

Understanding Germany's response to the 2015 refugee crisis

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Abstract

Purpose – This paper aims to understand the discrepancy between Germany's immediate positive response to the so-called "Europe 2015's refugee crisis" and the strict asylum legislation adopted in Germany in the following year.

Design/methodology/approach – The discrepancy is attributed to external and internal forces. The external force is Germany's obligation to adhere to the Common European Asylum System. The internal force is the role of the different policy actors. The paper focuses on the role of the media as an example of a private policy actor. Through adopting the theory of the social construction of target populations, the paper studies how the media constructs "asylum seekers", the target of the new asylum legislation. The role of the media is analyzed using the methodology of qualitative content analysis of a selected number of newspaper articles.

Findings – The majority of the studied articles problematized receiving and hosting refugees and focused on the reason behind migration differentiating between asylum seekers fleeing conflict areas and all others who might be abusing the asylum channel. The findings of the content analysis, as such, resonate with the amendments that focused on facilitating the integration of accepted "refugees" but restricted further entry. As such, it could be argued that these findings explain the influence of the media on the amendments and as such provide an explanation to the discrepancy between the initial response and the amendments.

Research limitations/implications – The analysis focused on one newspaper. The findings, as such, are not representative. The aim is only to provide an example of how the German media dealt with the refugee crisis and to suggest using the theory chosen by the paper to analyze the link between asylum legislation and the construction of asylum seekers. To understand how asylum legislation is influenced by how asylum seekers are constructed, more studies are needed. Such studies could analyze the role played by other media outputs and/or the role played by other policy actors in constructing the target of the policy.

Originality/value – The media's response is based on analyzing a sample of newspaper articles published by a German newspaper following the so-called 2015 refugee crisis. Accordingly, the findings represent an original endeavor to understand how the media reacted to the crisis.

Keywords Germany, Media, Policy, Europe, Refugees, Syrians, Asylum policies

Paper type Research paper

Theoretical framework

In the domain of policymaking, several theories can be grouped within the same framework. For example, game theory, social choice theory and common pool resource theory are



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compatible with the Institutional Analysis and Development Framework (Ostrom, 2007). It can also be argued that social construction of the target populations (SCTA) theory is compatible with the Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF) in terms of the unit of analysis and the importance attributed to the role of the actors and their belief systems in the policy process.

The unit of analysis for the ACF is the Policy Subsystem (True *et al.*, 2007). A subsystem can be defined as “clusters of individuals that effectively make most of the routine decisions in a given substantive area of policy” (Young-Jung and Chul-Young, 2008, p. 670). A policy subsystem is characterized by a functional/substantive dimension and territorial dimension. For example, water policy in California is a policy subsystem (Sabatier and Weible, 2007). By the same token, asylum policy in Germany is a policy subsystem.

According to the ACF, the individuals involved in any policy subsystem constitute the policy actors who are either public or private. Public actors are the decision-makers who decide on the final legislation. As such, public actors would include members of the legislative and executive bodies. Private actors, on the other hand, are those who try to influence the decisions of the public actors. They are the actors who try to lobby public actors to ensure that the final legislation aligns with their interest. Both the ACF and the SCTP acknowledge the importance of public and private actors and recognize the media as an example of the latter (Schreuder, 2018). However, while the media in the ACF influences policies through its representation in coalitions, the media in the SCTP theory influences policies by shaping public opinion (Schlager, 2007).

The ACF and the SCTP place a lot of emphasis on belief systems and how they influence policy actors. According to the ACF, there are three levels of beliefs, depending on their resistance to change. The first level is the Deep Core Belief, which is the core belief that spans most policy subsystems, involves very broad assumptions, and is highly resistant to change. For example, the belief that everyone has a right to education is a deep core belief. The second level is the Policy Core Belief, and this level refers to the application of the deep core belief by the policy participants. They are difficult but not impossible to change. For example, liberals and conservatives would have different views regarding free college education. Such views are difficult but not impossible to change. The third level is the Secondary Belief, which is narrow in scope and includes, for example, detailed rules and budgetary applications within a specific program. These beliefs are easy to change. For example, many politicians may not agree on a free college education (this is their policy core belief) but they might agree on budget allocation to expand access to some students, which represents Secondary Belief (Sabatier and Weible, 2007).

SCTP argues that policies have a target population. The extent by which policies will benefit or burden the target population depends on how the different policy actors perceive the target population and the position the target population occupies in the society. For example, big corporations occupy a powerful position because of their economic influence, while other groups occupy less powerful positions. The interplay between the position of the target population in the society and their social construction produces four kinds of target groups. The first is the “Advantaged” group, who are powerful and perceived positively, for example, veterans and scientists. The second group is the ‘Contenders,’ who are powerful but negatively perceived, for example, big corporations and the cultural elite. The last two groups are the “Deviants” and the “Dependents”. The Dependents are those who are powerless but positively perceived, for example, children and the disabled. The Deviants group is powerless and negatively constructed, for example, criminals and drug addicts (Schneider and Ingram, 1993).

Refugees and Asylum seekers, the target population in the case of this paper, constitute a politically powerless group in any society. As such, to understand the policies directed towards them using the SCTP theory, this paper will focus on how refugees and asylum seekers are constructed by the media, which represents a private policy actor. Through content analysis of a major German newspaper, the aim is to provide an example of how the media constructs 'refugees' and the link between such construction and the policy targeting them.

The Syrian refugees' crisis and Germany's response

In September 2013, the number of Syrian refugees reached one million, putting immense pressures on the neighboring countries hosting them (UNHCR, 2013). An increasing number were also attempting to reach Europe irregularly. In 2012, 72,500 thousand crossings were recorded. In 2014, the number rose to 283,500 thousand and in 2015, the number reached 1.8 million. 2015, as such, became labeled as the year of Europe's Refugee Crisis (UNHCR Tracks, 2015).

The majority of the crossings took place through the different Mediterranean Sea routes. After the fall of the Gaddafi regime in 2011 and prior to 2015, the most commonly used route was the Central Mediterranean route from Libya to Italy. However, in 2015, the Eastern Mediterranean route from Turkey to either Greece or Bulgaria and from there to Central and then Northern Europe became most common (Keridis, 2016). In particular, the movement from Turkey to Greece, known as the Balkan corridor, increased vastly. The increase was attributed to the continuation and escalation of the conflict in Syria, the deteriorating conditions in neighboring countries, and the change of the government in Greece, which decreased control on the Mediterranean coast. The visibility and determination of the migrants (who included Syrian refugees as well as other groups of migrants) and the support provided by advocacy groups and individuals made the move to central Europe unstoppable. In summer 2015, Macedonia opened its borders to the flow (Open Democracy, 2016).

From Macedonia migrants moved further to Serbia and Hungary, aiming for Germany or other European countries as final destinations (Dockery, 2017a). As per journalists' interviews with Syrians in Hungary, the desire to move to Germany was due to the realization that there was no opportunity in Hungary and the belief that opportunities would be available in larger economies (Hartocollis, 2015).

Fearing a further inflow of migrants, Hungary announced in July 2015 the building of a fence along its southern border with Serbia. As a response, migrants, the majority among them Syrians, rushed to cross the border before the fence was completed (Smale, 2015). In the last week of August 2015, a lorry was found abandoned with 71 dead bodies on the motorway in the Austrian town of Parndorf on the border with Hungary. The bodies identified belonged to Syrians and Afghans. It was believed that they were trying to make their way to Germany through the help of smugglers (BBC News, 2016).

Germany's response to the crisis

The Chancellor of Germany reacted on August 25 by suspending EU's Dublin Regulation for Syrians. The Dublin regulation stipulates that the country where an asylum seeker first enters the Union is the responsible country for registering the asylum application. Suspending Dublin for Syrians meant that Syrians coming to Germany would have their asylum applications processed in Germany even if they have passed through another European country. On August 31, Merkel, the Chancellor of Germany, made her famous

statement “Wir schaffen das” or “We can do this,” describing her decision as a ‘national duty’ (Dockery, 2017b).

Merkel’s decision increased further inflows of Syrians through the Balkan corridor. However, in September 2015, upon reaching Hungary, Syrians were prevented from boarding the train to Germany. The Hungarian government insisted that they must abide by the EU’s Dublin Regulation and apply for asylum in Hungary. Germany reacted by opening its borders and taking in the migrants stuck there (Dockery, 2017b).

According to Table AI (Appendix 1) concerning the number of asylum applications by Syrians in Germany on a monthly basis during 2015, the flow was steady until May. It increased during the summer as a result of the opening of the Balkan corridor explained above. The flow doubled in September moving from 9,800 in July to 11,220 in August to 18,085 in September. This is the effect of Germany’s suspension of the Dublin Regulation on August 25. The peak of the flow was in October and November when the flow doubled from 18,085 in September to 30,215 in October, as the flow of Syrians to Germany increased in response to the Chancellor’s welcoming remarks.

Defining the policy as welcoming, however, cannot only be judged by the number of applications lodged at the borders but must take into consideration other aspects, including asylum recognition rates on applications, the offering of humanitarian and resettlement places to refugees in countries of first asylum and the adoption of liberal asylum policies.

Asylum recognition rate

Asylum recognition number is the total number of asylum applications resulting in refugee status during a specific time at first instance and on final appeal. A first instance decision explains the decision given by the respective authority acting as a first instance of the administrative/judicial asylum procedure in the receiving country. If the decision rejects the claim for asylum, the asylum seeker can appeal the decision. A final decision on appeal means the decision granted at the final instance of administrative/judicial asylum procedure as a result of the appeal lodged by the asylum seeker who was rejected in the preceding stage of the procedure (Eurostat Database, 2019).

The overall asylum recognition number is not available in the Eurostat Statistical Data. Table AII (Appendix 1) indicates both numbers combined. It is clear from the table that the percentage of positive decisions on first instances and after the appeal in 2015 was high.

Humanitarian admission and resettlement

Resettlement is defined by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) as the process by which recognized refugees are selected and transferred from the first state in which they sought protection (first country of asylum) to a third state which agrees to admit them (UNHCR Resettlement Handbook, 2011). Germany specified an annual quota of 300 resettlement places in 2013, which was increased to 500 in 2015. In 2015, Germany met the targeted quota, and in 2016 it exceeded that number by offering resettlement places to 1,215 Syrians from Turkey and Lebanon (Resettlement.eu, 2013).

Humanitarian Admission is the process by which countries admit the most vulnerable groups for temporary protection. During 2013 and 2014, Germany provided 20,000 resident permits through the Humanitarian Admission Program known as HAP Syria. In addition, privately sponsored admission programs for Syrians were introduced in 2013 in agreement with the Ministry of Interior. According to these Programs, private citizens, German citizens as well as Syrians residents for over a year and who are willing to bear the cost of the travel and accommodation, can sponsor Syrians in Germany (Resettlement.eu, 2013). Finally, to

demonstrate a sense of solidarity with southern EU countries, Germany accepted to offer relocation places to refugees from Greece and Italy (Grote *et al.*, 2016).

According to the above, Germany's response to the refugee crisis of 2015 was not only in terms of opening the borders and suspending Dublin, but it also increased its resettlement, relocation, and humanitarian admission offerings. Moreover, asylum recognition numbers were high during the 'crisis' year. It is important to examine to what extent this response was reflected in liberal policies, which is the focus of the next section.

Asylum legislation adopted in response to the crisis

This section will review the amendments made to German Asylum Law following the Syrian Refugee Crisis and highlight the influence of the EU. To understand these amendments, the section will first provide some background information to the legal framework governing asylum in Germany.

Background to the legal framework

International legal framework. Germany (West Germany at that time) was among the twenty-six states drafting the 1951 *Refugee Convention*, the main legal instrument governing refugee issues, and ratified it along with its 1967 *Protocol* (Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees). Moreover, the right to asylum is codified in Article 16(a) of the German Basic Law, which serves as Germany's Constitution. According to this article, anyone persecuted on political grounds shall enjoy the right of asylum in Germany. Facing growing immigration pressures, Article 16(a) was amended in 1993. The amendment excluded applications for asylum from countries considered by Germany as 'safe' and ended the automatic granting of refugees status to applicants from 'unsafe countries' requesting proof of persecution before granting refugee status (Hailbronner, 1994).

European Union laws. The 1951 *Refugee Convention* was officially incorporated into the EU treaties through the Qualification Directive (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights & The Council of Europe, 2014). The two principal treaties on which the EU is based are the Treaty on European Union (TEU) originally signed in 1992 and amended in Lisbon in 2007 and the Treaty Establishing the European Community (TEC) originally signed in 1957 and amended in 2007 and renamed the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) (Treaty on European Union, 2016). In addition to incorporating the *Convention* into the treaties, the *EU Charter of Fundamental Rights* was adopted in 2000. Article 18 of the Charter provides for the right to asylum, and Article 19 prohibits deportation of asylum seekers (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights & The Council of Europe, 2014).

Asylum legislation has always been within the jurisdiction of member states according to the Maastricht Treaty of 1992, which created the European Union with its three-pillar structure: the European Community (EC) pillar, the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) pillar and the Justice and Home Affairs pillar. Only the first pillar constituted the EU's supra-national institutions, the other two pillars remained intergovernmental with decisions being made by committees composed of member states' politicians and officials. The creation of the pillar system was an attempt to compromise between the desire of many member states to add power to the European Union in additional areas (foreign policy, security and defense policy, and asylum and immigration policy) and the reluctance of other member states over adding these areas which were considered to be too sensitive to be managed by the supranational mechanisms of the European Union. Until 1997, the area of immigration and asylum policy was within the domain of the third pillar, and thus it continued to be administered at the intergovernmental level. However, the Treaty of

Amsterdam signed in 1997, moved asylum and immigration from the third pillar to the first pillar. This indicates the agreement among the member states that migration and asylum should be dealt with at the EU level (Pollack, 2005).

In 1999, the European Council met in Tampere and concluded to establish a common EU asylum and immigration policy that would fall under the newly created EU area of freedom, security, and justice (Pollack, 2005). They developed the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) based on two aspects. The first is that only one member state should be responsible for an asylum application. The second is to harmonize national asylum standards to prevent internal movement of asylum seekers and refugees (European Parliament Research Service, 2019). CEAS includes five key acts: Dublin Regulation, Eurodac Regulation, Reception Conditions Directive, Qualification Directive, and Asylum Procedure Directive. A regulation is a legislative act that applies directly to member states, while a directive is a legislative act that needs to be transposed into the national legislation of each country. Finally, a decision is binding only on those to whom the decision is addressing (European Union Website, 2019).

The Dublin Regulation determines the responsibility of European States for administrating the requests of asylum seekers from outside the European Union. Asylum seekers who move on to other countries after being registered should be sent back to the first European country in which they first entered. However, asylum-seekers should not be transferred to a Member State with systemic deficiencies in asylum procedures or reception conditions. As such, it was important to harmonize asylum procedures and reception conditions in all member states (European Commission Website).

The Eurodac Regulation adopted a fingerprints system, which requires member states to take fingerprints of every applicant for asylum. Once the fingerprints are taken, it is automatically shared with other member states. In this way, an asylum seeker whose fingerprints are taken in one country cannot seek asylum in another country (European Commission Council Regulation No.2725/2000, 2000).

The Reception Conditions Directive (RCD) establishes the criteria of receiving asylum seekers so that the same standard is applied in all member states eliminating the possibility of secondary movements (European Commission Council Regulation No.2003/9/EC, 2003). The Qualification Directive (QD), as previously mentioned, incorporated the 1951 Refugee Convention into EU treaties. Additionally, it gives those who do not qualify for refugee status the right to apply for subsidiary protection and requires EU countries to guarantee both the rights of refugees and those under subsidiary protection (European Commission Council Directive No. 2004/83/EC, 2004). Finally, the Asylum Procedure Directive (APD) determines the conditions for granting and withdrawing refugee status (European Commission Council Directive No. 2005/85/EC, 2005).

In 2013, the EU introduced amendments to the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) to be transposed into member states' legislation by 2015. EU Regulation no. 603/2013 added a component to Eurodac for law enforcement giving authorities the right to compare fingerprints linked to criminal investigations with those contained in Eurodac. Regulation no. 1052/2013 on border surveillance, which is known as Eurosur, was introduced to improve control at EU external borders. Regulation 604/2013, known as Dublin Regulation III, added a component to the original regulation that allowed asylum seekers to appeal a Dublin decision. Directive 2013/33 on reception conditions remained more or less the same as the earlier one (EUR-LEX database, 2018).

Most amendments were introduced to the Asylum Procedure Directive. The Asylum Procedure Directive 2013/32 requires common procedures for granting and withdrawing international protection as compared to the minimum standards that were established by Directive 85 in 2005. It stipulates that individuals should be offered the same level of

treatment regardless of where they lodge their application. Moreover, the directive requires member states to apply a single procedure for assessing eligibility for refugee status and subsidiary protection and introduced some improvements including the right of asylum seekers to a personal interview before a first instance decision is taken ([EUR-LEX database, 2018](#)).

However, the Asylum Procedure Directive distinguishes between prioritization and acceleration of processing applications in the asylum procedure. On the one hand, member states can consider applications from persons with well-founded claims of vulnerabilities as priorities, but on the other hand, unfounded applications can be accelerated under a less protective regime assuming that they are most likely going to be rejected. The directive listed ten grounds upon which accelerated procedures could be adopted including, for example, the use of false documents or refusal of an asylum seeker to have his/her fingerprints taken. Such grounds are criticized as insufficient grounds to indicate that the asylum seeker does not need international protection. Finally, the directive confirmed the concept of a safe country which allows states to refuse asylum seekers coming from countries classified as 'safe' without assessing the particular case of the person in that particular country ([Germany Asylum Information Database, 2019](#)).

Asylum and asylum process in Germany. In Germany, the two most important immigration laws are the Asylum Act and the Residence Act.

The Asylum Act regulates the process of granting and denying asylum. According to the Act, asylum seekers who are permitted to enter Germany or who are found in the country without a residence permit are allowed to submit an asylum application to the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF). An asylum seeker could be denied entry if he/she is coming from a third country recognized by Germany as safe, Germany is not the country that is supposed to register his/her application, or he/she poses a threat to the general public ([Germany Federal Office for Migration and Refugees website](#)).

There are three forms of protection provided by the German government: Refugee protection, Entitlement to asylum, and Subsidiary protection. Refugee protection is governed by Article Three of the Asylum Act, which expands the definition of the 1951 Geneva Convention by considering persecution on the basis of sexual orientation. Moreover, the article considers persecution inflicted by the state as well as non-state actors. Entitlement to asylum is less extensive, covering only those persecuted on political grounds by state actors. Such protection is regulated by Article 16 (a) of the Constitution. Both kinds of protection provide the recipient with a three-year residence permit that is later transferred into a permanent settlement and both allow for family reunification. Subsidiary protection is granted to those who are not qualified for refugee protection or entitlement to asylum but can provide evidence that they would be subjected to serious harm if returned to their country of origin. Examples of serious harm include torture, the death penalty, and generalized violence. Subsidiary protection provides residence for one year renewable and does not allow for family reunification. Finally, if the claim for asylum is rejected, and after making sure that there are no grounds for a deportation ban, the asylum seeker should leave the country ([Germany Asylum Information Database, 2019](#)).

The Residence Act, on the other hand, regulates the entry, stay, exit, and employment of foreigners, as well as admissions through the resettlement and humanitarian programs, which, are regulated by Article 23 (2) of the act. Like those accepted through local asylum procedures, resettled refugees are granted three years of temporary residence, after which they can apply for permanent residence ([Grote et al., 2016](#)).

The amendments. Amendments were introduced to both the Asylum and the Residence acts between 2015 and 2017. Despite the open door policy and the expansion of the

resettlement and humanitarian programs described above, the introduced amendments restricted rather than liberated the existing policies.

The German Asylum Act was amended on October 24, 2015, through introducing an article law known as 'Asylum Procedure Acceleration Act' or Asylum Package I. The article accelerated the asylum process for certain applicants by reducing the time needed to assess the asylum application. The act also increased the list of countries classified as safe to include Albania, Kosovo, and Montenegro. Finally, the act substituted in-kind benefits for cash benefits for asylum seekers whose applications have been denied or who failed to submit valid documentation. The decision to introduce in-kind benefits for these asylum seekers is that they need basic subsistence until their deportation or their ability to submit valid documents (Germany Asylum Information Database).

Sequentially, the Asylum Package II was adopted in March 2017. Similar to the preceding act, it aimed to accelerate the asylum application process for certain types of asylum applicants, for example, applicants from safe countries of origin, follow up applicants or applicants without documents. The new act further reduced the time for processing asylum applications for these asylum applicants. According to the act, claims for asylum should be evaluated in a week. One week is given to the applicant to appeal the decision and the administrative court is given a week to decide on the appeal. As such, all in all, the whole process would not take more than three weeks (Grote *et al.*, 2016). The act is criticized because it would have a negative impact on people without identification papers (like Palestinians from Syria or Afghans from Iran), those who have lost their documents during the journey, or those who need protection but excluded because they are coming from countries classified as "safe". Moreover, the act defined the provisions on suspending deportations for health reasons, indicating that suspension is only allowed if there is proof that the foreigner is suffering from a life-threatening illness that could worsen in case of deportation (Germany Federal office for Migration and Refugees website).

A number of other acts concerning asylum were also passed in 2016. For example, the Act on Faster Expulsion of Criminal Foreigners gave the authorities the right to refuse applicants based on suspected criminality. The Integration Act indicated the reasons for the inadmissibility of an asylum application. In addition to inadmissibility because of the Dublin Regulation, the act included other grounds that were criticized as restricting the right to asylum (Grote *et al.*, 2016). However, the Integration Act incorporated the 3 + 2 rule. The rule stipulates that if an asylum seeker is granted an apprenticeship in a German business, he cannot be deported for five years; three of those five years are to be spent in the apprenticeship, followed by an additional two in the company that provided the apprenticeship. Business associations in Germany played a major role in pushing for this rule (Gesley, 2016).

Amendments were also introduced to Section 11 of the Residence Act. On August 1, 2015, the Act to Redefining the Right to Remain and Termination of Residence was introduced to task the federal office with setting-time limits for asylum seekers whose ban on entry has become effective. The act also ordered a ban on entry and residence for applicants from countries designated as 'safe' (Germany Federal Office for Migration and Refugees). At the same time, it granted residence permits to persons who can prove that they are well integrated after a period of eight years and to well-integrated minors after four years. As such, on the one hand, the law facilitated residence for those already living in Germany, but on the other hand, it restricted entry for newly arrived asylum seekers (Refugee Movement: News from Inside).

The above analysis highlights how the amendments to Germany's asylum and residence acts correspond to the new regulations of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). The new CEAS' regulations were to be transposed by Germany, as well as other member states, into their national legislation representing as such an external force.

The next section will discuss the role of the media as an example of an internal force.

The role of the media

The theory of the SCTA regards the media as a policy actor and argues, as explained earlier, that the media plays an important role in influencing policies by shaping public opinion (Schlager, 2006). This paper analyzes the link between the amendments explained above and how the media perceives and constructs the target of the amendments through qualitative content analysis of a selected number of articles from a major German newspaper. The below section explains the sampling process as well as the methodology adopted for the content analysis.

Sampling

Sampling for media content analysis comprises three steps:

- (1) selection of media forms;
- (2) selection of issues; and
- (3) sampling from within the selected media form.

The types of media include traditional media like newspapers, magazines, TV, radio, as well as social media platforms (Macnamara, 2005). With regard to traditional media, TV is the most popular source for news across Western Europe, including Germany (Matsa, 2018). Since the last decade, social media is gaining popularity and replacing traditional media as a source of news, particularly among the young generations. However, in Germany, the majority of adults still get news from traditional media outlets (Pew Research Center, 2018). Despite the fact that TV and radio are more popular than newspapers, the latter continues to play a vital role in setting the agenda and influencing political debates. A recent study highlighted how newspapers inform TV broadcast news, which usually relies on reviewing daily papers and on journalists' interpretation of the news. The study concluded that television news is influenced by press coverage (Cushion *et al.*, 2018).

For all the above reasons, the media form selected is a newspaper. The focus is on the daily edition of *Die Welt newspaper*, one of the newspapers analyzed by the larger research upon which this research paper is based. The larger research examines the German media in comparison to the French media focusing on daily newspapers with different political views in the two countries.

The second step after selecting the media form is to select the issues and dates (Macnamara, 2005). The purpose is to understand how the media reports on migration issues and how it portrays refugees and migrants. To capture the change in perception and how it is influenced by the increased inflow of migrants, the time frame of data collection for the purpose of this study is set to be for the period from March 2013 to December 2016. March 2013 is an essential date in the Syrian refugee problem; notably, on that date, the number of Syrian refugees reached one million. The end date is December 2016 to cover the impact of the so-called "Mediterranean Refugee Crisis" of 2015.

The third and last step is sampling from within the selected media form and within the time frame and issue specified. For this research, it means selecting the articles to analyze from among all articles published daily by *Die Welt* from 2013-2016. The simplest form of selection is

a census, which basically means selecting all units in the sampling frame, which means in the case of this research paper analyzing all the newspaper articles, published during the research period. This would provide, of course, the greatest possible representation (Macnamara, 2005). However, the aim of this research paper is not to provide a representation of newspapers' coverage of refugees' issues in Germany during the research period as for this to occur different newspapers representing different political views and different geographical areas should be analyzed. The aim of this research paper, instead, is to provide an example of how German newspapers perceive and construct migrants and to try to find out if there is a link between such construction and the policy as represented by the new amendments.

The methods of sampling for media content analysis vary. They include systematic random sample, purposive sample, quota sample, and stratified composite sample. The most widely used sampling method for qualitative content analysis is *purposive sampling* because sampling for qualitative analysis is guided by the conceptual question and not by concern for representation. In qualitative media content analysis, the most important issue to consider when sampling is to ensure that the sample includes articles that address the question of the research (Macnamara, 2005). In this case, articles that discuss how refugees are perceived or how policies towards them should be drafted are the most important issues to consider while choosing the sample. As such, the issues and articles for analysis were *purposefully* selected. Friday issues were purposefully selected assuming that since it is the end of the week in Europe, Friday issues would cover events occurring during the week and/or reflect on legislations taking place during the week.

A total of 44 Friday issues, published from March 2013 to December 2016, were reviewed. The review investigated the frequency by which the following keywords appeared: 'refugees', 'migrants', 'Syrians', and 'asylum seekers'. As expected, the frequency of finding these keywords increased in 2015, the year the Syrian refugee problem confronted Germany. A total of 447 articles were identified including these keywords. The 447 articles were carefully read to identify the articles that deal precisely with the question of the research. A saturation level was reached after identifying 129 articles. As such the findings of this paper are based on analyzing 129 articles (see [Table AIII Appendix 1](#) for the number of articles and the saturation level attained year by year).

Saturation is an accepted methodological principle in qualitative research. It means that on the basis of the data collected and/or analyzed, no additional data is deemed necessary. There are many scholarly definitions of Saturation. For example, Urquha (2013, p. 194) defines saturation as: *'the point in coding when you find that no new codes occur in the data. There are mounting instances of the same codes, but no new ones'* while Given (2016, p. 135) defines it as reaching a point where *'additional data do not lead to any new emergent themes'* (Saunders *et al.*, 2018:1895). With regard to this paper, the review revealed that no additional new findings were found after analyzing a total of 129 articles. That is to say that the remaining 318 articles either used the same frames and delivered their message in the same manner as the preceding 129 articles or were neutral reports reporting on incidents or issues without attempting to frame their message. The methodology of framing analysis is explained in the next section.

Methodology

This paper undertakes content analysis of newspaper articles using the Transnational Comparative Framing Matrix (TCFM) put forward by Guo *et al.* (2012). The model of TCFM is based on Entman's (1993) approach of framing functions, the most widely used approach in media analysis. Robert Entman defines framing as the process of selecting "some aspects of a perceived reality and makes them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way

as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation.” (Entman, 1993, p. 52). As such, to frame is to select a particular aspect of our reality and focus on it when writing a text or presenting the news so that you define the problem and interpret it based on this reality. In this way, the frame is different from a theme. The theme of a text or an article is the content of the text or what the story is about. The frame, on the other hand, is how this story is told. Entman’s approach is centered on the functions of the frames, and according to him, frames have four functions: defining the problem, attributing the responsibility, evaluating the impact, and suggesting remedies (Entman, 1993, p. 52).

The TCFM model approaches content analysis through three steps. The first step entails identifying the frames used in the text under study, the second step entails understanding the context, and the third and final step entails examining how the frame reports on the theme through analyzing the aim or function of the frame (Guo *et al.*, 2012).

According to the model, there are three kinds of frames: generic frames, domestic frames, and issue-specific frames. Generic frames are those frames that are not related to a particular issue or a particular context. For example, the “Human Interest Frame” is a generic frame because it can be used when discussing any issue as long as the aim is to make the reader sympathize with the issue (Guo *et al.*, 2012). The “Problem Frame” is also a generic frame because it can be used when discussing any issue as long as the aim is to problematize the issue. According to David Altheide, there is an increase in the use of the problem frame” in the media. Almost all issues like crime, drugs, and diseases are problematized and exaggerated to generate fear (Altheide, 1997). Domestic frames, on the other hand, are those frames that are specific to the country or countries under study. Such frames would include political or cultural-position-driven frames, which are based on mainstream political/cultural beliefs. For example, War on Terror, although widely used in other countries now, is argued to be a popular domestic political-position frame in the USA. Finally, issue-specific frames are those frames that are specific to the issue under study, which in the case of this research is the migration issue (Guo *et al.*, 2012).

The first step when using the TCFM in content analysis is to identify which frames are being used by the studied text and to which groups of frames they belong. The second step is to identify the context on which the frame is focusing. For example, is the frame focusing on the people (individual context), the country (national context) or is it discussing the theme from a global perspective? The third and final step entails analyzing how the frame reports on the theme by analyzing the function or the aim of the frame. Questions that would be raised in this step could include Does the frame define the issue? Does the frame highlight the cause? Does the frame evaluate the impact of the issue? And does it suggest remedies? During this step, the researcher should make note of framing devices, such as common languages, catchphrases, and metaphors that characterize each frame (Guo *et al.*, 2012).

Findings of the content analysis

The bulk of the articles (94 out of 129) framed their messages using commonly used generic frames or culturally and politically driven frames. The problem frame and the human-impact frame were the two most commonly used, followed by the economic consequences frame. The remaining 35 articles used an issue specific frame. The issue-specific frame identified was the migration-asylum nexus frame that framed the issue based on distinguishing between those fleeing war/conflict and labor migrants (Appendix 2).

Problem frame

In all, 32 articles using this frame defined the refugee issue as “a Problem” with clear cause and effect. Out of the 32, 14 problematized the influx of refugees and the way Germany dealt with it, 10 problematized the process of providing shelter to the incoming refugees and the remaining 8 articles dealt with the rise of right-wing extremism, the refugee protest movement in 2013, and refugees’ integration.

In an attempt to problematize the influx of refugees, articles highlighted numbers. One article, for example, interviewed a senior staff at Frontex, EU border control Agency, and quoted him referring to the number of migrants as a “stream” that is “swelling” which gives the impression of an unstoppable flow. The interviewee also commented on Frontex’ duty to check the identity of the migrant to make sure they do not belong to the ISIS fighters which imply a link between migrants and terrorists (Bewarder and Kogel, 2015). Almost all articles dealing with the number of refugees through the problem frame used the frame to instigate fear.

The chancellor’s policy was criticized for offering a solution without indicating how to implement it as one article argued “we should move from ‘we can do it’ to ‘how we can do it.’” (Müchler *et al.*, 2015). Several articles commented that the rise of right-wing extremism and the fall of the popularity of both the CDU (Christian Democratic Party) and the SPD (Social Democratic Party) are the direct result of the chancellor’s open-door policy.

All of the ten articles dealing with the process of refugee shelters’ provision described it as chaotic and attributed such chaos to the failure of the federal government to consult with the concerned states, cities, and districts who were not properly informed of the actual number of refugees. Most of these articles, six out of ten, evaluated the impact of the problem. The discussion of the impact on the local population pointed out the conflict between the neighbors as a result of the process and the rise of right-wing extremism. The local population was described by one of these articles as “Worried neighbors” who were “ripped off their peace in the area” (Schmiemann, 2013). When evaluating the impact on refugees, the focus was on the dangerous conditions within the camps where two articles reported on incidents of attacks on refugees by refugees portraying as such refugee camps as danger sites indirectly instigating fear among the readers (Anonymous, 2014) (Anonymous, 2015).

Human-interest frame

Among the themes that were most commonly discussed using this frame were refugee shelter, irregular migration, minors, church asylum, and Merkel’ policy. The frame emotionalized the discussion around shelters focusing on the refugees themselves. The cause of any problems associated with accommodation was attributed either to the governing authorities or to the right-wing protestors described by one article as *disrupters* (Anonymous, 2013). One article reported on an incident where a refugee was beaten by the security guard of the camp. The article used strong emotional phrases and criticized the local state for resorting to the service of cheap security guards to save money (Dowideit, 2016). When reporting on irregular migration, emotional words were used to narrate stories about sinking boats. When discussing Merkel’ policy, one article referred to an actual interview with her and described her as ‘savior’ (Crolly *et al.*, 2015).

The concept of church asylum was described by one article, as “a holy imperative for Christians” (Kamann, 2015) while a second article highlighted that churches should adhere to humanitarian principles, not the law. When discussing minors, emotionally driven sentences were used to describe their journey and the troubles they face.

Economic consequences frame

Thirteen articles used the Economic Consequences Frame. While some of the articles focused on the possible economic contribution of refugees; majority of the articles highlighted the cost of hosting them and blamed their unemployment for their inability to integrate. Few focused on Germany's contribution towards the crisis either calling for reducing the economic contribution to the EU as no other country is contributing to receiving refugees or increasing the contribution to developing countries hosting a large number of refugees.

Migration-Asylum nexus frame (issue specific frame)

This frame was most commonly used to discuss irregular migration, the rise of right-wing extremism, the amendment to Asylum law, and the public perception towards refugees. Most articles using this frame relied on interviewing public figures. For example, one article interviewed the former SPD-chief who is critical of Merkel's open-door policy. The article quoted him "40 per cent of asylum seekers do not have the right to stay in Germany, we cannot open the doors to all the poverty of the world" (Werner, 2016). Another article used sarcasm when referring to the number of refugees highlighting that the majority are looking for economic opportunities and calling people sympathizing with them as "naïve and dreamy" (Schuster, 2014). Another one applauded the new amendment explaining it as aiming at balancing "the 'welcoming culture' in Germany towards politically persecuted refugees with faster deportations of people without perspective" (Krüger and Geiger, 2015).

Politically and culturally driven frames

Culturally driven frames refer to frames that transmit the message through the common beliefs and ideas of society. For example, framing Muslims in western media as having a conservative belief about women is a culturally driven frame because it relays the message on the basis of their ideas about Islam. The politically driven frame would, on the other hand, frame the message based on the common political stance of the nation. For example, framing migration as a security issue is a politically driven frame because it frames migration on the basis of the common political ideology (Guo et al., 2012).

Articles using the political frame mostly discussed irregular migration and framed the message from a security perspective criticizing the open door policy. Only three articles were identified using the culture frame. Two articles focused on the encounters between cultures but dealt with such encounter differently. One of the two focused on the positive impact of encountering different cultures highlighting the historical influence of Islam in Europe while the other raised the concern of Muslims' integration highlighting the incompatibility of Islam to western culture. The third article criticized the quota system and Poland's attempt to accept only Christian refugees.

Understanding the findings using the social construction of the target populations theory

The focus of the paper is on Merkel's initial welcoming policy and the amendments to the asylum laws that followed. The target population is those seeking asylum in Germany, which in 2015, were predominantly but not exclusively Syrians.

Apart from the forty articles using the human-interest frame, the majority of the analyzed articles (90 out of 129) negatively constructed the target population. In all, 32 articles problematized the open-door policy and the process of hosting refugees and attributed the rise of the rightwing to such policy. Most articles using the economic consequences frame focused on the cost of hosting refugees while only a few highlighted their possible economic contribution to society. Some of the articles using the Economic

Consequences Frame called for an increase in the contribution given to developing countries for the purpose of reducing the refugees' inflow into Europe; 35 articles constructed the target population by focusing on the reason behind migration using the migration-asylum nexus frame. Those fleeing war in 2015 were mostly Syrians and were constructed positively as a vulnerable group in need of protection fitting the category of "dependent" as described by the theory. The construction of asylum seekers coming from war driven countries in a positive manner can be attributed to the core belief of the society that every human being is entitled to protection. However, how society would approach asylum policy represents a policy core belief. Most analyzed articles using this frame questioned the genuineness of asylum claims made by those from non-conflict driven areas. This conservative approach to labor migration could be attributed to the center-right ideology of the newspaper.

The construction of asylum seekers from conflict-driven countries as "dependent" and labor migrants as "deviant" resonate with the amendments' objectives that were directed to facilitating the integration process of "refugees" who are accepted in Germany while restricting entry for those who are perceived as "deviant" and as such "undeserving".

Conclusion

The year 2015 is labeled as the year of Europe's Refugee Crisis during which it recorded the highest irregular migrant crossings through the Eastern Mediterranean route from Turkey to Europe. The response of many European countries was to tighten border control.

Germany, by contrast, responded by suspending the Dublin Regulation and opening its borders. Its liberal, welcoming policy increased further inflow, as indicated in the number of asylum applications submitted in 2015. The rate of recognition on such applications was also very high, resulting in either granting refugee status or subsidiary protection. Moreover, Germany also increased its resettlement, relocation, and humanitarian admission offerings. Such a liberal response, however, was not reflected in liberal policies. By contrast, the asylum legislation that followed was more restrictive.

This paper argued that the discrepancy between the initial response and the policy that followed could be attributed to external and internal forces. The external force is Germany's obligation to adhere to the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). The amendments introduced to German Asylum Law corresponded with the new regulations of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). Germany was obliged to adopt these amendments pursuant to EU Directives of 2013 that required incorporation into member states' legislation by July 2015.

The internal force is the influence of the different policy actors involved in the asylum legislation. The paper focused on the role of the media as a private policy actor, analyzed through content analysis of newspaper articles published by *Die Welt*, a center-right newspaper. The content analysis was undertaken using the TCFM based on Entman's approach of framing functions. The analysis revealed that most articles raised concerns about the consequences of Germany's open-door policy. Moreover, many articles framed the refugee inflow to Germany as a "problem", highlighting the possible misuse of the asylum channel by undeserving economic migrants.

The findings of the content analysis are explained using the theory of the SCTA. The analysis revealed that the majority of the analyzed articles problematized receiving and hosting refugees and constructed the target population through focusing on the reason behind migration differentiating between asylum seekers fleeing conflict areas and all

others who might be abusing the asylum channel. The former is constructed positively as a 'dependent' group and the later negatively as a 'deviant' group.

The findings of the content analysis resonate with the amendments that focused on facilitating the integration of accepted "refugees" but restricted further entry. As such, it could be argued that these findings explain the influence of the media on the amendments and as such provide an explanation to the discrepancy between the initial response and the amendments. However, given that the analysis focused on one newspaper with a center-right ideology, the findings are not representative. The aim of the paper is only to provide an example of how the German media dealt with the so-called refugee crisis and to suggest using the theory of the SCTA to analyze the link between asylum legislation and the construction of asylum seekers. To understand how asylum legislation is influenced by how asylum seekers are constructed, more studies are needed. Such studies could analyze the role played by other media outputs and/or the role played by other policy actors in constructing the target of the policy.

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Appendix 1

Germany's
response to the
2015 refugee
crisis

Month	No.
Jan	5,975
Feb	4,550
March	4,895
April	4,680
May	5,280
June	7,850
July	9,800
August	11,220
Sept	18,085
Oct	30,215
Nov	30,865
Dec	25,250

595

Table AI.
Asylum applications
to Germany on
monthly basis during
2015

Source: Eurostat 2015

Year	Total application assessed for asylum	Refugee Status	Humanitarian visa	Subsidy protection	Total positive decision	Rejection
First instance	103,845	101,135	220	60	101,415	2,430
Final decision	2,885	2,435	60	65	2,560	325

Table AII.
The number of first
instance decision and
the number after
appeal concerning
asylum applications
by Syrians in
Germany during
2015

Source: Eurostat 2015

Year	Total no. of articles	Articles selected for the analysis
2013	46	17
2014	41	23
2015	160	45
2016	200	44
<i>Total</i>	<i>447</i>	<i>129</i>

Table AIII.
Number of articles on
issues related to
migration by year
Friday issues,
Die Welt newspaper
(2013-2016)

Source: Computed by the Author

Table AIV.
Die welt analyzed
articles using TCFM
model

No.	Title of article	Date of publication	Context of the article	Frame used	Frame functions	Framing device
1	Refugees move into a Hostel	April 12, 2013	State of Berlin	Problem	Define the problem	Use of words
2	The First refugees have moved in	April 24, 2013	The neighborhood	Problem	Define the problem, identify the cause and evaluate the impact	The use of words
3	Schengen is controlling again	May 31, 2013	Europe	Securitization and border control (politically driven)	Define the problem	The use of words
4	I Love what I have	21 June, 2013	Global	Culture	Define the problem	Highlight difference between Europe and the Arab world
5	The concept of accommodating refugees	July 5, 2013	Individual (the refugees)	Human impact	Define the problem and suggest solution	Factual/Relying on/ statistics
6	The formation of camps is problematic	July 12, 2013	Individual (refugees)	Human-Impact	Define the problem and highlight the impact	Use of words
7	Round Table about the camp without any result	July 19, 2013	The state	Problem	Define problem and highlight its cause	Relying on quotes
8	Refugees 23%	August 2, 2013	Regional and National (Germany and Europe)	Migration-Asylum nexus (issue specific)	Define problem	Use of words
9	A Berlin refugee shelter in a state of emergency,	August 23, 2013	Individual (refugees)	Problem	Define problem, highlight its cause and its impact	Use of words
10	Welcome to the neighborhood,	September 13, 2013	Individual (host population and refugees)	Human-impact	Define problem and indicate its impact	Use of words
11	An unbelievable tragedy	October 4, 2013	Individual (refugees)	Human-impact	Define problem and indicate its impact	Use of words
12	Italy loosen its asylum policy after Lampedusa tragedy	October 11, 2013	Individual (refugees)	Human-impact	Define problem and indicate its impact and offer a solution	Relay on quotes
13	Stages of Misry	October 18, 2013	Germany and Europe	Human impact -	Define the problem and highlight its impact	Use of words
14	Alone to Germany,	November 1, 2013	Individual (refugee children)	Human impact	Define the problem and highlight its impact	Use of words

(continued)

No.	Title of article	Date of publication	Context of the article	Frame used	Frame functions	Framing device
15	More than 20,000 Syrians fled to Germany.	November 13, 2013	National (Germany)	Migration-Asylum nexus (issue specific)	Define the problem	Use of words
16	Peace in Camp Friedland (village in Lower Saxony).	November 22, 2013	Individual (refugees)	Human-impact	Define the issue, its cause, its impact, and provide a solution	Use of words
17	States want to take in another 5000 refugees.	December 6, 2013	National (Germany)	Migration-Asylum nexus	Define the issue	Use of words
18	Italy and Greece save hundred from boats	3 January, 2014	Europe	Human impact	Define the issue	Factual
19	Police operation in front of emergency shelter.	January 10, 2014	National (Germany)	Problem	Define the issue and highlight its impact	Quotation from different political parties.
20	Refugees attacked by Knife	January 24, 2014	Individual (refugees) and (community)	Problem	Define the issue and highlight its impact	Referring to other incidents to highlight the frequency
21	Uncontrolled growth bear the potential for conflict	January 31, 2014	National (Germany) – regional (Europe)	Migration – Asylum Nexus (Issue specific frame)	Define the issue	Interview with officials
22	Integration ministries demand more recognition for migrants	March 21, 2014	National (Germany)	Human-impact	Define the issue	Relying on quotes
23	Italy is groaning under the pressure of refugees	April 11, 2014	Europe	Problem	Define the issue, its cause and its impact	Use of words
24	Courage to Discouragement	6 June, 2014	Europe (regional)	Migration-asylum nexus	Define the issue, highlight its cause and offer a solution	Use of words and tone
25	Germany takes in a further 10,000 refugees	June 13, 2014	Nation (Germany)	Human-impact	Define the issue and its cause	Quotes from politicians and Civil society organizations
26	Asylum seekers: Government counts on material benefits	June 20, 2014	National (Germany)	Migration-Asylum nexus	Define the issue	Use of words

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Table AIV.

Table AIV.

No.	Title of article	Date of publication	Context of the article	Frame used	Frame functions	Framing device
27	We have seen how empty your country is	July 4, 2014	National (the state)	Problem	Define the issue	Quoting refugees
28	European Court: Deportation detainees are not permitted to go to prison	July 18, 2014	Regional (Europe)	Human –impact	Define the issue and its impact	Quotes from Human right activists
29	Countries are against Hamburg. Advance to re-distribute	July 25, 2014	National (Germany)	Economic consequence	Define the issue and its cause	Neutral
30	From the tent in the desert to the tent at the Ruhr ,	August 22, 2014	Individual (refugees)	Human Impact	Define the issue, its cause and its impact	Comparison
31	Interview with Katrin Göring-Eckhardt, head of the Green Party in Parliament	August 29, 2014	National	Human-impact	Define the issue and offer solution	Quoting and Use of words pictures: Use of words
32	Rising Expenses for Asylum seekers	September 5, 2014	German State	Human-impact	Define the issue and its impact	Use of words
33	How a former Miss Germany helps the poorest	September 19, 2014	German State	Human impact	Define the issue	Use of words and tone
34	Essen security personnel beat a refugee into hospital,	October 10 2014	Individual (refugees)	Human impact	Define the issue	Use of words
35	Federal states demand more money for refugees from the German state,	October 17, 2014	National (Local States)	Economic Consequences	Define problem	Quotes
36	Pistorius accuses Interior Minister of Cynicism	October 24, 2014	Nation (Germany)	Migration-Asylum nexus	Define the issue	Use of words
37	How Right-wing Populists are ruining Help for Refugees	November 21, 2014	National	Problem	Define the issue and highlight its cause	Use of words
38	Confederation and States argue over Deportations : The Coalition is accusing the federal states, especially Baden-Württemberg of “too much sympathy with refugees	November 28, 2014	Germany	Human-impact frame	Define the issue	Neutral
39	We need strategies	29 November 2014	National (State)	Human-impact	Define the issue, highlight its cause and impact and suggest remedies	Quotation from the refugees and politician who are demanding rights to refugees

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No.	Title of article	Date of publication	Context of the article	Frame used	Frame functions	Framing device
40	Senator counts on harsh verdicts after Hamburg Riots, We need every single Graduate	December 27, 2014	National (state)	Problem	Define the issue and its cause	Use of words
41	Germans are welcoming Refugees	January 2, 2015	Nation (Germany)	Economic	Define the problem	Use of words
42	Khaled stabbed by Roommate, We are sending craftsman to the North of Iraq	January 9, 2015	National	Migration-Refugee Nexus (Issue specific)	Define the issue	Use of words
43	Union criticised de Maizière for Sharia-comparison	January 23, 2015	National	Problem	Define the issue	Neutral
44	Flight under the cross	February 6, 2015	National	Migration-Refugee Nexus (Issue specific)	Define the issue and suggest solution	Use of words
45	Asylum 70%, Border Protection does not mean Refugee Defence	February 13, 2015	National	Human-impact	Define the issue	The author relies on quotes
46	Government stocks up help for refugees in Lebanon	February 20, 2015	National	Human impact	Define the issue, identify the cause and the impact	Use of words
47	Most Asylum seekers come to Germany, The next thing that will burn refugees,	March 4, 2015	National (Germany)	Migration-Asylum Nexus	Define the issue	Use of words
48	Better chances for young refugees,	March 13, 2015	Europe	Problem	Define the issue	Interviewing officials
49	EU plans military action against smugglers in the Mediterranean	March 20, 2015	Global	Human impact	Define the issue	Use of words
50	Neukölln has become even fuller and more Arabic, From the Refugee to the Craftsman	March 27, 2015	Individual (refugees)	Human Impact	Define the issue	quotation by politicians
51		April 4, 2015	State	Problem	Define the issue	Use of words
52		April 17, 2015	State	Human impact	Define problem and highlight its cause and impact	Use of words
53		April 24, 2015	Europe	Securitization and border control (Politically driven)	Define issue	Quotes from officials
54		April 29, 2016	Nation (city of Neukölln)	Economic consequences	Define issue	Interview with officials
55		May 5, 2015	National	Economic-impact	Define the issue	The tone and, quoting

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Table AIV.

No.	Title of article	Date of publication	Context of the article	Frame used	Frame functions	Framing device
56	The Federal State has nothing to do with the costs on the ground, The allocated Refugee	May 22, 2015	National	Problem	Define the issue and highlight its cause	Use of words
57	Market before State	May 29, 2015	Individual (refugees) National (each country)	Human impact	Define the issue and its cause	Use of words
58	Only Christian refugee welcome	June 6, 2015	National	The need for the economic contribution of refugees – Muslim vs Christian (Culturally driven)	Define the issue and suggest solutions	Quotation and interviews
59	Asyl yes but properly	June 26, 2015	Regional Europe)	The Migration-Asylum nexus	Define the issue, its cause and its impact	Author relies on Quotes by civil society organizations
60	Gauck calls attacks against Mirkel and the Girl	July 3, 2015	National (Germany)	Migration-Asylum nexus	Define the issue and its cause and suggest solution	Neutral
61	Even Toddlers ends up in Germany without parents, Acceptance for refugees sinks	July 10, 2015	National	Human impact	Define the issue, its cause, and offers solutions	Quotes of officials
62	The Hitler-greeter of Freital	July 17, 2015	National (Germany)	Human impact	Define the issue and its cause and suggest solution	<i>Use of words and use of quotes</i>
63	In Saxony, open xenophobia shows itself like nowhere else	July 24, 2015	Individual (refugee children) National	Human impact	Define the issue and its impact	Use of words
64	The big failure	July 31, 2015	National	Migration-Asylum nexus (topic specific)	Define the issue	The article reports on the results of a survey
65	Refugee tragedy: Many dead in smuggler truck	August 7, 2015	State/town	Economic Consequence	Define the issue and its cause	Use of words
66		August 14, 2015	National	Migration-Asylum nexus	Define the issue and offers solution	The article reports on interviews with officials
67		August 21, 2015	National/global	Human impact	Define the issue	Use of words and tone
68		August 28, 2015	Europe	Human impact	Define the issue and its cause	Quotes by Merkel and other politicians

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No.	Title of article	Date of publication	Context of the article	Frame used	Frame functions	Framing device
69	A Dead Child	September 4, 2015	Global	Human impact	Define the issue	Use of words
70	800,000 refugees do not overwhelm the Social State	September 11, 2015	National	Problem	Define the issue	The issue is discussed through interviewing officials Use of words
71	Stricter rules for refugees	September 18, 2015	National (Germany)	The Migration-Asylum nexus	Define the issue	The tone and use of words
72	Lean results from Brussels	September 25, 2015	Regional (Europe)	Problem	Define the issue, its cause and suggest solutions	Neutral
73	Fear of refugees is growing	October 2, 2015	National	Migration-Asylum nexus (issue specific)	Define the issue	Neutral
74	Where is Merkel' master plan	October 10, 2015	National (Germany)	Human-impact	Define the issue	Report on an interview with Merkel
75	Inverted roles in the Bundestag	October 16, 2015	National (Germany)	Problem	Define the issue and suggest solutions	Use of words
76	What we want to achieve	October 23, 2015	National (Germany)	Problem	Define the issue and its cause and suggest solutions	Use of words
77	Integration is the Boss' responsibility	October 30, 2015	National (Germany)	Problem	Define the issue and its cause and suggest solutions	Use of words
78	Coalition agrees on faster asylum policies	November 6, 2015	National (Germany)	Migration-Asylum Nexus	Define the issue	Refers to statistics
79	Emergency letter from civil servants: Asylum processes unconstitutional	November 13, 2015	National (Germany)	Political driven (Securitization and border control)	Define the issue	Quotes of officials
80	Culture, now more than ever	November 20, 2015	National/state	Culturally driven frames	Define the issue and evaluate its impact	Use of words
81	And our Wealth	November 27, 2015	National	Economic consequences	Define the issue and suggest solutions	Neutral
82	Turkey wants to send refugees to Syria	December 4, 2015	Europe	Migration-Asylum Nexus	Define the issue	Use of words
83	Bavaria triples number of deportation	December 11, 2015	National (Germany)	Migration-Asylum nexus	Define the issue	Use of words

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Table AIV.

Table AIV.

No.	Title of article	Date of publication	Context of the article	Frame used	Frame functions	Framing device
84	A bad type of naivety	December 18, 2015	Europe	Human-impact	Define the issue and its impact	The article is based on an interview with Anton Hofreiter, head of the Green party Use of words
85	European Council Commissioner demands more help for Refugees	December 20, 2015	Europe	Migration-Asylum nexus (issue specific)	Define the issue and offer solution	
86	61% says yes to an upper limit for refugees	January 1, 2016	National	Migration-Asylum nexus (issue specific) 21	Define the issue	Reports on a survey
87	Refugee Crisis became question of fate for the EU	January 15, 2016	Europe	Economic impact	Define the issue and its cause	Use of words
88	Angel Merkel, home alone	January 22, 2016	Europe	Problem	Define the issue	Use of words
89	Sweden sends back 80,000 refugees	January 23, 2016	National (Sweden)	Migration-asylum nexus	Define the issue	Use of words
90	Voter Confusion	February 5, 2016	Nation Germany	Problem	Define the issue and its cause	Providing a result of a survey that shows that citizens are against Merkel policy Use of words
91	Refugees with Facebook	February 12, 2016	Individual (refugees)	Migration-asylum nexus	Define the issue	Use of words
92	We can't imprison the people	February 26, 2016	Europe	Problem	Define issue and its cause	Use of words
93	Germans do not see a united Europe anymore	March 4, 2016	Germany and Europe	Economic consequence	Define the issue, its cause and offer solution	Use of words
94	Europe Know-it-all	March 11, 2016	Europe	Problem	Define the issue	Use of words
95	Merkel is in the team SPD	March 18, 2016	Germany	Human impact	Define the issue and its impact	Relies on a survey
96	Will those who do not integrate themselves be deported soon	April 1, 2016	National (Germany)	Migration-asylum nexus	Define the issue	Neutral
97	How Refugees become plumbers 2016	April 8, 2016	National (Jordan)	Migration-asylum nexus	Define the issue and its cause	Use of words
98	Resolutions of remarkable harshness	April 15, 2016	Germany	Politically driven (negotiation)	Define the issue and its cause	Use of words

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No.	Title of article	Date of publication	Context of the article	Frame used	Frame functions	Framing device
99	End of the refugee crisis	April 22, 2016	Europe	(politically driven)	Define the issue	Use of words
100	The Refugee crisis never existed in this way	May 6, 2016	National	Economic impact	Define the issue and its cause	The article reports on an interview with an official
101	It cannot only be Sigmar Gabriel's fault	May 13, 2016	National	Migration-Asylum nexus (issue specific)	Define the issue	Use of words
102	Arrived in a different country	May 27, 2016	National	Human-impact,	Define the issue, its cause and impact	Use of words
103	Seven Syrian and a landlord cannot find together	June 3, 2016	Germany	Problem	Define the issue and its cause	Use of words and tone
104	Jail Time for Online Agitator	June 17, 2016	State	Migration-Asylum nexus (issue specific)	Define the issue	Use of words
105	The lies of refugees	June 24, 2016	Europe	Migration-asylum nexus	Define the issue and its cause	Statistics to indicate numbers are high
106	Refugee Wave reaches employment market	July 1, 2016	National	Economic-impact	Define the issue and its cause	The author uses statistics
107	We need stricter rules,	July 8, 2016	National	Culture	Define the issue and its cause	The article discusses the issue through reporting on an interview with the sociologist
108	Extremism which breaks out spontaneously	July 22, 2016	National	Problem	Define the issue and its cause	The tone and use of words
109	The attackers make fun of the country that took them in	July 29, 2016	National	Border control securitization (politically driven)	Define the issue and its cause and offer solution	Use of words
110	More competent than social workers	August 5, 2016	State	Human Impact	Define the issue	Use of words
111	Should borders be closed,	August 15, 2016	National	Asylum-migration nexus	Define the issue	report on the result of a questionnaire
112	UN failure in refugee aid	August 19, 2016	International community (global)	Asylum-migration nexus	Define the issue and its cause	Use of words
113	The difficulties of integration	Sept 2, 2016	National	Problem	Define the issue and its cause	Use of words

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Table AIV.

Table AIV.

No.	Title of article	Date of publication	Context of the article	Frame used	Frame functions	Framing device
114	Integration cannot be measured in numbers	September 9, 2016	Germany	Migration-asylum nexus	Define the issue and offer solution	Use of words
115	Why the AfD candidate admire Muslims	September 16, 2016	Germany	Migration-asylum nexus	Define the issue	Use of words
116	Well Educated Christians are preferred	Sept 23, 2016	National	Migration-Asylum nexus	Define the issue	Article neutral – only report on result of survey
117	Greece is endangering the refugee deal	September 30, 2016	National (Greece and Turkey)	Problem	Define the issue highlighting the cause	Neutral
118	The Defensive Mayor	October 7, 2016	Individual (mayor)	Human Impact	Define the issue and its cause	Use of words
119	From Miracle to Drama,	October 14, 2016	National	Human impact	Define the issue and evaluate its impact	Use of words
120	Germany fails at sending back refugees	October 21, 2016	EU	Problem	Define the issue and its cause	Use of words
121	A Civil Servant cannot wear veil 2016	November 4, 2016	National	Problem	Define the issue and suggest solutions	Reporting on an interview
122	European Parallels	November 11, 2016	Germany and Europe	Human impact	Define the issue	<i>Use of words</i>
123	German judges [. .]	November 18, 2016	German	Human-impact	Define the issue and evaluate its impact	Use of words
124	We have to look at refugees closely again	November 25, 2016	Europe	Migration-asylum nexus	Define the issue	Neutral
125	More refugees are coming again	December 2, 2016	Germany	Problem	Define the issue	Relaying on quotes of officials
126	Making an Election Campaign with a “No” to a Double Passport	December 9, 2016	Germany	Problem	Define the issue and its cause	Neutral
127	Why the refugee crisis will become considerably more expensive.	December 16, 2016	National (state)	Economic consequence	Define the issue and evaluate its impact	The author relies on quotes from politician
128	Arrived to stay without permission	December 23, 2016	Europe	Migration-asylum nexus	Define the issue and suggest solutions	Use of words
129	EU should get refugees directly from Aleppo	December 30, 2016	Europe	Migration-asylum nexus	Define the issue	Neutral