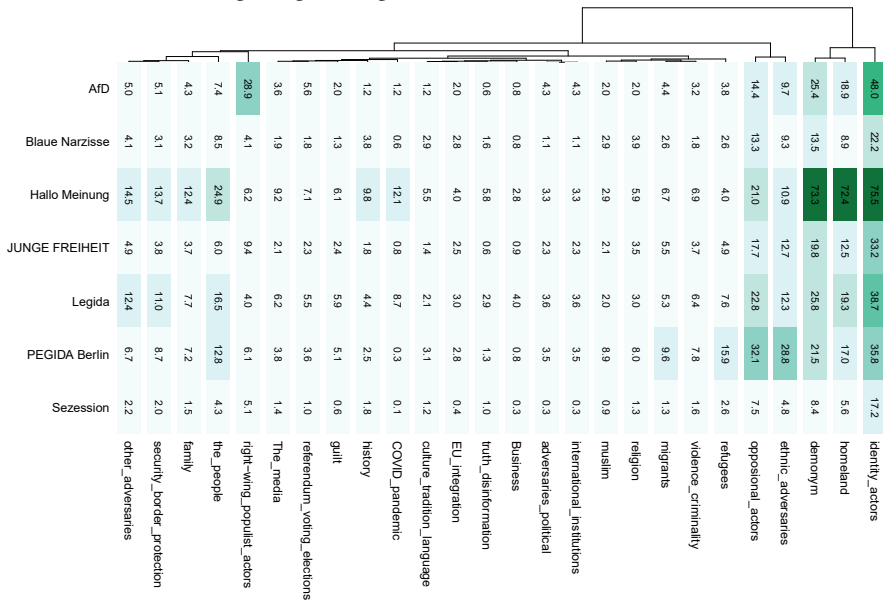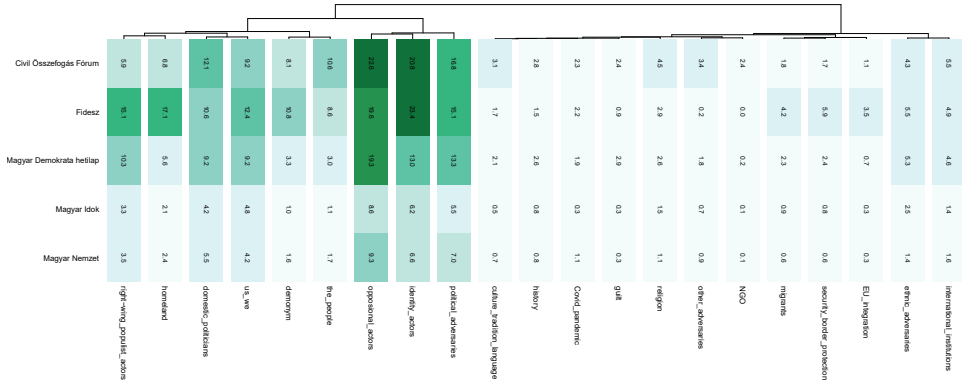
Source: Author

SOLUTIONS

Regarding solutions, Austrian narratives (Figure 2) frame building connects collectives and in-groups with the threat. Actors propose solutions such as caps on immigration numbers and refugees to be allowed into the country and a strong stance against immigration into Austria. Where former governing parties ÖVP and SPÖ are framed as threats towards the financial wellbeing of citizens, FPÖ promises tax cuts. Another frame within the COVID-19 pandemic displays government and vaccine mandates as a threat to ordinary citizens. Solutions here are warnings, calls for demonstrations and vaccination refusal by RWP actors or COVID-19 skeptic doctors such as Sucharit Bhagdi.

German actors (Figure 3) similarly frame migration and refugees. National sovereignty and safety of citizens are pitched against government and ruling parties, which are responsible for poor regulation of migration and asylum. The solution offered by AfD calls for easier deportation of refugees, lighter classification of safe countries of origin and caps on immigration. Within framing of oppositional actors, a strong focus on former government parties CDU/CSU and SPD can be observed, as well as key figures like former chancellor Merkel.

Figure 4. Cross tab of discursive fields by actors and issues, Hungary. Oppositional actors, political adversaries and identity actors are frequently connected. Domestic politicians are placed within narratives involving us/we discourse, the demonym and the people. The homeland is closely referenced alongside right-wing actors.

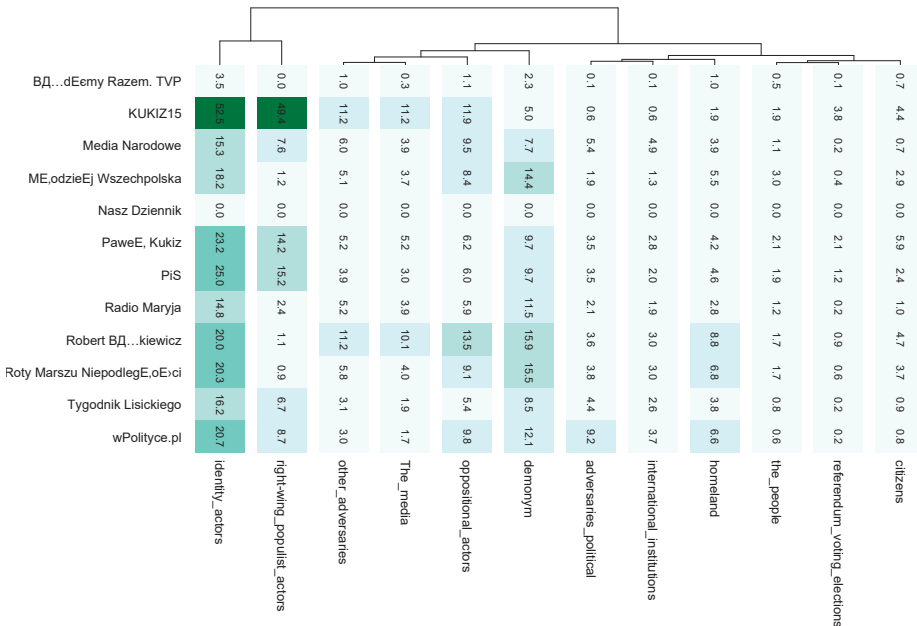|	right-wing_populist_actors	homeland	domestic_politicians	us_we	demonym	the_people	oppositional_actors	identity_actors	political_adversaries	culture_tradition_language	history	Covid_pandemic	guilt	religion	other_adversaries	NGO	migrants	security_border_protection	EU_integration	ethnic_adversaries	international_institutions
Civil Összefogás Fórum	5.9	6.8	12.1	9.2	8.1	10.6	22.6	20.9	16.8	3.1	2.8	2.3	2.4	4.5	3.4	2.4	1.8	1.7	1.1	4.3	5.5
Fidesz	16.1	17.1	10.6	12.4	10.8	8.6	19.6	20.4	15.1	1.7	1.5	2.2	0.9	2.9	0.2	0.0	4.2	5.9	3.5	5.5	4.9
Magyar Demokrata hetilap	10.3	5.6	9.2	9.2	3.3	3.0	19.3	13.0	13.3	2.1	2.6	1.9	2.9	2.6	1.8	0.2	2.3	2.4	0.7	5.3	4.6
Magyar Idok	3.3	2.1	4.2	4.8	1.0	1.1	8.6	6.2	5.5	0.5	0.8	0.3	0.3	1.5	0.7	0.1	0.9	0.3	0.3	2.5	1.4
Magyar Nemzet	3.5	2.4	5.5	4.2	1.6	1.7	9.3	6.6	7.0	0.7	0.8	1.1	0.3	1.1	0.9	0.1	0.6	0.6	0.3	1.4	1.6

Source: Author

In Hungary (Figure 4), frame building works similarly in terms of topics. Actors use Europe, Hungary and the people as a collective under threat by refugees and migration. This is described as population and economic migration. Immigrants and refugees are described as militant and perilous. Proposed solutions are open and uncensored dialogue, where it would be possible to call migration and refugee movements towards Europe a crisis, abandoning political correctness. Actors call for stricter regulations as well. Actors frequently addressed, as the source

of the threat, are liberals, opposition politicians and the EU. Similar frames are observable with regular migration, where Muslim immigrants are pitched against European citizens and described as violent and perilous. Actors see Western democracies under threat by their Muslim populations within a war-like narrative, that is further compared to the demise of Austro-Hungarian monarchy.

Frame building in Poland (Figure 5) follows similar structures. Right-wing politicians identify the "refugee crisis" and immigration as subjects marking a threat. Threat sources are political adversaries, like Civic Platform, their chairman Donald Tusk and the Polish People's Party, who are displayed as accepting immigrants into Poland. Actors like Pawel Kukiz or PiS present themselves as the solution, proposing anti-immigration policies. This type of frame building can also be found for the EU and European Council, which are perceived as the source for this threatening migration, as well as rule-of-law procedures, which are seen as threatening to national sovereignty. Solutions are presented with Polish right-wing politicians opposing these EU mechanisms.

Figure 5. Cross tab of discursive fields by actors and issues, Poland. Identity actors and RWP actors frequently appear together, connected to a larger field evolving around the demonym. Media appear alongside other adversaries, connected to narratives about the homeland and oppositional actors.

	identity_actors	right-wing_populist_actors	other_adversaries	The_media	oppositional_actors	demonym	adversaries_political	international_institutions	homeland	the_people	referendum_voting_elections	citizens
ВД…dEєmy Razem. TVP	3.5	0.0	1.0	0.3	1.1	2.3	0.1	0.1	1.0	0.5	0.1	0.7
KUKIZ15	52.5	49.4	11.2	11.2	11.9	5.0	0.6	0.6	1.9	1.9	3.8	4.4
Media Narodowe	15.3	7.6	6.0	3.9	9.5	7.7	5.4	4.9	3.9	1.1	0.2	0.7
ME,odzieEj Wszechpolska	18.2	1.2	5.1	3.7	8.4	14.4	1.9	1.3	5.5	3.0	0.4	2.9
Nasz Dziennik	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
PaweE, Kukiz	23.2	14.2	5.2	5.2	6.2	9.7	3.5	2.8	4.2	2.1	2.1	5.9
PiS	25.0	15.2	3.9	3.0	6.0	9.7	3.5	2.0	4.6	1.9	1.2	2.4
Radio Maryja	14.8	2.4	5.2	3.9	5.9	11.5	2.1	1.9	2.8	1.2	0.2	1.0
Robert ВД…kiewicz	20.0	1.1	11.2	10.1	13.5	15.9	3.6	3.0	8.8	1.7	0.9	4.7
Roty Marszu NiepodlegE,oE›ci	20.3	0.9	5.8	4.0	9.1	15.5	3.8	3.0	6.8	1.7	0.6	3.7
Tygodnik Lisickiego	16.2	6.7	3.1	1.9	5.4	8.5	4.4	2.6	3.8	0.8	0.2	0.9
wPolityce.pl	20.7	8.7	3.0	1.7	9.8	12.1	9.2	3.7	6.6	0.6	0.2	0.8

Source: Author

POSTS WITH MOST ENGAGEMENT

Austrian posts with highest engagement refer to government actors and political adversaries, for instance "wrong left turn", left-wing government coalitions of conservative and green parties. Actors are named as well, like former Austrian chancellor Kurz or vice-chancellor Kogler, who are perceived as lying to Austrians and insulting them. Messages describe lying and deceiving and failing government. Several posts attack government actors or parties over COVID-19 measures and vaccine mandates. The FPÖ states that "[w]hat the black-green government has done in recent weeks is more than shabby. The ongoing fear and panic mongering has really frightened many people". They claim that "[t]he government has really failed completely on all levels and lied to and cheated the Austrians – EVERYONE, the vaccinated, the recovered and the unvaccinated" and further set the country or the people in opposition to the government. One of the most shared posts mentions mainstream media in Germany. These posts follow a similar frame-building as observed within the text-mining analysis. Government and political opposition are identified as a threat to the people (the Austrians), whereas RWP actors promise salvation from their dangerous policies.

In Germany, some posts reference powerful, political elites and the media. Partisan news media *Hallo Meinung* rules in autocratic fashion by pooling mainstream media and politics. Posts deal with immigration and refugees, AfD stating that "the invasion has begun" and depicting a "[d]eclaration of war on Europe". Other posts include government actors, like former chancellor Merkel, former ministers Seehofer and Maas. Two AfD posts mention Merkel alongside anti-COVID-19 measures, stating that "Merkel wants Mega-Shutdown" and is "more and more radical". They criticize Bavarian prime-minister Söder for making "Islam [a] school subject". *Junge Freiheit* references right-wing key actors like AfD's Alice Weidel, Georg Pazderski and former Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs Witold Waszczykowski (PiS), who is mentioned over anti-immigration stances. Frame themes are slightly different compared to Austria. Perceived threats are immigration and refugees, which are taken as one and the same concept, connected to government officials, allegedly furthering this threat towards the people. The media are tied to the source of the threat as well. Another difference is the stronger focus on RWP key actors from AfD, which suggests a personality cult within the solutions of frame building.

Hungarian actors frequently reference immigration and refugees. They refer to Hungary as not being an immigrant country, connecting prominent figures like George Soros to the issue and Hungarian prime minister Orbàn as a defender. One Forum post states that "Soros' people would turn Hungary into a country of immigrants, so now we have to stand up for our country again", framing elites against the people. Other Fidesz messages address political adversaries, such as the left and Ferenc Gyurcsány, stating that "the left-wing coalition still

supports migration. The only reason they don't advertise at home is that they are pro-immigration, because you wouldn't be able to win an election with that". Another case is Ildikó Borbély (Hungarian Socialist Party), who "called all Fidesz supporters rats. Let's remember this on May 26, when we vote!" or Budapest mayor Gergely Karácsony, who is portrayed as part of the left wing, supporting immigration. Posts frequently reference the homeland, connected to Fidesz and Orbàn, opposed to a group of political adversaries and elites. These messages feature similar frame components as the German posts. Immigration and refugees are displayed as a threat to Hungary and the people. RWP government seem to require other sources of threat must be named, which can be found in Soros, and opposition politicians, which shows that even when in governing positions, right-wing populists resort to the opposition and international adversaries, in order to frame threats. Like Germany-specific frames, a personality cult can be observed within the frequent referencing of Orbán as the liberator.

Polish pages like those of Pawel Kukiz frequently aim at government party PiS over increasing prices, demands over tax cuts or, in combination with the Polish party Civic Platform (PO), budgets and Poland's role in Europe. Activist Robert Bąkiewicz's page frequently references the left in opposition to church and religion, portraying the left as "satanists" and rioters, connecting this to the EU. He calls "[d]on't be afraid of Brussels! Take action against aggressors who want to plunder our temples", framing the EU as supportive of violence against religious institutions. The PiS' posts feature party chairman and Deputy Prime Minister Kaczyński, portrayed amongst Polish flags, supported by visuals emphasizing what party and politicians have achieved. Parties emphasize their connection to the Polish state and people, as well as the homeland narrative. Polish posts mark a difference to the other countries, as populists also target each other like Pawel Kukiz and PiS. Kukiz for instance states that "[e]verything will take place during a hastily convened session of the Seym, so that Poles do not have time to realize that PiS is making a jump to the money!", displaying PiS as corrupt elites, talking about "the hypocrisy of PiS versus Kukiz15's fight against the privileges of politicians". Frame building shows similarities, as party elites (PiS, PO), international institutions (EU), and the political opposition (the left) are identified as the source of jeopardy. Threats are presented as not just economically detrimental towards citizens, but also, considering the religious narratives, as socially and culturally invasive and damaging. The PiS frames their work in a manner to identify them as accomplished, surrounded by national symbolism.

CONCLUSIONS

Quantitative content analysis revealed similarities when comparing the different actors. Right-wing populists in different countries are frequently tied to narratives about the homeland, identity actors and the people. In contrast, another field consists of political and ethnic adversaries, oppositional actors and international institutions. *The Master Populist Frame* could be exemplified within all national contexts and the results clearly indicate a common agenda in terms of narratives and frame construction, especially for international institutions, government and opposition actors, as well as migration and refugees. These frame components happen in conjunction with the core elements of RWP discourse, serving as a basis for subjects within frame building, suggesting a network of mutual support of movements and partisan media for RWP policies and politicians. This implies that contemporary right-wing populist discourse is preoccupied with topics that can be adapted for national and transnational contexts. This is especially relevant in the case of the four countries included in this study, as international institutions and politicians are frequently part of the framing process of these actors, as well as adversaries that are portrayed alongside the framed agenda of these institutions.

Qualitative analysis of the best performing posts in terms of engagement shows that in all countries, political adversaries and governmental actors were dominant targets, through the mentioning of politicians and portraying of policy that is opposed to RWP beliefs. In Austria and Germany these targets comprise of former and current chancellors, ministers, and opposition parties and politicians. In Hungary these targets consist of opposition politicians without decisive functions, as Fidesz is in government, yet also international actors like George Soros and the EU serve as sources of threat. In Poland, activist frames predominantly target the left whereas Kukiz predominantly targets PiS, personified by Jarosław Kaczyński. In Germany and Hungary, some posts point towards illegal immigration and refugees, which are connected to political adversaries or international institutions. The analysis of discourse in Austria, Hungary and Poland shows emphasis on connecting RWP actors (personality cult) with narratives evolving around the homeland and the people. In Hungary and Poland, social movement messages gain high user engagement, indicating a successful communication in terms of subjects and target audience, especially when compared to Germany and Austria. In the case of the former, results show that Polish and Hungarian movements were direct and clear in communicating who perceived opponents were (EU, George Soros, Immigrants, leftists), which appears to appeal to their online audiences. Seeing as the analysis of narratives within the most engaging posts confirm the quantitative content analysis findings, a practical implication of the proposed approach lies within its methodological applicability.

Furthermore, this study's approach and findings highlight a predominance of transnational frames, which are adapted using country or context specific motives such as specific actors (opponents, politicians, institutions, out-groups) or issues (migration, asylum, protests, policy).

The results suggest that not only do national and domestic frames exist, those shared by all types of actors, but so do international ones with similarities found in all countries mapped. This suggests the possibility of right-wing echo chambers in online media being created by a network of actors. Moreover, this plays into the discussion for cyberbalkanization and the emergence or cultivation of fragmented audiences and filter bubbles, as a network of actors effectively constructs similar national and transnational frames. These might ultimately result in a "confirmation bias" (Ludwig, 2018, p. 83) within a homogenous ecosystem of information issued by political actors, partisan media and social movements, consumed by users. The findings further point towards an international cooperation of right-wing actors from various countries, which would signify a follow-up to offline activities like the FPÖ congress in Vienna (2015), or the conference of European right-wing party officials in Germany (2017). This is further exemplified by increased posting activity during international events, like the "refugee crisis" or Brexit. Of the core elements defined by Engesser et al. (2017), the present study's mapped narratives evolve around all five of them. The people, corrupt elites (political adversaries, government actors) and dangerous others (immigrants, refugees, left-wing actors, ethnic or oppositional adversaries) were all part of references to specific individuals or collectives. The homeland appears in close connection to identity and RWP actors alongside national sovereignty in the light of immigration or international institutions. Frame building corresponds with the components of the *Master Populist Frame.*

These findings suggest a common agenda of mutually supportive actors by mentioning key figures and topics. Frequent referencing of topics such as globalization, immigration or corruption, mentioning a homogenous people, as connected to ideas of nationality and identity, opposed to elites or out-groups, institutions or issues like immigration, marks the narrative and agenda of contemporary European right-wing discourse. The present study's findings show that the operationalization of the core elements of right-wing discourse as components within the building of the *Master Populist Frame* prove as an effective methodological tool for the analysis of frames and agenda for a variety of actors and international contexts. This tool and the results can be of further interest to research preoccupied with political communication in various social media, as it adds to comparability between platforms, types of speech and formats of frames. The results address the gap in a broad field of literature and research mostly preoccupied with western RWP actors and discourse, adding insights on far-right social media communication in Central and Eastern Europe.

Further research could employ this methodological approach when mapping the development of narratives over time, setting them into the context of socio-political events, like the "refugee crisis", Brexit, COVID-19, or European Elections, as shown by the present research. This type of analysis could provide insightful results in terms of frame construction over time and how components of the *Master Populist Frame* are completed. Future research could also investigate the connection of formats and frames, as this approach focuses on written text. Especially within social media, the analysis of native and user-generated content might clarify similarities, differences or additions in frame building.

This research approach has certain limitations. For a more thorough analysis based on codes, a good understanding of the various national socio-political contexts is crucial, as well as language skills, yet coding certain narrative fields proves difficult when it comes to language-specific phrasing, as well as special words for certain subjects (i.e., Lügenpresse in German as a term for lying or untruthful media). Furthermore, the analysis of posts based on user engagement (reactions and shares) only provides limited results, as online and social media audiences cannot be verified, nor validated in terms of authenticity, which is why these results must be understood in context backed up with more in-depth analysis.

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ANNEX

Table 3. Codes Austria

Actors		Issues	
Us, we Wir | uns	**Migrants** Migrant | immigrant | einwanderer | Einwanderung | Zuwanderer | Zuwanderung | migration	**Referendum, voting** Referendum | volksentscheid | wahl | wahl+des+volkes | wahlen | urne | wahlurne	**History** Geschichte | historisch | vergangenheit | historische+wahrheit
The people volk | nation	**Refugees** Fluchtling | gefluchtete | asylant | asyl+suchende | asyl | flucht | asyl | Syrien | Syrer	**EU integration** Europaische+integration | diktat | europaisches+diktat | europaische+diktatur | europaisches+gesetz | europaische+gesetze | europaisch	**Culture, Language, Tradition** Kultur | kulturelle+wurzeln | tradition | unsere+traditionen | sprache | sprachlich | unsere+sprache | gemeinsame+sprache | nationale+sprache | landessprache | deutsch
Right-wing populist actors fpo | freiheitliche+partei | strache | hofer | vilimsky | hafenecker | kickl	**Sinti & Roma** Zigeuner | roma | sinti	**Terror** Terror | attentat | attacke | anschlag | dschihad	**Security, border, protection** Sicherheit | sicher | Grenze | Landesgrenze | unsere+Grenzen | Schutz | beschutzen | nationale+Sicherheit | offene+Grenzen
Demonym (common term) osterreichisch | die+osterreicher | osterreichische+mitburger | osterreich | patriot | echte+osterreicher | echter+osterreicher	**Jews** Jude | judisch	**Violence, criminality** Gewalt | Kriminalitat | kriminell | straffalig | brutal | bosartig | grauenhaft | verletzen | verletzt	**Truth, disinformation** wahr | desinformation | falsche+information | falsch+informiert | Lüge | Lügner | fake+news | lügenpresse | falschaussage
Citizens Bürger | staatsangehorigkeit | unsere+bürger | osterreicher | bundesburger | burgerinnen	**Muslims** Muslim | islam | sharia | muslimisch | muslima | Moschee | minarett | islamisierung | dschihad | mohammed	**Generational issues** Generation | generationsunterschied | die+alten | die+jungen | rentner | altere+mitburger | altere+burger | rente | altersunterschied	**Debt** schulden | wirtschaftliche +verschuldung | wirtschaftskrise | staatsschulden | staatsverschuldung | verschuldung
They (the others) Die+anderen | ihre | sie | andere	**Homeless** Obdachlos	**Family** Familie | Vater | Mutter | Kind | traditionelle+Familie | Familienwerte | Oma | Opa | Eltern	**Guilt** Schuld | tadel | beschuldigen | fehler | tater | tatervolk

Actors			Issues
Foreigners Fremd | auslander | fremdlandisch	**LGBTQ** LGBT | schwul | lesbisch | Lesbe | transgender | homosexuell | gender | sexuelle+identitat | sexualisierung | homosexualitat	**Religion** Religion | religios | glaube | christlich | judisch | muslimisch | islam | religiose+herkunft | religiose+wurzeln | katholisch | evangelisch | protestant	**COVID pandemic** covid | corona | virus | pandemie | mask
Domestic politicians (opposition) spo | ovp | neos | JETZT | rendi-wagner | brauner | bures | drozda | Eibinger-Miedl | Nehammer | Woginger | Sebastian+Kurz | Meinl-Reisinger | Scherak | Stern | Pilz	**International institutions** Eu | europaische+union | europaisches+parlament | eu+parlament | europaische+kommission | Juncker | Schulz | von+der+leyen | timmermans | Tusk | Mogherini | UN | vereinte+nationen | migrationspakt | migrationsabkommen	**Dictatorship** Diktatur | autokrat | herrschaft	**Restrictions** Verbot | ausgangssperre | restriktiv | auflagen | maßnahme
The media Medien | mainstream+medien | lugenpresse | system+medien | offentlich+rechtlich | rundfunk | linke+medien | medien+propaganda | Presse | TV | Fernseher | Zeitung | Radio | Nachrichten | ORF	**NGO** Ngo | nichtregierungsorganisation	**Homeland** heimat | zuhause | daheim | bei+uns | heimatland | Osterreich | vaterland	
Business Unternehmen | big+business | internationale+unternehmen | konzern | großkonzern | auslanische+unernehmen | investoren | auslandische+investoren	**The church** Kirche | die+kirche | vatikan | papst | katholische+kirche | evangelische+kirche		

Table 4. Codes Germany

Actors		Issues	
Us, we Wir | uns	**Migrants** Migrant | immigrant | einwanderer | Einwanderung | Zuwanderer | Zuwanderung | migration	**Referendum, voting** Referendum | volksentscheid | wahl | wahl+des+volkes | wahlen | urne | wahlurne	**History** Geschichte | historisch | vergangenheit | historische+wahrheit
The people volk | nation	**Refugees** Fluchtling | gefluchtete | asylant | asyl+suchende | asyl | flucht | asyl | Syrien | Syrer	**EU integration** Europaische+integration | diktat | europaisches+diktat | europaische+diktatur | europaisches+gesetz | europaische+gesetze | europaisch	**Culture, Language, Tradition** Kultur | kulturelle+wurzeln | tradition | unsere+traditionen | sprache | sprachlich | unsere+sprache | gemeinsame+sprache | nationale+sprache | landessprache | deutsch
Right-wing populist actors Afd | alternative+fur+Deutschland | Petry | Gauland | Weidel | Meuthen | von+storch | Hocke	**Sinti & Roma** Zigeuner | roma | sinti	**Terror** Terror | attentat | attacke | anschlag | dschihad	**Security, border, protection** Sicherheit | sicher | Grenze | Landesgrenze | unsere+Grenzen | Schutz | beschutzen | nationale+Sicherheit | offene+Grenzen
Demonym (common term) deutsch | die+deutschen | deutsche+mitburger | deutschland | patriot | echte+deutsche | echter+deutscher	**Jews** Jude | judisch	**Violence, criminality** Gewalt | Kriminalitat | kriminell | straffallig | brutal | bosartig | grauenhaft | verletzen | verletzt	**Truth, disinformation** wahr | desinformation | falsche+information | falsch+informiert | Lüge | Lügner | fake+news | lügenpresse | falschaussage
Citizens Bürger | staatsangehorigkeit | unsere+bürger | deutscher | bundesburger | burgerinnen	**Muslims** Muslim | islam | sharia | muslimisch | muslima | Moschee | minarett | islamisierung | dschihad | mohammed	**Generational issues** Generation | generationsunterschied | die+alten | die+jungen | rentner | altere+mitburger | altere+burger | rente | altersunterschied	**Debt** schulden | wirtschaftliche+verschuldung | wirtschaftskrise | staatsschulden | staatsverschuldung | verschuldung
They (the others) Die+anderen | ihre | sie | andere	**Homeless** Obdachlos	**Family** Familie | Vater | Mutter | Kind | traditionelle+Familie | Familienwerte | Oma | Opa | Eltern	**Guilt** Schuld | tadel | beschuldigen | fehler | tater | tatervolk
Foreigners Fremd | auslander | fremdlandisch	**LGBTQ** LGBT | schwul | lesbisch | Lesbe | transgender | homosexuell | gender | sexuelle+identitat | sexualisierung | homosexualitat	**Religion** Religion | religios | glaube | christlich | judisch | muslimisch | islam | religiose+herkunft | religiose+wurzeln | katholisch | evangelisch | protestant	**COVID pandemic** covid | corona | virus | pandemie | mask

Actors		Issues	
Domestic politicians (opposition) Merkel | Seehofer | Nahles | Klingbeil | Scholz | Schulz | Baerbock | Habeck | Lindner | Kipping | Riexinger | LINKE | links | liberal | linksliberal | fdp | grun | die+grunen | bundnis+90 | spd | sozialdemokraten | cdu | csu | christdemokraten | union	**International institutions** Eu | europaische+union | europaisches+parlament | eu+parlament | europaische+kommission | Juncker | Schulz | von+der+leyen | timmermans | Tusk | Mogherini | UN | vereinte+nationen | migrationspakt | migrationsabkommen	**Dictatorship** Diktatur | autokrat | herrschaft	**Restrictions** Verbot | ausgangssperre | restriktiv | auflagen | maßnahme
The media Medien | mainstream+medien | lugenpresse | system+medien | offentlich+rechtlich | rundfunk | linke+medien | medien+propaganda | Presse | TV | Fernseher | Zeitung | Radio | Nachrichten | ZDF | ARD	**NGO** Ngo | nichtregierungsorganisation	**Homeland** heimat | zuhause | daheim | bei+uns | heimatland | Osterreich | vaterland	
Business Unternehmen | big+business | internationale+unternehmen | konzern | großkonzern | auslanische+unernehmen | investoren | auslandische+investoren	**The church** Kirche | die+kirche | vatikan | papst | katholische+kirche | evangelische+kirche		

Table 5. Codes Hungary

Actors		Issues	
Us, we ,a+mi' | mienk | miénk | nékünk | nekünk | bennünk | minket | hozzánk | ránk | mellénk | belénk | velünk | tolünk | nálunk | rajtunk | rólunk | mieink	**Migrants** migráns | bevándorló | bevándorlás | migráció | bevándorolni	**Referendum, voting** választás | népszavazás | szavazás	**History** történelem | történelmi | múlt
The people emberek | polgárok | nép | nemz	**Refugees** menekült | menedékkéro | bolondok+háza | menedékjogot+kéro | Menedékkérok | menekülni | menedék | menhely | Szíria	**EU integration** európai+integráció | ukáz | diktátum | európai+normák | uniós+eloírások | Brüsszel	**Culture, Language, Tradition** kultúra | kulturális | kulturális+örökség | hagyomány | hagyományos | hagyományaink | nyelv | nyelvünk | nyelvi
Right-wing populist actors Orbán | Fidesz | Jobbik | Gulyás | Kubatov | Németh | Kocsis | Vona | Pongrátz	**Sinti & Roma** cigány | roma | sinti	**Terror** terror | terrorista | terrorista+támadás | terrortámadás | dzsihád | Iszlám+Állam | terroristák | támadás	**Security, border, protection** biztonság | biztonsági | biztonságos | határ | határok | határvédelem | határaink | védelem | védeni | nemzetbiztonság
Demonym (common term) hazafi | magyarok | igazi+magyar | magyar+nep | emberek | az+állam	**Jews** zsidó	**Violence, criminality** eroszak | bunözés | eroszakos | törvénytelen | törvénytelenül | delikvens | tettes | elköveto | brutális | gonosz | káros	**Truth, disinformation** igazság | valóság | igaz | álhír | hamis+hír | megtévesztés | hazugság | hazugok
Citizens állampolgár | polgár | állampolgárság | polgárainuk	**Muslims** muzulmán | muszlim | iszlám | saria | sharia | mecset | minaret | Iszlamizáció | dzsihád	**Generational issues** generáció | generációs+szakadék | idosek | fiatalok | nyugdíjasok | nyugdíjba+vonult | életkori+szakadék | életkori+távolság | idos+emberek	**Debt** adósság | államadósság | gazdasági+válság
They (the others) ok | oket | nekik | velük | rájuk | tolük | hozzájuk | náluk | bennük | rajtuk | övék | övéik | róluk | értük | belolük	**Homeless** homeless | hajléktalan	**Family** család | apa | anya | gyermekek | hagyományos+család | családi+értékek | család+értékei | nagyszülok | szülok | nagyi | Nagypapa	**Guilt** hibás | felelos | hibája | hibájából | felelosség | felelossége

Actors		Issues	
Foreigners idegen | külföldi | Külföldiek	**LGBTQ** LGBT | LMBT | homokos | buzi | leszbikus | leszbi | homoszexuális | melegek | transz | neme | szexuális+identitás | szexualizáció | szexuális | Biszexuálisok | szexuális+forradalma | különbözo+nemu | A+melegellenessé | önazonossághoz+való+jogát | szexualitást+öncélúan	**Religion** vallás | vallásos | hit | keresztény | keresztyén | zsidó | muzulmán | muszlim | iszlám | vallás+örökség | keresztény+örökség | katolikus | evangéliumi | protestáns	**COVID pandemic** covid | koronavírus | vírus | világjárvány | maszk
Domestic politicians (opposition) baloldal | balos | zöldek | zöld+párt | liberális | libsi | soros | Magyar+Szocialista+Párt | mszp | Tóth | Kunhalmi | Párbeszéd +Magyarországért | Karácsony | Szabó | Richárd+Barabás | LMP | Magyarország+Zöld+Pártja | Kanász-Nagy | Schmuck | Keresztes | Demokratikus+Koalíció | DK | Gyurcsány | Csaba+Molnár	**International institutions** EU | Európai+Unió | Európai+Bizottság | Európai+Parlament | Európa+Parlament | ENSZ | Egyesült+Nemzetek | migrációs+egyezmény | migrációs+csomag | menekültügyi+egyezmény | Európai+Tanács	**Dictatorship** diktatúra | autokrata | szabály	**Restrictions** Ban | kijárási+tilalom | korlátozó | kiadások | intézkedéseket
The media a+média | a+sajtó | hazug+média | hazug+sajtó | baloldali+sajtó | baloldali+média | állami+televízió | köztévé | közmédia | média+propaganda | propagandaoldal | Klubradio | Szabad+Pecs | index.hu | RTL+Klub | Atlatszo | Direkt36 | Szabolcs+Dull | central+media | Zoltán+Varga	**NGO** civilek | nemkormányzati | civil+szervezet | Csóka-Szucs | András+Kusinszki | Stefánia+Kapronczay | Társaság+a+Szabadságjogokért | TASZ | Eötvös+Károly | Mérték+Médiaelemzo+Muhely	**Homeland** Szüloföld | otthon | itthon | Magyarország	
Business vállalat | befekteto	**The church** egyház | vatikán | pápa		

Table 6. Codes Poland

Actors		Issues	
Us, we My | nas	**Migrants** migrant | imigranci | imigracj	**Referendum, voting** Referendum | referendum | wybór | wybór+spośród+ludzi | wybierz | urna | urna+wyborcza	**History** historia | historyczne | przeszłość | historyczna+prawda
The people ludzie | kraj | kraj | ojczyzna | ojczyzna	**Refugees** uciekinier | uciekł | osoba+ubiegająca+się +o+azyl | osoby+ubiegające+się +o+azyl | przytułek | azyl	**EU integration** Europejska+integracja | dyktando | europejskie+dyktando | europejska+dyktatura | prawo+europejskie | europejskie+prawa | europejski	**Culture, Language, Tradition** kultura | kultura+korzenie | tradycje | nasze+tradycje | język | językowe | nasz+język | wspólny+język | język+krajowy | język+narodowy
Right-wing populist actors Prawo+i+Sprawiedliwość | pis | Kaczyński | Duda | Terlecki | Kukiz | Marcinkiewicz | Tyszka | Sachajko | Żuk	**Sinti & Roma** Cygan | Romowie | sint	**Terror** terror | zabójstwo | atak+terrorystyczny | atak	**Security, border, protection** Bezpieczeństwo | pewnie | granica | Granica+państwa | nasze+limity | Ochrona | chronić | bezpieczeństwo+narodowe | otwarte+granice
Demonym (common term) polski | Polska | obywatele+polscy | patriota | real+polska | prawdziwy+biegun	**Jews** Żyd | żydowsk	**Violence, criminality** przemoc | Przestępczość | przestępca | przestępca | brutalny | złośliwy | okropne | boli | ranny	**Truth, disinformation** prawda | dezinformacja | błędna+informacja | źle+poinformowany | kłamstwo | kłamca | fałszywe+wiadomości | prasa+leżąca | fałszywe+stwierdzenie
Citizens obywatel | narodowość | nasi+obywatele | Polskie | federalny | obywatele | obywatele+polscy	**Muslims** Muzułmanin | Islam | Szariat | muzułmanin | muzułmanin | Meczet | minaret | Islamizacja	**Generational issues** Pokolenia | luka+pokoleniowa | stary | chłopcy | emeryt | starsze+burgery | starsze+burgery | emerytura | różnica+wieku	**Debt** winien | ekonomiczny+dług | kryzys+gospodarczy | dług+publiczny | dług
They (the others) inni | ich | Ona	**Homeless** Bezdomny	**Family** rodzina | ojciec | matka | dziecko | tradycyjna+rodzina | Wartości+rodzinne | babcia | dziadek | rodzice	**Guilt** wina | winić | winić | błąd | tater | ludzie+przestępczy

Actors		Issues	
Foreigners Zagraniczny | obcokrajowcy	**LGBTQ** LGBT | wesoły | lesbijka | transpłciowy | homoseksualny | płeć | seksualna+tożsamość	**Religion** religia | religijne | uwierz | Chrześcijański | żydowski | muzułmanin | Islam | religijne+pochodzenie | religijne+korzenie | katolicki | ewangelicki | protestant	**COVID pandemic** covid | koronawirus | wirus | pandemia | maska | corona | korona
Domestic politicians (opposition) Tusk | Lepper | Olejniczak | Kotlinowski | Pawlak | Platforma+Obywatelska | PO | Kierwiński | Budka | Grabiec | Czarzasty | Kwaśniewski | Sojusz +Lewicy+Demokratycznej | Nowa+Lewica | Biedroń | Socjaldemokracja+Polska | SDPL | Liga+Polskich+Rodzin | LPR | Giertych | Bałażak	**International institutions** ue | unia+europejska | Parlament+europejski | ue+parlament | Komisja+europejska | Juncker | Schultz | von+der+leyen | Timmermans | Kieł | Mogherini | ONZ | zjednoczone+narody | pakt+migracyjny | umowa+migracyjna	**Dictatorship** dyktatura | autokrata | reguła	**Restrictions** Zakaz | godzina+policyjna | restrykcyjne | edycje | środki
The media Media | mainstream+media | prasa+do+łap | system+media | publiczne+prawne | nadawanie | lewo+media | media+propaganda | Naciśnij | telewizja | telewizja | Gazeta | radio | Aktualności | Gazeta+Wyborcza | Dziennik+Gazeta+Prawna | Puls+Biznesu | Newsweek+Polska | Polityka	**NGO** ngo | organizacja+pozarządowa	**Homeland** strona+główna | w+domu | u+nas | ojczyzna | Polska | ojczyzna	
Business duży+biznes | firmy+międzynarodowe | grupa | duża+korporacja | firmy+zagraniczne | inwestorzy | inwestorzy+zagraniczni	**The church** Kościół | kościół | watykan | papież | katolicki+kościół | protestancki+kościół		

Intellectual Influencer as a New Ambassador in Digital Marketing Communication

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Abstract: This conceptual paper focuses on intellectual influencer concept to offer a differentiation tool for influencer marketing activities. First, influencer marketing is explained from the traditional point of view. Secondly, the historical development process of the public intellectual concept which was formerly a subject of non-marketing disciplines such as journalism, sociology, and philosophy is discussed. Subsequently, the relationship between these two concepts together with influencer marketing and related marketing communication activities are evaluated. Finally, marketing-related areas where intellectual influencers can produce content are elaborated. This study could open a fresh field in academic research by bringing a new dimension to influencer marketing. Also, it can offer a noteworthy alternative for businesses in terms of differentiation, attracting attention and reaching target markets.

Keywords: digital marketing, influencer marketing, advertising, public relations, marketing communications.

A NEW FORM OF INFLUENCER: INTELLECTUAL

The word influencer, derived from Latin word 'influere' (flow in) means the ability to create change without forcing (McMullan et al., 2022). Like Campbell and Farrell's (2020) microinfluencers, intellectual influencers also have a profession other than being an influencer. Hence, intellectual influencers who can be compared to intellectuals (especially public intellectuals), can be explained as individuals having knowledge and authority on certain issues regardless of their profession (based on the definitions of Danowski and Park (2009) and Dahlgren (2013a)). As they have different professions such as journalism, publishing, and academic (Posner, 2001); monetary motivation (unlike traditional influencers) remains in second plan for this type of influencer. Intellectual influencers can be considered as an extension of public intellectuals defined by Posner (2001).

With diversification of media tools and proliferation of information sources, consumers began to encounter many messages and distractions in daily life (Skains, 2019). Digital technologies have made our attention more limited although it facilitates access to information sources (Williams, 2018). In this ecosystem, the roles of social media and mobile devices are increasing (Pwc, 2018). Social media offers a platform where users can share ideas and produce content on their fields of expertise or interests (Audrezet et al., 2020). Research reveals as of 2020, an adult spends an average of three hours per day consuming social media content (Hiley, 2022). With the pandemic, social media has become an even more important player in meeting "entertainment, information and social connection" needs of consumers (Deloitte, 2021, p. 10). The global decrease in F2F social interaction combined with an increase in the time spent at home with the internet, changed the media consumption patterns of young people, which fed influencer marketing (Taylor, 2020).

With digital platforms becoming a part of our daily life, advertising and public relations activities also went digital, influencer marketing stood out for creating brand awareness and word of mouth (Tsen & Cheng, 2021). Although influencer marketing is associated with millennials, it appeals to a wide age group (Campbell & Farrell, 2020). Relatives and influencers are the most prominent factors affecting consumer decision-making (Marketing Charts, 2019). So today, who the influencers are and how they shape consumer taste are prominent research topics (Vrontis et al., 2021). We see research about influencers in marketing communications, public relations, social marketing, health communication, and public opinion-making fields (Hudders et al., 2021). Although influencer marketing is an option often used in practice, strategic issues such as finding the most suitable influencers for target markets are still understudied areas (Ye et. al., 2021).

This study elaborates the 'intellectual influencer' concept to bring a new perspective to influencer marketing in the axis of marketing and communication activities. The limited content in academic and/or internet sources regarding this concept proves the novelty of the subject.

From the academic point of view, this study follows Novoselova and Jenson's (2019) definition of intellectual influencers, which extended the concept to feminist bloggers. The authors stated that the people in question become an actor in the neo-liberal market environment by combining their activist, creative, intellectual, and professional sides. It is possible to see the reflections of this concept in non-academic sources (blogs and mobile applications). Schwartz-Horney (2021) makes a dual definition of 'influencer-intellectual'. On one side, well-known people who already produce for cultural consumption in their professional life by sharing their lifestyle and thoughts on social media. On the other side, less popular young consumers who have a certain follower segment on social media, sharing cultural-related content such as books and politics.

Other than social media-based content, production platforms have emerged where users can create and follow creative, informative, and cultural consumption-based content (Armitage, 2021). Such platforms allow users to 'bond' and make discoveries with content such as podcasts and articles according to their interests (Wiser Media, 2021). Like curating an art gallery 'content curation' (which refers to searching and sharing content) can be an important marketing strategy (Armitage, 2021). These people's potential to influence purchasing behavior was pointed out with the statement "famous people like academics, authors, musicians, actors, politicians, they're all good salesman" (Globe Hackers Multimedia (Buliamti), 2021).

Research and industry experiences reveal that influencer marketing is often more effective than traditional advertising (Rosengren & Campbell, 2021). Although influencers or word-of-mouth creators who produce engaging consumer content for a fee (Rosengren & Campbell, 2021) are an important longstanding marketing strategy, related research is limited (Ye et al., 2021). Intellectual influencers, whom we consider to be an extension of public intellectuals, differ from the traditional notion in terms of background, main profession (Posner, 2001) and financial expectations. This study aims to present intellectual influencers as a new form of influencer marketing. As far as we know, there is no academic study who adopted this perspective. While doing so, the concept of public intellectual, which has been the subject of studies in fields such as journalism (Posner, 2001; Dahlgren, 2013a), sociology (Posner, 2001), philosophy (Danowski & Park, 2009), was taken as a theoretical framework.

Our study presents the intellectual influencer as a structure transformed from the public intellectual with digitalization. We aim to introduce a concept that was previously the subject of disciplines other than marketing with its potential for marketing and communication disciplines.

In this context, we realized a conceptual study in parallel with Gilson and Goldberg's (2015)' approach. Suitably, by focusing on the "*what's new*" question (p. 128), existing issues are evaluated from an interdisciplinary perspective (intellectual influencers, which we will consider here as an extension of public intellectual). Our approach aims to treat the subject in a brand-new area (marketing and influencer marketing). Herewith, we hope to bring a different perspective, fresh application, and research field to the subject.

Accordingly, the traditional definition of an influencer and its relationship with marketing activities is explained. The public intellectual concept, which is an important notion for 'intellectual influencer' is discussed. Then, the intersection of these two concepts is elaborated. Finally, marketing areas where intellectual influencers can be more effective, and their content production areas are discussed. Intellectual influencers have potential to both breathe new life into academic studies and offer businesses a new means of differentiation.

TRADITIONAL INFLUENCER DEFINITION

Influencing is one of the main purposes of marketing and social proof (with celebrities or ordinary people like 'consumers') is an important tool for creating this (McMullan et al., 2022). Lazarsfeld, Barelson, and Gaudet talked about influencer concept in their study about the American Presidential Election in 1940 and acknowledged mass media's indirect effect through opinion leaders (cited in Vrontis et al., 2021). Opinion leaders are defined as interesting and persuasive people whose words are valued and trusted by their followers (Casalò et al., 2020). For all these reasons, opinion leaders are prominent in consumer decision process and market information (Gnambs & Batinic, 2012).

While digital marketing emerged in the 1990s was primarily related to advertising, its scope expanded with the emergence of mobile marketing and social media in the 2000s (Fierro et al., 2017). Digital marketing opens new doors in interacting with consumers (Ghorbani et al., 2021). Although the words opinion leader and influencer are used interchangeably sometimes, an influencer is an opinion leader emerging with social media (Belanche et al., 2021). Social media offers self-branding opportunities to its users having entrepreneurial abilities and producing interesting or informative content (Marvick, 2013). Influencers manage their names on social media platforms like a manager handles a brand (Gómez, 2019).

Influencers are social media users gaining a broader public and visibility by sharing their interests or ideas with the potential to influence decision-making processes of their followers (Hudders et al., 2021). Kadekova and Holienčinova (2018) emphasized the importance of influencers who know their followers well and produce interesting, informative, or entertaining content for targeted marketing activities (especially for reaching young people). Influencers' content in one or more niches create viral communication (De Veirman et al., 2017).

With increasing privacy and security concerns, it becomes difficult to collect consumer information in today's market and influencers offer the opportunity to target niche market segments by bypassing this situation (e.g., consumers who are interested in a specific wine type) (Campbell & Farrell, 2020). Consumers who follow influencers according to their interests also create sub-cultures (Schwartz-Horney, 2021).

There are many different influencer classifications in literature (e.g., Kadekova and Holienčinova, 2018; Ouvrein et. al., 2021; Gómez, 2019). Since Campbell and Farrell's (2020) study is a recent and comprehensive one (Park et al., 2021), we briefly mention this study below to show these classifications in question.

Based on existing studies, Campbell and Farrell (2020) divided traditional influencers into five categories:

- Celebrity influencers: They are famous regardless of the social media platform and they use this reputation when advertising.
- Mega-influencers: People with one million or more followers who are famous for being market mavens on social media.
- Macro-influencers: People who are less famous than mega-influencers, have between 100,000 and 1 million followers, and focus on a subject such as travel, food and drink, and music.
- Micro-influencers: People who have a career other than being an influencer and have fewer followers than macro-influencers.
- Nano-influencers: People whose follower networks are just starting to grow (sometimes spontaneously) without the purpose of being an influencer. They can proactively engage with brands and are open to free promotion.

However, to the best of our knowledge, no study directly included the 'intellectual influencer' discussed within the scope of our study in these classifications.

THE PUBLIC INTELLECTUALS. THE CONCEPT THAT PAVED THE WAY FOR THE INTELLECTUAL INFLUENCER.

The concept of 'public intellectual', which was first used by C. Wright Mills to refer to intellectuals who played an active role during the Cold War years, was defined as authorities knowledgeable in political and social issues, regardless of their profession (Danowski & Park, 2009). There is a transition from the concept of public intellectual to concept of civil intellectual with digitalization (Dahlgren, 2013a). According to this approach, while the public intellectual consists of journalists, academics, or 'experts in a special area', the 'civic' intellectual refer to a broader audience defined as 'small', well-known, politically engaged citizens.

The term intellectual notates people who stand out with their rational, analytical, and other cognitive abilities (rather than their physical strength or charisma) (Bashevkin, 2017). The intellectual's technical and non-instrumental knowledge spans cultural and political spheres, it is secular, and narrowly specialized (Melzer et al., 2003). According to the postmodern perspective, "authentic culture is a product not of cultural specialists but the street" (Holt, 2002:84). In the same study, Holt (2002) states that brand equity is the product of events occurring in daily life rather than commercial activities.

Dahlgren (2013a) defines intellectuals as individuals with high communication skills and knowledge preserving democracy regardless of their profession. Still, public intellectuals were associated with journalists, academics, pundits, public relations specialists, spin doctors, image managers, advertisers, and experts in a specific area (Dahlgren, 2013a). Posner (2001) identifies American public

intellectuals' workspaces, on which argument Danowski and Park (2009) expanded theirs. Public intellectuals can perform many different professions from literature to economics, from history to law, from journalism to publishing (Posner, 2001).

Although Russell Jacoby (1987) states the last intellectuals did survive into the mid-20th century, blog-like social media platforms paved the way for the birth of a new and younger public intellectual group (Danowski & Park, 2009). Web intellectuals are people with political identities coming from very different socio-demographic characteristics, sharing content on issues such as journalism, activism, culture (Dahlgren, 2013b). Novoselova and Jenson (2019) underline that feminist bloggers, who produce content for cultural consumption in social media, play the role of both influencer and public intellectual. Danowski and Park (2013) note that public intellectuals can create a more interactive network in social media compared to celebrities. Public intellectuals mostly dealt with non-marketing disciplines such as journalism (Posner, 2001; Dahlgren, 2013a), sociology (Posner, 2001), philosophy (Danowski & Park, 2009).

On the other hand, Hartley (2015) discusses the transformation of intellectuals over time in three stages as 'Parisian myth', 'public intellectual' and intellectuals affiliated with 'knowledge clubs'. The author states that the intellectual met with concepts such as pop culture, internet, and digitalization over time. Thus, the intellectual influencer considered within the scope of our study can be elaborated as Hartley's (2005) 'knowledge clubs' period type of intellectual.

INTELLECTUAL INFLUENCERS IN MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

Cultural consumption covers " arts, culture and leisure" fields and includes activities such as "visiting cultural events (theater, concert, cinema, etc.), watching tv, reading books, eating" (Rössel et al., 2017, p.1). Today, cultural consumption covers many different media platforms (Dahlgren, 2013a) and the pandemic has accelerated its scope and digitalization process (Deloitte, 2021). Although the rudimentary value proposition of public intellectuals is information sharing, a 'celebrity phenomenon' public intellectual also offers entertainment, symbolic and belonging to the community values (Posner, 2001). Online opinion leaders create hedonic and utilitarian value by providing beneficial information about products or brands (Lin et al., 2018).

In the middle of the 21st century, the phrase 'public relations' was replaced with 'strategic communication', which better expresses both media and internal communication (Zerfass et al., 2018). 'Strategic influencer communication' is one of the prominent current issues for marketing and public relations (Sundermann and Raabe, 2019). The crucial benefit of influencer marketing for marketing communication is its ability to render ad blocking mechanisms idle (Kadekova & Holienčinova,

2018). Influencers are important for persuasive media communication (Pang et al., 2016). With narrative strategies, traditional influencers balance personal details and information about the product advertised in their content (Zhou et al., 2021).

Attractiveness and trustworthiness are prominent parameters in creating brand image and purchase intention in influencer marketing (Wiedman & Mettenheim, 2020). Quality content is more important than quantity and specializing in posts increases identification and engagement (Tafesse & Wood, 2021). Audrezet et al. (2020) show authenticity as the most effective issue for influencer marketing and define two types of authenticity strategies (passionate and transparent). Passionate authenticity refers to dealing with an issue intrinsically motivated (Moulard et al., 2014, 2015, 2016). The reflection of this approach on influencers is 'enjoyable' and 'intrinsically gratifying' content (Audrezet et al., 2020). The concept the authors call transparent authenticity refers to providing fact-based and unadorned information. Influencers do have specific communication strategies (Kozinets et al., 2010).

POINTS WHERE TRADITIONAL AND INTELLECTUAL INFLUENCER MEET

In this section, various situations related to influencers detected in the literature are interpreted within the scope of this study.

Table 1. Adaptation of some traditional influencer topics to intellectual influencers

Traditional influencer literature	Interpretation/adaptation for intellectual influencers
According to the classification devised by Campbell and Farrell (2020), micro influencers have other professions, while nanoinfluencers are people whose followers increase because of ordinary social media behavior.	*Intellectual influencers can be compared to micro influencers in terms of having another profession, and nano-influencers in terms of increasing the number of followers as a result of 'ordinary social media behavior'.*
For influencer marketing's success, interacting from different channels such as blog and posts (Campbell & Farrell, 2020) and addressing both the positive and negative aspects of the subject (Mudambi & Schuff, 2010) are important.	*This situation can be evaluated by the nature of the concept of the intellectual influencer who does not have a title like a brand ambassador and has limited (if any) financial expectations from the brand.*
Quality and authenticity in content are important for influencer marketing (Association of National Advertisers, 2018)	*This situation arises organically for intellectual influencers who have specific expertise for the content and low financial expectation and who make objective comments.*
The public relations budget is normally the third unit associated with influencer marketing (after marketing and brand management) (Association of National Advertisers, 2018).	*It is possible that intellectual influencers can transform this ranking.*

Traditional influencer literature	Interpretation/adaptation for intellectual influencers
Cultural capital is an important issue for influencers (Campbell & Farrell, 2020).	*This situation can be evaluated as a point that brings the traditional influencer closer to the intellectual influencer. Cultural capital is a natural outcome of intellectual influencers' professions or interests.*
McQuarrie et al. (2013) argue that influencers have risk reduction, 'aesthetic inspiration' and 'exemplary taste' influence in the eyes of consumers.	*This situation is suitable for intellectual influencers whose content is directly in fields such as culture, art, popular science, and literature.*
McQuarrie et al. (2013), interpret Bordieu's cultural capital approach in terms of fashion bloggers, state that these bloggers transformed their cultural capital into social capital and economic resources through their aesthetic content production. The authors underline that the cultural capital transformation process can be adapted to different fields besides fashion.	*Intellectual influencers can also be considered as a different interpretation of this approach.*
Being an expert in one or more subjects is an unreconciled issue (Gnambs & Batinic, 2012).	*It can be investigated whether the same issue remains uncertain for intellectual influencers.*
Trustworthiness (Wiedman & Mettenheim, 2020), specialization in quality posts (Tafesse & Wood, 2021), authenticity (Audrezet et. al., 2020), and being intrinsically motivated (Moulard et. al., 2014, 2015, 2016; Audrezet et. al., 2020) are issues emphasized in the literature in terms of traditional influencers.	*These features can be considered as an innate situation for intellectual influencers who have maximum expertise in the subject they share (they research, experience, and share information.) and where financial concerns are secondary.*

Source: The left column of this Table was created based on the sources available in the literature about traditional influencers (shown in the first column with their references), the right column was created by the author by adapting these situations to intellectual influencers

As stated in detail in Table 1, we can include intellectual influencers in some influencer classifications (e.g., partial inclusion of micro influencers and nano influencers [see Campbell & Farrell, 2020]). There is evidence for the relationship between cultural capital and influencer (Campbell & Farrell, 2020; McQuarrie et al., 2013) and this seems to be naturally compatible with the nature of intellectual influencers. Content quality (Association of National Advertisers, 2018) is another prominent issue for influencers. It can be said that intellectual influencers discussed in our study are in an advantageous position because they are people who have suitable resources and infrastructure, i.e., they are journalists etc. (Dahlgren, 2013a).

Just like traditional influencers who communicate with consumers through various media channels (Campbell & Farrell, 2020), intellectual influencers can also diversify their communication channels. The advantage of intellectual influencers is to express their honest opinions as they do not receive payment. So, intellectual influencers can respond more easily to the advice (criticisms in comments) of Mudambi and Schuff (2010).

As underlined in Table 1, an influencer's content is expected to offer 'aesthetic inspiration' and 'exemplary taste' (McQuarrie et al., 2013). Trustworthiness (Wiedman & Mettenheim, 2020), specialization in quality posts (Tafesse & Wood, 2021), authenticity (Audrezet et al., 2020), and being intrinsically motivated (Moulard

et. al., 2014, 2015, 2016; Audrezet et al., 2020) are other expected elements. These issues can be seen as naturally compatible with intellectual influencers' content.

The question of whether specialization is necessary (Gnambs & Batinic, 2012) is another worth researching area for intellectual influencers whose relationship with public relations budget (Association of National Advertisers, 2018) can also constitute another significant research stream.

A GRAY AREA IN INFLUENCER MARKETING: COMPENSATION AND ITS REFLECTION ON INTELLECTUAL INFLUENCER

In the classical definition, influencers receive incentives for advertising (Association of National Advertisers, 2018; Campbell & Grimm, 2019; Campbell & Farrell, 2020). Like influencer marketing, PR events have also started to use advertising-led models for establishing relationships and creating goodwill (Wolf & Archer, 2018). Blogging, which can be considered the first stage of content production in social media, is a relatively unprofessionalized field with limited financial incentives (Novoselova & Jenson, 2019).

Monetary compensation previously seen as unethical for public relations began to transform with digitalization (and bloggers, influencers, and journalists adapted to this situation) (Archer & Harrigan, 2016). Wage incentives, the main distinction between advertising and public relations, is obscured by these new dynamics (Archer & Harrigan, 2016). Still, being subject to compensation for the content produced by intellectual influencers that outweighs cultural consumption is a precarious issue as it can damage the impartiality and honesty of informative content (Schwartz-Horney, 2021).

Although profitability is not the primary goal of all influencers, they generally expect to receive a monetary or similar return (Pang et. al., 2016) as they identify their activities with "work", "writing", "journalism", "a project", "a career" (p.263) and spend a significant amount of time and effort to create these contents (Novoselova & Jenson, 2019).

According to the classification of Zhou et. al. (2021), people who talk about the brand in the 'low-level marketer controlled earned influencer marketing' option do not receive compensation and their content develops beyond the marketing effort. Stoldt et al. (2019) note a transition from travel journalist to travel influencer in the tourism sector, where influencers create more 'genuine' content. The authors add that comparing journalists and influencers on content independence is complicated because journalists are sponsored by destination marketing organizations and influencers are similarly sponsored by brands. Zhou et. al. (2021)'s 'low-level marketer controlled earned influencer marketing' can provide a perspective on this subject.

MARKETING ACTIVITIES AND INTELLECTUAL INFLUENCERS

Intellectual influencers have the power to promote specific topics or institutions with the content they create (Novoselova & Jenson, 2019). Well-known people in society influencing large masses on social, economic, and cultural issues (Han & Ki, 2010) is one of the main marketing research fields. Hudders et al. (2021) pointed out that a limited number of recent studies handle influencers in nonprofit marketing settings such as 'raising awareness (e.g., health communication)' or 'changing public opinion (e.g., feminism)'. Young consumers care about the political stance of influencers (Tsen & Cheng, 2021).

Except in academic databases, we see that young people and blogs mention this concept. Retta (2020) states that intellectual influence cannot be considered independent of political stance and the difference between 'regular' and 'intellectual' influencers is being "not only beautiful and relatable but also smart and politically engaged". Lopez (2017) emphasizes the need for more intellectual influencers who talk about politics, culture, literature, and nature on social media to help society transform for the better. The media consumption of the millennial and Generation Z differ (e.g., social media accounts instead of printed newspapers or traditional media, opinion pieces, podcasts, and non-mainstream publications) also, entertaining, and informative social media on these new platforms create a 'revolution of information' (Schwartz-Horney, 2021).

CONTENT PRODUCTION AREAS OF INTELLECTUAL INFLUENCERS

The content produced by intellectual influencers on social media was examined and the exemplary content subjects are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Intellectual influencer's content topics

'Gourmandise' (e.g., drinking culture, cocktails, healthy food, word cuisines)	Architecture/buildings (e.g., cultural heritage, architectural movements, cultural assets)	Visual or fine arts (e.g., painting, sculpture)
Book/literature	Current-popular political issues (e.g., feminism, veganism)	Travels or trips (e.g., cities' cultural and artistic venues, eating and drinking places)
Nature (e.g., wildlife, mushrooms, birdwatching)	Design (e.g., architecture or arts)	Hobbies or other niche topics (e.g., cycling, fish culture)

Source: This table was created by the author by scanning the post
of intellectual influencers on social media platforms

We observed that the content producers are usually journalists, writers, or academics. In addition, some of those people prefer to use their own identities, while others prefer pseudonyms. Intellectual influencers' content creation areas are not limited to the above topics. The Table 2 is only exemplary.

Influencers have the potential to create social impact (Ouvrein et al., 2021). Using influencers under social marketing umbrella is an important area for future studies (Hudders et al., 2021). Byrne et al. (2017) stated that influencers can play a role in the allocation of public health through their post about food consumption.

Although celebrities as endorsers in destination marketing is an old practice, influencers' presence (Bokunewicz & Shulmman, 2017) and effect (Han & Chen, 2021) in this field are relatively new. Influencers started the trend of reinterpreting the relationship between brands, travel, and the tourism industry, and content production in this field moved from travel journalists to travel influencers over time (Stoldt et al., 2019). The potential of influencers for the tourism and hospitality sector (Yetimoğlu & Uğurlu, 2020), promoting event marketing activities through influencers (e.g., Sun et al., 2021; Jílková, 2018) are research and application areas.

Traditional influencers also create contents about travel, food (Lou & Yuan, 2019; Campbell and Farrell, 2020) or current political or social issues (e.g., Duguay, 2019; Yang et al., 2021; Hudders et al., 2021; Tsen & Cheng, 2021). However, issues related to food or travel are a leisure-time (Rössel et al., 2017) or cultural consumption activity (Dahlgren, 2013a). Accordingly, intellectual influencers who are strong in terms of background – just like public intellectuals (Dahlgren, 2013a) – can create a differentiation point. Novoselova and Jenson (2019) also point to this issue.

Considering the above situations and the topics determined within the scope of our study (see Table 2) we conclude that intellectual influencers can be more effective in social marketing, destination marketing, event marketing, and art marketing fields. Although traditional influencers exist in these areas, intellectual influencers can provide more successful targeted marketing results.

CONCLUSION

This study presents 'intellectual influencers' as a new and promising influencer marketing option. Herein, the difference of the subject from the traditional and how it can be used in marketing communication activities are discussed. As we explained in detail, we can consider intellectual influencers as an extension of public intellectuals. Although public intellectuals are a field of study

for journalism (Posner, 2001; Dahlgren, 2013a), sociology (Posner, 2001), and philosophy (Danowski & Park, 2009), it can be a new and promising subject for marketing.

The role and potential of influencers in media communication are known (Sundermann & Raabe, 2019; Kadekova & Holienčinova, 2018; Pang et al., 2016; Zhou et al., 2021) but the intellectual influencers can bring a new breath to this subject. Creating 'quality content' (Tafesse & Wood, 2021) and 'passionate transparent authenticity' (Audrezet. et. al., 2020; Moulard et al., 2014, 2015, 2016) which are important issues for influencers can be considered innate and natural in intellectual influencers due to their backgrounds.

We see influencer marketing in tourism, hospitality or event marketing, (e.g., Yetimoğlu & Uğurlu, 2020; Sun et al., 2021; Jílková, 2018) areas. These are activities of leisure time (Rössel et al., 2017) or cultural consumption (Dahlgren, 2013a). So, we concluded that intellectual influencers with their strong background (like public intellectuals (Dahlgren, 2013a)) can create a differentiation point for these areas, which Novoselova and Jenson (2019) note. Based on the Table 2 and the situation above, intellectual influencers can be evaluated as more successful in areas such as destination, event, and art marketing.

In their bibliometric analysis of traditional influencers, Ye et al. (2021) state that businesses must bear many costs to find suitable influencers for their target markets and then work with them. Hence, working model of intellectual influencers – based on non-direct monetary incentives – can offer a cost-effective option to businesses.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This paper is a conceptual study and a result of non-systematic literature analysis. The newness of the subject in terms of marketing and communication activities constitutes the reason for this choice. However, elaborating on this subject with systematic and discipline-oriented reviews with different techniques may reveal remarkable findings.

Table 2 presents exemplary production areas of intellectual influencers, but is not the result of systematic research. So, qualitative research on the content production areas of intellectual influencers may offer important information. King et al. (2015) draw attention to the relationship between consumer wellness and food. Food and other topics can be seen among the intellectual influencer's content topics (see Table 2). All these issues can serve consumer wellness. Accordingly, the relationship between intellectual influencers and consumer wellness can be another new research area.

Research reveals that consumers are more affected by influencers with whom they can establish a 'personal connection (or parasocial relationship). It may be possible with the right target market selection to reach consumers 'in search of uniqueness' who are more distant to media consumption and trends (such as 'geek' consumers) through intellectual influencers. Consequently, it is recommended to investigate the subject with different personality traits, especially with 'need for uniqueness'.

Intellectual influencers can appeal intellectually concerned consumers and cultural consumption. Cultural consumption covers many different media platforms (Dahlgren, 2013a). So, this point of view presents a wide field of research and application. The contribution of intellectual influencers to social responsibility studies (e.g., Yang et al., 2021; Li, 2022) can be discussed. As Brooks et al. (2021) point out 'celebrity capital' emerges differently in terms of celebrities (who are already famous) and social media influencers. The relationship intellectual influencers with celebrity capital can be investigated (as public intellectual is already a 'celebrity phenomenon' (Posner, 2001)). Again, the subject of cultural capital – previously mentioned in terms of traditional influencers (Campbell & Farrell, 2020; McQuarrie et al., 2013), can be researched for intellectual influencers whose professions are directly related to this subject (Dahlgren, 2013a). Lopez (2017) emphasizes the need for an increase in intellectual influencers speaking about politics, culture, and literature.

The effect of influencer marketing differs according to influencer (e.g., Park et al., 2021; Britt et al., 2020) or product type (e.g., Lee & Eastin, 2020; Lin et al., 2018). These issues are open to elaboration in terms of intellectual influencers. Public intellectuals have the potential to create entertainment, symbolism and belonging to the community (Posner, 2001), hedonic and utilitarian values (Lin et al., 2018). So, intellectual influencers can be considered together with consumption values. The Persuasion Knowledge Model developed by Friestad and Wrigth in 1994 is a topic related to influencers in terms of disclosures and endorsements (cited by Castonguay, 2021). Considering this model together with intellectual influencers can also reveal important results.

Rosengren and Campbell (2021) point out that except for sales related outputs, influencer marketing can focus on non-sales related outputs such as cause-related marketing. The intellectual influencers who have lower monetary concerns can also stand out in this regard. As Eisend et al. (2020) emphasize, transparency and disclosing content are important research areas with research gaps. The fact that intellectual influencers have a different relationship with monetary incentives offer another research area. Intellectual influencers' relationship with public relations budget (Association of National Advertisers, 2018) can also constitute a significant research area and offer new opportunities to businesses. Intellectual products circulate through people such as journalists or academics, and this

content is sometimes funded by their readers (consumers) (Johansen, 2021). How these people can be funded by staying away from the advertising logic, and how to reach an agreement with brands at this point is another debatable issue.

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Studying Media Systems in the Era of Digital Media

Interview with Professor Daniel C. Hallin

This year there is the 18th anniversary of publishing a book entitled "Comparing Media Systems: Three Models of Media and Politics", you co-authored with Paolo Mancini. Looking back all these years, what major changes across media systems have you noticed?

There are two main sets of changes that interact with one another. One of them is, obviously, the rise of internet. It is connected to the whole broader restructuring the media markets. The traditional legacy media declined, more in some systems than in others. One can see a fragmentation of the media. The old, broadcast era of mass media that are centralized is over with the much more targeted media. It is also connected to shifts in professionalization and standards in journalism. Still, there is a huge debate over how much of continuity, and how much change is actually there. The other thing is that in Western countries there is a crisis of the existing party and institutional system. This crisis is reflected in decline of many traditional political parties and the rise of populist leaders. Some of these changes had already started when the book was published, but they become more severe in a current period. It has disrupted the relationship between the media and traditional political structures. It has also created new kind of dilemmas for journalists, straining traditional routines based on trusted sources in the established political order.

So, what would be your suggestions for those who are trying capture all these changes in their studies on the media systems these days? Do you think we should add any new domain to the ones you used in your studies on the media systems?

I think that domains we used in the book still work pretty well. They are quite general. They have to do with the relation of the media to the economic structure of the media market, the political institutions, including the state

and political parties, as well as internal structure of journalism, in the sense of professionalism. So, I think the domains are still relevant, but what one has to do is to think through what are the new values and conceptualizations that you have to put forward within those domains. For example, how is political parallelism different in the era when existing political parties have collapsed and new political actors come along? The biggest changes are in the media markets. We have to deal with the fact that media markets are much more complex, fragmented, and targeted than they used to be in the past.

In terms of methodology, studies on media systems became challenging. Before, there was a limited number of the media that were central to the system, and you could study only those. And now, the system is much more fragmented, which means that you have to be a little bit modest about any claim you are making about any particular study. This is a bit of methodological advice I have always given: you have to put together lots of different studies and take a look at the picture they are giving. It is even more important than it used to be. You just cannot do one study and say that "this is the relationship between media and politics". It takes much more of a community of researchers working on different aspects of relationships and different conjunctures. Then you need to synthesize those to draw bigger conclusions.

How would you describe the U.S. media system these days? What changes this particular media system has been facing?

The biggest change in the US is an increase in political polarization. It had started a long time ago, around the 1970s, but it has intensified a lot lately. It is a change in the political system, but it is a change in the media system, too. With the re-emergence of the partisan media, particularly Fox News and other media on the right, many people have observed an asymmetrical increase in partisanship in the media. It changes the nature of the media system, and it changes the relationship of audiences to the media system. Audiences of a lot of media now are structured by politics – much more than they were before. It changes a lot for journalists and their professional routines. Journalism is now fragmented, too. While some journalists still follow the routine of objectivity, some others reject it. But even for those who try to follow this routine, it is increasingly challenging. When you have actors clearly violating what used to be norms of political order or spreading misinformation, journalists have to decide how explicit are they going to be while calling these things out. This is one of the most interesting

things in the US. There is a lot of debate among journalist: what is objectivity? Should we follow objectivity? What would be an alternative to it?

At the same time, there is – to some extent – a decline of professionalization in the sense that there is less consensus on what the professional norms in journalism are, there are more competing subcultures within journalism that have different norms, and there is also a lot of blurring the boundaries of professional journalism. It is much less clear who is a journalist and who is not a journalist. The mainstream journalists have much more competition for their role. They are not gatekeepers in a way they were in the previous era. I would not exaggerate the decline of professionalism too much, because in many ways journalism it still very strong, but professionalism has definitely declined, particularly, in the sense that consensus and the centrality of journalism has gone down.

Indeed, political and economic factors are affecting journalism to a huge extent. Can you also see changes among journalists across generations in the US? Is a new generation of journalists different than those who entered the profession some time ago?

I would say there tend to be differences caused by political orientation of the media outlets you are working in rather than generations. But yes – there are some generational difference, too. Younger journalists tend to be impatient with constraints of the routines of objective journalism. They are more oriented toward social media and digital media which tend to be more opinionated, generally. They are also more open to the idea that journalists should play different role, namely, to be open about their judgements. So, one of the big changes in the journalistic culture is a shift from an authority of journalism that is based on being neutral and detached to the authority of journalism where people trust journalists because they feel journalists are sincere, authentic, and share their world views. I think that younger journalists tends to be more comfortable with relating to the audience and less attached to the old idea of journalists being neutral, detached, and dispassionate.

And how should we consider an audience in the contemporary analyses of the media systems?

I think that the audiences come in lots of different parts of the analysis. One dimension of political parallelism has to do with is how the audience relates to the media. Namely, do audiences choose media close to their own political orientation, or not? The behavior of the audience is a part of how we define political parallelism. Obviously, the dimension of the media markets has to do centrally with the audiences: how they are divided up, how they are targeted. Also, journalistic

professionalism that has to do with norms of journalism is something that is not purely internal to journalism. Norms of journalism are related to the whole wider social context and to the way the society sees the role of journalism. You do not have a high level of journalistic professionalization unless media owners accept these roles of journalism and unless the public accepts these roles of journalism. If the public comes with different expectations of what journalists should do, then, it is hard for journalists to stick to particular set of norms that violates audiences' expectations. So, I really see professionalism as something that is a broad social development, not something that is purely internal to journalism.

> **Now, I would like to ask you about studies on the media systems in non-democratic regimes. Such studies are challenging due to a limited access to information and censorship. At the same time, digital media provide an opportunity for non-democratic regime to spread misinformation. What would be your advice for those who are conducting studies on the media systems controlled by political power?**

First of all, non-democratic regimes are diverse. Hence, you will have a different theoretical perspective and – to some extent – different methodological approaches, depending on particular kind of regime you are studying. I have always thought that this is important for communication scholars to be engaged with the literature in a comparative politics, political sociology, and so on, to try to understand what kind of regime this is, how the system of power works, and understand the media within that context. It is important to understand the non-democratic regimes in their own right rather than simply interpreting them as not having characteristics that we associate with liberal democratic regimes. I think we also need to understand their complexity. We cannot always understand them as top-down propaganda, in a totally centralized way. They have their own forms of political parallelism in the media due to the fact that sometimes there is a competition between fractions within the ruling elite; there are conflicting ideas about the functions of the media should be. There is usually no dichotomy that you can draw between "zero press freedom and journalistic agency" and "free system". Usually, there are some journalists who have some room to maneuver, maybe more in some conjunctures than in others, so you need to understand that complexity.

The authoritarian system I probably know the best, maybe you can call it a semi-authoritarian regime, is Mexico when the PRI [Revolutionary Institutional Party] ruled. It was a one-party dominant regime, so it had its mechanisms of control of the media. But the party itself was very complex, and it had its factions and journalists played a very active role in the society. Also, in China there is a lot of complexity and were many changes in different periods, for example, in how much scope journalists have for critical coverage, how the

mechanisms of control work, how tight they are. So you need to understand an evolution of the systems and the shifts they go through, which are related to tensions within them about how to legitimate themselves.

> The book "Comparing Media Systems: Three Models of Media and Politics" has inspired many scholars to either revise the concept of media system models you offered in the book or to develop typologies of the media systems in other regions of the world. What do you think about these revisions? And what would be the future of the studies on the media systems?

What Mancini and I was always argued, is that people should develop their own typologies for the kinds of systems they are studying, rather than try to fit things in ours. I think it makes sense to use our typology as a point of reference and look for similarities and differences from them. But generally, the task that we need to do when we are trying to analyze a new kind of system is to develop a new kind of typology that will reflect that. I think there is some important work in that direction. But I also think there is a tendency in scholarship not to attempt a broad synthesis of the sort that we were doing. People tend to do smaller quantitative studies. We took the historical-institutional approach in comparing media systems. Many people are referring to that in their own studies, but not too many people try do that kind of analysis. I think it is related to a pressure to publish lots of articles – it is hard to do this kind of scholarship when you are under such pressure. I would like to see more of this kind of analysis. It think it pushes us forward if scholars do this kind of analysis more.

> Your book also encourages scholars to look back, into the history, when analyzing current conditions of the media system…

One of the thing I have been thinking a lot working on the media systems in Latin America is that they change a lot. There were periods when they were authoritarian systems and then they moved to democracy, the populist leaders come and go, so you had periods with a high level of polarization, and periods when all the media aligned with government. That presents challenges for conceptualizing media systems, when you have that pace of change. At the same time, there are often continuities underneath that change. These things need to be theorized – like underlying pattern of clientelism, for example.

> What would be your general advice for those who would like to conduct comparative studies on media systems?

To do analysis at this kind of level, you have to synthesize across lots of different studies and to look at the bigger picture. Any given study that you do, you need to ask what it is going to contribute to a wider process. I think we should think about how we can put all these studies together to understand a broader pattern. So, it is a holistic approach to the study of media systems. And I think it is very important to be interdisciplinary in order to understand the role of the media in a broader evolution of political and social system.

Daniel C. Hallin was interviewed by Agnieszka Stępińska on May 9th, 2022.

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Daniel C. Hallin is Distinguished Professor Emeritus at the University of California, San Diego. His research concerns journalism, political communication, and the comparative analysis of media systems. He has written on the media and war; on television coverage of elections, demonstrating the shrinking „sound bite" and offering an interpretation of its meaning for political journalism, and on the rise and decline of journalist professionalism in the United States, and, more recently, health news and the mediatization of health and medicine. He has also focused his attention on the comparative analysis of media systems, focusing on Western Europe and on Latin America, and trying to bring into political communication and media studies the tradition of comparative historical and institutional analysis that can be found in sociology and comparative politics. His book "Comparing Media Systems: Three Models of Media and Politics", co-authored with Paolo Mancini, has won the Outstanding Book awards of the International Communication and National Communication Associations, and the Goldsmith Book Award of the Shorenstein Center on Press and Politics at Harvard.

DANIELA DIMITROVA (ED.). GLOBAL JOURNALISM: UNDERSTANDING WORLD MEDIA SYSTEMS. ROWMAN & LITTLEFIELD PUBLISHERS, PP 258. ISBN: 1538146851.

Many researchers, especially in the Western world, hold that media and thus journalism is in severe crisis, and the profession is threatened by several internal and external phenomena such as the change of the media environment, digitalization, the emergence of social media, political pressure and commercialization. However, if one looks at this claim a bit closer, it might turn out that these statements and the corresponding worries are mostly coming from the Western countries, and typically reflect the values and belief systems of these regions. Therefore, when researchers analyze the field of journalism and media from a one-sided and less flexible Western perspective, the outcomes and conclusions might fail to understand the unique nature of media systems and media cultures that differ not only from region to region, but also from country to country. Without understanding the given region's cultural, historical, economic, political, and societal particularities, our chances to examine complex communicational systems authentically remain close to zero.

In the edited volume entitled *Global Journalism: Understanding World Media Systems* Daniela Dimitrova and her colleagues offer new ways of approaching media systems by taking both the local context and technological changes into account. The editor indicates in the preface that the book's purpose is not to approach world media systems and global journalism with a normative lens:

> A basic premise in this bozok is that there is no ideal media system. While it may be easy to see the media in dichotomous terms—free versus censored, open versus closed, one-sided versus diverse, or objective versus subjective, the book cautions against simple generalizations. (p.14)

Since publications in the field of communication and media research come mostly from the perspective of Western researchers, to avoid ethnocentrism, Dimitrova invited twenty-two authors from twelve countries to offer a geographically more diverse outlook.

The book is structured in three parts. Part one focuses on the key concepts, in which authors address basic concepts in global journalism such as news flows,

the role of technology, media freedom, journalistic cultures, digital era, and journalism ethics and journalists' responsibilities in the 21th century.

Part two elaborates on the world's regions. In this part of the book, the authors offer a wide and deep insight into the world's regions and their media cultures. In these chapters, the reader can not only understand how the professional practices and values can vary between regions and countries, but they can also have a view on what factors can shape media systems across cultural contexts. The authors take us on a journey to Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, North Africa, Central and Eastern Europe and Russia, Western and Northern Europe, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America, and North America.

Part three looks at global issues, events and topics that have deep and significant effects on the audiences on a worldwide scale. In the three chapters of this final part, the authors discuss the digital transformation of international and national news agencies, international conflicts and crises, and the relation of public diplomacy and international communication. Without any 'simple generalizations', these chapters outline that throughout the still developing globalization of societies, media technologies might influence—to various extents—all those countries that are not disconnected from the global communication chain.

In an introductory chapter, prior to the first part, Daniela Dimitrova provides a framework for the study of global media systems by combining the most important features of existing media models. As mentioned before, Dimitrova argues for a more a detailed, non-normative approach. Thus the book defines global journalism as the following: "*journalism produced within a specific media system, which is typically a national-level media system, embedded within a regional and global network.*" *(p. 24.)* The author claims that the framework offered by the book builds

> […] on the core principles of previous models, (…) it aims to present a comprehensive, multidimensional model that captures the effects of several macro-level factors simultaneously, while acknowledging that additional elements may be at play at the micro level. This type of approach is fluid and enables scholars to determine relationships between systems while, at the same time, identifying regional patterns. (p. 24)

Daniela Dimitrova's edited book covers a wide range of topics from fake news to media ethics. The new and more nuanced media model that the book offers relies on synthetizing various media theories and empirical data, which can hopefully help researchers to understand more about the peculiarities of the world's media systems. At the end of each chapter the authors set questions based on their studies, which clearly indicates that this book is not only a textbook for

scholars and researchers but it is also an object to trigger the critical thinking of students learning about global journalism and media systems.

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WĘGLIŃSKA AGNIESZKA (2021), PUBLIC TELEVISION IN POLAND. POLITICAL PRESSURE AND PUBLIC SERVICE MEDIA IN A POST-COMMUNIST COUNTRY, PP. 135.

In a book called "Public Television in Poland. Political Pressure and Public Service Media in a Post-communist Country" deals with the topical current problem of the functioning of Polish public television (TVP) in the conditions of unchanging interest of politicians from the perspective of journalists working there. The presentation of the outlined problem through the eyes of journalists was motivated by several reasons. Primarily, it is a journalist who influences the selection of information. Secondly, based on selected information, television programs are prepared, and thus journalists are responsible for the content broadcast, which should be part of the public mission to which the public broadcaster is obliged to fulfil. Due to the obligations, incumbent on journalists, they are perceived as guarantors of democracy, but, as the author rightly points out, it is possible only if journalists are guaranteed autonomy and independence from political actors and the market. It is worth noting that these are only theoretical assumptions that must always be verified by reality. This is the subject of this book.

The author's aim of the book is to analyze the work of TVP journalists in the context of the implementation of public tasks specified in the Broadcasting Act and the documents binding within the public broadcaster. The author also considered it justified to pay attention to a much broader context concerning the discussed issues. The author did so by referring to the existing theoretical findings in the field of public broadcasters, the situation of this type of broadcaster in other post-communist countries, European media legislation implemented in the Member States, methods of media financing, relations between public broadcasters and politicians, and the role of journalists in a democratic system.

The following research questions were subordinated to the implementation of this goal: (1) In what aspects does TVP draw on the guidelines of the EU institutions and international organisations? (2) In what aspects does TVP reflect the tendencies present across CEE media systems? (3) How did the transformation of TVP proceed in terms of the change from communism to liberal democracy? (4) In what areas is TVP subject to the political or market influence? (5) How exactly is the remit of TVP defined? (p. 4).

The above questions, all characterized by a high level of generality, were supplemented with specific questions: (1) How do the legislator regulations regarding PSM work in practice with reference to TVP? (2) How do the journalists understand and pursue public objectives? (3) How has the multi – platform nature of new media changed contemporary television journalism? (4) To what extent do the way of managing the broadcaster, structural changes and job security translate into the situation of the network's journalists? (5) Do the journalists of TVP identify with the brand and its objectives? (p. 4-5).

The book consists of two parts, with two separate chapters within each of them. The first part of the book is theoretical. It presents the concept of public broadcasters from the perspective of both Western European and post-communist countries. The first chapter discusses the concepts of creating and defining a public service broadcaster. Therefore, the four basic models of public electronic media management (governmental, professional, parliamentary and civic) and the factors taken into account by Daniel Hallin and Paolo Mancini in the classification of media and political systems prepared by them were recalled.

Subsequently, attention was drawn to the technological changes that took place in the area of broadcasters and recipients, which inevitably forced the redefinition of the public broadcaster and its goals. The second chapter presents the models of public media that developed in post-communist countries in Europe after the period of systemic transformation that took place since 1989. This chapter recalls the theoretical investigations in this area made by the team of Michael Brüggemann and Bogusława Dobek-Ostrowska. Moreover, examples of simultaneous transformation of the media system in two post-communist countries, the Czech Republic and Hungary, were discussed in detail. By juxtaposing these two examples, it is possible to capture convergent but distinct points, proving that despite a similar past, the treatment of public service broadcasters may differ.

The second part of the book is entirely devoted to journalism in Polish public television. The third chapter focuses on Polish public television. The functioning of the state broadcaster in the Polish People's Republic (PRL) and the simultaneous transformation of the political, economic, social and media system from the communist regime to liberal democracy were discussed in detail. This, as the author explains resulted in the adoption of the Broadcasting Act constituting the foundations for the activities of Polish public television and commercial television. This chapter also presents all the necessary information to understand the conditions, in which public television operates: the internal structure, the goals and the principles of financing its existence.

Chapter four is the longest and, at the same time, empirical part of the book. The methodology of the conducted research was presented and properly justified, as well as formulated hypotheses and the research procedure explained. The study covered 44 journalists who had been working for at least several years

in public television and representing various TVP branches (located across parts of Poland). The research comprised conducting and recording interviews, during which the issues of interest to the author were raised. Thus, several key categories for the study were distinguished: diversity, objectivity, journalistic responsibility, tabloidization and commercialization, influence on recipients, technological transformation, intergenerational relations, safety and comfort of work, as well as politicization and pressure from politicians. It is important to appreciate the multiplicity and variety of topics discussed. This allowed for a comprehensive treatment of the outlined issues.

It is also worth mentioning that the book is supplemented with several tables and graphs prepared by the author, which perfectly illustrate and complement the content. The rich bibliography also deserves special attention.

Summing up, it should be emphasized that in the reviewed book it is extremely valuable to supplement theoretical investigations, both general and detailed, by large-scale empirical research. In this way, the author of the publication comprehensively illustrated the subject of research and exhaustively answered the research questions, which guide her. Therefore, it should certainly be considered that the findings made in the book „Public Television in Poland. Political Pressure and Public Service Media in a Post-communist Country" constitute an extremely important contribution to the existing arrangements regarding Polish public television, which is a crucially important element of the Polish media system.

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VI Congress of the Polish Communication Association "Media and Society in the Age of Platforms, Algorithms and Data"

GDAŃSK, POLAND, SEPTEMBER 22–24, 2022

The VI Congress of the Polish Communication Association (PCA) was held in Gdańsk on September 22–24, 2022. The conference entitled "Media and Society in the Age of Platforms, Algorithms and Data" was organized by the Institute of Media, Journalism and Communication, the University of Gdańsk, in cooperation with the PCA.

More than 250 speeches were delivered by media scholars, practitioners, and experts from the media industry and from various (Polish and European) research centers. The program included 50+ thematic panels, three plenary sessions and a round-table discussion. Through reference to the conference theme, participants shared their research on the media concerning the ongoing development of information technologies, algorithms and data that goes beyond the theories and research perspectives typical of the digital and linear revolution. Another significant game-changer was the context of the global COVID-19 pandemic, as it showed the power of platforms, challenged journalistic ethics, media organization strategies and interpersonal relations, including replacing face-to-face communication with network communication.

DAY 1

The first day of the VI Congress took place in the European Solidarity Center, the event's co-organizer. The opening session was hosted by Sławomir Siezieniewski, Polish TV journalist. The welcoming speeches were given by Basil Kerski (the ECS Director), Piotr Stepnowski (the Rector of the University of Gdańsk), Iwona Hofman (the President of the Executive Committee of the Polish Communication Association), Piotr Borawski (the Deputy Mayor for entrepreneurship and climate protection,) and Michał Harciarek (the Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Gdańsk). The PhD Dissertation Award in 2020 was granted

to Kinga Adamczewska (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań), while the 2021 PhD Dissertation Award was granted to Katarzyna Pagacz (Jagiellonian University in Kraków). The opening session further acknowledged Urszula Doliwa (University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn) – the winner of 2022 edition of the Media and Democracy Karol Jakubowicz Award. Finally, Karolina Wojtal (University of Warsaw) received the 2022 Award in Medi@stery for the best MA thesis in Poland's media studies.

Photo 1. Kinga Adamczewska (left) received the PhD Dissertation Award.

Photo by: Beata Użarowska (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań)

Honorary memberships of the Polish Communication Association were granted to Hanna Machińska (Deputy Commissioner for Human Rights, University of Warsaw), Teresa Sasińska-Klas (Jagiellonian University in Kraków), and Janusz W. Adamowski (Uniwersity of Warsaw). The opening session celebrated the 40th anniversary of the scholarly career of Bogusława Dobek-Ostrowska – the President of PCA from 2008–2013, and the Editor-in-Chief of the "Central European Journal of Communication" from 2008–2019. Michał Głowacki and Agnieszka Stępińska – the Editors of CEJC – further announced dedication of the Spring 2022 issue to Bogusława Dobek-Ostrowska. The Congress honored the memory of the late outstanding media researchers: Piotr Francuz, Marian Gierula, Jerzy Mikułowski-Pomorski and Zbigniew Oniszczuk.

Photo 2. Bogusława Dobek-Ostrowska celebrates the 40th anniversary of her scholarly career with Iwona Hofman, the current President of the Executive Committee of the Polish Communication Association. European Solidarity Centre in Gdańsk, September 22, 2022.

Photo by: Beata Użarowska (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań)

The first plenary session was chaired by Michał Głowacki (University of Warsaw). The keynote speaker Graham Murdock (Loughborough University) delivered his contribution entitled "Hidden Abodes: Digital Lives and Distant Others". The second plenary, chaired by Ewa Nowak-Teter (Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin), included the keynote speech given by Göran Bolin (Södertörn University) on "Data Value: Dynamics of Value Generation in Data Capitalism". The first day of the Congress ended with a gala dinner at the Artus Court on Długi Targ street, hosted by the Mayor of the City of Gdańsk.

Photo 3. Meeting of the Forum of Young Media and Communication Scholars, one of the 21 sections of the Polish Communication Association, during the VI Congress of the PCA. The young scholars were joined by Iwona Hofman (right). Gdańsk, September 23, 2022.

Photo by: Beata Użarowska (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań)

DAY 2

The second day began with meetings of 21 research sections of the Polish Communication Association. The meetings in the research groups were followed by the plenary session entitled "Media Freedom and Democracy in the Age of Platforms and Data". The session was chaired by Göran Bolin; it presented the indicative findings from the European Union-funded research project MEDIADELCOM (Horizon 2020). Ilva Skulte (Rīga Stradiņš University) spoke about press freedom in post-socialist Latvia, while Halliki Harro-Loit (University of Tartu) presented findings on the perception of free media in Estonia. The presentation on the protection of "justice" in the Hungarian law system was delivered by Gabor Polyak, from Mertek Media Monitor – a Hungarian NGO dealing with press freedom issues. Polish researchers were represented by Katarzyna Gajlewicz-Korab, Jacek Mikucki and Łukasz Szurmiński (University of Warsaw), in discussing the critical junctures for media freedom in Poland. The round-table discussion ended with a presentation of the "Central European Journal of Communication" and its role in sharing and promoting research and its impact on Media Freedom and Democracy. The CEJC Editors spoke about three highly interwoven foundations of media and democracy research, alongside the scholarly values concerning the impact on media policies and self-regulation.

Photo 4. Michał Głowacki and Agnieszka Stępińska, editors of the "Central European Journal of Communication", deliver a speech on "Researching Media Freedom and Democracy: The Case of *Central European Journal of Communication*". Gdańsk, September 23, 2022.
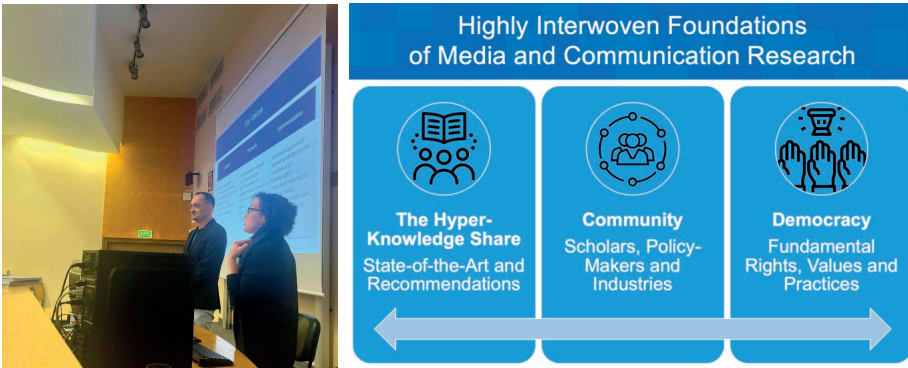
Photo by: Dagmara Sidyk-Furman (University of Warsaw)

The first round of parallel thematic sessions was dedicated to religious communication, propaganda studies, manipulation and health communication (both in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the invasion of Ukraine). The second round of parallel sessions included research shared on the relationship between media and politics, new Public Relations practices and the concept of the network society. The afternoon round-table discussion focused on the

positioning of the communication and media studies discipline in Polish science. The session was chaired by Iwona Hofman, who was joined by Urszula Doliwa, Michał Drożdż (The Pontifical University of John Paul II in Kraków), Sławomir Gawroński (University of Information Technology and Management in Rzeszów) and Jadwiga Woźniak-Kasperek (University of Warsaw). As a result of the deliberations, a proposal was initiated to submit to Błażej Skoczeń, chairman of the Committee for Science Evaluation, with postulates regarding stabilizing the scoring of journals in disciplines and increasing the share of monographs in filling publication slots.

One of the most important events on the second day of the Congress was the General Assembly of the Polish Communication Association. During the meeting, the association's authorities were elected: the President and members of the Executive Committee as well as the Revision Committee. As a result of the PCA members' votes, Iwona Hofman remained the President of the Executive Committee of the Polish Communication Association, while Michał Głowacki was re-elected as the Editor-in-Chief of the "Central European Journal of Communication". During the General Assembly, new activities of the association were also established, as it was an opportunity to reflect upon the current stage of the autonomy of our discipline's research, as the PCA is to face new duties and responsibilities, one being the task of mapping future research and community orientations.

The second day of the Congress ended with a conference dinner at the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Gdańsk, during which participants had the opportunity to listen to the concert of the University of Gdańsk's vocal studio.

DAY 3

The last day of the Congress began with two final rounds of parallel sessions, during which the focus was on the age of algorithms, media ethics and media literacy. One of the morning sessions was chaired by Bogusława Dobek-Ostrowska and looked at media accountability and self-regulation with speeches by Susanne Fengler (Erich Brost Institute for International Journalism in Dortmund), Halliki Harro-Loit, and Michał Kuś (University of Wrocław). The second international morning session was devoted to the Polish case of media accountability – it was moderated by Isabella Kurkowski (Erich Brost Institute for International Journalism in Dortmund), who was joined by Bogusława Dobek-Ostrowska, Damian Flisak (Ringier Axel Springer Polska), Michał Chlebowski (TVN Warner Bros. Discovery), Michał Kuś, and Adam Szynol (Uinversity of Wrocław). The accompanying discussion was attended by Polish scholars, media managers, journalism unions and ethical councils' representatives, who continued their discussions in the afternoon workshop in Sopot.

Photo 5. Speakers during the "Media Accountability and Self-regulation: The Global Perspective" parallel session (left to right, top to bottom): Susanne Fengler (online screen), Halliki Harro-Loit, Michał Kuś and the session's chair, Bogusława Dobek-Ostrowska. Gdańsk, September 24, 2022.

Photo by: Dagmara Sidyk-Furman (University of Warsaw)

The closing ceremony was led by Iwona Hofman, who made a substantive summary of the past three days and thanked the guests for their participation. Małgorzata Łosiewicz (University of Gdańsk), the chairwoman of the local organizing committee of the VI PCA Congress, received warm congratulations for the hospitality and unifying atmosphere of the event. Finally, the host of the VII Congress of the Polish Communication Association was announced; the PCA Congress in 2025 will be organized by the University of Silesia in Katowice.

Dagmara Sidyk-Furman
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Meeting of the working group Independent Self-Regulation in Poland: "Establishing Effective Media Self-Regulation in Poland"

UNIVERSITY OF GDAŃSK AND HOTEL VILLA BALTICA SOPOT, SEPTEMBER 24, 2022

Internationally acclaimed representatives of the working group Independent Self-Regulation in Poland (established in January 2022) attended the 6th Congress of the Polish Communication Association entitled "Media and Society in the Age of Platforms, Algorithms and Data" (https://kongres.ptks.pl/en/). During the Congress, the working group representatives were offered guidance into the establishment, effectiveness and financing of self-regulatory mechanisms such as the proven examples of press councils in Belgium, Germany and Estonia. The members of the working group are representatives from Ethical Council REM, TVN, Civic Pact for Public Media, Agora, Institute of Political Science and Institute of Journalism and Social Communication, University of Wrocław (UWr), Editors-In-Chief, Ringier Axel Springer Polska, Polish Chamber of Press Publishers (IWP), University of Warsaw (UW), Association of Polish Journalists (SDP), Journalistic Association (TD), Journalists' Association of The Republic of Poland (SDRP), Local Press Publishers Association (SGL). The dialogue organizer on annual basis and working group initiators since 2020 are the Erich Brost Institute for International Journalism in cooperation with the Journalism Departments of the University of Warsaw and the University of Wrocław.

During the 1-day event on September 24, 2022 participants gained an overview about the benefits and challenges of implementing systems of self-regulation like press councils or ombudsmen, including budgetary aspects and efforts from the media sector to be undertaken to implement such institutions. Additionally, Dr. Michal Chlebowski, News Programming Standards Manager at TVN of the TVN Warner Bros. Discovery also introduced his own PhD research about the status of ethical code knowledge of working journalists in Poland.

ACADEMIC RESEARCH ON MEDIA ACCOUNTABILITY

During the session entitled „Media Accountability and Self-regulation: The Global Perspective" as part of the 6th Congress of the Polish Communication Association at the University of Gdańsk Prof. Dr. hab. Bogusława Dobek-Ostrowska mentioned the importance of media accountability and specifically also media self-regulation from the perspective of collaborative research. In this context she mentioned the MediaACT project (11 partners from Eastern and Western European countries plus 1 partner from the Arab world), which has set the scope for further dialogues on media accountability and relevant enhancement for getting active in media self-regulation, such as currently is the case in Poland. Dobek-Ostrowska explained that the research teams analysed and compared the development and influence of the forms of media accountability from 2010 to mid-2013. In a broad field study, they investigated which established and which innovative forms of media self-regulation are represented across the diverse countries. This is because the quality of media self-regulation is also a measure of the quality of the public sphere and an essential indicator of media pluralism. Media self-regulation should be understood holistically as it concerns not only print media (such as press councils), but every form in which media (print, digital, electronic) are held accountable to society (ombudspeople, media journalism, media blogs, codes of ethics, etc.).

Prof. Dr. Susanne Fengler from the TU Dortmund provided in her presentation key insights of „The Global Handbook of Media Accountability" (Routledge, 2022) – a comparative research related to the status of media accountability in 44 countries, which included Poland. Fengler explained during the 6th Congress of the PCA the key concepts of media accountability, media self-regulation and media transparency. In context, she also characterised three varied regions of media accountability in Europe: liberal, democratic-corporatist, polarized-pluralist. She also introduced pushing and limiting media accountability factors and presented the results of the exemplary study, showing the diffusion of press councils and broadcasting councils over time. Fengler also pointed out the differences between the professional and dysfunctional professional models of media accountability, with special focus on Poland and Ukraine, where the institutions function but do not take enough collective action to prevent state interference. Fengler used the case of Turkey to show the fragility of media accountability from political pressure: „The example of Turkey shows how fast media accountability institutions can also deteriorate under political pressure. Twenty years ago, the Turkish media accountability system was considered a model for the region – with an independent press council, ombudsmen, and the like. Today, all MAIs appear ‚captured'. This underlines how vital it is for media freedom to ensure professional and independent media accountability institutions."

The participants have been highly interested in this panel. In the Q&A session Fengler explained her hopes for the Media Freedom Act – for it to create (at last) a common regulatory board on EU level, which will provide the opportunity to check whether members states are following the EU regulatory framework.

Prof. Halliki Harro-Loit from the University of Tartu in Estonia provided in her speach entitled "From Analog to Digital – One Step Upward but Two Steps Back?" an overview about the Media Accountability System in Estonia. She pointed out that the Estonian media market is small and oligopolistic, and there is a minimum of state interference. Harro-Loit stressed that the competition is an important factor in influencing the development of journalism culture. In Estonia, the process of Media Accountability was frozen as two competitive self-regulatory bodies simultaneously exist. The national Code is enforced by two press councils, of which one is affiliated to the Newspaper Association and the other to the Journalists' Union and the Association of Media Educators. This richesse of press councils derives from a conflict 15 years ago, but today it provides competitive viewpoints and, as a result, improves the self-regulatory discourse. The working self-regulation has prevented the State from interfering with media performance, even when it would have been eligible to do so, for example, to protect the public's interest, or to protect the rights of an individual. Furthermore Harro-Loit emphasized that the code of ethics in Estonia is outdated and that there is currently no motivation among the various actors to renew it. The situation in Estonia, as it emerged in the Q&A session, was similar to that in Poland, where different Council of Honour as well as ethical councils for self-regulation exist, however without any kind of interlinking and also without effective or visible results.

Dr. Michał Kuś from the Institute of Political Science at the University of Wrocław (UWr) presented in a specific presentation entitled „Poland: The Polarised Model of Media Accountability" the state of media accountability in Poland. The major positive characteristics are that there are quite a lot of developed media self-regulatory instruments, however, these instruments are neither effective nor ineffective. In their research for the polish chapter in "The Global Handbook of Media Accountability" (Routledge, 2022) the researchers Michał Głowacki and Michał Kuś found out a broader context for their research – connected to the high level of political and social polarisation, media tribes, verbal aggression and double standards. They also identified new instruments and actors of media accountability: NGO's activities (such as media monitoring and fact-checking), social media, media journalism outlets and academic actors as important tools. Kuś pointed out, that "We should stop thinking in terms of double standards, like 'there is a lot of irregularities, but others are responsible for that, not us'. This is the basis for further dialogue on the establishment

of a press council in Poland. After all, control over the quality of journalism in Poland is a common concern".

THE EUROPEAN MEDIA FREEDOM ACT – A SOLUTION FOR APPLIED MEDIA SELF-REGULATION?

In panel attended by media practitioners and academia representatives entitled „The Polish Challenge of Media Accountability and Self-regulation", the relevance of academic collaborative research about the state of play of self-regulation in EU member countries, as well as the development of recommendations as made in the MediaACT survey for European Media Policy makers was highlighted by Dr. Isabella Kurkowski. The recommendations from media practitioners and academia are today more than relevant, specifically in the light of the newly adopted European Media Freedom Act (EMFA). Kurkowski explained that the EMFA is highlighting the role of media self-regulation at the EU level as an important tool of media freedom and as a cooperative and necessary counterpart towards only the regulatory process. The opportunities and new standards of EMFA were, in detail, introduced at the PCA conference by Isabella Kurkowski, regional coordinator on Media Accountability at the Erich Brost Institute for International Journalism. Kurkowski stressed the importance of cooperation between statutory and self-regulation, which EU policy-makers highly encourage.

Relevant steps of protecting Media Freedom and Pluralism on EU level of the last 4 years are following:
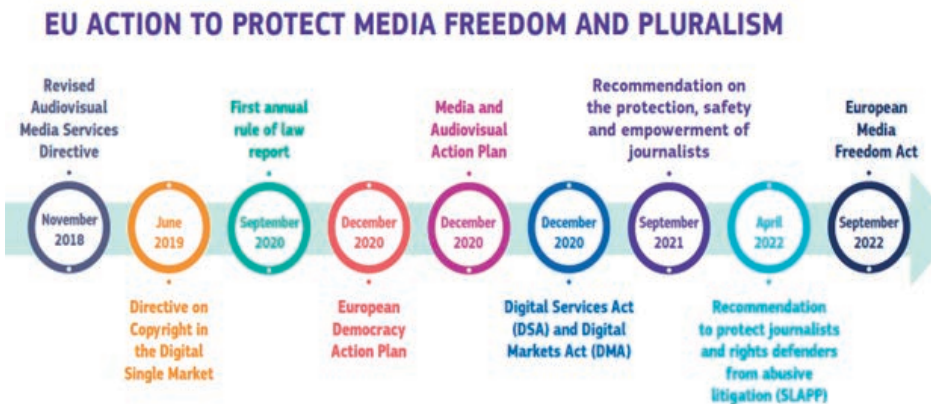
Source: European Commission: https://ec.europa.eu/
commission/presscorner/detail/en/fs_22_5507

In her presentation on the newly adopted EMFA, Kurkowski emphasized that for the first time self-regulation has become an important part of the legislation. Until now, relevant recommendations and resolutions have been provided by the Council of Europe, such as:

- Resolution 2066 (2015) "Media responsibility and ethics in a changing media environment"
- Resolution 1636 (2008) "Indicators for media in a democracy"

The European Parliament has provided further recommendations, such as:

- European Parliament resolution of 11 November 2021 on strengthening democracy and media freedom and pluralism in the EU: the undue use of actions under civil and criminal law to silence journalists, NGOs and civil society (2021/2036(INI))

It is important to note that under the new EMFA legislation, funding will also be made available to strengthen press and media councils.

Source: European Commission: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/fs_22_5507

THEORY AND PRACTICE OF MEDIA SELF-REGULATION IN POLAND

This panel clarified from the perspective of media practitioners what kind of applicable tools of media accountability currently are used in Poland. In this regard Dr. Michał Chlebowski presented the TVN Warner Bros. Discovery's approach, in which he serves as TVN Standards & Practices Coordinator. In 2018, a new project within the standards and practices department was introduced as a tool of in-house media self-regulation: The standards and practices department, as well as editors, oversee the work of journalists on three levels, all related to ethical standards:

1. whether (or not) the team follows the internal ethical rules;
2. on-air control by checking complaints from the public on the broadcast;
3. consulting – attending the editorial meetings and helping cover stories according to the code of ethics.

Chlebowski emphasized that TVN implements other projects, such as monitoring the balance of gender of the guests. In order for the journalists to learn from the best lessons, monthly internal meetings discussed ethical mistakes with the overall team.

Dr. Damian Flisak, Head of Public Affairs, Ringier Axel Springer Polska emphasized that in Polish media outlets that are well functioning – there is no need for another level of media regulation as suggested by the EMFA. External regulation of already proven ethical approaches in newsrooms might destroy media freedom and already well-developed media self-regulatory in-house mechanisms. Flisak – a lawyer specializing in media legislation – estimates that such a regulation can, however, have positive outcomes in Poland when related to the failed distributions of public funds for advertising and to shelter the independence of public media from political interference. By contrast, negative effects can be the editorial independence of each media outlet, which suggests independence of this type should not be covered by any kind of regulation within EMFA. Flisak explained that related to these topics there are more open consultations between EU and the private media in all EU member countries. There is no need for a EU regulator for media, because there is no EU media, but rather 27 different economic media markets. Plurality is, however, a pre-condition for media accountability, which is why the checks and balances are already provided in the media market by the audience. Flisak stated that: "In a well-functioning media outlet there is no problem with editorial independency – and this type of problem will not disappear after creating more legal rules on EU level".

Chlebowski explained additionally that most cases of ethical breeches are proceeded in instances of electronic media by the Polish regulator National Broadcasting Council, which investigates the method of the reporting. However, other than external monitoring, TVN has several internal levels of communication

with the audience and in resolving complaints. Nonetheless, civil court proceedings also exist.

Damian Flisak stated in relation to the missing self-regulation process of a press council on the national level: "In Poland, we don't have an effective mediation element of the self-regulatory process – it simply doesn't work (for several reasons)". In some cases, media are relevant experts in ongoing court proceedings and fulfil the role of amicus curie. In media cases of relevance, the Commissioner for Human Rights interferes and brings up topics into public or parliamentary level discussion. So, in this sense an Ombudsman position on national level already exists in Poland. Flisak, however, names other important problems such as the implementation of the Digital Services Act (DSA), which poses a new challenge in terms of content moderation – and provides a positive outlook. Perhaps self-regulation may serve in future as a good grounding for consulting with the gate-keepers? Digital services include a large category of online services, from simple websites to internet infrastructure services and online platforms. The rules specified in the DSA primarily concern online intermediaries and platforms. For example, online marketplaces, social networks, content-sharing platforms, app stores, and online travel and accommodation platforms. The Digital Markets Act includes rules that govern gatekeeper online platforms. Gatekeeper platforms are digital platforms with a systemic role in the internal market that function as bottlenecks between businesses and consumers for important digital services. Some of these services are also covered in the Digital Services Act, but for contrasting reasons and with distinct types of provisions. Gatekeepers are allowed to take down content violating not only law, but also their own terms of service – which are their private rules. Checks and balances applied by self-regulation in this field indeed might be very much needed!

Pieter Knapen, Secretary-General and Ombudsman at the Raad voor de Journalistiek in Belgium stated that media councils by their ethical nature are standing in the public and journalists. Digital platforms need to keep their hands off from media participating in the self-regulatory system, unfortunately this idea is not reflected in the DSA. In the French-speaking part in Belgium the media regulator can interfere in the spheres covered by the Press Council, in Flanders – this is not the case as the independence of the Press Council is previewed as the core value. According to the statement Knapen concludes that Media Councils, as part of the self-regulation system, should be excluded from any kind of digital platform regulation.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF ESTABLISHING MEDIA COUNCILS AS A SELF-REGULATORY APPROACH AND AS AN INSTRUMENT OF MEDIA ACCOUNTABILITY?

Dr. Michał Kuś clarified that prior to the establishment of a self-regulatory body the process of consultation should involve all relevant stakeholders, thus specifically a press council stands not only for the public, but also the journalists. Dr hab. Adam Szynol from the Institute of Journalism and Social Communication at the University of Wrocław (UWr) underlined the statement and acknowledged that there are two major problems existing in Poland related to media self-regulation: "The country has only very weak self-regulatory institutions in media and their position is not recognized on a broad scale by either the media outlets or the public. There is, however, a very strong media regulator with huge influence from the government". Szynol argued that sometimes the business and corporate way of dealing with ethical issues is probably more effective than statutory regulation.

However, the discussion intensified when Andrzej Krajewski from the Journalistic Association (TD) in Poland posed the question: "If we have such weak self-regulation institutions in Poland, why don't we rely more on EU institutions?" The discussion was unable to provide a solution to the complexity of the problem, but clearly a broader dialogue in the near future is needed on exactly this topic.

Prof. Halliki Harro-Loit underlined the ever increasing need for a consultative character. Everything connected to digital media is now ruled by the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and unfortunately not by ethics. The GDPR, in this sense, is the toughest privacy and security law in the world. Though it was drafted and passed by the European Union, it imposes obligations onto organizations anywhere, so long as they target or collect data related to people in the EU. The regulation was put into effect on May 25, 2018. The GDPR will levy harsh fines against those who violate its privacy and security standards, with penalties reaching into the tens of millions of euros. Dr. Damian Flisak related that Ringier analyzes the regulations on a case-by-case basis, however the management of the media outlet prefers to prevent ethical breeches, rather than healing wounds.

A similar statement was provided by Dr. Michał Chlebowski, who highlighted that TVN analyses carefully all new EU regulations on a case-by-case basis and that the media outlet also participates in public consultations related to any new regulation, e.g., organised by the regulator. Unfortunately, public consultations tend to be ineffective – as was the case in implementing the revised EU Audio Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD). Where programming for minors should be marked in a clear way, private broadcasters in Poland presented a draft of the regulation and gave feedback towards the regulator, but KRRiT decided

to take the draft version without comments, ignoring all feedback from the overall private broadcasting sector in Poland.

Prof. Dr. Bogusława Dobek-Ostrowska envisioned that researchers and media practitioners should establish a comparative EU project in order to research regulatory and self-regulatory mechanisms related to EU Media Policy and to see which solutions are working across the EU and how to take the lessons learned from their experiences.

PRE-CONDITIONS FOR SETTING UP A SELF-REGULATORY MECHANISM IN POLAND

A specific and more intense working group meeting was held as an afternoon, half-day, round-table on September 24th, 2022 at the Hotel Villa Baltica in Sopot. Attendees recalled the dialogue from 28 January 2022 in Warsaw, which indicated that representatives of the most important print and online publications in Poland, publisher associations, KRRiT, REM, OKEM and six journalists' associations as well as the Commissioner for Human Rights and academic media researchers shared the desire to establish a format of independent self-regulation in Poland. All participants at this event agreed to set up a working group on "Independent Self-Regulation" in order to foster self-regulatory mechanisms in Poland.

The aim of the half-day workshop in Sopot on 24th September 2022, at which all stakeholders of the working group were present, was to draw up a concrete road map and a model for the establishment of an independent press council or any other self-regulatory mechanism. In this discussion there were 21 members of the working group, consisting of representatives from Ethical Council REM, TVN, Civic Pact for Public Media, Agora, Editors-In-Chief, Ringier Axel Springer Polska, Polish Chamber of Press Publishers (IWP), University of Warsaw (UW), Association of Polish Journalists (SDP), Journalistic Association (TD), Institute of Political Science, University of Wrocław (UWr), Journalists' Association of The Republic of Poland (SDRP), Local Press Publishers Association (SGL), the Institute of Journalism and Social Communication, University of Wrocław (UWr) as well as the Erich Brost Institute for International Journalism.

Dr. hab. Adam Szynol gave a brief overview about the first meeting in September 2020 – as a milestone for establishing this working group and starting the discussion on whether a functioning media council is needed in Poland. He summed up the second meeting of the working group in January 2022, during which the Polish government plan was intensely discussed within the Group to establish a new media co-regulatory body at the national level. At this time the working group agreed on some basic characteristics of a potential self-regulatory body:

- independent,

- responsive,
- effective,
- representative for the media and the public,
- consistency for all media as a deep deprofessionalization of the media was noticeable.

Szynol stated that the challenge now was to engage the public and other actors in the process of establishing an effective media accountability system in Poland. Pieter Knapen in his function as an international consultant explained that actually an agreement on the ethical code before creating a media council is not necessary an internationally acclaimed Code of Ethics can be used. A more detailed and specific Code of Ethics can be developed at a later stage. The most important aspect is that the temporarily drafted Code of Conduct meets the criteria of transparency, inclusiveness, independence as well as representativeness. Szynol explained that the work of a media council does not involve ideology, politics, editorial decisions or editorial lines and each media-specific council commits to basic principles of journalistic ethics and to follow the agreed Code of Conduct procedures. Michał Chlebowski underlined however, the importance to start convincing and involving the key players of the Polish media market to create such a self-regulatory body. He said that the work of the press council is continuous and requires constant adaptation and setting timely guidelines, which requires a high-level of cooperation and recognition of the media in Poland. Michał Jaszewski, legal advisor at the Association of Polish Journalists (SDP) proved that representativeness of the stakeholders as well as the media and journalists itself is a key element – only then will the Press Council be a realistic endeavour. However, Andrzej Krajewski also argued clearly that the populistic and mouthpiece government media would pose a huge challenge in this endeavor, because their work is a contradiction of ethical journalism. Paweł Czajkowski, Director of the Legal Department at Agora drew attention to inclusiveness being important, but it should not be a sine qua non condition for a successful self-regulatory system, which could be set up in the near future in Poland.

From the part of the media practitioners, one important statement related to digital media and bot-texts across all discussions: The Code of Ethics should also regulate the principles of transparency in relation to texts written by AI/algorithms – media owners prefer self-regulation and are tired of ineffective institutions, he stated: "We don't need more regulation, we need future-oriented thinking as a way forward in our independence".

GOOD PRACTICES FROM FLEMISH AND GERMAN PRESS COUNCILS

Pieter Knapen shared his experiences from the Flemish Press Council and took into consideration various aspects of international donor funding, which often prevents independence of a council – therefore a healthy mix of stable income structure is needed when considering to establish a self-regulatory body. Knapen recommended to refrain at the beginning of the newly established self-regulatory body from the appeal procedure. However, Knapen said it was important to include appeals into the system mediation, in order to find an amicable settlement of a complaint. The Flemish Press Council consists of 12 representatives from the public, 12 from the media and 12 from the journalists, they work voluntary and have no income. The council is in its legal structure a not-for-profit organization and therefore truly independent. Related to the transparency of a new to be established Press Council in Poland – it is not enough to only publish the complaint decision on the website, but also to ask the media outlets to publish the relevant decisions. A transparent process of handling complaints guarantees recognition in the wider public – indeed, it might be worth also to consider public hearings for settlements, although involved parties might not be so open during such a mediation process.

Manfred Protze, Member of the German Press Council explained that that national council is registered in its legal form as an Association. The Council includes publishers and journalists' associations as well as founders. It consists of three complaint commissions and receives up to 2000 complaints (print and online news media) per year. The German Press Council has been in existence for 60 years and follows some basic rules, such as: the accused party must always have the opportunity to comment, however, the public doesn't have to take part in the council's judgements, as it is a process of media self-regulation which is decided on consensus in the complaint commission. Nevertheless, the public is the final judge of the reception of the Press Council adjudications on complaints against ethical breeches.

A FIRST ROAD MAP DRAFT FOR ESTABLISHING SELF-REGULATION IN POLAND

The 21 stakeholders of this working group developed in a joint and consultative process a first Road Map for the relevant pre-conditions in establishing an independent and self-regulatory body for the media in Poland by developing criteria such as:

1) structure, authorities, competences, legal status,
2) effective complaint procedure,
3) financial structure and administration.

WORKING GROUP – ROAD MAP

OUTCOMES:

1. STRUCTURE, AUTHORITIES, COMPETENCIES, LEGAL STATUS:

- Initiative Group (Temporarily Founders)
- Call for participants
- Informal internal consultations
- No start without publishers on board as members
- Starting Event of founding the Council
- New legal entity to be defined
- Decision on structures
  - » Using the European Media Freedom Act for a new set-up and/or to make REM more effective?
  - » KRRiT/REM part of the new to be established Press Council?
  - » Consultation and complaints acceptance deadline
  - » Nationwide call and naming event of (s)elected founding members
  - » Initiative Group starts its work
- Room can be provided for a first secretariat structure probably at the University Wroclaw or Warsaw

2. EFFECTIVE COMPLAINT PROCEDURE:

- Written complaints
  - » Both parties should be heard in either or both written and oral forms
  - » Realistic and not too long deadline for response must be given
  - » Mediation should be a part of the complaint work
- max. 12 complaint commission members

- Type of arbitrators:
  - » People with media experience (no business interests)
  - » Experts with legal, editorial and civil society expertise
  - » Different kinds of experienced media representatives: media representatives, journalists, lawyers, academia, civil society)
  - » Arbitrators to be randomly chosen
  - » Bridge between academia and media education
  - » Representatives must cover all regions of Poland
  - » List of experts to be included, for example psychological experts
- Complaints from Media against Media:

- » Proves to be a conflict of interest
- » No influence clause should be included in the statutes
- Monthly Complaint Commission Sessions by Zoom in the beginning
  - » Prior having a physical secretariat structure, including technical equipment
  - » 1x time per month complaint commission session on arriving complaints
- Establishing a PR and civil society reach out Commission
  - » Developing a structure how to reach out to the public in order to inform them about the Press Council work and about their rights to complain cost-free
- Establishing a Personal Data Management Plan

3. FINANCIAL STRUCTURE AND ADMINISTRATION
- EU Funding to start
- Business Plan Development
  - » Media Councils in the Digital Age project application
  - » REM can apply in order to improve the system and/or
  - » Through another NGO or Press Council who wants to support the establishment
- Proportional financial participation
  - » member fees to be paid by umbrella organisation
  - » Richer media outlets pay more
  - » Bigger media outlets pay more
  - » Every member has one vote
  - » Number of votes does not represent proportion
- To include freelancers
  - » Associated in journalistic organizations
- Governmental subsidy from various sources
- Who pays for the system and the organizational structure?
  - » Press publishers, broadcasting companies, journalists' associations, EU Funds, net native publishers

At the end of the workshop session, it was stated by the participants that as the next step, a solid concept for establishing media self-regulation in Poland should be developed as an official strategy paper in the Polish language. The further steps should be taken only after receiving the concept based upon the above-mentioned Road Map as well as lessons learned from other newly established Press Councils will be discussed in a further meeting. The goal will be to circulate the concept to representatives of the media outlets as well further possible future members.

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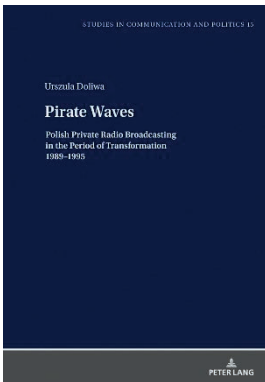
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Professor Urszula Doliwa Wins The Media and Democracy Karol Jakubowicz Award 2022

The Media and Democracy Karol Jakubowicz Award 2022 was granted to prof. Urszula Doliwa (University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, Poland) for her recent book, "The Pirate Waves. Polish Private Radio Broadcasting in the Period of Transformation 1989–1995" (Berlin, Bern, Brussels, New York, Oxford, Warszawa, Wien: Peter Lang).

The Selection Committee, which includes the Editors and Associate Editors of the "Central European Journal of Communication" and the Executive of the International Association of Public Media Researchers, noted that the most recent book by prof. Urszula Doliwa presents an original, media policy-driven approach to the identification and systematization of the stages of media market development, at the same time pointing to the main problems and challenges for the transition from the monopoly to the dual model in the media market. The topics discussed in the monograph are part of the broadly understood studies on the transformation and democratization of the media and are followed by a comparative perspective on radio evolution in Central and Eastern Europe. "The Pirate Waves" was also acknowledged for pointing out the discrepancy between market demand and media regulation—something of potential value to scholars, policy-makers and the public.

Urszula Doliwa is Associate Professor and Head of the Institute of Journalism and Social Communication at the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, Poland. Since the start of her academic career, her research interests have been centered on radio and non-profit media, which is why her previous publications include monographs, edited collections and scholarly papers on media systems, community media, and radio broadcasting.

The Award ceremony took place in Gdańsk, Poland, on September 22, 2022, during the opening of the Polish Communication Association's VI Congress "Media and Society in the Age of Platforms, Algorithms and Data".

Photo 1. The Award Ceremony in Gdańsk, Poland, on September 22, 2022: prof. Katarzyna Konarska, prof. Urszula Doliwa, Małgorzata Semil-Jakubowicz and prof. Iwona Hofman.

Photo by: Beata Użarowska (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland)

Every year, the Media and Democracy Karol Jakubowicz Award recognizes novel methodologies and the societal impact of scholarly publications in media systems, media policies, media ethics, and public service media in Central and Eastern Europe, and beyond. A full list of this year's nominees can be found on the Award's website: https://www.ptks.pl/en/awards/the-media-and-democracy-karol-jakubowicz-award.

Dagmara Sidyk-Furman and Michał Głowacki
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The 9th ECREA's European Communication Conference "Rethink Impact", Aarhus (Denmark), October 19–22, 2022

Media and communication scholars from Europe participated in the 9th European Communication Conference of the European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA). The theme of the conference, "Rethink Impact", was suggested as a frame for discussing how research, academic education, and training do interact with and impact on and reflect society. This year ECREA received 1711 individual and 62 joint panel submissions to various research sections, marking the highest number of submissions in ECREA events history.

Picture 1. Special Issue 2022 launch party – ECREA Conference, Aarhus

Overall, researchers from Poland presented their findings in several panels, including an international book panel "The Matrix of Media Culture. Central and Eastern Europe Beyond Institutions and Systems" (Michał Głowacki, University

of Warsaw) and sessions organized by the research sections. Specifically, Polish scholars participated actively in sessions of Political Communication section (Agnieszka Stępińska and Kinga Adamczewska, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań; Tomasz Gackowski and Anna Mierzecka, University of Warsaw), Gender, Sexuality and Communication section (Greta Gober, University of Warsaw), Audience and Reception Studies section (Denis Halagiera, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań), Diaspora, Migration and the Media section (Rafał Leśniczak, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw), Mediatization section (Jakub Nowak, Maria Curie Skłodowska University in Lublin), Journalism Studies section (Agnieszka Stępińska, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań), the CEE-Network (Jacek Mikucki and Łukasz Szurmiński, University of Warsaw; Ilona Biernacka-Ligięza, Maria Curie Skłodowska University in Lublin), and the poster session (Karolina Brylska, University of Warsaw).

Picture 2. Editors of the Special Issue 2022: Nico Carpentier, Vaia Doudaki, and Michał Głowacki

The conference was accompanied by the General Assembly of ECREA, Executive Board Elections and voting on General Assembly agendas. Elections followed in research sections, temporary working groups and research networks. Four Polish scholars were elected to serve as either a chair or vice-chair of the following sections and networks: Dominika Popielec (Kazimierz Wielki University in Bydgoszcz) – Vice-chair of the Interpersonal Communication and Social

Interaction Section, Małgorzata Winiarska-Brodowska (Jagiellonian University) – Chair of the Central and East-European Network, Greta Gober (University of Warsaw) – Vice-chair of Gender, Sexuality and Communication Section and Agnieszka Stępińska (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań) – Chair of the Political Communication Section. Also, Nicoleta Corbu, one of our Associate Editors of the "Central European Journal of Communication" (CEJC), was elected the vice-chair of the Political Communication Section. Congratulations!

Thanks to Nico Carpentier and Vaia Doudaki from Charles University in Prague, the the "Central European Journal of Communication" co-organized the Special Issue 2022 launch party to mark the 30th issue of CEJC. The issue, entitled "Mediating Change. Changing Media", produced in collaboration with Nico and Vaia, brought together European scholars representing transdisciplinary views on today's communications and media studies. Similarly, scholars from various disciplines showed up at the informal CEJC gathering in Aarhus with snacks and beverages. Thank you Nico, Vaia and all the editors, contributors, reviewers, book referees and other scholars who showed up at ECREA – and all scholars who supported the "Central European Journal of Communication" over the last 15 years.

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Photos by Jacek Mikucki

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