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Introduction

The speed and scale of human displacement precipitated by the conflict in Ukraine is unprecedented in post-Second World War Europe. Also unprecedented has been the outpouring of public support and the tangible legal and policy measures enacted to welcome and support Ukrainian refugees, both in Europe and elsewhere. This stands in contrast with the fraught and often conflictual approach that has characterized public policy discussions of asylum in previous years, including the last time that Europe was confronted by a large-scale influx of refugees in 2015.

Media narratives around migration play a key role in shaping political will and policy regarding asylum. In this paper, we analyse the dynamics of press coverage of large-scale conflict-affected migration in Europe through two case studies: the current Ukrainian displacement; and the 2015 refugee "crisis", which was due in large part to the inflow of Syrian refugees. We apply a combination of sentiment analysis and qualitative thematic analysis to explore how media discourses have shaped the narrative around these two influxes and probe the perception that race has played an outsized influence in framing those narratives. Our aim is to share the tools of our methodological approach, along with our findings, to inform and support those working with migrants and refugees.

Previous research has grouped migration narratives into three main categories: migrants as a benefit to the communities that receive them; migrants as victims needing support from destination communities; and migrants as a cultural, security, economic, and – as highlighted by the pandemic – health threat to receiving communities (Banulescu-Bogdan, 2022). Our review certainly bears out these themes and illustrates some telling differences in the coverage of both crises. Our hope is that this analysis may offer clues as to how to sustain support for Ukrainian refugees in the longer term – when we know public support often wanes – while enhancing the global response in support of all refugees.

Methodology

We used a systematic, mixed-methods media content analysis of English-language mainstream European media news sources, disaggregated by month, to identify and explore common narratives related to refugees arriving in Europe. The first five months after the Russian invasion of Ukraine (24 February–23 July 2022) were compared to the five months in 2015 with the greatest number of new arrivals in Europe (August–December; UNHCR, 2016).

We identified articles via Factiva's international news database for publications meeting inclusion criteria. Sources of news were limited to Factiva's list of European major news and business sources reporting in Europe and in English. To avoid biasing the data set by using terminology specifically referencing migration status (such as "refugee" as against "illegal immigrant"), we utilized the "human migration" subject tag developed by the database along with search terms referencing the sending country of the population of interest [*Ukraine* or *Ukrainian*; *Syria* or *Syrian*; *Iraq* or *Iraqi*; *Afghanistan* or *Afghan*].[1]

Articles were sorted by relevance and assessed for content via a title and byline review, followed by a quick read of the document. Articles deemed to contain only a superficial mention of refugees or migrants were excluded. A total of 100 articles were thus chosen for each month of the analysis. A full search strategy can be found in Appendix 1.

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[1]   While 2015 arrivals in Europe spanned a large number of sending countries, we chose to focus our attention on articles discussing Syrians, Iraqis and Afghans, as these nationalities had the highest numbers of arrivals during the time frame, and as asylum-seekers from conflict-affected settings, they made the most apt comparison to displaced Ukrainians.

Articles were cleaned of extraneous data (that is, advertisements). An automated wordcount was run for frequency of key phrases (Table 1). Articles were also categorized by the topic(s) they addressed and publisher type (Figure 1). The most common news sources were private international news, followed by private local or national news. News sources from English-speaking countries – primarily the United Kingdom and Ireland – accounted for the majority of article sources; other sources included English-language branches of primarily non-English publications, such as the Latvian News Agency (LETA), as well as English-language publications in countries where the primary or native language is not English.[2]

Table 1. Frequency of key words by year[3]

	refugee	migrant	illegal immigrant	illegal migrant	economic migrant	asylum	influx	flood	stream	swell	pour	wave	tide
2015	4 500	2 307	29	27	92	1 350	215	50	43	19	47	97	27
2022	3 918	152	2	2	6	278	75	18	45	4	24	53	4

Figure 1. News sources by publisher type

News sources by publisher type, 2015

News sources by publisher type, 2022
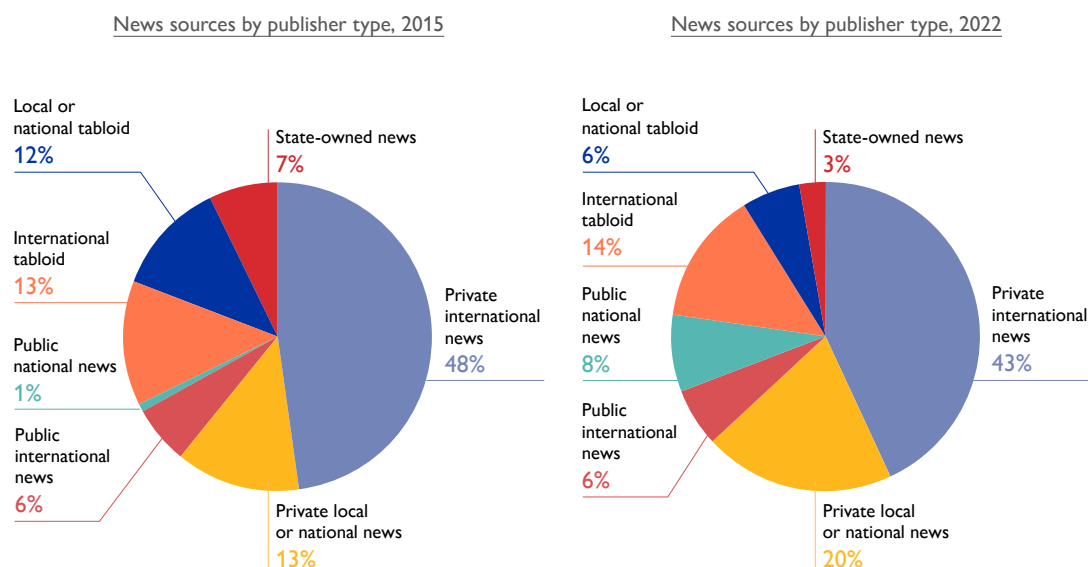
Anglophone content

Our decision to limit our review to English-language articles was a necessary practicality; however, it has caused some distinct limitations that should not be ignored. The majority of the articles come from publishers in the United Kingdom and Ireland, which, as islands, are likely to experience and discuss migration differently than their mainland counterparts. Indeed, a UNHCR-commissioned content analysis found that the United Kingdom's press coverage in 2015 framed the crisis as a border control issue more frequently than coverage in other European countries; it also found United Kingdom coverage was the most negative and polarizing of the countries assessed (Berry et al., 2015). The enactment of Brexit, and its associated discourse and policy impact on immigration, also likely played an oversized role in our sample due to the disproportionate number of United Kingdom news sources included.

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2   We made the decision to include State-owned and operated media, such as the Sputnik News Service, as the purpose of this review is to capture the news to which Europeans are likely to be exposed, regardless of the accuracy of its content and the political purpose behind its publication.

3   The base search terms allow for inclusion of prefixes and suffixes with similar spelling such that "migrant" includes "migrants" but not "migration".

Sentiment analysis

Sentiment and magnitude values for each article were obtained via the Google Cloud Natural Language API Sentiment Analysis tool (Table 2). In sentiment analysis, values can range from −1 (very negative) to 1 (very positive), with zero being neutral. These values are calculated at a sentence level, with the absolute value of each sentence's sentiment considered its magnitude. The magnitude of an article reflects the overall presence of emotive language, both positive or negative, present in the writing. Therefore, articles with a neutral sentiment value can be limited in emotional language (low magnitude) or containing an equal mix of both positive and negative values (high magnitude). As a summation of absolute values according to sentence count, magnitude is closely linked to sample length. To account for discrepancies in article length, magnitudes were considered in relation to the total word count of the article.

Table 2. Range of sentiments by month

2015	Total number of articles	Average Length	Average Sentiment	Minimum Sentiment Value	Maximum Sentiment Value	Average Magnitude per 100 Words
August	849	782	-0.257	-0.5	0.0	1.96
September	3 023	1 166	-0.246	-0.5	0.0	1.92
October	1 320	811	-0.226	-0.7	0.1	1.85
November	1 176	756	-0.247	-0.5	0.1	1.78
December	877	684	-0.196	-0.5	0.2	1.88
2015 Overall	7 195	840	-0.234	-0.7	0.2	1.87

2022	Total number of articles	Average Length	Average Sentiment	Minimum Sentiment Value	Maximum Sentiment Value	Average Magnitude per 100 Words
Feb 24–March 23	4 193	1 717	-0.142	-0.5	0.2	1.73
March 24–April 23	2 383	882	-0.119	-0.5	0.3	1.67
April 24–May 23	1 146	712	-0.116	-0.5	0.4	1.85
May 24–June 23	781	513	-0.102	-0.6	0.3	1.52
June 24–July 23	546	596	-0.145	-0.6	04	1.65
2022 Overall	9 049	783	-0.125	-0.6	0.4	1.68

Figure 2. Sentiment analysis values by month
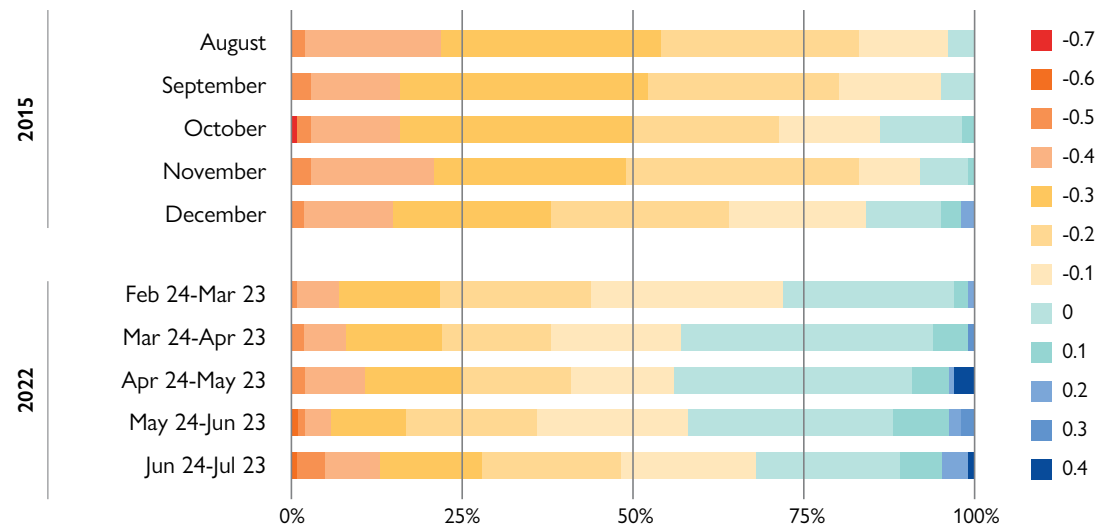
Sentiment values in the sample ranged from very negative (−0.7, October 2015) to moderately positive (0.4, April–May 2022). On average, articles in 2015 had a sentiment value 0.11 lower than those in 2022 [t(953) = 11.76, p < 0.005]. This result supports the qualitative findings, suggesting an ambivalence towards asylum-seekers and migrants in 2015 compared to the strong support of displaced Ukrainians in 2022 (Figure 2). Furthermore, articles in which migrants and asylum-seekers were referred to as "economic migrants", "illegal migrants", or "illegal immigrants" (M = −0.25, SD = 0.13) were, on average, significantly more negative [t(143) = 5.65, p < 0.005] than articles in which those terms were not used (M = −0.17, SD = 0.16). When disaggregated by theme, a similar trend persists in which most 2015 articles are more negative than 2022 articles on the same topic (Figure 3). However, articles discussing death of refugees from 2022 are notably more negative than those from 2015, despite the comparatively high rate of refugee deaths in 2015.

Figure 3. Average sentiment by theme
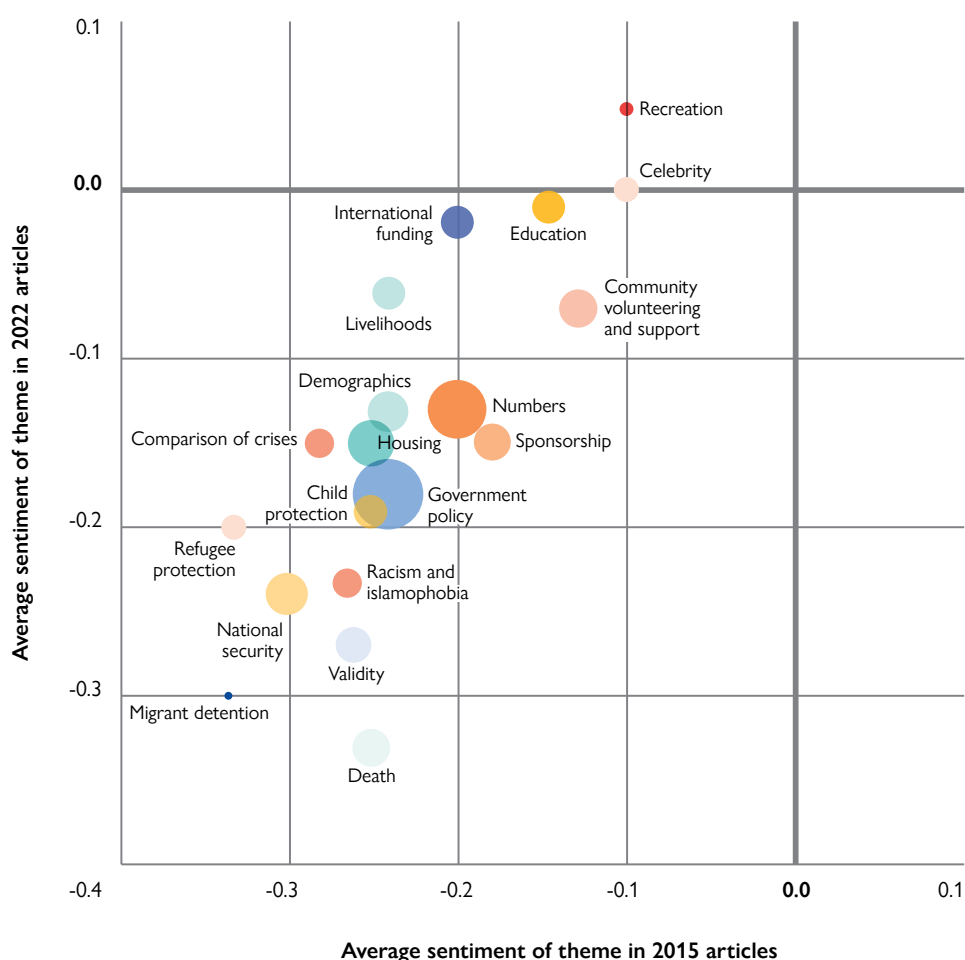
Importantly, this analysis looked at overall sentiment in the articles and did not explore sentiment specific to sentences regarding migrants or asylum-seekers. As such, negative scores can stem both from anti-migrant rhetoric as well as empathetic or visceral language discussing conflict and asylum-seekers' experiences. This is likely the cause of the negative skew across articles both from 2022 and 2015, despite the widespread support of Ukrainian asylum-seekers identified in 2022. Future research exploring entity sentiment analysis may provide an opportunity to explore these dynamics in more depth.

Qualitative analysis

For the qualitative analysis, ten articles for each month of interest were randomly selected, and an inductive approach was applied in the development of the codes according to a step-by-step thematic analysis method (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Intercoder reliability of greater than 80 per cent was obtained prior to coding and reassessed halfway through the coding process to ensure consistency. Figure 4 shows the frequency of the most common codes, along with codes with particularly disparate coverage between 2022 and 2015. Media in 2022 covered topics of support and integration (such as housing, community volunteering or livelihoods) at much greater rates than did media in 2015, whereas 2015 saw high rates of coverage discussing border crossings and migrants as threats. For code definitions, see Appendix 2.

Figure 4. Relative frequency of key codes in qualitative analysis subsample by year
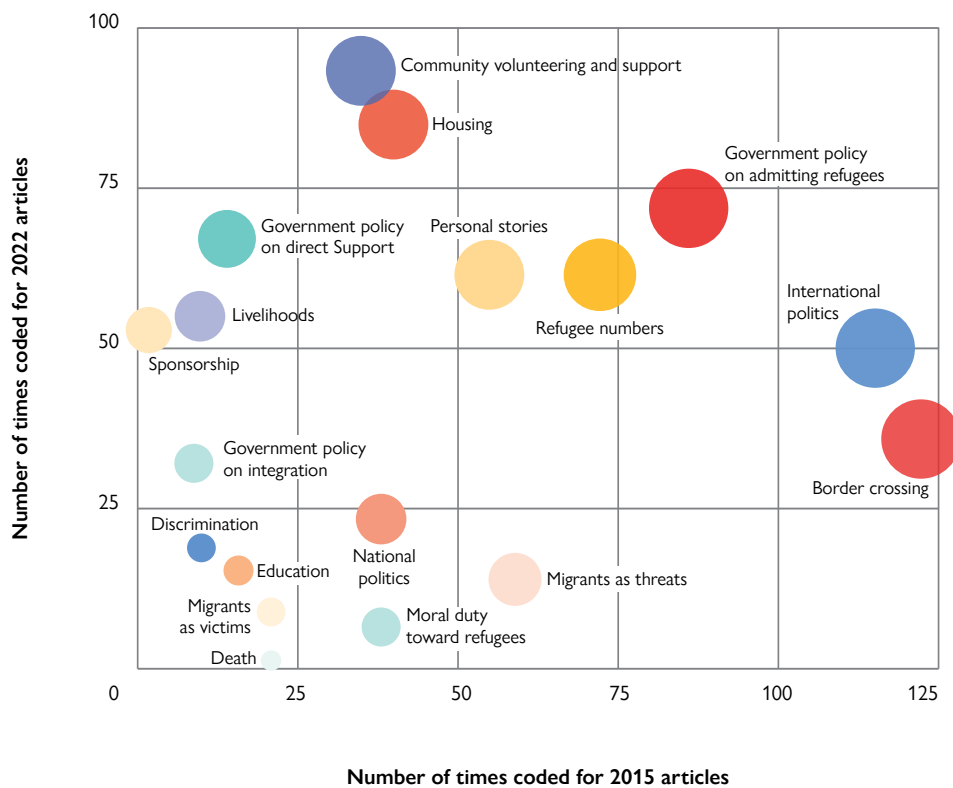
Discussion

The news media play an important role in shaping public opinion around who migrants and asylum-seekers are and the legal and moral responsibilities of destination countries. Media coverage frequently relies on and perpetuates common narratives around migrants, with sympathetic coverage highlighting asylum-seekers as victims of conflict and the benefits to destination communities arising from the integration of migrants, while negative coverage recites and expands upon themes of migrants as threats to the national security, cultural identity, economic security, and health of the destination community (Banulescu-Bogdan, 2022). These narratives do not stand alone but are instead influenced by various sociopolitical and economic factors that can mediate the content and impact of news coverage. By exploring the primary themes identified by our reviews of news coverage of Ukrainian and Syrian refugees respectively, and placing those themes in the broader sociopolitical context, we hope to provide insight into how public opinion influences, and is influenced by, the media.

Media narratives portraying refugees and migrants as threats

Asylum seeker or murderous ISIS terrorist? It's impossible to tell says EU border boss. (Culberston, 2015)

Research suggests that perceived threat is one of the most important predictors of attitudes towards migrants and refugees (Landmann et al., 2019), and thus understanding how threat perception is communicated can aid in addressing the underlying concerns of receiving communities.

In our qualitative analysis, the code "migrants as threats" contained four subcodes – national security, cultural identity, economic, and health. References to migrants or refugees as any type of threat were 4.2 times more common in the 2015 sample than in the 2022 sample, with threats to national security accounting for the majority of references (71% for 2022; 64% for 2015) in both cases. In 2015, concerns regarding national security were closely linked to terrorism; media discussing the potential for asylum-seekers to be affiliates of terrorist organizations were common leading up to the November 2015 Paris attacks and ubiquitous in the months that followed. Conversely, despite 2022 seeing an aggressor on European soil, suggestions of threat – for example, that Russian operatives may be hidden among Ukrainian asylum-seekers – were limited primarily to tabloid coverage in the first weeks of the conflict.

Safety concerns presented by the media are not limited to matters of national security, however. Throughout the 2015 data, refugees were presented as actors prone to violence; clashes with police or between groups of migrants and asylum-seekers at borders and in camps and transit centres received coverage across both left- and right-leaning media. While inhumane treatment by authorities and poor conditions in camps often catalysed these events, articles primarily focused on the violent acts themselves and demographics of the perpetrators, particularly their nationality. Take the following quote, for example:

Some 200 Syrian and Afghan refugees clashed in a crowded German refugee centre in Hamburg overnight, leaving four people injured in the third such riot this week…. Hamburg police were also called to another centre where rival groups faced off, armed with wooden poles and broomsticks, after a 19-year-old migrant accused a 23-year-old Iraqi of having stolen his mobile phone.(AFP, 2015a)

The contextualization needed for the public to understand how and why these events occur – overcrowded living conditions and disparate treatment of migrants by nationality due to government policy, for example – was often only addressed briefly in articles from 2015. However, in the few cases where similar articles can be found in 2022, we see a potential opportunity for how this coverage can be reframed. One article from the *Daily Mail* (Lampert et al., 2022), while maintaining the sensationalist approach for which the tabloid is known, blames a chaotic scene at the Polish border on poor organization and crowd management. By linking the story to the environment that exacerbated the risk rather than focusing on individual actors, the piece provided an opportunity for readers to understand not just the experiences of asylum-seekers but also potential avenues for addressing these concerns.

Coverage of other sources of threats was less prevalent in the qualitative sample. Threats to cultural identity accounted for 15 per cent of threat codes in 2015, but none in 2022. Overwhelmingly, threats to cultural identity were presented with a broad brush and relied heavily on racialized tropes and the assumption that migrants and asylum-seekers are uninterested in integration. In contrast to 2022 (see below), there was little discussion of strategies, such as support for language acquisition, that could help overcome barriers to integration.

Notably, threats to the economy – a commonly-cited concern in the literature (Banulescu-Bogdan, 2022; Landmann et al., 2019) – were largely absent from the qualitative subsample. When explored in the larger sample, articles from 2015 discussing economic concerns centred around migrant and refugee employment (covering both fears of job "theft" as well as refugee unemployment) and the State burden of welfare provision.

> *Employers who hire illegal immigrants in care homes, building sites and as cleaners will be "hit from all angles", [James Brokenshire, United Kingdom Immigration Minister] has warned amid a sharp rise in migrants entering Europe from Africa and the Middle East. "[Those] who give jobs to illegal migrants are denying work to UK citizens and legal migrants and helping drive down wages". (Warrell, 2015)*

In 2015, high – but decreasing – unemployment rates across Europe coincided with an uncertain recovery from the European debt crisis (Eurostat, 2015), and research has found increased negativity towards migrants' contribution to the economy in countries that experienced the most severe economic impact from the financial crisis (Vogt Isaksen, 2019). Conversely, while the pandemic contracted economies across the globe in 2020, Europe saw a strong rebound in 2021 and early 2022, with historically low unemployment rates persisting into the summer of 2022, despite the Russian invasion (Trading Economics, 2022). While high inflation rates in Europe – stemming both from food and energy price hikes in relation to the conflict as well as from the post-pandemic supply chain struggles – would normally serve as a fertile ground for economic concerns around migrants, multiple articles highlighted the economic benefits of Ukrainians filling jobs left open by the post-pandemic worker shortage.

> *Poland's response to war on its doorstep was quick, unbureaucratic and generous. It helped that, in February, Poland registered a historic low adjusted jobless rate of just 2.8 per cent. (Scally, 2022)*

Lastly, coverage of threats to health offered rare but telling opportunities for comparison between 2015 and 2022 narratives. In 2015, health-related coverage revolved around the potential for transmission of tuberculosis and measles from migrants to the receiving community. Media coverage in 2022, however – despite the COVID-19 pandemic having precipitated a global conversation around cross-border disease transmission – refocused the coverage away from risk to the receiving community and instead to elevating the health needs of asylum-seekers themselves.

> *Ukrainian refugees to be housed on a cruise ship in Scotland face a "real risk" of being caught up in a Covid outbreak, a health expert has warned…. [Emeritus Professor of Bacteriology Hugh Pennington] urged the government not to house vulnerable people over the age of 65. (Allardyce, 2022)*

Who is the "deserving" asylum-seeker? Linking vulnerability, "deservingness", and validity of asylum claims

The framing of migrants and asylum-seekers as either "deserving" or "undeserving" of protection has increasingly been wielded both in support and in lieu of more legal, rights-based understandings of who is a refugee. Narratives around "deservingness" can help to build empathy for asylum-seekers as well as address the heightened needs of particularly vulnerable individuals; however, vulnerability rhetoric can also inadvertently undermine access to asylum by disenfranchising asylum-seekers, particularly young men, who are seen as "less vulnerable" (Smith and Waite, 2019). Unfortunately, rights-based language with detailed legal content rarely makes for eye-

catching headlines, and victim narratives thus remain a key tool by which the media – and the United Nations and NGO representatives they quote – can sway public opinion.

> *Far from being propelled by economic migrants, this crisis is mostly about refugees. The assumption by the likes of Hammond, May and others is that the majority of those trying to reach Europe are fleeing poverty, which is not considered by the international community as a good enough reason to move to another country. Whereas in fact, by the end of July, 62% of those who had reached Europe by boat this year were from Syria, Eritrea and Afghanistan, according to figures compiled by the UN. These are countries torn apart by war, dictatorial oppression, and religious extremism – and, in Syria's case, all three. Their citizens almost always have the legal right to refuge in Europe. (Kinglsey, 2015)*

Articles with coverage discussing the legitimacy of asylum claims – including coverage supportive of asylum-seekers – accounted for 12.8 per cent of 2015 articles but only 2.4 per cent of 2022 articles. The press acknowledged the need of protection for those fleeing conflict; however, 2015 coverage frequently used nationality as a proxy for the validity of asylum claims. In particular, while most articles acknowledged the vulnerability and need of Syrian refugees, this coverage was accompanied by a raft of articles that simultaneously questioned whether those asylum-seekers were genuinely Syrian.

> *People smugglers using Facebook to sell fake Syrian passports to economic migrants. (Rayner, 2015)*

The prevalence of counterfeit passports and the use of a fake Syrian passport by one of the assailants involved in the November 2015 Paris attacks may have stoked such coverage (CSIS, 2016). Furthermore, as countries such as Germany announced policies welcoming Syrians but explicitly excluding asylum-seekers of other nationalities, they may have created an explicit incentive for migrants and asylum-seekers to present themselves as Syrian, a practice many articles claimed was widespread.

However, the focus on "legitimacy" is not entirely absent in the Ukrainian crisis. Articles by left-leaning publishers highlight apparent racial disparities in the treatment of those fleeing Ukraine. Black and Brown Ukrainians and non-citizen residents have faced pushback from Ukrainian and Polish border authorities, and Romani refugees have faced particular challenges, with reports of community volunteers refusing to serve them and politicians suggesting Ukrainian Roma are "economic migrants" rather than refugees (Chebil, 2022).

> *Czech president Miloš Zeman claimed earlier this month that while refugees from Ukraine should be welcomed, he "would make one little exception in terms of Romani Ukrainians. I'm not sure whether they aren't economic migrants". (Nattrass, 2022a)*

Media narratives around integration

Integration – here used to describe migrants' and asylum-seekers' access to livelihoods, education, housing, health care, and other public systems in a manner similar to the members of the community they are arriving into – is often described by experts as a "day 1" issue, meaning that it should be taken into consideration even as the acute response focuses on direct support to meet acute needs (Benton and Selee, 2022). In 2015, discussions of livelihoods, permanent housing, and education were largely postponed as a matter to address after the formal legal process of seeking asylum had been completed, a task which can take months if not years. In the meantime, migrants and asylum-seekers are left entirely dependent on the State and NGOs, and consequently

blamed for the associated cost. Conversely, in 2022, the rapid enactment of temporary protection and sponsorship policies allowed Ukrainians to access work, education, and health care under the same provisions as citizens. The difference in coverage regarding integration – and, indeed, concerns over the speed and quality of integration support – reflected this reality, with coverage of integration topics between 1.8 to 5.5 times more frequent in 2022 (Figure 5).

> *A two-tier refugee system is emerging in Ireland, where Ukrainian refugees are being offered more access to society than people seeking international protection, according to the Chief Commissioner for Human Rights and Equality. (RTE, 2022)*

Figure 5. Number of articles addressing topics of integration
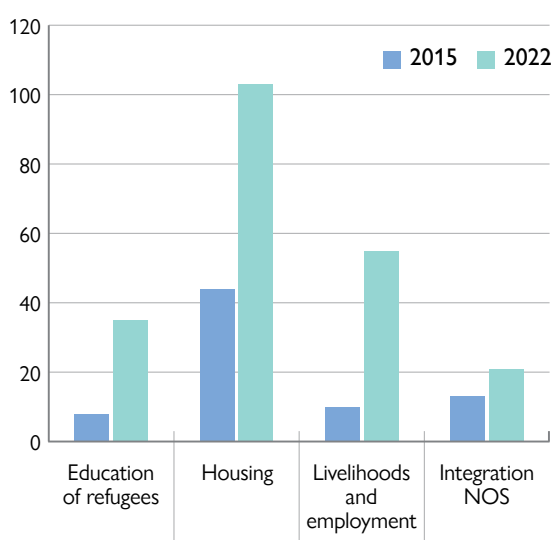
In 2022, coverage of integration was not just aspirational, but highly solutions-oriented. While articles in 2015 lamented poor conditions in refugee camps, calls for accountability were non-specific; coverage addressing livelihoods and education was largely absent. In comparison, sharp criticism against policies seen as ineffective in the Ukrainian response – particularly regarding the United Kingdom's "Homes for Ukraine" programme's slow roll-out and limited safeguards for beneficiary protection – pointedly called for individual politicians to act. Similarly, press coverage around housing of displaced Ukrainians has routinely highlighted the interplay between permanent housing, employment, and access to education.

> *Most [Ukrainians] are in emergency accommodation, but the pace of moving families to longer-term accommodation … is proving a more protracted process. Properties are matched to the refugees' needs, taking into account proximity to schools, work or a requirement to be close to hospitals. (Sheehan, 2022)*

In comparing the press coverage of 2015 with that of 2022, we see clear indications that activating the Temporary Protection Directive, alongside initiatives such as community sponsorship programmes, considerably increased the capacity of countries of destination to absorb asylum-seekers and removed bottlenecks associated with the asylum system, which helped, in part, to reframe the narrative around "integration".

Beyond race: What other factors impact a country's willingness to welcome?

> *It would take 44 hours to drive from Mariupol in Ukraine to Dublin. It would take 54 hours to drive from Aleppo in Syria. Both cities have been brutally bombed by Vladimir Putin. Civilians have fled in huge numbers from both. Why does that 10-hour difference place Mariupol in our neighbourhood, while Aleppo is outside it? (O'Toole, 2022)*

Much can be said, and indeed much has already been written, regarding the role of race and religion when considering Europe's ambivalent[4] – and, often, openly hostile – attitudes towards refugees in 2015, particularly when compared to the outpouring of support Ukrainian refugees have received over the first five months since the Russian invasion began. Yet prejudice is not the only factor which can impact a country's willingness to accept refugees. Other considerations, such as cultural and familial ties, gender dynamics, economic realities, and perceptions of asylum-seekers' long-term intentions all play a role in determining the receptivity of a country of destination to admitting refugees.

The role of neighbouring countries

Neighbouring countries across the globe have historically been the primary destination for refugees. Familial and social ties provide a basis for community-based support beyond what governments can provide, and these social ties can spur awareness of the humanitarian need in the national consciousness. This was seen in 2015, where the figure of 1 million arrivals in Europe was dwarfed by the number of refugees received by Syria's regional neighbours, particularly Türkiye, Lebanon, and Jordan. In 2022, a similar trend has been seen, with Poland taking in over 2 million refugees in the first three weeks of the crisis (Charlish and Badohal, 2022).

Expectations around length of displacement also come into play throughout the course of any displacement crisis. The expectations of return of both refugees and receiving communities are often amplified in the early phases of a crisis, diminishing over time. Geography can moderate these expectations, as it can be seen as easier to return home from neighbouring countries than from further away (Laub, n.d.). Despite the uncertain situation in Ukraine, the media coverage suggests that many Ukrainians and members of the European communities that received them expect them to return soon, and media coverage highlighting this expectation suggests it plays a role in shaping the willingness of the receiving communities to accept refugees.

> *The situation isn't helped by the impossibility of predicting how many refugees will stay in the long term. In late May, interior minister Vít Rakušan tried to calm nerves by claiming 1,000 refugees a day were leaving the Czech Republic to return home to Ukraine. (Nattrass, 2022b)*

Gender dynamics

Gender dynamics also complicate the receptivity of countries of destination to asylum-seekers. In 2015, nearly three quarters of asylum-seekers in Europe were men, while in 2022, women and children make up an estimated 90 per cent of Ukrainian refugees (Pew Research Center, 2016; UNHCR, 2022). Media coverage presents men as a greater source of both economic and national security risk as well as requiring greater scrutiny to meet the requirements

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4   Notably, we saw a brief but dramatic increase in sympathetic media coverage of asylum-seekers after the tragic 2 September 2015 death of Alan Kurdi.

of asylum. The arrival of working-age men in 2015 was frequently presented as suspicious, suggesting economic interests were the underlying drivers of migration rather than concerns over safety, ignoring – or even villainizing – young men who sought to attempt the dangerous journey to Europe in advance of their family or in response to forced conscription by the Syrian Government. Notably, resistance around young refugee men seeking work in Europe in 2015 was reversed in 2022, with Ukrainian refugees welcomed as a boon for sagging economies, and barriers to employment – such as childcare needs and professional licensure – addressed at a systemic level.

> [Czech President Miloš Zeman said] that compassion was "possible" for refugees who are old or sick and for children, but not for young men who in his view should be back home fighting against jihadists. (AFP, 2015b)

Conclusion and next steps

Our review of media narratives around 2015 and 2022 arrivals into Europe – while limited in both scope and generalizability – nevertheless reveals striking differences between the way that Ukrainian refugees have been covered and the way that refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic have. In both instances, civilians are fleeing the wholesale destruction of their homelands, at the hands of some of the same antagonists. However, differences in media portrayals of refugees – in terms of, among other things, perceptions of threat, refugee legitimacy, or economic contribution – have helped to delineate the landscape which refugees from Ukraine and the Syrian Arab Republic encountered in Europe in 2022 and in 2015, respectively. Issues of race, proximity, and gender have undoubtedly played a role in shaping these contrasting narratives. So, too, have the political and socioeconomic changes in the region impacted when and how the media cover migration.

Ensuring fair and accurate media coverage of migration is a challenge that will only grow in importance in an increasingly interconnected and mobile world. The International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and organizations such as Human Rights Watch (HRW) have sought to address bias and misinformation in reporting through the development of guidelines and workshops to train journalists in rights-based and accurate terminology when covering migrants and asylum-seekers (ILO, n.d.; IOM, 2022; HRW, 2014). Yet more is needed to ensure balanced coverage and to promote respect for the dignity of refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants.

One thing is clear. Building on positive media narratives around Ukrainian refugees will be vital to sustaining public support in the critical months ahead, as the war is prolonged and expectations around an early resolution and return diminish. A greater challenge still, perhaps, is whether advocates can leverage this outpouring of goodwill to cultivate future support for asylum-seekers more broadly, in Europe and around the world.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Search strategy and data cleaning methodology

All articles were sourced through Factiva's international news database utilizing the following criteria:

a.   Source: Major news and business sources, Europe

b.   Keyword(s):
   i.   2022 articles: [*Ukraine* OR *Ukrainian*]
   ii. 2015 articles: [*Syria* OR *Syrian* OR *Iraq* OR *Iraqi* OR *Afghanistan* OR *Afghan*]

c.   Region: Europe

d.   Language: English

e.   Date range:
   i. 2022 Articles:
      1.   24 February–23 March 2022
      2.   24 March– 23 April 2022
      3.   24 April– 23 May 2022
      4.   24 May– 23 June 2022
      5.   24 June– 23 July 2022
   ii. 2015 Articles:
      1.   August 2015
      2.   September 2015
      3.   October 2015
      4.   November 2015
      5.   December 2015

f.   Subject: Human migration

g.   In "more options," check "republished news"

h.   Sort by: Relevance

Articles were then reviewed in order of relevance according to title, byline, and a skim of the article. Duplicate articles, including republications, were removed. The following inclusion criteria were used:

-   The article must reference the concept of an asylum-seeker or refugee (that is, a person who has crossed an international border to escape conflict or persecution), regardless of the terminology by which the author refers to this concept (such as refugee, asylum-seeker, migrant).
   o   This includes people in the process of crossing the border (for example, sitting in line at a border crossing, or arriving by boat).
   o   Articles must discuss international displacement; articles discussing both international and internal displacement are included.
   o   Articles primarily discussing Ukrainians displaced to or seeking refuge in the Russian Federation were excluded, as this topic, while of significant concern, requires an intentional and nuanced approach much more adequately met independent of this project.

- The content of the article must centre around activity in Europe or European politicians. For example, non-European politicians visiting refugees or asylum-seekers in Europe were included, as were European politicians visiting refugees outside Europe. For the sake of this search, articles centring on refugees or asylum-seekers in Türkiye were not included.
    o Coverage primarily discussing refugees, asylum-seekers, or migrants outside Europe were excluded unless an explicit link was made in the text to the European situation. For example, articles where the primary content focused on humanitarian support systems in the Middle East were not included, while articles covering European politicians responding to the refugee "crisis" by visiting, increasing funding to, or engaging in military action in the Middle East were included.
    o Articles in which refugees currently in Europe discussed their journey to Europe were included.

- Summary articles were not included.

- Letters to the editor were not included. Op Eds were included.

Articles which met inclusion criteria were then cleaned for extraneous text (that is, advertisements, URLs, blockchain time posts, text descriptions of pictures, improperly ported information). Sections of articles which did not reference refugees were removed if separated by a clearly demarcated heading. Summaries that expanded beyond the topic of the article (such as a "summary of today's news") were removed. Pre- and post-cleaning word counts were recorded.

Appendix 2. Qualitative analysis code definitions

Attitudes towards refugees: Parent code covering topics related to receiving community attitudes around migrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees.
    Discrimination: Discussion of racism, religious prejudice and Islamophobia, and other presumptions based on nationality, gender, or the like;
    Moral duty toward refugees: Descriptions of governments or communities in countries of destination as morally obligated to support refugees or asylum-seekers.
    Validity: Language around "real" refugees, refugees versus "economic migrants", and both positive and negative interpretations of the current crisis. For this code, there should be an acknowledgement of "invalid" refugees, even if it argues these refugees are valid. Discussion of false passports falls under this code.

Border crossing: Topics specifically discussing the arrival into the country of destination (such as border fences, border patrol, or long lines), inclusive of smuggling but not trafficking.

Celebrity and well-known figures: Language referencing the actions or opinions of celebrities, including entertainers, writers, royalty, and religious figures.

Common narratives: Parent code for references to common narratives around refugees, asylum-seekers, and migrants.
    Migrants as beneficial: Discussion of the ways in which migrants provide specific social, economic, or other benefits to the receiving community;
    Migrants as threats: Discussion of migrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees as cultural, security, economic, or health threats to receiving communities;
        Threats to cultural identity: Discussion of migrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees as threats to the cultural identity of the receiving community;

Threats to economy: Discussion of refugees, asylum-seekers, and migrants as threats to the economy, including both individual (concern for "stealing" jobs) as well as country-wide (concern for inflation, increased unemployment, wage depression) economic issues.
Threats to health: Language suggesting migrants, asylum-seekers, or refugees pose a threat to the health of the receiving community;
Threats to national security: Language presenting migrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees as criminals, instigators of violence, or threats to peace, the safety of locals, and national security. Include here discussion of the threat of terrorism.
Migrants as victims: Discussion of migrants as victims in need of support from receiving communities.

Comparison of refugee crises: Comparisons across various refugee crises and non-crisis large-scale migration events.

Conditions and needs: Parent code covering topics related to the short- and long-term needs of migrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees.
Child protection and well-being: Issues of child protection, inclusive of concerns regarding well-being (that is, child-specific health care);
Death: Discussion of death or risk of death of migrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees after they have left the sending country;
Education: Discussion of educational needs of refugees, including university (do not include language discussing educational status as a factor for employability);
Health: Discussion of the mental and physical health of migrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees, including social and environmental determinants when directly linked to health (such as overcrowding leading to increased exposure to or spread of infectious disease) and access to health care (not including child-specific access);
Housing: Any discussion of housing or sheltering migrants, refugees, or asylum-seekers
Integration NOS: Discussions on topics of integration not otherwise covered (such as how to get a bank account or phone number);
Livelihoods and employment: Discussion of livelihoods and employment barriers, opportunities, and rates of migrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees;
Private hosting of refugees (sponsorship): Discussion specific to individuals hosting or sponsoring refugees, such as the Homes for Ukraine programme. (This frequently overlaps with refugee housing; however, if they are talking about the programme but not about the need to house refugees, include this code and not refugee housing);
Recreation: Discussion of migrants, asylum-seekers, or refugees participating in recreational activities (for example, provision of tickets to sporting events);
Refugee protection (not child specific): Discussion of protection issues for refugees (such as background checks for private hosts) not otherwise covered by other codes.

Violence against refugees: Discussion of physical and other forms of violence and threats to migrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers from either State actors or non-State actors;
Detention/detainment: Discussion regarding the arrest or detention of migrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees;
GBV: Discussion of gender-based violence against migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers;
Trafficking: Description Discussion of trafficking of migrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees (do not include smuggling).

Government response: Parent code covering governmental policy and capacity needs in relation to migrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees;
Government policy on refugees: Government policies on accepting, monitoring, repatriating, and supporting – or not supporting – migrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees;

Admission: Government policies regarding whether refugees should be allowed in the country, how many should be allowed, what processing they require, approaches to resettlement, and expulsion/repatriation/deportation;

Direct support: Government policy regarding the provision of direct support for the basic needs of migrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees (that is, government-sponsored housing and cash assistance payments);

Integration: Government policies that allow, or do not allow, refugees to support themselves and access the same resources and opportunities as community members of the country of destination.

Capacity of receiving community: Language on generalized capacity of receiving community (including need for international funding or increased taxes); do not include here discussion of specific capacity issues which have individual codes (such as housing).

International funding and support: Discussions of States increasing funding for international or regional actors (requests for international funding go under "capacity of receiving community").

Response of receiving community: Parent code for content discussing humanitarian, non-governmental, and community-led responses to refugees and asylum-seekers;

Article calls for donations: Calls for donations in support of migrants, asylum-seekers, or refugees made by the article, including detailed guides on how to donate;

Community support for refugees [referred to in the text as "community volunteering and support" for clarity]: Any coverage of business or non-governmental, individual or community-based direct service provision of migrants, asylum-seekers, or refugees (do not include language on community opinions towards refugees);

External donations and fundraising: Discussion of fundraising activities by external entities (such as celebrities, individuals, community members);

Humanitarian support structures and activity: Coverage of humanitarian agencies/formal response; include refugee processing conducted or enabled by NGOs or the United Nations. (Community-led initiatives are coded under "community support").

Personal stories: Language describing the personal stories of refugees.

Politics: Parent code covering topics related to local, national, and international politics;

International politics: Discussion of politicians or political motives across borders; include statements of political solidarity with Ukraine. Include statements of development and security in sending countries;

Military intervention in sending country: Military intervention from an outside country (often the country of destination) to the country of origin, often (but not necessarily) as a "solution" for migration;

National or local politics: Discussion of local or national politics, including responses to migrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees by politicians;

Political will in country of destination: Discussion of the extent to which political will impacts decision makers around policies related to migrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees. Include here discussions of receiving community attitudes towards refugees when specifically linked to political action or calls for policy change; do not include individuals calling for change in policy unless those individuals have a public persona or are speaking as representatives of a larger group.

Role of media: Meta discussions of the role of media on sentiment related to migrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees.

State of sending country: Language relating to the ongoing conflict, political situation, or other factor in the sending country which is likely to impact asylum-seekers' and refugees' decisions around flight or repatriation.

Statistics: Parent code for discussion the number and demographics of migrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees.
> **Refugee demographics:** Language discussing the demographics of migrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees.
> **Refugee numbers:** Language discussing the number of refugees, including the number of new arrivals and departures.

Technology and social media: Language discussing the use of technology by migrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees.

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