REMINDER

ROLE OF EUROPEAN MOBILITY AND ITS IMPACTS
IN NARRATIVES, DEBATES AND EU REFORMS

Media practices related to migration and intra-EU mobility in the EU-10 Member States

WORKING PAPER

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Media practices related to migration and intra-EU mobility

in the EU-10 Member States (D11.2)

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Executive summary

This paper offers an overview of the findings of the interviews and focus group research conducted among journalists and influencers on how the media cover the issues of mobility and migration in four Central/Eastern European countries, including in Hungary, Poland, Romania, and Slovenia. It reveals that

- despite similarities in the recent histories of these countries, the issues of mobility and migration are covered differently across the region,
- immigration has been a major issue on the public agenda since 2015, dividing some of these societies, even though relatively few migrants and refugees from beyond the European Union have actually stayed in the region, and
- emigration – including both intra-European mobility as well as, to a lesser extent, emigration to third countries — is as much an issue as immigration and has had severe economic and demographic effects.

While the findings are not representative in quantitative terms, the focus groups cover the widest possible range of media outlets in terms of both platforms and genres, as well as a wide spectrum of influencers, and hence allow for some cautious generalisations to be drawn regarding both country-specific and regional trends with respect to the political, commercial and technological factors that affect news production and shape media narratives and frames on mobility and migration in different countries. The findings of the content analysis of media discourses will supplement this analysis in the course of the REMINDER project.

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Common introduction to both reports (EU-15 and EU-10)

Note: This section acts as an introduction to both reports.

Rationale

Work package 11 of the REMINDER project is an analysis of media practices, and the factors that shape them, in the reporting of migration and intra-EU mobility in 9 EU member states. It is part of the "perceptions" pillar of the REMINDER project, looking into public discourses related to migration and intra-EU mobility.

Its findings should, eventually, be considered alongside the findings of work packages 8-10 which look at media content and public attitudes, thus helping to develop a picture of the relationships between the practice of journalism, the content of media, public attitudes and policy outcomes. This overall approach of the REMINDER project – interviews with journalists compared to media content generated by their outlets – builds on methodological ideas suggested by Bruggemann (2014) to measure journalistic framing practices.

The framing of migrants in media worldwide is a highly contentious issue (Allen et al 2017). On the one hand, media organisations are often accused of inciting hostility toward migrants (FRA 2016) while on the other, media are accused of participating in pro-migration or globalist propaganda (New Culture Forum, 2013).

This work package does not attempt to answer the question of how migration is framed by media – an issue which will critically depend both on which media are being considered, and on the specific political context at any given time – but rather to understand what factors affect the choices made by media professionals in the materials (and therefore frames) that they generate.

It addresses a gap between existing academic analyses of media frame-building (Bruggeman, ibid), which tend to privilege the role and power of political actors in shaping media frames (Hanggli 2012), and older work on the sociology of the newsroom (see Stonbely, 2013), which highlights the role of institutional norms as well as editors' and

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reporters' individual biases or conceptions of their professional responsibility (Schudson 1989) in the stories that are published.

Specifically, the work package was designed to develop a clearer understanding of the political, commercial, institutional, practical, and technical factors that affect news production and shape media narratives and frames around EU mobility and Third-Country Nationals in different EU countries.

These first two deliverables from WP11 (D11.1 and D11.2) provide a country-by-country analysis of media practices and narratives about migration:

A. From countries that are part of the "EU15" - or "old" EU Member States (D11.1);
B. from countries that are part of the "EU10" - relatively new EU Member States that have joined the bloc since 2004 (D11.2).

Methodology

This work package is built around a series of semi-structured interviews with 221 media practitioners and sources in the project's core eight Member States, designed to analyse if, and how, differences in the cultures, objectives, and pressures in different news-generating and news-producing environments in EU countries affect the choices of news items reported, and narratives generated, about the subject of migration and intra-EU mobility. The countries chosen represent an economic, geographical and cultural cross-section of the EU: Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Romania, Spain, Sweden and the UK. The work-package also added one further new EU Member State – Slovenia – to the analysis after undertaking a pilot project there, which provided suitable and interesting data. Interviews were supplemented by a written questionnaire. An online survey was also undertaken, though the results of this will not be published until Deliverable 11.3.

In each of the targeted EU Member States, the size and composition of the sample was adjusted to reflect the size and composition of the media in the specific country. The specific media outlets and sources chosen to participate varied from country to country and were selected based on the country's population, their audience reach, and an assessment by local media analysts of their influence in media debates about migration in the countries in which they operate.

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Interviewees included those reporting on migration – including journalists, commentators, and high-impact online contributors - and key "sources" feeding stories to those news professionals. These included government workers and public relations teams, NGOs and civil society "voices" (activists or spokespeople). A majority of interviews (more than 70%) were with those reporting on migration, while a minority (a little under 30%) were with important "sources". The majority (58%) of fieldwork came from individual interviews, while a smaller share (42%) of participants joined focus groups. Interviews and focus groups all followed the same structured questionnaire - though journalists and sources, by virtue of their different roles, received slightly different questions.

Interviews with journalists worked to understand their perception of the general "worldview" espoused by the media organisation(s) that they represented, and of the "worldview" of their consumers (i.e. readers, viewers, followers, target media, etc.). Analysis was also undertaken to help answer the following questions:

- What shapes choices of language used to describe migration?
- To which extent do interlocutors believe it is important to distinguish between EU/non-EU migration, and/or do they consider other distinctions more important?
- What do the subjects have in mind when they talk about migration, and what do they think their audiences have in mind?

Another line of questioning addressed the culture and practices of the newsroom or other working environment. This considered factors such as:

- Management style;
- Workforce diversity;
- Deadline pressures;
- Job security and casualization.

This allowed examination of how factors related to the institutional practices and norms of news organisations relate to the tone and approach of these organisations' outputs on EU mobility. It also allowed the team to examine concepts of what constitutes a "good story", as well as the decision-making processes of journalists dealing with EU mobility and migration of third-country nationals in different EU member states. Moreover, it facilitated

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analysis of the differences between the different media environments across case-study countries.

Interviews with "sources" considered many of the same questions while also asking about overall organisational objectives; approaches to dealing with the press and aims in doing so; reflections on what media wants; and considerations on how media demands affect the production of materials or choice of publications/releases issued (by the source), the tone and content included in them, and the timing of interventions in the press.

In order to elicit the most natural and frank responses and not to exclude any relevant actors, the field work was conducted in the local languages; findings were, however, collected and aggregated in English to enable this analysis. Anonymity was guaranteed to all respondents.

Practical constraints

Recruitment of participants was undertaken by regional media analysts affiliated to the European Journalism Centre (EJC) (which also provides a publicly accessible database (EJC 2017) of European and third-country media landscapes), the Budapest Business School and the University of Oxford. This recruitment was based on an understanding of the media landscapes in these particular countries and an assessment of key actors in media debates about migration. While efforts were made in each country to ensure that the sample represented the range of media and source types present – as well as political, social, hierarchical and demographic variation with the national media landscapes – the teams faced a number of practical constraints that should be considered in reading this analysis. These include both a limit on the number of participants who could realistically be interviewed, and a lack of any reliable metrics to measure the importance of various media or sources on migration debates in the countries surveyed.

As such, it is important that these findings are seen as useful insights into, rather than a comprehensive picture of, media practices in the surveyed countries, and considerably more detailed analysis will need to be done in the future to develop these analyses further. Nevertheless, the team had the contacts and credibility to reach out to journalists, sources and newsrooms of all types in all of the surveyed countries.

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It was also paramount that all subjects were confident they would remain anonymous and that all markers that might link specific statements to individuals would be removed from any document accessible by third parties. This means that some information from participants has been described rather than provided as direct quotes.

Some terms to describe media types – such as "broadcast", "online", "TV", "magazine" and "radio" are essentially descriptive and neutral. However, for newspapers, terms such as "tabloid" and "broadsheet" may be perceived in different ways in different countries – as descriptive of a certain physical format, a certain reporting approach, or both.

Throughout this report, we use all of these terms (and others) to describe media as they are described by reporters and sources in their own countries; however, for consistency, in the allocation of quotes to individual reporters from newspapers we use the following terms:

- "popular newspaper" to describe any newspaper with more of a focus on celebrity, lifestyle or sensation;
- "quality newspaper" to describe any newspaper with less of a focus on the issues above.

These terms should not be seen to be making value judgements about these media.

Participants were offered the choice of participating in focus groups or individual interviews the majority chose individual interviews, but all were asked the same set of questions. Both approaches provided different benefits and limitations, with interviews yielding more detailed and varied statements than focus groups, but, focus groups providing a space for participants to challenge and discuss one another's statements.

A key influencing factor affecting this research was the refugee crisis of 2015, which overshadowed all other topics of migration and mobility in several of the sampled countries and thus severely reduced the number of instances when media covered, for instance, intra-EU work mobility. The UK is a notable exception in this respect.

Country overview

As discussed above, these two reports look at a total of nine EU Member States. The countries were selected to capture a broad range of geographic, economic and cultural factors represented within EU Member States. The countries were divided into two clusters,

one of long-time Member States in Western Europe (EU-15), and another one consisting of post-socialist nations that joined the bloc since 2004 (EU-10). This division was made to accommodate different media and political traditions and experiences.

Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom represent the "old" Member States – which tend to be countries of destination for both mobile EU citizens and non-EU migrants, while the "new" EU members are represented by Hungary, Poland, Romania, and Slovenia – these countries have, over the last century, tended to be migrant-sending, rather than receiving, countries.

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EU-10 countries – Political and media context overview

The section below offers a summary of the political framework conditions in the countries covered by this study, followed by a brief overview of the four selected countries' political and media landscapes in order to map the contexts in which mobility and migration have become major issues in recent years.

The Hungary research was carried out by Péter Bajomi-Lázár, Cecília Filep and Zoltán Gayer, the Poland research by Renata Stefańska and Monika Szulecka, the Romania research by Andrei Schwartz and Manuela Țimbolschi-Preoteasa, and the Slovenia research by Barbara Kuznik and Gasper Andrinek. Participants of the focus group sessions and interviews were provided anonymity.

Table 1

Number of respondents per country

	Hungary	Poland	Romania	Slovenia	Total
Journalists	13	20	13	7	53
Influencers	5	8	5	6	24
Total	18	28	18	13	77

Because of the low number of respondents and of the method applied, this part of the research only allows for qualitative findings to be formulated. However, as domestic experts were seeking to cover the whole spectrum of journalists and influencers to the extent possible when inviting respondents, the data gathered also allow for some cautious generalisations regarding both country-specific and regional trends.

The political context

Unlike Western Europe, which has been a target region for extra-European migrants and refugees for decades, Central/Eastern Europe has mainly been a transit zone for them - and

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only in recent years. This, however, does not mean that migration is not on the political, media and public agendas in this region. The example of some of the countries discussed in this paper, and especially those of Hungary and of Poland, reveals that migration can be a hot topic even without migrants staying, and that the lack of massive extra-European immigration may be coupled with high rates of xenophobia (Hunyadi and Molnar 2016).
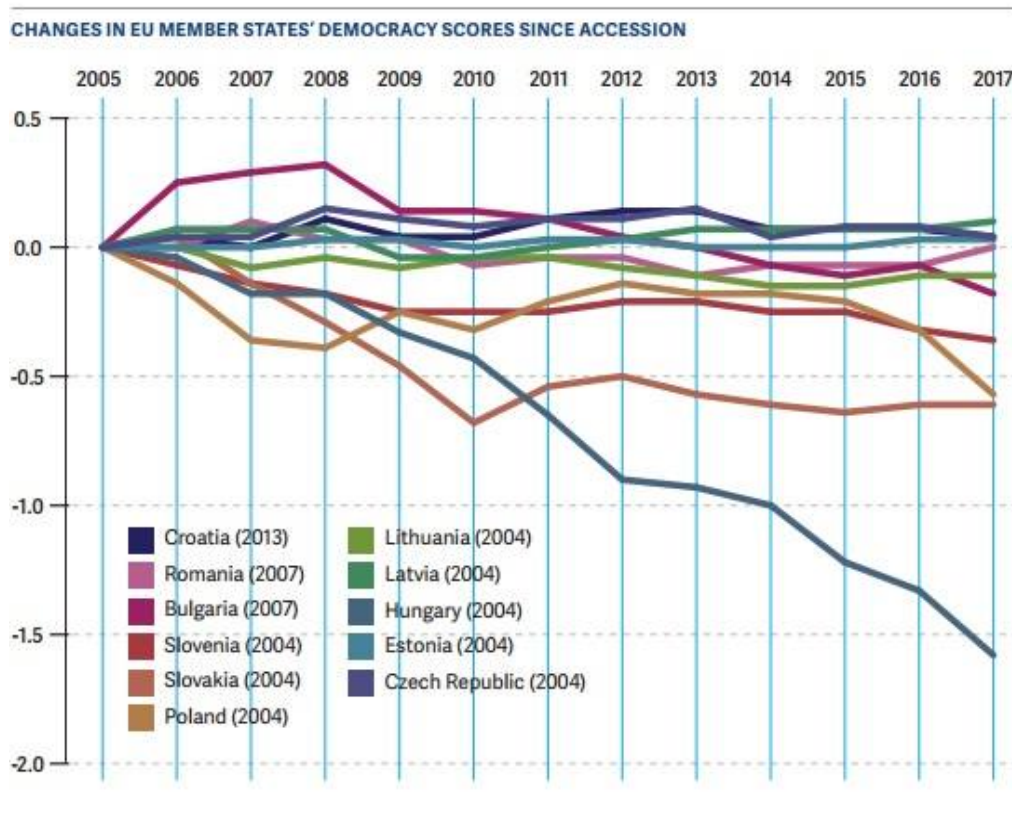
At the same time, the migration debate must also be seen against the historical background of the region, which was marked by (often forced) mobility. The countries of the region had tormented histories in the 19th and 20th centuries, marked by successive waves of political transformation, territorial change and foreign — Ottoman, Austrian, German, and Soviet Russian — occupation, most of which resulted in massive movements of population, and in the significant presence of minorities that have lived in the region for a long period of time. Bulgaria, for example, has a large Turkish minority, Romania a large Hungarian minority, Lithuania a large Russian minority, and almost all countries have major Roma and minor Jewish communities that are, as a general rule, heavily exposed to ethnic prejudices. The only country in the region with a largely nationally and ethnically homogeneous character is Poland.

The countries of Central/Eastern Europe have also been heavily involved in intra-European mobility or, from their perspectives, emigration. Since their accession to the European Union in 2004 (the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia), in 2007 (Bulgaria and Romania), and in 2013 (Croatia), millions of citizens of former communist countries have moved to Western Europe in search of better education and employment. The number of those who have left Central/Eastern Europe totals about 20,000,000 (that is, twice the population of Hungary, or half that of Poland), amounting to over 10 per cent of the population in some of these countries such as Slovenia. The young and the educated, in particular, have left, resulting in growing labour shortages, and an ageing population in their home countries (Parikh 2017).

Despite the admittance to the European Union of the former communist countries of Central/Eastern Europe, democracy is still fragile in many of them, and most particularly in Hungary and Poland, where democracy indicators have been decreasing in recent years (see Figure 1; Freedom House 2017).

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Figure 1

Democracy indicators 2008–2017

CHANGES IN EU MEMBER STATES' DEMOCRACY SCORES SINCE ACCESSION

Legend:
- Croatia (2013)
- Romania (2007)
- Bulgaria (2007)
- Slovenia (2004)
- Slovakia (2004)
- Poland (2004)
- Lithuania (2004)
- Latvia (2004)
- Hungary (2004)
- Estonia (2004)
- Czech Republic (2004)

Source: Freedom House Nations in Transit (Freedom House 2017)

Frequent and often dramatic political changes in Central/Eastern Europe throughout the past one hundred years suggest that political parties, including those in office, are poorly embedded in society. Parties' failure to stabilise their positions is also reflected in high electoral volatility, low party membership figures, low public trust in parties, and frequent party splits and mergers in comparison to Western Europe (Biezen 2000; Jungerstam-Mulders 2006, Lewis 2001). In recent decades, incumbents have often taken populist and nationalist stances in an attempt to garner votes and to cement their positions, as shown by the examples of Franjo Tuđman in Croatia, Viktor Orbán in Hungary, Jarosław Kaczyński in Poland, and Vladimir Mečiar in Slovakia.

In Central/Eastern Europe, populism and nationalism often means the evocation of anti-migration and anti-European sentiments that a part of the population appears to be receptive to (cf. Juhász and Molnár 2016). These positions are commonly communicated via

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the media, cultural institutions, schools and churches that are often subject to direct or indirect political pressures and are used to deliver ideologically loaded messages. Given the highly polarised or fragmented political cultures of many of these societies, such efforts are often met with resistance, which turns these institutions into ideological battlefields, including on the issue of migration.

As regards the media in Central and Eastern Europe, there appears to be a gap between idealised standards and practices of journalism. While most journalists are, on principle, committed to the ideal of impartiality, actual reporting tends to follow ideological and political lines (see Bajomi-Lazar 2017a for further discussion). Few outlets are economically and politically independent, while many are affiliated with political forces, albeit mostly informally and in non-transparent ways, and promote particular ideological agendas and frames of interpretation.

This paper takes a closer look at how journalists and sources have dealt with the issues of mobility and migration in recent years in four selected Central/Eastern European countries - Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovenia, on the basis of field research conducted by domestic country experts. It is aimed at contributing to the REMINDER project that is to understand the impacts of free movement and the processes through which political narratives and public opinion are formed (REMINDER 2017).

Political and Media Landscape Hungary

Hungary has a population of nearly 10,000,000, of which an estimated 500,000 have moved to Western Europe since the country's European accession to the EU (Világgazdaság 2017). Until 2015, migration was not a significant issue. In that year, nearly 180,000 migrants and refugees entered the country, coming mainly from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. While only a few thousand of these people remained for more than a few weeks, with the rest moving rapidly on to Western Europe, since 2015, migration has been high on the political, media and public agendas. According to the European Social Survey, the prevalence of xenophobia across the Hungarian population, measured by an aggregated score for prejudice and so-called "welfare chauvinism" (DEREX, no year), grew from 45 to 54 per cent during this period (Juhász and Molnár 2016).

Since the 2010 legislative and municipal elections bringing victory to the conservative and nationalist Fidesz party and its Christian Democrats party ally, as well as another electoral victory in 2014, a „carrot and stick" media policy (Bajomi-Lazar 2017b) has politically instrumentalised the public media and much of the private media, including outdoor billboards, disseminating government messages (Bajomi-Lazar and Horvath 2013; Freedom House 2017). There is much less coverage of opposition voices in rural areas, though several online news sites and the evening news bulletins of the commercial television channel RTL Klub provide notable exceptions (Budapest, the capital, where some critical outlets persist, is a different case) (Urbán, Polyak, and Szász 2017). The journalism community is divided along ideological cleavages, news reporting is highly ideological, and kompromat journalism is widely practiced (Sipos 2013). In recent years, polarisation has turned into multi-polar fragmentation: as a result of a conflict between Prime Minister Orbán and his former political ally, media oligarch Lajos Simicska (Dunai 2017), right-wing media to date display a clear division line between pro-government and anti-government outlets.

That said, the incumbent government has established in recent years a near hegemony of its ideology in the media, the educational system and cultural institutions. According to the press freedom rank compiled by Reporters Without Borders, Hungary occupied the 23rd place worldwide in 2010, while in 2017 it occupied the 71st position (Reporters Without Borders 2017). Freedom House now lists Hungary among the „partly free press" countries, along with Bulgaria, Romania, and Serbia (Freedom House, *ibid.*).

Hungary, like most other post-communist countries, had not experienced massive immigration until 2015, and prejudices mainly targeted the domestic Roma and Jewish communities (cf. the section "Media Practices in Hungary" below). Mobility and migration were hardly discussed issues, if at all. However, in the summer of 2015, thousands of migrants and refugees crossed Hungary's southern border within just days and made tumultuous scenes around Budapest's Eastern Railway Station and other parts of town, which made the news across the Hungarian media. The Hungarian government refused to offer any meaningful humanitarian help to migrants and refugees and hindered NGOs' efforts to do so. At the same time, however, in 2015, the Hungarian Government launched a costly anti-migrant "information campaign", referred to as downright propaganda by independent analysts (Máriás et.al. 2017; Bátorfy 2014), coupled with a staged „national

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consultation" on migration, and thus set and framed a new political and media agenda. The campaign used the term „migrant" to describe all migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers, regardless of their legal status, country of origin and personal background. This term, however neutral in many other languages, sounds foreign to many Hungarians. The campaign often equated „migrants" with „terrorists," and suggested — albeit without evidence — that immigration, including illegal border crossing, has largely been supported by Hungarian-born American billionaire and philanthropist George Soros and the NGOs financially supported by his foundations.

Political and Media Landscape Poland

Poland has a population of approximately 38,000,000, of which about 2,100,000 have moved to Western Europe since the European accession (The Economist 2017). Unlike in many other countries in the region, the number of asylum seekers did not grow during the refugee crisis in 2015, and Poland was more affected by economic migrants coming from Ukraine. Despite the relatively low number of migrants and refugees, the issue of migration has dominated the public discourse since 2015, especially as regards the matter of integration, and particularly cultural conflicts linked to Islam. According to the European Social Survey, the prevalence of xenophobia grew from 18 to 25 per cent between 2015 and 2016 among Poles (Juházs and Molnár, *ibid.*).

Recent years have seen major changes in Poland's political and media landscapes. The electoral victory of the conservative and populist Law and Justice party in 2015 was followed by a wave of social demonstrations in response to some government measures, including a campaign against NGOs, the centralised oversight of educational institutions, and its increased control over the Constitutional Tribunal. The level of political polarisation has grown (Freedom House 2016). As regards the media, the new parliamentary majority almost immediately passed a new broadcasting law and took direct control over public media (Reporters Without Borders 2017; Glowacki 2017). Reporters Without Borders granted Poland the 54th position in the global list of press freedom, which meant a decline of seven positions in comparison to 2016. Freedom House has also downgraded Poland which is now listed among the „partly free press" countries (Freedom House 2017).

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Although Poland did not experience the 2015 migration crisis directly, the European Union's relocation programme (supported by the previous government, led by the Civil Platform party) became one of the most widely discussed topics in Poland. The discussion also treated the issue of the rapidly growing scale of migrant workers in the Polish economy, coming mainly from Ukraine, whose number has reached an estimated 1,500,000. This migration stream, perceived previously as a response to labour market needs, was increasingly considered a potential threat to the economic security of the state and of Polish citizens.

Political and Media Landscape Romania

Romania has a population of 22,000,000, including a Hungarian minority of about 1,500,000 people. During the past one hundred years, Romania was mainly a source country, experiencing significant emigration (Focus Migration 2017). As a host country, it experienced a wave of immigration during the Bosnian war in the early 1990s, and has in recent years received refugees from North Africa and the Middle East. Since its accession to the European Union in 2007, Romanian citizens have moved to Western Europe on a massive scale, the number of emigrants reaching 1,328,000 according to Eurostat (2017) data, and Romania is mainly seen as a source country to date.

The status of democracy in Romania — including the transparency and accountability of governmental decision-making and openness toward civil society — has improved in recent years under the technocratic government of Dacian Cioloş. However, media are frequently exposed to political and business pressures, often combined via oligarchic ownership structures: a report commissioned by the European Parliament estimated the aggregated market share of politically affiliated media outlets at over 50 per cent (Bárd and Bayer 2016). Reporters Without Borders granted Romania the 46th position in the global list of press freedom in 2017, revealing some improvement compared to previous years (Reporters Without Borders, *ibid.*). According to the 2017 Freedom of the Press Report of Freedom House, the Romanian media landscape is „partly free."

As Romania is mainly an emigration country – with Central/Eastern Europe's second highest number of emigrants to Western Europe after Poland (Eurostat, *ibid.*) – discussions on migration tend to focus on discrimination toward the Romanian labour force in Western

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Europe and the domestic demographic consequences of emigration. As regards immigration, the majority of the population now rejects the idea, formulated by the quota proposition of the European Union, that the country should host refugees. According to a study conducted by the research institute INSCOP (2016), 84.6 per cent of the population opposed immigration in March 2016.

Political and Media Landscape Slovenia

With only 2,000,000 citizens, Slovenia is the smallest country in terms of its population among the four countries studied. According to official data, the number of those living abroad is between 250,000 and 400,000 (Slovenia 2017).

Politically, Slovenia is an outlier to regional trends in that it is the most consolidated democracy among those selected for the purpose of this project in the region (see Figure 1 above). The Nations in Transit 2017 report, however, observes a declining public trust in centrist, or mainstream, political parties, and increasing support for populism and extremism. This may have been triggered by the 2015 migration crisis causing chaotic scenes in Slovenia, a part of the so-called „Western Balkans corridor," resulting in massive anti-migration protests that were supported by the major conservative opposition force, the Slovenian Democratic Party (Freedom House 2017, *ibid.*).

As regards the media landscape, the small size of the market limits the pluralism and quality of voices, and makes the state a major actor, especially in terms of the distribution of subsidies and advertising revenues, which may be seen as instruments of political pressure (Milosavljevic and Smokvina 2017). Nonetheless, Reporters Without Borders (*ibid.*) granted Slovenia the 37th position in the global list of press freedom in 2017, showing an improvement in comparison to previous years, and Freedom House (*ibid.*) lists Slovenia among the „free press countries", with one of the best scores in Central/Eastern Europe. The political and media landscapes are polarised among the left and the right (Milosavljevic 2016). The team implementing the fieldwork for this analysis in Slovenia reported that right-wing political actors, now in opposition, have heavily criticised mainstream media — widely seen as having a left-wing orientation — for their allegedly biased reporting about the migration crisis (see also Association of Journalists of Slovenia 2016.

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With regards to migration, Slovenia is a source, a host and a transit country. It used to receive significant numbers of economic migrants from other parts of former Yugoslavia, as well as a wave of war refugees in the 1990s. Between October 2015 and January 2016, its borders were crossed by an estimated 423,000 refugees, coming mainly from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq (International Migration Outlook 2016). Media covered widely the migration issue, which generated relatively heated discussions. The government first offered humanitarian help to migrants and refugees, but then decided to close the country's borders down and to let through only those with a clear humanitarian need.

Region overview summary

Table 2 below summarises selected democracy indicators for the four studied countries as rated by the Freedom House Nations in Transit Reports 2017.

Table 2

Selected democracy indicators 2017 (higher figures meaning lower democracy scores)

	Hungary	Poland	Romania	Slovenia
National democratic governance	4.25	3.25	3.50	2.25
Civil society	2.75	1.75	3.00	2.00
Independent media	4.25	3.00	4.25	2.50
Overall democracy score	3.54	2.57	3.39	2.04

Source: Freedom House Nations in Transit (Freedom House, ibid.)

Table 2 shows that, of the countries studied, media freedom and democracy are the most consolidated in Slovenia, and the least consolidated (or the most de-consolidated) in Hungary (media freedom being just as fragile in Romania, too). For most democracy indicators, Poland and Romania are to date located between these two poles.

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Media practices in Hungary

The Hungary research was conducted in September and October 2017 and covered 13 journalists and 5 influencers. The opinions of 9 journalists were revealed via focus group sessions, and those of the remaining 4 either via personal meetings or telephone or Skype interviews. Of the influencers, 2 were interviewed personally and 3 via telephone or skype.

Journalists

1. *Demographics and background*

When compiling the sample of journalists, the research team had to handle the extreme fragmentation of the Hungarian media landscape. Researchers decided not to invite any journalist based and working in the countryside, as regional outlets mainly publicise content that has been produced in centralised, Budapest-based, newsrooms, especially as regards issues of nationwide interest. Other than that, the sample covered the whole variety of media platforms. Independent journalism is the exception rather than the rule in Hungary, and reporting on mobility and migration is largely a function of the ideological positions of journalists and their outlets. With regard to their political positions and affiliations, the sample included left-wing/liberal, right-wing/anti-government, as well as rigth-wing/pro-government journalists.

2. *Professional environment*

The journalists interviewed noted, with few exceptions, the extreme dividedness of the Hungarian journalism community, and most of them thought the profession had a poor reputation. As one of them observed: "Cycle after cycle, there were 'media wars' that have made dialogue between journalists impossible and undermined efforts to come to represent a joint professional position" (HUJO05, online). With regards to work conditions, left-wing journalists have repeatedly mentioned government efforts to "silence" them, and one journalist has explicitly noted financial insecurity as a main feature of the profession, while another observed that "the whole profession fears, and feels insecure about, the future" (HUJO06, quality newspaper).

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3. Professional self-perception

As for their motivation to become a journalist, many respondents noted the responsibility to inform people on current affairs so that they can make good decisions, and some of them mentioned the opportunities „to meet a number of people" and to „make an impact" on society. „Curiosity" was another frequently mentioned motive.

When asked about reporting practices, several journalists used the terms „accurate", „correct", „factual," „independent," „credible," „complete" and „comprehensible" as they main features of a well-presented story. Several of them also observed that any good story must be based on „conflict".

4. Framing of, and attitudes towards, mobility and migration

The media agenda is dominated by the issue of massive immigration into Hungary and Europe, while emigration from Hungary to Western Europe is hardly ever discussed, if at all. This is at odds with reality, as few migrants or refugees tend to remain in Hungary, while huge numbers of Hungarians have moved in recent years to Western Europe in search of a better life.

There is a conceptual confusion regarding word choices in the context of mobility and migration, as various terms with different meanings and connotations are used by the Hungarian press and media to describe the same people, including „migrants," „immigrants," „asylum seekers," and „refugees," while some outlets use the term „migrant" to describe people with very different backgrounds. One journalist observed this: "Words are beginning to lose their meaning. Hungarian public opinion is influenced to the degree that words do not have the same meaning any more" (HUJO03, broadcast).

The choice of words often expresses an intentional choice of the dominant frame of interpretation, and helps to identify the political position of the speaker. For example, as another journalist observed: "We prefer to use the term 'refugee', as the word 'migrant' might sound correct in English, but in Hungarian a 'migrant' is an enemy who will kill us. Therefore, we call them 'refugees'. [...] We could use the term 'migrant', but it is a delicate one as it is widely used by pro-government propaganda" (HUJO11, broadcast). Journalists also noted, regardless of their ideological positions, that the term „migrant" *(migráns)* was

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unfit to describe the issue. The reason for this, as some of them critically pointed out, is that the government has „over-used" the term that has earned a highly negative connnotation. Most journalists added that they made an effort at avoiding the term. (For more on journalistic narratives on migration, see Section 4.1.8. below.)

Sources

1. Demographics and background

Hungary is a polarised pluralist society in which societal cleavages divide the journalism community and the NGOs in much the same way. When compiling the sample of influencers, the team had difficulty finding pro-government interviewees. These people could not be directly and personally addressed, only via their assistants, and most of them have ignored the repeated requests addressed to them via both telephone and email. At the end of the process, the sample included 4 influencers critical of the government and 1 pro-government think tank representative. The sources intervieweed were intellectuals with a background in the social sciences, the humanities, or journalism.

2. Professional environment

The sources agreed that they had a high professional reputation, but some of those representing a non-hostile position toward migration noted that they have recently been targeted by government propaganda, stating that they actively promoted immigration. For example, in October 2017, former director of operations of the Information Office in charge of foreign intelligence, László Földi, said in an interview on Echo TV about NGOs: "*There is a war going on. These people are collaborants, war criminals, traitors of their home country, an so on. […] Those involved in human trafficking […] may be freely liquidated. According to the laws of war, spies and saboteurs are not tried in court but instantly done away with."* (444.hu 2017)

3. Professional self-perception

When asked about their motivation, sources stressed that they believed in their causes and hoped to influence societal processes. Influencers consider it their job to inform the public about migration in a correct, unbiased and comprehensible way, and to mediate between stakeholders (that is, refugees and the Hungarian authorities), referring to the negative

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coverage of migration on pro-government media. They also noted that the public debate about migration was irrational and heated, and that some media covered migration using tabloid methods. As one of the observed: "Facts, figures, emotions, and a good picture. A bridge needs to be built between the reader and facts" (HUSO02).

4. Framing of, and attitudes towards, mobility and migration

Just like journalists did, the sources intervieweed also noted that the term „migrant" was problematic in the Hungarian language because of its negative connotation. One of them also observed this: "I try to avoid using the word „refugee". If one is to understand the irregular movements of the 21st century, the distinction between a „refugee" and a „migrant" cannot be sustained. Everybody leaves their homeland under pressure. But who is a refugee and who is not is a matter of subjective judgment" (HUSO05). It was noted by another influencer that the issue of migration was much higher on the media agenda than the actual number of migrants would warrant.

Conclusion

The narratives of both the media and the sources can be divided into two major groups:

1) According to *the narrative critical of the government,* the Hungarian government has introduced the term „migrant" with a highly negative connotation by launching a hate campaign on outdoor billboards, radio stations and television channels since early 2015, that is, before the actual arrival of refugees. This had established an atmosphere of fear before they physically crossed the border. When refugees arrived to Budapest on a massive scale, residents could meet them in person. This is when several NGOs were formed in an effort to offer humanitarian help to them. In other words, the first reaction of some Budapest residents was to accept and to help refugees. Government propaganda (Máriás et.al. 2017; Bajomi-Lázár and Horvath 2013; Bátorfy 2014; Freedom House 2017), however, was underway, including the idea of building a wall on Hungary's southern border. From that point onwards, few refugees arrived to Budapest, as they were directly transported from Hungary's southern border to its western border with neighbouring Austria. Government propaganda, which also included statements on how the government defined its position vis-à-vis the European Union and its quota policy, refusing to accept any

refugees at all, was meant, as already noted, to generate fear and adversarial feelings among the population. It labelled refugees as potential terrorists, and has transformed public opinion and behaviour.

2) According to *the narrative loyal to the government,* the „realist" approach to mass migration has been suppressed by Brussels which does not realise that this is a major threat to traditional European and Christian values. As an influencer observed: "The political elites of the EU are amazingly naïve, and their self-destroying attitude is responsible for the whole crisis. What I would like to achieve in this fight is realism to become the dominant view in Europe" (HUSO05). This narrative suggests that PM Orbán and his cabinet are trying to change European politics so that the European Union realises it is under a threat of unforeseeable outcomes. The propaganda campaign that the government has launched is aimed at alarming public opinion.

Approaches to migration are thus largely polarised along the ideological cleavages dividing Hungarian society, including the journalism community and non-governmental organisations, and reflect the heated atmosphere surrounding the issue of migration, generated by the government's immigration policy and campaigns on pro-government media. They are also a sign that, with the 2018 legislative elections approaching, the issue of migration is high on the legislative, media and public agendas, even though – Hungary being a transit country – few migrants have stayed in the country. The two main narratives had little in common. The issue of migration has been politically instrumentalised and used to mobilise voters by engaging their emotions, while little attention was paid to facts and rational arguments.

While it may be difficult to assess the exact impact of the repeated anti-migration messages launched by pro-government outlets and the government itself, there is no doubt that they did have *some* effect on public opinion and behaviour. The prevalence of those refusing „foreigners" grew significantly between 2014 and early 2016. The level of xenophobia was especially high among the voters of the incumbent Fidesz party and the oppositional far-right Jobbik party. It was also more likely to occur among the less educated (TARKI 2016). Some cases that the press has reported on also attest to the efficacy of the campaign. For example, in June 2015, a young man, believed to be a refugee, was beaten in Szeged, a city

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near the south-east border of Hungary (Index.hu 2015). Also, in October 2017, a local hotel owner in a small village called Őcsény wanted to invite refugee children and women for a brief holiday, but had to give up his plan after local residents protested and damaged his car (Index.hu 2017). Despite the fact that those living in the village had never personally met refugees, the words of the interviewees on the video made by the news site Index attest to a *moral panic,* i.e. migration is largely perceived by the public as a major threat to Hungary's and Hungarians' values and lifestyle, not least because most of them come from a different cultural and religious background.

The position of outlets critical of the government, as well as that of the NGOs approaching migration from a humanitarian perspective, had little impact on the public discourse. It is to note, though, that media outlets critical of the government are in an inferior position in terms of the numbers and reach of titles, which may explain their limited impact. Yet they do exist, and there is an intense yet largely emotional debate going on between those of a pro-government and those of an anti-government position.

Media practices in Poland

The Poland research was conducted between August and November 2017 and involved 20 journalists and 8 influencers. All but one of the journalists were interviewed in personal meetings, and the remaining one in writing. Five influencers attended a focus group session, and the rest were interviewed on an individual basis.

Journalists

1. *Demographics and background*

While compiling the list of journalists, the research team had some difficulties, as right-wing journalists were as a main rule more difficult to contact and to involve than left-wing ones. The interviews were conducted in a friendly atmosphere. That said, participants found it important that the research team grants them anonymity. The journalists sample was representative in that it covered all of the major segments of the Polish media landscape, including left-wing, right-wing and far-right journalists and outlets. It was also

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representative of the variety of media platforms, including a national news agency, daily and weekly newspapers, television channels, radio stations, and online news sites.

2. Professional environment

Most of the interviewees think journalism as a profession is respected in Poland – at least by people whose opinion matters to them –, albeit some of them noted that its prestige had been declining in recent years. They also observed that media and politics were now more polarised than they used to be. As one of them said: "One group doesn't want to talk to journalists from certain newspapers, television channels and radio stations, the other group doesn't want to talk to journalists from the other newspapers, television channels and radio stations" (PLJO01, magazine). Another linked declining prestige to increased polarisation: "The media have been heavily involved in the political conflict, perhaps too heavily, and they are more often on one side of the conflict, in my view. They more and more often serve not as journalists but as PR specialists or spin doctors of politicians or even as electoral campaign organisers. Because of that, the journalistic profession has been devalued" (PLJO03, quality newspaper).

At the same time, all journalists reported that their newsroom atmospheres were friendly and free, with little interference into editorial content by their superiors, if at all. They have not experienced any pressure by external actors, either. To be more precise, several journalists noted that *other media outlets* may be exposed to pressures, but not their own. Outlets of Catholic orientation follow the position of the Catholic Church and the expectations of their audiences, and one interviewee observed pressures by advertisers.

In terms of job security, the overwhelming majority of the journalists interviewed feel „very secure," „secure" or „rather secure," and do not fear losing their jobs.

3. Professional self-perception

When asked about their professional motivation, one journalist mentioned „curiosity." Two mentioned the motive of „telling the truth." Further motivations included „the education of people," „having an influence on public opinion and thus on reality," „changing something in the world," and „exerting influence." One interviewee observed the decline of neutrality-seeking journalism and the rise of opinionated journalism: "Only facts that fit are used, and

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those that do not fit are ignored. There is a lot of journalistic unreliability and the subordination of reality to ideological visions. Much is said about the so-called „identity journalism." Weeklies have a very clear political line, ideological and political identity, and focus on it. […] Journalists write what their readers need; journalists act as politicians" (PLJO05, magazine). Overall, journalism which promotes a cause appears to be a more common perception of the journalists' role than neutrality-seeking reporting. Interviewees who were motivated ideologically felt that doing their job was a „mission," „vocation," or „responsibility."

That said, when asked about their professional objectives, several journalists mentioned the aims of providing people with „relevant", „credible," „objective," „truthful" and „trustworthy" information, as well as „asking both sides." This apparent contradiction is in line with the old wisdom that „objectivity" is what people believe to be the truth.

4. Framing of, and attitudes towards, mobility and migration

The major issues discussed in the context of migration include Poland's labour market needs (with an estimated 1,500,000 immigrants from the Ukraine), Brexit (because of an estimated 1,000,000 Poles working in the United Kingdom), discrimination aimed at Poles in Western Europe, as well as crime involving Poles abroad (mainly as victims), terrorist attacks committed by immigrants in Western Europe, the „Islamisation" of Europe, and curiosities linked to individual migrants. Some organs, depending on their profiles, also discuss foreign affairs, including European migration policy, human trafficking, and developments in war zones such as Chechnya, the Ukraine, and Syria in an attempt to contextualise the migration issue.

Journalists generally use a variety of terms to describe migrants, including „economic migrant," „climate migrant," „refugee," „newcomer," „foreigner," „outlander," „fugitive," „asylum seeker" and „alien" *(obcokrajowiec).* In Poland, unlike in Hungary, the word „migrant" has no negative connotation. Most newsrooms do not have an explicit policy regarding word choice, and the various terms used occur to be interchangeable. Some journalists attempt to speak of individual people rather than a homogeneous group when reporting in order to avoid generalisation and to stay neutral and objective. As the team that implemented the field work for this analysis in Poland observed, the language chosen

to describe migrants can be roughly divided into three groups: 1) right-wing journalists who say that they do not use any special language to write about migrants, 2) left-wing journalists who claim that they try not to use an emotional language and who attempt to avoid phrases of negative connotations such as a „wave of migrants" or a „flood of migrants," as they do not want to heat up the debate about migration in Poland, and 3) journalists of the tabloid press and media who say they intentionally write in an emotional or sensational way in order to raise interest, because only such language appeals to the emotions of people who otherwise do not read much.

In addition to the above-mentioned three types, one of the interviewees representing a far-right magazine admitted that when writing about migrants, s/he sometimes intentionally used politically incorrect terms such as *bisurmani* (and old Polish word, scornful about Muslims). In contrast to this, another journalist observed this: "We don't know their language, we talk only with those who speak English, so we have an overrepresentation of well-educated and cultured people, with good manners. We can communicate only with such people. For this reason, we create a little distorted picture. [But] there also are a lot of people who do not know English because they are uneducated, humble people" (PLJO14, broadcast).

The word choice may also depend, at least to some extent, on whether they speak about 1) refugees from North Africa and the Middle East, 2) refugees from the Ukraine, Russia and Belarus, or 3) Poles living in Western Europe. In general terms, a difference is made between immigrants from North Africa and the Middle East on the one hand and those from the Ukraine on the other. The latter are seen as "our folks" (PLJO01, magazine) or "unwanted younger brothers" (PLJO03, quality newspaper), which latter expression also refers to Russians and Belarusians. Several journalists noted that migrants coming from different countries usually have different motives, and distinguished between intra-European migrants in search of better education and employment on the one hand and extra-European migrants coming from war zones on the other. Many made a difference between legal and illegal migrants, too. It has also been observed that the Polish public in general perceived the various migrant groups differently in line with their legal, social, religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds. EU migrants are usually perceived positively,

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which cannot be said about non-EU nationals, especially those who come from the Middle East and North Africa.

Political orientation seems to have a defining impact on how particular outlets report about mobility and migration. The left-wing media and some Catholic outlets cover refugees from a humanitarian perspective discussing, for example, how they are treated in refugee camps. The specialised media mostly deal with the legal and political issues related to refugees, including the EU's relocation programme. The right-wing media present Muslim immigration as a civilisational, cultural or security threat, discussing the potential risks of terrorism, and often write about the negative consequences of uncontrolled immigration in Western European countries.

While most of the journalists interviewed tried to carefully distinguish among various migrant groups and to consider the humanitarian aspect of migration, one of them referred to the „conspiracy theory", far more widespread in Hungary, as a result of government propaganda, presenting that the Hungarian-born American philanthropist George Soros is behind the „migration project" with the purpose of de-stabilising Europe. This particular „Soros narrative" is present also in some (especially right-leaning) Polish media. One participant mentioned Soros as possible author of this project, explaining: "I don't think it is spontaneous; it's a project that is well thought-out and well organised, skilfully exploiting the fact that many people in Europe became slaves of their own propaganda," and the same person added: "His [Soros'] purpose is a separate matter, but this operation is undoubtedly de-stabilizing Europe." (PLJO17, magazine). Another respondent argued migrants from the Middle East aimed at turning "Europe into a caliphate with Sharia law and at exterminating non-Muslims" (PLJO20, online). A further respondent spoke of a "cultural clash" (PLJO05, magazine), stating that Muslim migrants are intolerant of other cultures and do not respect the traditions of the land.

Sources

1. Demographic and background

Of a total of eight influencers, five interviewees represented private organisations, and three government institutions.

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Many of the influencers representing non-governmental organisations are dedicated to helping the integration of immigrants and to protecting their human rights. They also consider it their job to keep contact with, and to provide relevant information to, the media. Those representing government institutions focus on economic issues and help developing policies aimed at promoting the social integration of immigrants.

2. Professional environment

In terms of the social prestige of the represented groups, uncertainty seems to be prevailing. Most interviewees could not tell whether and how their work was evaluated by society. One interviewee distinguished between those seeing their activities as positive, those who think that their activities had a negative impact, and those taking the position of the neutral observer. In a similar vein, another one noted that their reputation depended on who assessed it.

3. Professional self-perception

When asked about their motivation, influencers listed motives such as „fighting stereotypes," „fighting untrue information," „presenting objective, fair information," „raising awareness," „influencing the public debate," „providing the media with reliable information," and „ensuring the representation of migrants' voice in the media." Humanitarian aspects such as information and assistance offered to migrants were also mentioned, albeit much less frequently.

4. Framing of, and attitudes towards, mobility and migration

The major topics mentioned by influencers in the context of both intra- and extra-EU movement and migration include labour market and legal issues, the latter regarding the need to distinguish between migrants with different legal statuses. Security issues raised by migration have only marginally been mentioned.

Influencers appeared to be more conscious of word choice than journalists, and keep an eye on migrants' legal statuses, distinguishing between refugees and asylum seekers, as well as EU citizens and non-EU citizens. Cultural differences between migrants coming from different regions were also much less frequently mentioned by influencers than by journalists, and even in that case they stressed that generalisations must be avoided, since

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cultural differences may also exist within one country or religion of origin; Muslims, for example, do not constitute a homogeneous group.

Some of the influencers interviewed are dedicated to building a „positive image" of migrants, even though they observed that media were not interested in „positive stories," but were looking for „sensational" and „dramatic" ones, and were likely to draw a „black and white" picture of the issue, taking sides (it is noteworthy that journalists, too, mentioned that media were more interested in „negative" and „sensational" stories). As one of the influencers noted: "It is necessary to provide the media with positive stories, positive aspects, positive emotions about migration. To give examples, to show nice things, to show that migrants pay taxes and we helped them in preparing the tax reports, that foreigners work in the hospitals, etc." (PLSO03, NGO).

Overall, the interviews suggest that influencers are less divided, or less polarised, over ideological cleavages than journalists are.

Conclusion

In Poland, migration is a complex issue in that—unlike most other Central/Eastern European countries—Poland is a source, a transit, as well as as a host country. Consequently, migration has been high on the public agenda, especially since 2015, with key issues including integration, humanitarian problems affecting asylum seekers, and the European Union's relocation programme. Concerns about migration have been intensified by reports about terrorist attacks, coming on a fairly regular basis from Western Europe in recent years.

The influencers interviewed stressed the low professional level of the public discussion going on about migration, which may partly have been caused by the heated atmosphere generated by the incumbent government's efforts to control public media and to „re-polonise" much of the private media by way of limiting the ratio of foreign ownership. In a comparative perspective, however, migration appears to be less of an issue in Poland than in Hungary, and the debates about it appear to be less heated.

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The effects of the migration discourse in Poland may be difficult to assess. The fieldwork team in Poland report stress that journalists and influencers are generally expected to take a position either in favour of or against migration, while audiences may find themselves in „filter bubbles" untouched by information contradictory to their pre-existing views, and only exposed to data that confirm their opinions. The information the media delivers typically focuses on negative stories.

Media practices in Romania

The Romania research was conducted between August and October 2017. It covered 13 journalists (with 2 of them representing the same outlet, but in different positions and with different responsibilities, one working as an editor and the other as reporter), and 5 influencers. The journalists represented a broad range of media platforms, including a wire service, newspapers, radio, television, and the internet. The great majority of them—with the exception of only 2 respondents — work for outlets with a major reach. The outlets covered include both news and opinion platforms. The sample of the sources interviewed is representative, too, to the extent that it covers both private and public institutions, all of which deal with migration issues.

Journalists

1. *Demographics and background*

The sample included journalists from a variety of professional and managerial experience and career levels, ranging from rank-and-file journalists to editors-in-chief. Two of them mentioned that they had a background in political science, and some of them spoke of the profession as a „passion."

The research covered a variety of the Romanian mainstream media; however, while concentrated mostly in urban areas, respondents believed their audience to be more educated and part of the medium income tier. Possibly because of this, their target group might seem to be more homogeneous than in other Central/Eastern European countries.

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2. Professional environment

Most of the journalists said their profession was „valued", „appreciated" and „respected", at least among those whose opinions mattered for them. One of them, however, noted that s/he experienced a certain deal of reluctance on many people's part to talk to journalists. Another one thought that the job was poorly valued. Yet another one refused to answer the question.

The majority said that their outlets were of a centrist orientation, and one of them stated that it had no political position. Another one noted that the position of the outlet s/he worked for depended on which political party or parties were in office. Yet another called his/her superiors "professionally unprepared political puppets" (ROJO04, broadcast), i.e. they were lacking political independence. This is very much in line with the political instrumentalisation of the media on one hand, and the partisanship of most news outlets on the other, a phenomenon characteristic not only of Romania, but all of the region's countries.

As for the newsroom atmosphere, most journalists described it as a „friendly", „collegial" and „pleasant" one, while two of them referred to lingering tensions between the management and journalists, but there was no further explanation given. At the same time, however, with the exception of two respondents, the vast majority mentioned external pressures by politicians and political parties, which is in line with how international media freedom watch organisations assess the status of media in Romania. The overwhelming majority of journalists felt very secure about their jobs.

3. Professional self-perception

When asked about their professional motivations, journalists cited motives such as „serving the public," „making an impact on society," „informing the public about the truth," „influencing the public discourse," and „educating the public." One of them said that "I want to fight a system that I often believe to be wrong and dirty" (ROJO06, online), and another stated that "I believe you can change things for the better" (ROJO10, broadcast).

In terms of reporting practices, respondents said that they sought to report in a „decent", „neutral," „objective," „honest," „accurate" and „relevant" way, and to adequately

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contextualise news stories and current affairs, as well as to "present every side of the problem" (ROJO04), that is, they aspire to follow the standards of Anglo-American non-partisan journalism. This occurs to be in contradiction with the general picture that many media outlets in Romania are politically affiliated or instrumentalised. One of them added that "[s]ome materials have an important emotional component" (ROJO04, broadcast).

4. *Framing of, and attitudes towards, mobility and migration*

When discussing migration, journalists referred to both emigration and immigration as major issues. One respondent observed that migration as an issue is located at the intersection of at least three areas: "This is the part that is connected to institutions such as the police, the border police […] politics in terms of decision-making, the presidential administration, the government, the parliament […] and the international segment that deals with what comes from Brussels" (ROJO01, online).

Most of the journalists used the terms „migrant," „immigrant," „asylum seeker" and „refugee" as interchangeable synonyms, while making a very clear distinction between „emigration" and „immigration." They noted that those involved in intra-EU mobility are usually better educated and share a common cultural heritage, as opposed to those coming from beyond the Union. Some of them highlighted the need to more carefully distinguish between „migrants" and „refugees." Migrants were usually defined in terms of their particular circumstances such as a war situation in their home countries or as people who had escaped for reasons of political persecution and climate change effects, as well as in terms of their desire to earn a better living.

Several of the journalists interviewed mentioned humanitarian considerations in the context of migrants, and refered to the dire circumstances that had made them leave their home countries. One of them said that "I see them as people coming out of desperation" (ROJO04, broadcast), and another stated that "I try to address the subject with as much empathy as possible" (ROJO05, online). Yet another one, however, noted that immigration may cause concerns: "If they come from regions such as Afghanistan or violent areas, they can raise problems. Another element is the legality of their situation" (ROJO02, online). That said, the perspective taken was mostly a national one. One of them explicitly noted that "[w]e use a Romanian perspective" (ROJO02). And another said this: "We are a country that produces

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many migrants. Thus, the perspective will always be internal, focused on Romania" (ROJO05, online).

In their own perception, journalists sought to use a neutral and balanced language and a politically correct terminology when discussing migration; „political correctness" was emphasised by as many as four of them. One of them said that "[o]ne of the criteria is to never offend and to never be abusive" (ROJO02, online); another stated that "I try to avoid stereotypes" (ROJO04, broadcast); and yet another noted that s/he tried "not to contribute to xenophobia, Euroscpeticism and extremism" (ROJO12, broadcast). According to the authors of the Romania report, the occasionally disdaining coverage of refugees had to do with sensationalism rather than nationalism, while the overall approach to migrants is that these are people in need. Only one of the journalists intervieweed suggested that immigration into Romania should be limited and the country's borders should be better secured.

Sources

1. *Demographic and background*

The influencers represent civil and professional organisations specialised in migration and engaged in research and advocacy, as well as public organisations in charge of the implementation of migration policy. Most of them, however, deal with citizens arriving to Romania from third countries, and pay much less attention to Romanian citizens moving to Western Europe.

2. *Professional environment*

When asked about their reputation, influencers unanimously said that their profession was respected. Several of them added that they „enjoyed" and were „passionate" about the humanitarian cause they worked for and they considered their job a „noble endavour."

3. *Professional self-perception*

When asked about their professional motivations, influencers stressed their intention to make an impact upon society, to „change things," „to inform and educate," „to combat false information," „to create empathy with migrants among the public," and „to influence public

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policy." They all were devoted to free movement within the European Union, and no one mentioned issues that immigration may raise.

4. Framing of, and attitudes towards, mobility and migration

The key issues mentioned by influencers included hate speech within Romania directed towards non-EU migrants and the discrimination against Romanian emigrants in Western Europe who, as one of them observed, are occasionally "treated as slaves" (ROSO03, NGO). With both categories of migrants, their principal objective was to protect their human rights, i.e., as one of the influencers put it, "[t]he perspective is first of all humane" (ROSO01, international organisation).

Influencers without exception sought to make a clear distinction between „migrants" and „refugees," based on national and international legislation, and stating that the former seek better life conditions but may return to their home countries, whereas the latter were forced to leave it. They also, distinguished between those moving within the EU and those coming from non-EU countries, noting that the motivations of these two groups may differ. In terms of the former group, another distinction was made between those going from the West to the East and those moving the other way. They sought to use a neutral language in an effort to combat the spread of hate speech experienced after the 2015 migration crisis.

Some of the influencers expressed their dissatisfaction with the way the Romanian press and media covered migration, especially because, in their views, journalists tended to confuse different groups of migrants and to portray them in a negative way. They also said that media coverage should be based on thorough documentation, offer a meaningful context, avoid exaggeration, and should not generate panic. One of them observed that there were two poles in the media: "One that is nationalist and has a speech of rejection and hatred, and one that promotes a humanist and human rights-based approach" (ROSO01). It is worth noting that this perception is similar to that observed in Hungary, but much less manifest.

Conclusion

As Romania to date is mainly a migrant source country, with over 1,000,000 Romanian citizens working in Western Europe, media tends to focus on emigration – including the

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issues of Brexit, the discrimination of Romanian (and in general Eastern European) workers in host countries, and the domestic demographic problems caused by massive emigration, that is, it has a national perspective. As the authors of the Romania report observe, however, these issues are not high on the political agenda, as all major political parties and actors support the idea of free movement within the European Union.

In a similar vein, immigration is not much of a political issue in that there are no capable nationalist or extremist political parties or movements pushing this issue (even though the ratio of xenophobia has increased in recent years among citizens). That said, discussions do cover the issues of the refugee quota, human trafficking on the Black Sea, illegal border crossings, the potential cultural and economic effects of immigration, as well as terrorism. Overall, news reporting dominated over in-depth analysis.

The sources interviewed suggest that some of the Romanian press and media report about migration negatively, with the result that some people in Romania "comment on how migrants come as a hoard of conquerors that threaten our lives, health, liberty, jobs, and so on" (ROSO05, international organisation).

Overall, the perspective of journalists may be summarised as a „national" one, while that of the influencers as a „humanitarian" one.

Media practices in Slovenia

The Slovenia research was conducted in July 2017. Of a total of 7 journalists, 5 journalists participated in a focus group session and 2 were interviewed individually. The journalists sample represents a variety of media platforms, including daily and weekly newspapers, radio stations, television channels and an online news site. The influencers sample, consisting of 6 people, was also representative in that it covers both non-governmental and governmental organisations.

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Journalists

1. Demographics and background

The overwhelming majority of journalists were, by their self-definitions, of a moderate left or liberal position. The research team had a difficulty involving right-leaning journalists who did not respond to their calls; finally, one such journalist was reached.

The respondents claimed that their profession had a high, yet gradually declining, social prestige. Many of them mentioned that they had been accused of pro-government bias in their reporting, which they linked to a weakening respect for journalists. The declining prestige of their work was also named by some as a reason for their declining motivation to continue working as journalists. This sense of declining social prestige was also linked to a perceived reduction in the impact that journalism has on society.

2. Professional environment

Unlike in the other Central and Eastern European countries surveyed, most of the journalists interviewed observed that a hierarchical, „managerial approach" prevailed in the newsroom, and only two of them referred to a „friendly" and „collegial" atmosphere. In a similar vein, most of them referred to external pressures on editorial content without, however, any further clarifications—this contrasts with the perceptions of international media freedom watch organisations such as Freedom House and Reporters Without Borders (see the introductiory sections of this paper), that suggest media are comparatively free in Slovenia. Newspaper journalists without exception expressed a fear of losing their jobs, as in recent years dozens of print journalists have been dismissed, whereas those working for nationwide broadcast media felt their job was secure. Whether this is linked to the global trend of a shrinking newspaper industry or to domestic political pressures, however, cannot be said on the basis of the information gathered during this analysis.

3. Professional self-perception

Professional motivations among several of the Slovenian sample were broadly activist in nature, with journalists highlighting motives such „making a change", „changing the world," „working for the public interest," „giving voice to the people from the bottom of society," „giving voice to minorities," „enlightening," and „acting as the watchdogs of democracy."

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Several of them also mentioned the creative nature of the job as a motivating factor. Some, however, referred to journalism as a „job" rather than a „mission." In terms of their daily routines, many of the respondents said that they sought to write about personal or individual stories that their public can identify with.

The influence of politics on media in Slovenia was noted, with one journalist claiming that: "All our media are very biased, the media landscape is not balanced, all mainstream media are more or less left-leaning. The reason for that still lies in the political structure in the country, and politics always played an important role in media as an influencer. Old structures still run the game" (SIJO07, broadcast/online).

4. *Framing of, and attitudes towards, mobility and migration*

Brexit and the discrimination in Western Europe of economic migrants coming from the south-eastern countries of the European Union were both key issues noted by participants. Intra-EU mobility was also mentioned as an issue, but considered a positive development. A focus on measured and anti-xenophobic discourse was apparent among the Slovenian journalists interviewed, and neither recent Islamic terrorist attacks in Western Europe, nor migration were thematised as a threat to Europe's traditional cultural values. One journalist mentioned the issues of cultural influence or „the Islamisation of Europe" in the context of conspiracy theories, adding that "mainstream media never went so far, but this context comes out in some other media [and] the social networks" (SIJO02, quality newspaper). Another observed that: "There is this bizarre online news portal Nova24. According to their reports, the number of rape attempts has increased since we have those few hundred refugees in the country" (SIJO03, broadcast). Yet another journalist stressed, though, that "[w]e try to go in the direction of calming down, anti-hysteria" (SIJO06, magazine).

As a main rule, journalists used relatively consistent terminology when covering migration, and distinguished between „economic migrants," „asylum seekers", and „refugees." However, a left-leaning journalist suggested that all „migrants" could be called „refugees," whereas a right-leaning one suggested that differentitation was needed as not every „migrant" was a „refugee." Another one observed that: "The migrants are people that were forced to leave their own country. What were the reasons for them to flee, war, economy, discrimination or even the climate, is not so important for me" (SIJO03, broadcast).

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Journalists are also consistent in that they do not chose the term „migrant" when referring to those moving within the EU, but call them by their nationalities, as the term „migrant" has a slightly nergative connotation. And, as one of them noted: "When our people leave the country, we call it brain drain, when other people outside the EU leave their countries, we call it migration" (SIJO02, quality newspaper). Within the EU, they usually make a further distinction between those coming from old and those coming from new member states; as one journalist observed, the former are "first class," while the latter are considered "second class migrants" (SIJO05, quality newspaper).

Overall, a humanitarian approach prevailed among the interviewed journalists in that they frequently mentioned the "discrimination" (SIJO01, SIJO03), "modern slavery" (SIJO02) or "exploitation" (SIJO04) of foreigners working in Slovenia or of Eastern Europeans working in Western Europe. However, one of them also raised concerns about this approach, observing: "Telling heart-breaking individual stories when you have a problem of half a million unidentified people crossing your country is manipulative and doesn't help solving the problem. Journalists should report facts and not play activists on the field. There are special humanitarian organisations for that. Journalists should report" (SIJO07, broadcast/online).

Sources

1. Demographic and background

The influencers sample was representative to the degree that it included non-governmental and governmental organisations, as well as an EU liaison institution, all of which specialised in issues related to migration.

2. Professional environment

When asked about their public reputation, the typical answer was that "it depends on who you ask" (SISO03, NGO), meaning that some people respect what they do, while other ones are cynical about it. Overall, influencers agreed that they mostly received positive feedback.

3. Professional self-perception

When asked about their professional motivations, the influencers – similarly to the journalists – referred to „making a difference," „making this world a better place," „solving

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problems," „helping people" as well as „preserving basic human rights" as their main motives.

They also noted that their job was „to inform the public" (this being the most frequent answer), „to promote the positive side of the EU" (this being the second most frequent one), as well as „to offer foreign workers in Slovenia […] legal assistance" and „to train and inform vulnerable groups about their rights."

4. Framing of, and attitudes towards, mobility and migration

The major issues listed by influencers included the discrimination and exploitation of Romanian and Bulgarian citizens working in Slovenia, Brexit, the European Union's migration policy, and brain drain from Slovenia to Western Europe. Again, neither the cultural challenges of extra-EU migration, nor terrorist attacks committed by Muslims in Western Europe were mentioned as issues of interest, even though one influencer briefly raised the issue of integration and another the question of security in the context of the 2015 migration wave passing through Slovenia.

Sources agreed that journalists were mainly interested in „drama", „conflict," „problems," „scandal," and even sought to cause „hysteria," while they failed to offer the „big picture," that is, to contextualise human stories. This view is in sharp contrast with journalists' self-perception. Most influencers also thought that journalists' word choices in the context of migration were inconsistent, and should have been more in line with the terms defined by legislation. They also observed that intra-EU migrants were never referred to as „migrants", which they explained with the fact that this word choice would have been inadequate to highlight the benefits of free movement within the EU, while it implied negative connotations such as brain drain. Further, they also observed that Slovak, Romanian and Bulgarian citizens working in Slovenia were often exploited.

Regarding word choice in the context of migration, most influencers agreed that "migrants are people on the move" (SISO01, SISO03, SISO06). They also agreed that different types of migrant groups should be distinguished on the basis of their legal statuses such as „economic migrants", „asylum seekers" and „refugees." Further, influencers felt that they

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had little impact on media discourses, and suggested that journalists preferred to rely on primary sources such as EU institutions and academics.

Conclusion

Unlike in some other countries discussed in this paper, and particularly in Hungary, the migration discourse in Slovenia appears to focus on human rights issues, and especially the protection of the right of workers of foreign origin. Despite the fact that the 2015 migration wave crossed Slovenia as a part of the „Western Balkans corridor", debates about migration appeared to be much less heated and much less politicised than in the other countries of the region. That said, the discourse reflects the political cleavages dividing the political and the media landscapes, with the left-wing media taking a humanitarian approach to migration, and some right-wing outlets focusing on the negative aspects of it.

Conclusions for the EU-10 country cluster

The focus group research conducted among journalists and influencers in Central/Eastern Europe allows for some cautious preliminary findings to be formulated regarding the public discourse on mobility and migration in the region. At least three trends may be discerned: 1) The issues of mobility and migration are covered differently across the region's countries. 2) Immigration has been a major issue on the public agenda since 2015, dividing some of these societies, even though relatively few migrants and refugees from beyond the European Union have actually stayed in the region. 3) Emigration — or intra-European mobility — is as much an issue as immigration, with severe economic and demographic effects. In more detail, these points mean the following:

1) The issues of mobility and migration are highest on the public agenda in Hungary (where it is a main focus of government propaganda and pro-government journalism), followed by Poland (where it also generated some debates, albeit less intensely), and Slovenia and Romania (where it is a secondary issue). While the public discourse focuses on *immigration* in some countries, and most prominently in Hungary, *emigration* is a more emphasised issue in other ones, and most importantly in Romania.

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2) As regards immigration, two major narratives may be identified: the *nationalist approach,* considering migrants — especially those from the Middle East and North Africa — a threat to national culture and security, and the *humanitarian approach* regarding migrants as people in need of assistance. The nationalist approach occurs to be the most powerful in Hungary, followed by Poland, whereas the humanitarian approach prevails in Slovenia, followed by Romania. Whether the nationalist or the humanitarian approach dominates the public discourse in a country is not a function of the actual number of migrants staying in these countries. Further, the public debate about immigration in the countries studied is heated to different degrees. In Hungary, and to some extent in Poland, the discussion is of an *emotional* nature, with journalists' and influencers' positions following the ideological cleavages dividing society. By contrast, the debate is more *rational* in Slovenia and in Romania, where actors seek to take an unbiased position. Whether the dominant paradigm of the public discourse is of a more emotional or of a more rational character may be a function of the political actors affecting the discourse: Hungary and Poland currently have populist and nationalist governments, whereas Slovenia and Romania are lead by technocratic ones.

3. While all countries across the region have been severely affected by massive emigration to Western Europe that has had major domestic economic and demographic consequences, the media address the issue to different degrees across the region: it is a widely discussed topic in Romania and, to lesser degrees, in Poland and Slovenia, whereas it is almost completely ignored in Hungary.

It should also be mentioned that most of the journalists interviewed during the research were not migration specialists (but covered a wide range of topics, as few outlets can afford to employ a great number of specialised journalists), while influencers were. This might explain why the various layers of the public discourse on mobility and migration differ. Whereas journalists are (as a general rule, but Slovenes being an exception) less conscious in their word choices and use the terms „migrant," „refugee," „asylum seeker," etc., interchangeably, often knowing that such generalisations may feed prejudices and that „migrant" has a negative connotation in some of these languages, especially in Hungarian and to some extent also in Slovenian, influencers are more cautious when it comes to

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choosing the right word, and make a distinction, mostly in line with what international and domestic regulation prescribes.

It has been noted that there is in Central and Eastern Europe a gap between standards and practices of journalism, the former promoting norms of neutrality, and the latter evincing engagement. This gap between standards and practices was also highlighted in this study: while journalists stated they were seeking to report on migration in a truthful and factual manner, both journalists and sources observed that the media coverage of migration and mobility was often biased in line with media outlets' ideological and political affiliations.

As a general rule, the organisations specialised in migration and mobility issues are based on a humanitarian and human rights approach and consider it their mission to offer protection to migrants and refugees. There are some exceptions, though. For example, a pro-government think tank in Hungary identifies itself with the government's anti-migration perspective and considers immigration a major threat to Hungarian and European culture that needs to be combated.

These findings have some limitations. First, the samples taken in the four countries are not meant to be, and cannot be, fully representative. Second, the issue of migration is politicised, to varying degrees, in all of the region's countries, and journalists and influencers are exposed to a greater or lesser extent of political pressures. As a result, some respondents may hide their real opinions and say instead what they think is expected from them, despite the fact that anonymity was granted to all. In other words, publicly presented and privately held views may differ; in a delicate context like this, a focus group method may only disclose what people say, but not what they think.

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ROLE OF EUROPEAN MOBILITY AND ITS IMPACTS IN NARRATIVES, DEBATES AND EU REFORMS

The REMINDER project is exploring the economic, social, institutional and policy factors that have shaped the impacts of free movement in the EU and public debates about it.

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