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MASTER THESIS

**Framing Displaced Persons In
News Articles In 2015 And 2022: A
Comparative Topic Modelling**

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Abstract

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by Andrea BREGOLI

In 2022, Europe faced the arrival of over 8 million Ukrainians fleeing the Russian invasion. The overall positive and solidary reaction to this displacement stands in stark contrast to previous displacements, such as the "refugee crisis" of 2015. Taking into account that the public mainly informs itself about such events through domestic media, this explorative analysis aims to uncover the differences and similarities in the framing of refugee and asylum issues between 2022 and 2015. It does so by identifying the frames employed in the news articles via the unsupervised algorithm of topic modelling, a quantitative text analysis method, in over 40 Swiss newspapers (N = 12'676) and two time-frames: January 2015 to December 2015 and January 2022 to December 2022. The findings reveal that frames related to accommodation and personal accounts are the most prominent in both years, but that 2022 lacks a politicisation frame that encompasses the social and political disagreement regarding refugees and asylum-seekers in Swiss society. Furthermore, while 2022 sees a more prominent solidarity frame, 2015 sees more dominant frames related to different border situations and European politics, often carrying a securitisation discourse. In sum, the results suggest that variation exists in the deservingness discourse of refugees in Swiss media, since the portrayal of Ukrainian refugees was not ambivalent and rather solutions-oriented, but the portrayal of non-Ukrainian displaced persons, even in 2022, was politicised, ambiguous, and problem-oriented.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

At the beginning of 2022, a Russian invasion of Ukraine that would cause the sudden displacement of over 8 million individuals in Europe (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2022) was an unimaginable scenario for the average European citizen. Despite these tragic events, or perhaps because of, society and politics in Europe and all around the world showed great support for Ukraine and solidarity with Ukrainians. However, given how the EU and Europe in general have dealt with asylum-seekers and refugees in the past, one couldn't help but wonder how the situation of Ukrainian refugees would be handled. Surprisingly, within two weeks, and in record time, the EU activated the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD), a temporary protection status created in 2001 under the European Union's (EU) asylum policy, for the first time. The TPD essentially represents safe access to EU territory without any lengthy asylum procedures, a most welcomed step for those fleeing war and seeking asylum and protection (Carrera & Ineli-Ciger, 2023). However,

"[w]hile the capacity to reach a common EU response is certainly to be praised, this same response raises a critical question: Why is the current situation so different from other recent or still ongoing large-scale forced displacements that the activation of the TP Directive is immediately justified? Or, to put it more bluntly, why is the conflict in Ukraine different from the recent conflicts in non-European countries, such as Libya, Afghanistan, and Syria?" (Carrera & Ineli-Ciger, 2023, p. 3)

While it is not the purpose of this investigation to answer the questions above, it is important to provide differing insights and evidence that represent elements of a larger answer. An obvious first step lies in the media coverage of refugees themselves, since these are known to have a more negative, problem-oriented, and politicised media portrayal (Eberl et al., 2018; Esser et al., 2016; Ruedin & D'Amato, 2015). This stands in stark contrast with

news articles depicting Ukrainian refugees as "real refugees" (Serrao, 2022), which suggests that the available information in public discourse is able to differentiate "real" and "fake" refugees. Nevertheless, even if it is possible to qualitatively investigate the argumentation from such articles, it cannot be said that such differentiations are representative of the public discourse. If one assumes, however, that media is an information source that reflects the public discourse, the analysis of information in news articles portraying refugees might provide representative answers.

Therefore, this analysis will compare the media framing of refugees between 2022, where the vast majority of refugees came from Ukraine, and 2015, where most people originated from Syria, Afghanistan, and Iraq. In order to investigate the media portrayal of refugees, framing theory will be used, as its basic premise is that human choice and perception are contingent on the way information is presented. More precisely, the way in which problems are defined, causes are diagnosed, moral judgements are made, or solutions are suggested, will ultimately impact the way people think or act (Entman, 1993). In order to achieve representative results that relate to the content of the information itself, quantitative text analysis methods will be applied, given their ability to analyse large collections of documents by viewing text as data. More specifically, news articles will be analysed through structural topic modelling, which, simply put, algorithmically groups words that are likely to co-occur into one cluster. This cluster, or topic, is what this analysis understands as a frame, since it represents relevant words that can be interpreted as an overarching theme. The collection of different word clusters, or frames, will be compared to each other in order to uncover differences and similarities in the framing of both years.

Topic modelling, by giving semantically coherent and satisfactory results, is an increasingly popular approach in media analysis and was thus already applied to the media coverage of refugees in 2015 (Czymara & van Klinger, 2019; Greussing & Boomgaarden, 2017; Heidenreich et al., 2019). Given the recency of the 2022 events, this is not the case for 2022. Taking this into account, the current research design is the first approach not only to applying topic modelling to news articles in 2022, but also to comparing it with 2015. Given the novelty of this approach, this investigation must be understood as being primarily an exploratory analysis with the aim of delivering first insights about the data used. In order to achieve this goal, this analysis will

provide the asylum-related context of its case study, Switzerland¹, and Europe overall. Moreover, the theoretical framework revolving around framing theory, as well as literature specific to the framing of refugees and asylum-seekers, will also be presented. This will be followed by the presentation of the data and methods used, as well as a detailed literature review of existing framing analyses. Lastly, the results and analysis will be presented, followed by a brief discussion and conclusion evaluating the implications of the results.

¹Switzerland was chosen as a case study, since no specific framing analyses related to the coverage of displaced persons in Swiss media exist.

Chapter 2

Asylum in Europe

The objective of this chapter is to present a concise introduction to the European asylum context, followed by an examination of the displacement events that occurred in 2015 and 2022 across Europe. Subsequently, the focus will shift towards the specific asylum context of our case study, Switzerland, by analysing the impact of both aforementioned events on the country.

2.1 The asylum system of the EU

Talking about the EU asylum system before the 1980s is difficult, as a proper, coherent system did not exist. In fact, it is even difficult to talk about an international asylum system before the 1970s. The original *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, signed by only 29 countries in 1951, applied only to European refugees (Hamlin, 2021, p. 97), as it was designed to cope with the aftermath of the Second World War, and was only extended to refugees outside Europe with the *1967 Protocol to the Geneva Convention* (Hatton et al., 2004). It is with increasing pressures on multiple European borders during the 1980s that the European Economic Community saw large incentives to coordinate and harmonise migration policies, which is how the beginnings of the EU migration policy must be understood. Internally, these migration policies can be mainly reflected via the Schengen Agreement of 1985 and the Single European Act of 1986, promoting mobility among member states. Externally, the harmonisation of visa policies, carrier sanctions, and the Dublin Convention of 1990 represent the most important policies.

In Figure 2.1 we can clearly see the stark increase in asylum applications developing in the 1980s and reaching a peak at the beginning of the 1990s due to the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the Yugoslav wars, reaching almost 700'000 applications in 1992. The EU saw not only Eastern European refugees, but also many others coming from Turkey, Iran, Sri Lanka, or Afghanistan. Together with the stark increase in applications also came

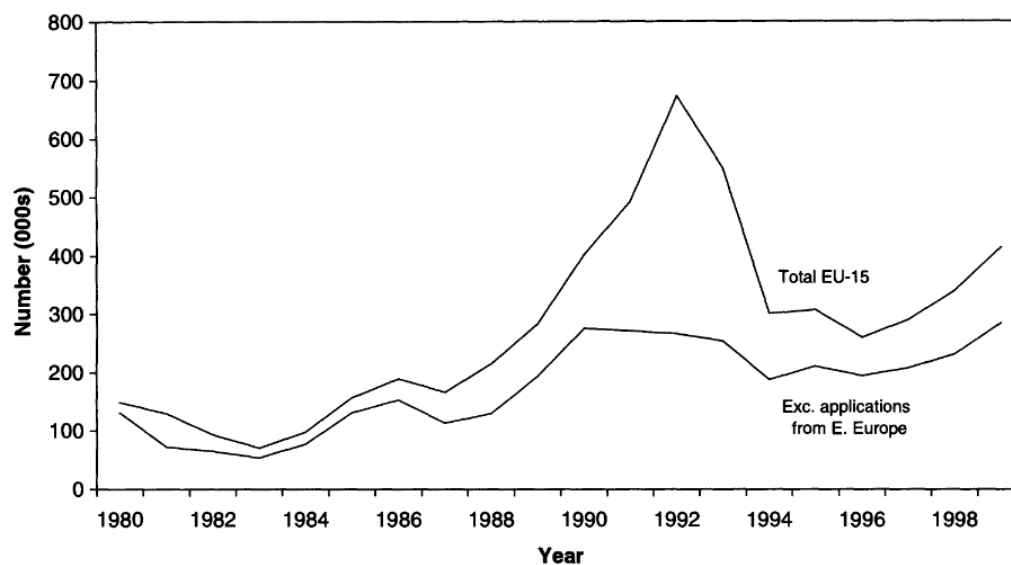


Figure 2.1: Accepted asylum applications in the EU (1980-1999). Source: Hatton et al. (2004)

a stark increase in asylum restrictions. The above-mentioned Dublin regulation, signed in 1990, introduced a few restrictive principles in order to potentially curb asylum flows towards Europe, such as the “safe third country” and “safe country of origin” principles (Hatton, 2005).

The former principle states that countries can deny asylum procedures if the applicant has transited through a country deemed safe, essentially introducing a condition to lodge the asylum application in the EU country of first entry, thus putting pressure on member states of the EU periphery. This aims to deal with what was coined the problem of “asylum shopping”, since before the Dublin regulations applicants could lodge an application in other member states if their application was denied elsewhere. The latter principle is a practice that was first introduced by Denmark in 1986, where member states can presume a lack of a persecution risk in origin countries it deems “safe”, essentially leaving it up to the states’ interpretation of what constitutes a “well-founded fear of persecution” (de Haas et al., 2018, p. 349).

It is important to emphasise that the Dublin regulation is one of the first EU asylum policies because the Maastricht Treaty founding the EU, followed by the Amsterdam Treaty, formed the basis to apply EU wide policies. It is thus as of this point that one can formally mention an EU asylum system, with the acceptance of the Dublin Convention becoming an *acquis* for EU membership. Further regulations concern the Dublin II convention, the European Dactyloscopy, and the Common European Asylum System, which came into force in the 2000s and introduced temporary protection statuses

and a variety of resettlement programmes (Hatton, 2005). The TpD, a regulation introduced in 2001, was a policy response to the Kosovo crisis at the end of the 1990s, which also caused a mass influx of refugees, seen in Figure 2.1 at the end of the depicted period.

In conclusion, it can be said that the development of the EU asylum system was closely linked to the growing influx of asylum applications following the significant events related to the dissolution of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. These events required the harmonisation of national asylum policies in order to effectively manage and regulate these migratory flows. These efforts mainly resulted in the Dublin regulations still applied to date. The complexities and challenges associated with these laws, which primarily place the main onus on member states located at the periphery of the European Union (Trauner, 2016), became particularly evident during the third significant event linked to asylum: the “refugee crisis” of 2015. While it is not the primary objective of this study to examine the utilisation of the term “refugee crisis”, Hess et al. (2017) contend that the events of 2015, characterised by significant migrant flows, were not indicative of a crisis of refugees. Instead, they suggest that it was a crisis of the European border regime, which experienced a structural and historical defeat with the migration flows of 2015.

2.2 The “refugee crisis” of 2015

At the beginning of 2015, Europe saw an increase in asylum claims, mainly from individuals coming from war-torn regions such as Iraq, Afghanistan, and especially Syria, due to the ongoing civil war that started in 2011. A total of 1.2 million asylum applications have been lodged in member states of the EU in 2015 and a third of them were made by Syrians (Eurostat, 2016). The majority of new arrivals occurred during the summer, when up to 150'000 individuals claimed asylum. Compared to the previous year, three times as many applications have been lodged since the majority of individuals arrived from Northern Africa through Lampedusa, an Italian island in the Mediterranean Sea. In 2015, more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of new applications came through the Aegean Sea from Turkey to Greece via the Lesvos and Kos islands (Heisbourg, 2015, p. 7). The fact that the majority of arrivals came through the sea led to the tragic deaths of thousands of individuals. These were frequent also before 2014, but together with the increase in arrivals in 2015, media and public attention in Europe has been much greater. In September, at the peak

of asylum claims, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, António Guterres issued a statement reading: “This is primarily a refugee crisis, not only a migration phenomenon” (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2015).

The 1.2 million new asylum applications in the EU were met with ambiguous positions from the side of its member states (Holmes & Castañeda, 2016). On one hand, the increase in asylum rates was accompanied by the installation of tougher border controls and a strong increase in anti-immigrant rhetoric (Casella Colombeau, 2020; Hess et al., 2017). The most prominent example lies in Hungary, when in July 2015, the state decided to erect a physical barrier along its border with Serbia and decided to close its border to Croatia in October 2015 (Heidenreich et al., 2019, p. 178). Hungary received attention for its overt xenophobia from President Viktor Orbán, but didn’t differ much from other countries, since borders were also sealed with razor-wire barriers between Greece and Turkey and Spain and Morocco, for example. Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia were reluctant to participate in any EU burden-sharing scheme and also expressed xenophobic remarks: “In Slovakia, we don’t have mosques, we only want to choose the Christians” said one Slovakian official; Jaroslaw Kacynski, the leader of the Poland’s Law and Justice Party, stated that the migrants carry “various types of parasites”, which “could be dangerous” (Heisbourg, 2015, p. 11).

On the other hand, more positive reactions were seen when Angela Merkel allowed the entry of thousands of people blocked at the Hungarian border after the political pressure rose due to the death of the three-year-old Alan Kurdi (Galantino, 2022, p. 8). This “Willkommenkultur” [welcome culture], with Merkel’s famous slogan “Wir schaffen das” [we can do this] had however another side of the coin. Germany saw an increase in anti-immigrant violence during the year and the force of the debate around this issue influenced a series of more restrictive migration legislation, even after 2016, and greatly influenced the rise of the far-right populist party “Alternative für Deutschland” (AfD) [Alternative for Germany] (Czymara & van Klinger, 2019; Griebel & Vollmann, 2019).

In fact, many EU countries saw a souveraniste backlash, a “return to the old religion of tightly controlled borders and the unfettered sovereignty of nation-states” (Heisbourg, 2015, p. 10). The “refugee crisis” of 2015 does not explain this latter phenomenon alone, since the EU was already facing its

own “European crisis” with many challenges, such as the Greek crisis, Euroscepticism, and the uncertainty of the United Kingdom’s role. The happenings of 2015 served to augment the tensions within the EU, especially along the lines of its asylum policy, which overburdened the southern member states despite financial, operational, and relocation support (Trauner, 2016). For example, Italy bore the primary responsibility of search and rescue operations in the Mediterranean since it was the main entry and transit point for individuals wanting to enter Europe until 2014 (Galantino, 2022, p. 7). For this reason, Dublin and its unfair allocation system were heavily criticised by Italy (Hess et al., 2017, p. 10). Hungary, which was seeing refugees as early as winter 2014, might remain in memory as impeding refugees from continuing through the Balkan route. However, it can be argued that it was, in fact, acting in line with the Dublin regulation, which mandates asylum requests to be processed in the country of first-entry. Germany, on the other hand, was the one dropping Dublin rules with the humanitarian standpoint of the “welcome culture” (Heisbourg, 2015, p. 12). This raised doubts about the effectiveness of the Dublin Convention, since it was ineffective in both preventing asylum applications and completing transfers between member states (Garcés-Mascreñas, 2015, p. 2).

It is for the above-mentioned elaborations that Hess et al. (2017) argue that the true crisis lied in the broader challenges stemming from an ineffective EU asylum policy, particularly the Dublin regulation, rather than the sheer volume of asylum claims alone. In fact, asylum application rates were already relatively high in 2014 due to the crossings in the Mediterranean Sea and continued to be high even after 2015, but it was 2015 that saw a larger perception of the emergency rhetoric by national and European politics (Hess et al., 2017, p. 8). Notwithstanding, it must be noted that only a quarter of the total registered refugees in 2015 have made their way into the EU. The highest share of individuals leaving their war-torn regions stayed mostly within their regional groupings of states. Turkey registered over 2 million refugees, Lebanon around 1.1 million, and Jordan around 630’000.

2.3 The “refugee crisis” of 2022

On February 24, 2022, after months of acute diplomatic relations with the Russian military, which was stationed along the border with Ukraine regarding the 8-year-long conflict, along with tensions due to Crimea’s annexation and occupation of the Donbas region, the Russian military invaded Ukraine

with a goal of overrunning the country and deposing its government in 72 hours. 100 days into the invasion, Russia was able to control only one fifth of Ukrainian territory (Zawadzka-Palucka, 2022, p. 97). The invasion has led to an exodus of the Ukrainian population—numbers as of December 2022 show that around 8.13 million have fled the country to reside abroad since the war broke out (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2022). Between the end of February and the beginning of May, a time window of around one month, 5.6 million people have left Ukraine and around 13 million were displaced. 2.85 million have gone to Russia, 1.54 million to Poland, 1.02 million to Germany, 472'000 to the Czech Republic, 173'000 to Italy and 159'000 to Spain. Additionally, per December 2022, 270'000 Ukrainians were registered in Canada and in the United States (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2022). These numbers greatly surpass the one's from 2015 and generally any displacement of persons in Europe since the Second World War, as it is not only large, but also occurred in a relatively small time frame.

The reactions to this massive exodus are deeply interwoven, yet can be separated into three main categories: the involvement of the European and international community in the direct and indirect effects of the war, the activation of the TPD, and the overall enthusiastic reception of Ukrainian refugees. One of the paragraphs of the EU regulation introducing the TPD in 2022, the Council Implementing Decision 2022/382, clearly illustrates the interconnectedness of the three categories:

“Following the invasion, which seeks to undermine European and global security and stability, the European Council, condemned Russia’s unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine in the strongest possible terms, underlining the gross violation of international law and the principles of the United Nations Charter. The Union has shown, and will continue to show, its resolute support for Ukraine and its citizens, faced with an unprecedented act of aggression by the Russian Federation. This Decision forms part of the Union’s response to the migratory pressure resulting from the Russian military invasion of Ukraine.” (Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/382, n.d.).

The “unprovoked and unjustified” Russian invasion led to overwhelming reactions and condemnation by the European community, due to its geographical proximity, but also by the Western international community in general (Zawadzka-Palucka, 2022). Sanctions, such as Russia’s exclusion

from the international banking system SWIFT, formed a main component of the response targeting the economic competitiveness of the country and hoping for an end to the invasion. However, the invasion only resulted in a steep decline in production and exports of staple foods, consequently causing a shortage and raising food prices worldwide. The ban on Russian exports has also caused gas and oil prices to increase in the first half of 2022 and consequently a general disruption of the global supply chain due to the importance of gas and oil therein, not to mention the rise of global inflation (Ozili, 2022). Major and billion dollar level military assistance was also offered by a series of nation-states via the supply of defensive weaponry in order to increase Ukraine's ability to defend itself as well as humanitarian aid, even from across continents, as in the case of Argentina, India, and Pakistan (Ozili, 2022, p. 11). The direct and indirect involvement of the European community in the consequences of the Russian war is correlated to its "resolute support for Ukraine and its citizens", which consequently also led to the first-time introduction of the 2001 TPD in order to handle the mass exodus of persons fleeing Ukraine.

Essentially, the TPD is a European protection status that grants "temporary residence permits, emergency health care, shelter, social benefits, education for minors, as well as limited access to the labour market and a limited right to family reunification" (Ineli-Ciger, 2023, p. 67), amounting to a status that easily grants territory access and basic rights without much bureaucracy, thus differing greatly from the Dublin regulations. It is an EU protection scheme that was created in the aftermath of the 1998/1999 Kosovo War in order to better deal with mass displacements within the EU (Carrera & Ineli-Ciger, 2023, p. 15), yet not activated until 2022. The legalities of the TPD are various, but two stand out in terms of relevance.

The first relates to the impossibility of EU member states giving a lower set of rights to beneficiaries; the status is thus tied to these rights. Secondly, the criteria for what constitutes a "mass influx", the condition and requirement for the activation of the directive, are not set or defined (Carrera et al., 2023). On one hand, the fair and adequate level of conferred rights, too high for some states, has been indicated to have been one of the reasons for its non-implementation until 2022 (Ineli-Ciger, 2023, p. 65). On the other hand, the lack of criteria and/or definition of what constitutes a mass influx leaves member states with discretion in choosing which nationalities are to be included. In the final adopted text accepted in 2022, it was in the member states' discretion whether to include other third-country nationals, such as

permanent residents without Ukrainian nationality or (stateless) individuals residing in Ukraine under international protection (Carrera et al., 2023, p. 19). Only Spain, Portugal, and Germany have extended the temporary protection rights to other categories of third-country nationals (see Ineli-Ciger, 2023, p. 71).

Similar to the preamble of the TPD directive, the President of the European Commission, Ursula van der Leyen, issued a statement stating “Europe stands by those in need of protection. All those fleeing Putin’s bombs are welcome in Europe. We will provide protection to those seeking shelter and we will help those looking for a safe way home” (European Commission, 2022). Huge wave of protests under the “In Solidarity with Ukraine” banner have been held across Europe and show the collective empathy towards Ukrainians and guilt in the impossibility of Europe to defend Ukraine, resulting in an overwhelming public support (McCann et al., 2022). Dražanová and Geddes (2023) used data gathered by the Observatory for Public Attitudes to Migration (OPAM) in early June 2022 and show that respondents in all observed countries, namely Austria, Czechia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia, are strongly supportive of welcoming Ukrainian refugees (p. 138). The highest proportion of respondents who would not allow any Ukrainian refugees, found in Slovakia and Hungary, only amounts to around 10%, as seen below.

Moreover, the humanitarian response also took the form of accommodation offers, apart from the usual asylum centres, by citizens and even private companies, such as AirBnB; free transportation by public transport companies; and campaigns for the collection of donations by state authorities and companies (Carrera et al., 2023, p. 11). Despite the media presence of such initiatives, only a small proportion of respondents in the OPAM survey have hosted Ukrainian refugees or are willing to do so (Dražanová & Geddes, 2023, p. 144). Running counter to these humanitarian actions, and due to the possibility of excluding non-Ukrainian nationals, reports of xenophobia and racial profiling have also been present in the media. According to numerous reports by the media and civil society actors, people of colour have been subjected to separate queues or longer waiting periods solely based on racial profiling (Carrera et al., 2023, p. 12). Discriminatory statements were also issued by EU politicians; Bulgarian Prime Minister (PM) Kiril Petkov stated that “These [Ukrainians] are not the refugees we are used to... these

people are Europeans... These people are intelligent, they are educated people... This is not the refugee wave we have been used to... there is not a single European country now which is afraid of the current wave of refugees." (Carrera et al., 2023, p. 13).

The comparison between the "refugee crisis" of 2022 with the one from 2015 found in the quote above has become a general topic of hot debate, since the overall positive governmental and media responses towards Ukrainian refugees stands in stark contrast with the reception of refugees in 2015, especially in Central and Eastern Europe (Carrera et al., 2023; Dražanová & Geddes, 2023; Ineli-Ciger, 2023). The EU's bilateral agreement with Turkey in 2016, which essentially is a non-binding declaration to stop arrivals, symbolises a very different approach than the swift agreement, in record time, to activate the TPD, which allows the exclusion of other third-country nationals fleeing Ukraine (Ineli-Ciger, 2023, p. 77). The "refugee crisis" of 2022 also provides grounds for comparison with other "migration crises" in Europe, such as the one sparked by the Kosovo War in 1998-1999, which point to the conclusion of the 2022 events as being an outlier since the displacements of the Cold War (see van Selm, 2023).

2.4 Asylum In Switzerland

Swiss asylum legislation, much like in the EU context, appeared rather late in the 20th century. Up to 1981, no proper asylum legislation existed in Switzerland and relied exclusively on the Geneva Convention (signed in 1954) and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees. Its refugee definition was, in fact, almost identical to the one suggested by the Geneva Convention, as the Swiss legal system is monist and international law is directly applied to national law (Bader, 2018, p. 71).

Switzerland adopted quite a liberal policy towards refugees due to the direct application of the Geneva Convention. This praxis was mainly seen in the offering of asylum to communist Eastern European countries. Around 14'000 Hungarians settled permanently in Switzerland in 1956, proportionally the biggest welcome of Hungarian refugees in Europe, and around 12'000 Czechoslovakians arrived in 1968 (Efionayi-Mäder, 2003). Given the context of the Cold War, where anti-communist sentiments played a role in the acceptance of refugees, as well as the extension of the refugee definition to non-European persons through the 1967 Protocol, Swiss authorities also granted asylum to refugees from Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam in the late

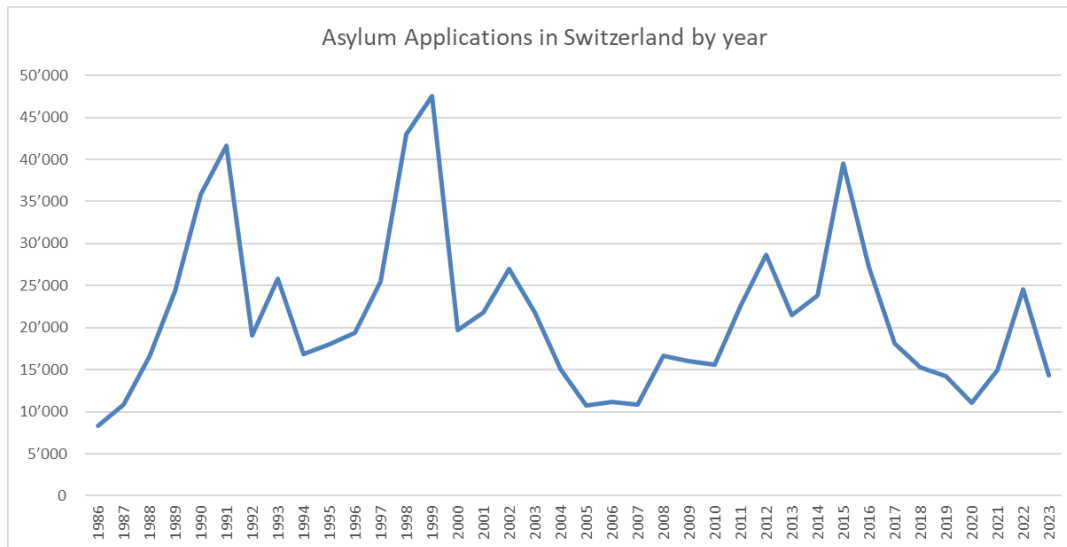


Figure 2.2: Asylum applications in Switzerland (1986-2021). Source: Staatssekretariat für Migration (2023a)

1970s (D’Amato, 2012; Piguet, 2009). The increased relevance of asylum in the political arena led to the introduction of the first Swiss asylum law in 1981, which essentially gave the Confederation policy-making powers on this topic. As Switzerland is a federal state, with high municipal autonomy, a tradition of consociationalism and direct democracy, cantons had large decision-making power in policy domains, such as welfare and education, giving rise to policy differences between cantons (D’Amato, 2012, p. 170; Ruedin & D’Amato, 2015)

As of the 1980s, two new trends for asylum matters emerged in Switzerland, and generally in Europe overall as well. On one hand, the nationality of asylum seekers started to diversify greatly, with applications coming from people from Turkey, Sri Lanka, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia. On the other hand, and together with the increased exodus from Soviet countries, this led to an exponential increase in applications overall (D’Amato, 2012, p. 170). These two trends paved the way towards an image of asylum being associated with unwanted migration, thus becoming a highly sensitive, politicised, and contested topic (Ruedin & D’Amato, 2015). Between 1981 and 2008, 15 partial or total revisions of asylum law were conducted by authorities (Piguet, 2009). This image of asylum was fuelled by the unprecedented number of asylum requests in 1991, when a massive influx of asylum seekers followed the breakup of Yugoslavia, representing Switzerland’s first “asylum crisis” (Bader, 2018, p. 71), and in 1998 due to the Kosovo War.

During the 1990s, asylum recognition rates decreased. Whereas during

the end of the 1970s recognition rate averages revolved around the 80% figure, between 1985 and 1990, they dropped to around 6%. Between 1990 and 2002, Switzerland received 146'587 asylum applications from the Balkans; 10'000 were granted asylum and 62'000 received temporary or subsidiary protection (Kaya, 2005). Temporary and subsidiary protection in Switzerland is called "provisional admittance" and is granted to persons who qualify as a refugee in the sense of the Geneva Convention, but not according to Swiss asylum law. Provisionally admitted refugees receive the *permit F*, whereas persons with the permit B, called recognised refugees, are recognised as refugees under the Geneva Convention and Swiss asylum law (Bader, 2018). A series of restrictive measures were also introduced in the same decade, such as the establishment of a "safe country" list, in parallel to other European countries (Bader, 2018, p. 74) with the Swiss asylum law revision of 1999: no or little social welfare assistance, new grounds for non-admission to the regular procedure and the rejection of humanitarian admission due to its automatic family reunification programme (D'Amato, 2012, p. 176).

At the turn of the century, Switzerland entered into a bilateral agreement on the free movement of persons with the EU in 2002, making Switzerland a *de facto* member of the EU when it comes to the free movement and settlement of citizens (Ruedin & D'Amato, 2015, p.141). Subsequently, Switzerland also signed the Schengen Agreement, along with the Dublin acquis, in 2004, which entered into force in 2008 and implied that Switzerland was to follow Dublin regulations. During this period, apart from Serbians, there were also significant asylum applications from Eritrea, Somalia and Iraq, with Eritreans and Somalians forming important communities of (provisionally admitted) refugees and asylum seekers in Switzerland (Wagner & Platzer, 2010, p. 86ff.).

2.4.1 The "refugee crisis" of 2015 and 2022 in Switzerland

While numbers of asylum applications have been increasing since the turn of the decade, Switzerland, as the majority of Western Europe, reached a maximum in 2015 with a total of 39'523 asylum applications. This marked the highest number of applications since the outbreak of the Kosovo War in 1998 and represented a challenge for the Swiss authorities. Matters of registration, distribution, accommodation, and care of asylum seekers and refugees had to be urgently dealt with within months, days, and sometimes even hours. On average, Swiss authorities registered around 1'500 new arrivals per week in

2015, which greatly differed from neighbouring countries such as Germany or Austria—the former registered around 800'000 new refugees in 2015 alone (Roth, 2017, p. 5). Despite the difference in absolute numbers, the Swiss authorities still had to adapt to this new scenario. For example, accommodation capacity was raised from 2'500 persons in federal asylum centres to 6'000 until the end of 2016 (Roth, 2017, p. 7).

It was this sense of collective urgency that was also reported by the Swiss media, which was very similar to the general tone of European media discussed in 2.1. The rise in asylum applications was very salient among press releases of political parties, especially the right-wing *Schweizerische Volkspartei* [Swiss People's Party] (SVP) (Gessler & Hunger, 2022). It was also shown that right-wing media often convoluted or made connections between refugees and religion, but that the prevalent emotion in Swiss media articles covering refugees was actually pity (Chan & Rinke, 2022). This hints towards a more humanitarian stance in line with Switzerland's humanitarian tradition.

Despite the rise in absolute numbers, relative numbers show a different picture, since Switzerland actually had a smaller share of EU-wide asylum applications when compared to 2014, namely 3% instead of 3.8%. Among this 3% applying for asylum in Switzerland, Eritrea was the most represented nationality, which mainly came through the Mediterranean route, followed by Afghanistan and then Syria (Staatssekretariat für Migration, 2015). The fact that Syrian asylum-seekers place third runs counter to the intuition that 2015 reached a peak due to people fleeing the Syrian war. A higher number of applicants besides Syrians might have implications for the discourse of the "deservingness" of refugees, which makes distinctions between dichotomies such as "(im)migrant/refugee", "voluntary/forced" migration, or "economic/political" refugees (Holmes & Castañeda, 2016, p. 17).

Immigrants or migrants, as opposed to refugees, tend to be portrayed in popular, political, and academic discourse as economic opportunists, voluntarily leaving their home communities in search of a better life. Because they are viewed as having made a free and autonomous choice to cross borders, they are often positioned as unworthy of social, economic, and political rights. (Holmes & Castañeda, 2016, p. 16)

The discourse between a "deserving" and "non-deserving" refugee, which often includes the "economic/political refugee" dichotomy (Griebel & Vollmann, 2019; Holmes & Castañeda, 2016), continually affects Swiss politics

and public opinion, as seen in a decisive asylum law revision in 2012. Swiss citizens voted in favour of an amendment to the refugee definition which excluded the refusal of military service, a primary flight ground for Eritreans, as a legitimate ground for asylum. Consequently, in one year, the provision of the less advantageous temporary protection status (status F) increased by 52% for Eritrean nationals (Bader, 2018, p. 3f.).

While numbers of asylum applications have subsequently gone down after 2015, 2016 still proved to be a “crisis” year. The higher number of persons being recognised either as refugees, provisionally admitted refugees or asylum-seekers, and the respective salience among political parties, media, and public opinion, were also followed by discussions on the efficiency of the Swiss asylum and integration system. In 2019, the Swiss asylum law was revised, which saw the introduction of a “fast track” in the asylum process. In the same year, the *Integrationsagenda Schweiz* [Integration Agenda Switzerland] was introduced in order to develop and strengthen efforts in “integration matters” of its target group. While there are no analyses specific to Switzerland, the 2015 “refugee crisis” was perceived as an unprecedented phenomenon in migration and asylum matters that had to be addressed. The “refugee crisis” of 2022, on the other hand, proved to be an entirely different “crisis” than 2015—even to the point that its effects are not even reflected in the graph above.

On the 11th of March, the Swiss Federal Council activated the *Status S*, which was introduced with the total revision of Swiss asylum law in 1998 and can be deemed as the Swiss version of the TPD, as it was also conceived against the background of the wars in the Balkans. The status S, with S standing for *Schutzsuchend* [protection seeking], was to be granted to all Ukrainian residents and also to all third-country nationals residing in Ukraine who were, due to security reasons, unable to return to their home country. In 2022, 74'959 status S applications were lodged, of which 98.6% had a positive decision. Approximately half of the applications were made by persons either below the age of 18 or above 64; 48'611 were lodged by women and 26'348 by men (Staatssekretariat für Migration, 2023c). As seen in Figure 2.3 below, the majority of applications were lodged before June, reaching up to an average of 1'400 weekly applications (Staatssekretariat für Migration, 2023b). Apart from Ukrainians, other nationalities/third country nationals applied for the status S, namely from:

- Russia (575 applications, 89% of positive decisions)
- Turkey (269 applications, 58% of positive decisions)

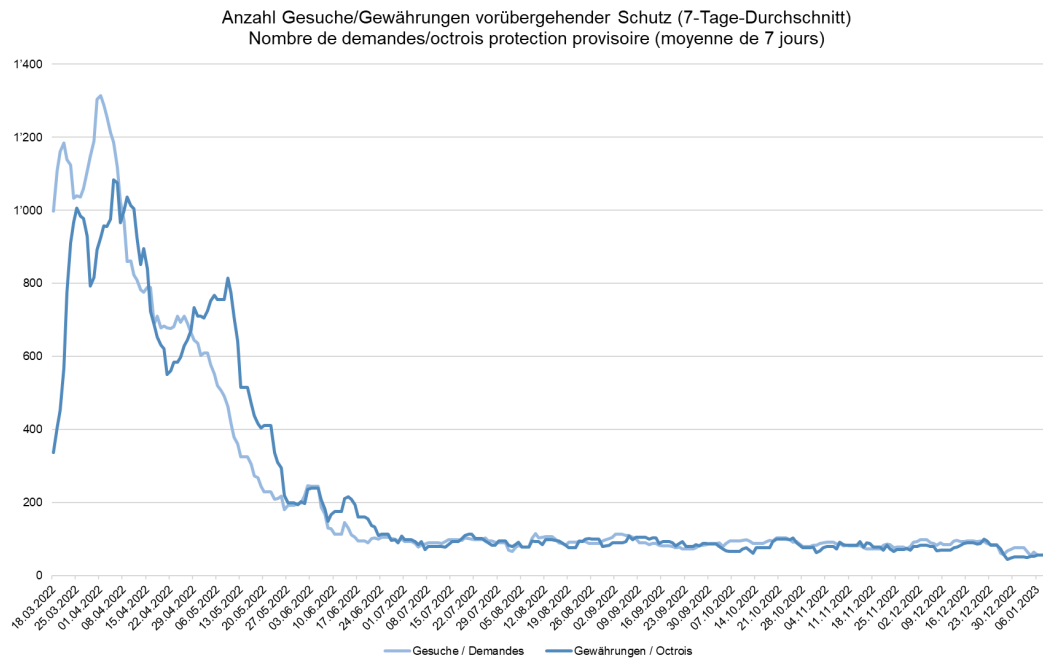


Figure 2.3: Application/Recognition of Status S (7 day average). Source: Staatssekretariat für Migration (2023b)

- Azerbaijan (148 applications, 65% of positive decisions)
- Belarus (150 applications, 95% of positive decisions)
- Nigeria (137 applications, 25% of positive decisions)

The applications for status S are not reflected in Figure 2.3 above because its legalities are different. According to an evaluation report on the status S, the application for the permit is not a normal asylum application, but rather a temporary protection permit application granted to a specific group of persons defined by the Federal Council (Eidgenössisches Justiz- und Polizeidepartement EJPD, 2022). The difference from a normal asylum application lies in the fact that grounds for asylum are individually assessed on the basis of individual and targeted persecutions. If Ukrainians were to undergo the normal asylum procedure, they would not be eligible to be recognised as refugees, since the refugee status requires proof of individual persecution. For this reason, if Ukrainians were to undergo the normal asylum procedure, they would most probably receive the status of a provisionally admitted refugee/third-country national, Status F (see Chapter 2.4), as their lives would be in jeopardy should they return to Ukraine. This would've proven to be problematic, since the rights conferred to persons with status F are incongruent with rights conferred to Ukrainian nationals/residents in the areas of economic activity, freedom of movement,

and family reunification, given that Ukrainians have their own visa regulations with the EU/Schengen. Apart from the legalities, the Federal Council has also stated that it introduced the status S in order not to overburden the normal asylum process, which also saw an increase in applications after the COVID pandemic (Eidgenössisches Justiz- und Polizeidepartement EJPD, 2022).

However, the activation of the status S, just as in the EU with the TPD, has sparked many public debates on the topic of differential treatment, especially regarding the “refugee crisis” of 2015. Some examples of differential treatment deal with private accommodation versus state-provided accommodation, since around 60% of Ukrainians lived in private accommodations¹, as well as benefits provided by private companies. Statistics show that around 35% of Ukrainians were lodged with guest families (Schweizerische Flüchtlingshilfe, 2022). AllianceSwissPass has provided free public transportation for all Ukrainians until the 1st of June of 2022 and telecommunication companies handed away free SIM cards Ukrainian (Eidgenössisches Justiz- und Polizeidepartement EJPD, 2022, p.). The essence of these debates revolved around why the solidarity towards Ukrainian refugees couldn’t have been the same for Eritreans, Afghans, and Syrians, once again tapping into the “deservingness” discourse. Just like many European officials, also the Swiss media compared 2022 with 2015 by reporting content such as “This time they are real refugees” (Serrao, 2022). While this might not be representative of the entirety of the Swiss media landscape, the specific difference in the framing of refugees is the main question to be answered in this analysis. For this, the theory of what framing means and what frames are will be laid out in the next chapter.

¹The matter with private accommodation is however tied with free movement rights granted through visa-free regulations, which stand in stark difference to movement regulations of other asylum related permits.

Chapter 3

Framing Theory

The objective of this chapter is to provide a brief history of framing and its associated theories. It aims to distinguish between various interpretations of framing and to examine the existing literature encompassing framing and media analyses within the context of displaced individuals, particularly refugees and asylum-seekers.

3.1 Framing and (media) frames

Framing is a concept used in the study of media effects, which had its beginnings at the start of the 20th century, when the relationship between pro-war attitudes and World War I propaganda was investigated. As of the 1960s, research started taking more factors into account, such as the role of influential opinion leaders. For example, Klapper (1960) stated that campaigns only reinforce existing attitudes rather than create them. Since the 1980s, research on media effects took a social constructivist stance. It represents a synthesis of earlier research, where mass media is recognised to actively shape social reality, but with a more accepted view that people's individual information processing, that is, pre-existent meaning structures or individual-level characteristics, also plays a major role (Scheufele, 1999, p. 105). It is in this social constructivist perspective of media effects that the framing concept emerged, despite being pioneered in the study of psychology. Framing has its beginnings with Kahneman and Tversky (1984), who demonstrated with their study of the "Asian disease", that human choice is contingent on the description of choice problems:

"Imagine that the U.S. is preparing for the outbreak of an unusual Asian disease, which is expected to kill 600 people. Two alternative programs to combat the disease have been proposed. Assume

that the exact scientific estimates of the consequences of the programs are as follows: If Program A is adopted, 200 people will be saved. If Program B is adopted, there is a one-third probability that 600 people will be saved and a two-thirds probability that no people will be saved. Which of the two programs would you favour?" (p. 343).

72% of subjects of the experiment chose Program A and 28% Program B. In the subsequent experiment, identical options were presented to the respondents but formulated in terms of deaths instead of lives saved:

"If Program C is adopted, 400 people will die. If Program D is adopted, there is a one-third probability that nobody will die and a two-thirds probability that 600 people will die" (p. 343)

By changing the description—the framing—of the problem, the result was practically reversed. 22% chose Program C and 78% chose Program D. This experiment was able to be replicated multiple times and thus clearly shows how human choice depends on how information is presented and how persons understand a problem. How a given piece of information is presented to the audience is the psychology-rooted concept of framing and can be called "equivalence framing" (Cacciato et al., 2016, p. 5).

There is also a sociologically-rooted concept of framing, which can be traced back to Goffman (1974). This alternative concept introduces the social constructivist notion of meaning constructs, or interpretive schemes, which people use in order to understand, classify, and make sense of the everyday world. Contrary to equivalence framing, framing in its sociological sense revolves around what the audience ultimately receives of the presented information, given their own beliefs and characteristics, instead of only how the information is presented. The "selection of one set of facts or arguments [according to one's meaning structure] can be deemed a frame" (Cacciato et al., 2016, p. 5). The sociological version of framing can be called "emphasis framing".

The difference between equivalence and emphasis framing is equal to what Scheufele and Tewksbury (2007) imply by framing being both a macro- and micro-level construct. As a macro-construct, framing refers to modes of presentation by journalists and other communicators that try to make the information presentable and resonate with their audience. As a micro-construct, framing refers to how the presented information is processed and

used by the individual (p. 12). Scheufele (1999) makes an analogous but distinct differentiation between these levels: individual and media frames. Whereas the former refers to internal structures of the mind, the latter refers to frames embedded in the overall political discourse. These differentiations are important, since framing needs to be understood as encompassing frames that are used to present information and frames that are used to interpret information. Consequently, this investigation understands framing as having two dimensions:

1. the information structure and content (of the message, news article, text)
2. the processing of the information structure according to a meaning construct (on an individual level)

Concerning the first dimension, variations can occur in the organisation of the information, the word choice, the emphasis of certain aspects over others, and even in the inclusion/exclusion of further information. Boomgaarden (2017) defines a news frame as emphasising or endowing certain aspects or considerations regarding a given object and consisting of two features: the aspect that is highlighted and the strength with which the aspect is embraced (p. 53). According to this definition, a strong news frame can be found (1) within a single news article (intra-story news strength) and/or by (2) being repeated across different news articles (inter-story news frame strength).

The second dimension revolves around the *effect* of framing, which can be summarised as follows: “a framing effect is one in which salient attributes of a message (its organisation, selection of content, or thematic structure) render particular thoughts applicable, resulting in their activation and use in evaluations” (Price et al., 1997, p. 486). Reading a message will therefore cause an effect, which will determine which individual knowledge structure will be used to interpret the given message (Cacciatore et al., 2016, p. 13).

In another definition, Entman (1993) describes the emphasis of particular aspects as “salience”: “[saliency] means making a piece of information more noticeable, meaningful, or memorable to audiences” (p. 53). By the same token, Entman also reinforces that the exclusion of information is just as significant as its inclusion, which is why he ultimately defines framing as consisting of (1) the *selection* of information and (2) the determination of its *saliency*.

According to Entman’s definition, framing essentially operates by making certain information more salient, visible, or accessible to an audience,

ultimately revolving around an emphasis-oriented concept of framing. Entman's work from 1993 serves as the basis for much of the framing literature and studies. However, Cacciatore et al. (2016) rightly point out that such a persuasive or salience-based definition of framing carries a fundamental problem when it comes to evaluating its effects and how it can be differentiated or isolated from other concepts such as agenda-setting and priming. For example, did a given piece of information have an effect on its reader because of its persuasive character or simply because it was read? Consequently, it is necessary to clearly define how framing effects operate and differ from other effects. This can be done through the analysis of the accessibility-applicability model, as it differentiates between the required cognitive processes of each effect on an individual level. More specifically, the model differentiates between an accessibility and an applicability effect.

The accessibility effect, as the name implies, can be traced back to how accessible, or how easily recalled, a given piece of information can be. Agenda-setting functions through accessibility effects of salience, since this concept examines the relationship between the emphasis of mass media on certain issues (relative to the overall coverage) and the importance attributed to these issues by the general public (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007, p. 11). In other words, the media dictates to the public what to think about by constantly exposing and refreshing the memory of individuals by covering certain issues more frequently or prominently, that is, transferring salience to the audience. On the other hand, the applicability effect takes place when individuals apply their own knowledge and belief schemes based on the way the information is presented. Applicability effects will thus vary in strength according to individual-level characteristics, such as knowledge on a certain topic.

The difference between both effects is that accessibility effects can be safely assumed to have a uniform effect among the whole audience (Cacciatore et al., 2016, p. 9). When news articles on the first ever image of a black hole appeared in newspapers, it certainly increased the salience of this topic independent of the previous knowledge of the audience, that is, produced an accessibility effect. However, natural scientists such as astronomers or physicists, or even aficionados, may have resonated differently with the article than someone who knows nothing about black holes. In other words, the applicability effect might have been stronger for persons with a pre-existing knowledge structure on the topic. Notwithstanding, both effects cannot be understood as being completely independent from each other, as they cannot be completely isolated: "An applicable construct [individual frame] is

far more likely to be activated when it is accessible. Likewise, an inapplicable construct is highly unlikely to be used in a given situation, no matter how accessible it is" (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007, p. 16).

While it is highly important to lay out the differences between framing and other media effects, this investigation does not aim to measure or analyse the effects of framing or other media effects, that is, how applicable or accessible a given piece of information is. This analysis follows two theoretical approaches regarding framing. Firstly, it follows the proposed recommendations of Cacciatore et al. (2016), which posit that "framing research be both terminologically and conceptually refocused around equivalence-based definitions that are more directly tied to alterations in the presentation of information rather than the persuasive value of that information" (p. 12). Framing in this analysis is thus to be understood in its psychologically-rooted definition and consequently with an exclusive focus on the above-mentioned first dimension of framing, its information structure, and its content. Taking this into account, it will only consider frames as being media frames. Secondly, it follows the typology of framing proposed by Scheufele (1999) and understands media frames as an independent variable. Therefore, this analysis will not consider how journalists or news outlets themselves arrive at the produced frames (frames as dependent variables) nor analyse the interaction between media and individual/audience frames (applicability effects).

Given the focus on equivalence framing and consequently media frames, it is necessary to also clearly lay out what constitutes a news frame. Put simply, a news frame is a theme that functions as a central organising idea or story line (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989). According to Pan and Kosicki (1993), a theme is a connection of different semantic elements into a coherent whole, such as background information, context, pictures, descriptions of an action or person, as well as quotes from sources (p. 59). In more simple terms, and as Entman (1993) describes it, a frame typically consists of four elements: the definition of problems, diagnosis of causes, moral judgements, and suggestions of remedies (p. 52). Lexical choices are the most basic elements, or signifiers, that will construct a theme, define a problem or suggest remedies within certain shared rules or conventions (Pan & Kosicki, 1993, p. 59). Pan and Kosicki (1993) categorise these lexical choices according to four structures:

1. **Syntactical Structures:** Patterns of word and phrase arrangement into sentences. Most news stories follow a certain structure, such as headline, lead, background, episodes, and closure.

2. **Script Structures:** News articles are often times portrayed as stories. Normally, these aim to cover and answer the who, what, when, where and how, normally within the form of a beginning, a climax, and an end. It is for these structures that many news articles are highly personalised and dramatised in some sense.
3. **Thematic Structures:** News articles are often hypothesis-testing, meaning that they do not only report events or action, but posit a certain hypothesis with a body of material to support it. A theme is therefore the central hypothesis that connects all the sub-themes of the used material and provides the basis for a given news frame.
4. **Rhetorical Structures:** News articles make use of stylistic devices, such as metaphors, depictions and visual images. These increase salience or vividness of a report and maximise effectiveness for audience retention.

Taking the above-mentioned elaborations on framing into account, media or news frames can therefore be defined as lexical choices, structured in a certain way, in order to bind an overarching theme and sub-themes into a coherent whole. The theme and the corresponding lexical choices usually define a problem, diagnose a cause, make a judgement, or suggest remedies.

The identification of frames, however, is not an objective task. A frame or theme cannot be attributed or belongs to a given lexical choice, but it can be deduced from its structural arrangement. Moreover, it is hardly measurable whether a given news frame was the actual intended frame the author wanted to convey. Frames can be the conscious effort of the author, in which case they can be categorised as a persuasive message, but they can also be an unconscious result, that is, due to dominant journalistic, cultural, or social norms. This is also the reason why frames, or even the media in general, cannot be understood as having an inherent intent of wanting to persuade an audience (Boomgaarden, 2017, p. 59f.).

Nevertheless, while this analysis does not investigate the individual effects of news frames, it is still important to keep in mind that frames *can*, through the accessibility-applicability model, influence the opinions, attitudes, and behaviour of the audience. This is especially the case for *valence frames*, which include a “good or bad” indication or explicit positive or negative considerations of a given object within a frame and can possibly push a certain attitude towards the same object (Schuck & De Vreese, 2006; Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2003). This is analogous to the “Asian disease” problem by Kahneman and Tversky (1984), which by using the positively

connotated “save” term instead of the negatively connotated “death” term, was able to push a preference towards a different answer even though it was the same problem. Valence frames have an increased possibility of influencing opinions because the frame is perceived in terms of loss or gain, risks or opportunities, disadvantages or benefits, thereby containing differential evaluative components (Boomgaarden, 2017; Schuck & De Vreese, 2006). Valence frames can be prevalent when there is strong polarisation in politics, since disagreement indicates an array of contrasting evaluative components in media frames, but also when there is strong agreement on an issue, which indicates rather similar and uniform evaluations.

3.2 Framing refugees and asylum-seekers

A study conducted by Esser et al. (2016) across 16 Western democracies has shown that the media coverage of immigration and integration is the third most negative topic within the category of political news. Additionally, this coverage is often depicted in the context of other topics, such as issues with the labour market, security or culture—more specifically economic crisis, antipathy of Islam and terrorism (Chouliaraki & Zaborowski, 2017; De Vreese et al., 2011). By connecting the negative tone of immigration in relation to these other topics, the European media provides frames or “templates of how to think about immigration” (Meltzer et al., 2020, p. 4). This is especially the case for refugees and asylum-seekers, as they are often framed in a more biased manner and often represented as a threat to the economy, security and culture, therefore possessing a frame narrative that is dominated by a problem-orientation (Eberl et al., 2018; Greussing & Boomgaarden, 2017; Mustafa-Awad & Kirner-Ludwig, 2021).

Not only is coverage problem-oriented, but also has a tendency to construe refugees, especially individuals coming from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, as “dehumanised, homogeneous, passive masses” (Zawadzka-Palucktau, 2022, p. 97), constructing a form of division between Europe and Africa (Horsti, 2008). This feeds into a delegitimisation strategy and consequently into the previously mentioned “deservingness” discourse (Holmes & Castañeda, 2016). The study by Holzberg et al. (2018) has shown that refugees and asylum seekers tended to be represented as “undeserving” due to their low economic productivity and their being a threat to state security or gender relations, confirming the connection between immigration

and the above-mentioned topics in media reporting. This division is also indirectly confirmed by Roman et al. (2020), who analyse the media coverage of Ukrainians due to the start of the Russian-Ukrainian military conflict in 2014, and find that crime or security threat frames were nearly non-existent in news articles.

There is also an array of negative stylistic choices employed by news outlets, which mainly revolve around metaphors, interchangeable use of different terms, as well as simplistic storytelling and stereotypes. Studies find that many metaphors refer to large bodies of water, uncontrollable natural disasters, criminals, objects, and commodities in general (Benczes & Ságvári, 2022, p. 417). The use of metaphors, such as “wave”, “flood” or “masses” can easily lead to a certain dehumanisation of the reported individuals (Gabrielatos & Baker, 2008). A typical stylistic choice is also the interchangeable use of “migrant”, “immigrant”, “refugee”, and “asylum seeker”, which are then used as near-synonyms (Baker et al., 2008). In Hungary, Benczes and Ságvári (2022) examined the development of the Hungarian term *migráns*, which was non-existent in Hungarian prior to 2015, and therefore claim that its negative connotation and metaphorical framing had to be “built up from scratch” (p. 418) 418)—a quite interesting insight, as it represents a specific example of how a frame can develop. Zawadzka-Paluckta (2022) has shown that Ukrainian refugees were exclusively labelled as “refugees” in Poland, whereas during 2015, when most individuals came from the MENA region, were also labelled as “(im)migrants”. Naming and labelling choices can therefore have an impact on their construal as legitimate claimants of asylum—parallel to “war refugee” against “economic migrant” (Zawadzka-Paluckta, 2022). Moreover, media coverage also often focuses on certain myths of the economic impact of migrants, which undermine policy efforts of long-term integration, and also use stereotypical depictions referring to crime, economic unviability or cultural difference (Boomgaarden, 2017; Eberl et al., 2018). This simplified narrative might contribute to a perception of uncontrollability and threat by readers (Galantino, 2022, p. 4).

Furthermore, studies have investigated the presence of sentiment in media and found that asylum-related issues are frequently associated with lexical choices that deal with fear (Becker, 2016). Nevertheless, it is actually pity that dominates the sentimental tone of refugee coverage (Chan & Rinke, 2022). This goes hand in hand with the model of discourse of suffering by Chouliaraki (2006), which posits three types of news in the media discourse of pity:

1. **Adventuristic news:** reports those who suffered as outsiders and simultaneously blocks emotional engagement with the covered individuals.
2. **Emergency news:** reports those who suffered as outsiders, but provides reads with possible courses of action.
3. **Ecstatic news:** reports those who suffered as people similar to us.

News media on refugees can fit into all three categories, depending on what other topics are mixed into the reporting. If the topic of Muslims and terrorism is mentioned alongside asylum-seekers and refugees, the media discourse can become less pitiful and more fearful, thus moving away from ecstatic and towards emergency and even adventuristic types of news (Chan & Rinke, 2022). Nevertheless, the media discourse of pity, or unfair suffering of immigrants, does provoke emotions of compassion in readers (Eberl et al., 2018, p. 9). This is strongly related to the humanitarian tone/frame, since these aim to mobilise help and increase legitimacy by provoking compassion and/or pity among the public opinion. Overall, humanitarian and positive perspectives on refugees and asylum-seekers have recently become more visible in international discourse (Galantino, 2022), which stands in line with the overall dominant presence of pity in the media discourse. However, this can be dependent on other factors, such as the political tendency of the news outlet (Chan & Rinke, 2022).

The above-mentioned insights into the overall depiction of refugees and asylum-seekers in the media, as well as their stylistic choices and sentiment, are important to understand, as these can have certain media effects and impact the attitudes of public opinion. Even though a causal attribution of media on attitudes or voting choice is not possible, and effects vary based on the specific “migrant group”, there are studies suggesting that anti-immigrant public opinion can be influenced by simply making it more salient in the news (Sniderman et al., 2004) or discussing it with either positive or negative sentiments (van Klingeren et al., 2015). This, in turn, can favour the voting shares of parties with an anti-immigrant stance (Boomgaarden & Vliegenthart, 2007) or increase anxiety towards immigrants (Czymara & Dochow, 2018). However, even though humans react more to negative news, news emphasising certain positive aspects can also positively alter opinions of (im)migration, such as the positive economic consequences of migration (Igartua & Cheng, 2009) or portraying asylum-seekers as legitimate refugees (Schemer, 2014). The discussion on attitudes is also deeply intertwined with (ethnic)

prejudice, as news media can influence the readiness of readers to categorise others and, especially when emphasising ethnicity, create a sense of in-group belonging and simultaneously out-group hostility (Boomgaarden, 2017; Sniderman et al., 2004). Stereotypical representations are closely related to the framing of social groups (Boomgaarden, 2017), since stereotypes, along with other lexical structures, can be considered socially supporting and continually reviving themes and narratives that present cues separating social groups along the lines of origin, citizenship, language group, etc. The “refugee crisis” of 2015 has proven to be fertile ground to analyse the effects of such narratives, as peaks in asylum applications increase the salience and therefore the politicisation of immigration (Ruedin & D’Amato, 2015). The politicisation of an issue can further exacerbate media effects and their impact on public attitudes.

Politicisation is an interesting concept when it comes to the analysis of media. The typology by van der Brug et al. (2015) regarding politics towards a given topic considers not only the accessibility effects of salience, that is, the public attention towards an issue, but also polarisation, which reflects the positional disagreement of political actors. The consideration of both salience and polarisation enables the classification of a subject as politicised, characterised by elevated levels of both salience and disagreement, or as an urgent issue, where an issue is highly salient but characterised by cooperation rather than divergent perspectives (see Figure 3.1). By applying this categorisation to immigration, it is possible to differentiate the news coverage of immigration by degrees of salience and polarisation, revealing nuances across time or migrant groups. Ruedin and D’Amato (2015) argue that in Switzerland, despite the gradual increase of immigrants, has not seen a significant increase

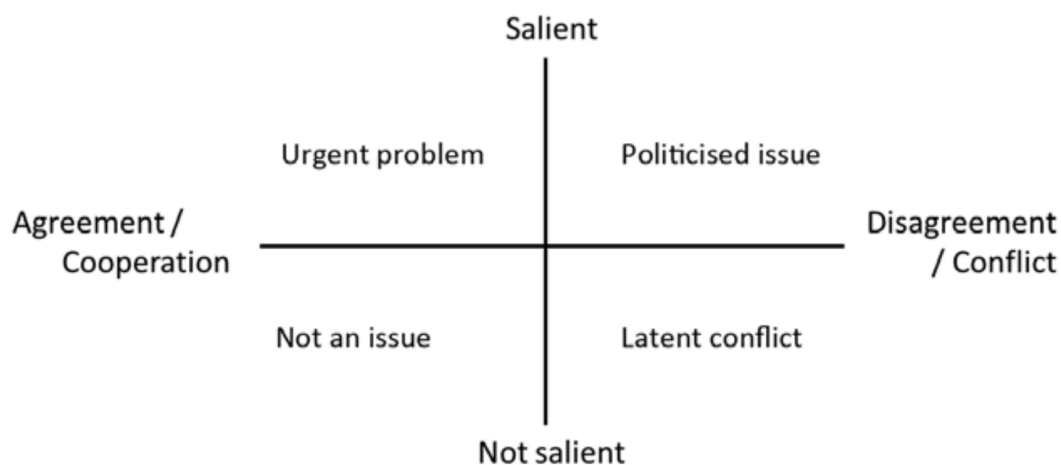


Figure 3.1: Typology of politics towards a topic. Source: van der Brug et al. (2015)

in the salience or polarisation of immigration. However, they contend that immigration is a constant politicised issue, especially because of the development of the SVP, and that sudden changes in demographics, such as the 1998 asylum application peak (see [Figure 2.2](#)), increase politicisation in the short term.

Chapter 4

Data & Methods

Automated corpus-assisted analysis methods differ from qualitative methods, such as discourse or thematic analysis, in that they use quantitative means to analyse data. The primary advantage of this type of text analysis, simply put, is the sheer volume of data that can be analysed. A coherent, systematic analysis of large-scale text collections is, unfortunately, practically impossible through qualitative means. Consequently, scholars struggle with substantiated inferences made from text data (Grimmer & Stewart, 2013). This is especially difficult in the case of news analyses since there are hundreds, if not thousands, of news articles available for a given topic and in multiple languages, especially with the emergence of online media. Quantitative text analysis thus represents an attractive and exciting method to make more comprehensive, evidence-based conclusions from large collections of text, that is, corpora.

As Ledolter and VanderVelde (2022) point out, a corpus consists of a collection of *documents*, the basic unit of observation, which can be a book, a speech, a tweet, or as in our case, a news article from a newspaper. Each document consists of text information, regarded normally as a string of words, where each word is separated by a blank space, but also including punctuation. In the specific vocabulary, individual words are usually denominated as *tokens*. According to Zipf's law, there is a high probability that the majority of tokens in a corpus are *singletons*, that is, have a high frequency of low occurrences. Inversely, there is also a high probability of tokens with a low frequency of high occurrences. Additionally, it is important to determine whether word order is important for the intended analysis, since some methods focus on word order and others rely on the *bag of word* assumption.

Methods relying on word order include, for example, concordance and collocation analyses. Concordance refers to text snippets around a certain keyword, providing the context in which that word is used, and collocate refers to the quantification of concordance, that is, how many times certain

strings or tokens occur around that given keyword. A popular approach that makes use of this is corpus linguistics, which aims to determine statistically relevant lexical items or patterns. With corpus linguistics, it is possible to quantitatively determine what words or phrases are more common around, or associated with, the term “refugee” or “asylum-seeker”, revealing prominent discourse, connotational and evaluative patterns. This analysis type is important, since many psycholinguistic experiments have demonstrated that “if the word refugee collocated saliently with items referring to criminal behaviour, language users may become primed to routinely associate refugees with crime rather than, for instance, with the right to international protection” (Zawadzka-Paluckta, 2022, p. 100). However, by focusing on the micro-structure of the text information itself (Greussing & Boomgaarden, 2017, p. 1755), corpus linguistics is often criticised for disregarding context (Baker et al., 2008). For this reason, corpus linguistic methods are frequently accompanied by qualitative methods (see Calabrese & Mistiaen, 2019; Griebel & Vollmann, 2019).

Nevertheless, discourse, connotational and evaluative patterns can be more subtle and also occur outside the immediate context of a given keyword, therefore representing patterns that may not be immediately apparent, or as denominated in the specific vocabulary, are *latent themes*. It is at this point that methods focusing on the *bag of word* assumption, where word order is *not* taken into account, prove to be useful. Methods relying on this assumption, simply put, analyse the corpus as a collection of individual tokens. As Greussing and Boomgaarden (2017) correctly state, a bag-of-word representation of the corpus.

“reveals semantic contexts that are embedded in the latent dimensions of communication, even across different text documents. This is an important advantage since in a long-established discourse, specific word combinations (that is, frames) get conventionalised over time and do no longer need to be explicitly mentioned in full to convey a specific meaning (Hellsten, Dawson, and Leydesdorff 2010).” (p. 1755)

In order to uncover these latent lexical attributes, probabilistic modelling of term frequency occurrence using machine-learning algorithms is necessary¹. A popular approach of automated news analysis is *topic modelling*, which is the method employed in this investigation. It is an unsupervised

¹Hence its denomination as *automated* corpus-assisted analysis

text analysis tool that analyses patterns of word usage across documents in the corpus and identifies clusters of words that tend to occur together, which can be interpreted as different topics. These clusters of words are representative of what was can be referred to as the latent semantic patterns of a text (Greussing & Boomgaarden, 2017). While topic modelling leads to good models of documents, and therefore to good overall results, it has disadvantages when it comes to the interpretability of its results (Chang et al., 2009). It is for this reason that automated text analyses cannot be assumed to replace careful, close reading of texts. As Grimmer and Stewart (2013) rightly point out, automated text analysis must follow four principles:

1. All Quantitative Models of Language Are Wrong – But Some Are Useful
2. Quantitative Methods Augment Humans, Not Replace Them
3. There Is No Globally Best Method for Automated Text Analysis
4. Validate, Validate, Validate

Despite the many advantages of quantitative text analysis, its high potential for transparency deserves special consideration. Unlike qualitative coding, despite inter-coder reliability, automated analyses provide the possibility for scholars to check the validity of findings and different interpretations of the same data (Zawadzka-Paluckta, 2022). For this reason, the following chapters will thoroughly lay out the data and the specific methods used in this analysis. All data cleaning, formatting, and analyses were conducted in R (R Core Team, 2022).

4.1 Data collection

The overall goal of this analysis is to compare the framing of refugees in Swiss news between 2015 and 2022 by analysing the individual frames used in each year. Consequently, 18'309 news articles from the German-speaking part of Switzerland were collected via [Swissdox](https://swissdox.ch/)², a comprehensive online archive of Swiss media, for the periods of 01/01/2015 – 31/12/2015 and 01/01/2022 – 31/12/2022 with the following query:

```
("Flüchtling Flüchtling"~4000 OR "Geflüchtete Geflüchtete"~4000  
OR "Flüchtling Geflüchtete"~4000) OR ("asylsuchenden asylsuchenden"~4000 AND asyl*)
```

²<https://swissdox.ch/>

This query aimed to target news articles that exclusively covered either refugees or asylum-seekers. In contrast to the queries of other studies, the removal of possible noise was already part of the collection process. It mainly states that the search terms *Flüchtling* [refugee] or *Geflüchtete*³ [refugee] needed to appear at least twice within a range of 4'000 characters, with the same condition applying for *asylsuchenden* [asylum-seekers/asylum-seeking] (though with an additional requirement that the article had to additionally include some form of *asyl* [asylum]).

The search engine of Swissdox enables filtering according to different categories, such as outlet, media type, location, language, year, author, etc. The search query was further filtered so that the chosen data fit three categories, namely daily newspapers, weekly newspapers, and magazines. Daily newspapers are evidently the one's with the highest volume of articles, and magazines the one's with the lowest. Since the data is to be representative of the whole German-speaking Switzerland, it was made sure that at least one daily newspaper from each canton is present in the dataset⁴. The general condition was that newspapers had to have articles for both years; newspapers without archives for either 2015 or 2022 were removed from the search. Consequently, many cantonal daily newspapers, such as the *Luzerner Zeitung*, *Appenzeller Zeitung*, *Zuger Zeitung*, *Urner Zeitung*, *Nidwaldner Zeitung*, *Obwaldner Zeitung*, *Schaffhauser Nachrichten* were removed and not included in the collection process. While not ideal, it must also be taken into account that there is a large amount of re-published articles across these outlets, which were later removed as duplicates in the data cleaning process.

Additionally, in the search engine it remained evident that big daily newspapers showed a higher number of online news articles in 2022 than 2015. Therefore, outlets with more articles online in a given year were chosen over their printed counterpart. The online version was more likely to contain the articles in the printed version, but not vice versa. By selecting either only the printed or online version of a given outlet for a given year, duplicates were avoided, apart from also including online media in the dataset. The latter is important, since it was shown that digital channels are the main source of information for half of the Swiss population (Forschungsinstitut Öffentlichkeit Und Gesellschaft, 2022). Furthermore, magazines with under

³A more general German term that aims to describe any individuals in a flight process, thus used to refer to both refugees and asylum seekers. *Geflüchtete* is more positively connotated than *Flüchtling* (Griebel & Vollmann, 2019) and is the German nominalisation of the verb "to flee".

⁴Francophone or Italoophone articles were excluded due to practical reasons, as the data processing would include translation.

ten articles over both years, as well as weekly newspapers with less than 20 articles over both years, were excluded. The selection of outlets before data cleaning included 11 magazines, 9 weekly newspapers and 17 daily newspapers (see Table 4.1 below).

Type	Newspapers
Daily Newspapers	20 minuten online, Aargauer Zeitung, Basler Zeitung, Berner Zeitung, blick.ch, Bote der Urschweiz, Bündner Tagblatt, Der Bund, Die Südostschweiz, Freiburger Nachrichten, Neue Zürcher Zeitung, Solothurner Zeitung, srf.ch, St Galler Tagblatt, Südostschweiz, tagesanzeiger.ch, Thurgauer Zeitung, Walliser Bote
Weekly Newspapers	Die Weltwoche, Die Wochenzeitung, Glattaler, NZZ am Sonntag, Seetaler Bote, Sonntagsblick, SonntagsZeitung, Tagblatt der Stadt Zürich
Magazines	Beobachter, Das Magazin, Doppelpunkt, Finanz und Wirtschaft, Handelszeitung, NZZ Folio, Schweizer Bauer, Schweizer Familie, Schweizer Gemeinde, Schweizer Illustrierte, Sonntag, Surprise, work

Table 4.1: List of all used newspapers by outlet type.

4.2 Data cleaning

Given that the downloaded news articles from Swissdix came bundled in various PDF files, one for each news outlet, the initial step in the data cleaning process was to transform all PDF files into .txt files. The major, but unavoidable, issue with this approach, was that each converted .txt file contained hundreds of news articles in the same file, which had to be extracted individually.

Considering that each newspaper and respective .txt file had an own structure, it was possible to automate the article extraction using regex. Each article text, which contained a headline, a lead, a date, and a main body in one continuous text body, was then also separated into different variables to create the metadata for each article. This process was very time-consuming due to the different structures of each newspaper, which required the definition of different regex. All print media was very similar in structure, which made the process relatively simple. However, every online media outlet had its

own, sometimes irregular structure, making the cleaning process more complicated. Once the raw dataset with all news articles from all newspapers was complete, resulting in a dataframe of 18'301 articles with four metadata variables (newspaper, date, headline, main text body), the actual cleaning for text analysis began.

Given that the query looks for at least two occurrences of one of our search terms, some articles mention refugees or asylum-seekers only in passing or in a secondary manner. This might be the case for newsflash articles, where one small paragraph might report on refugees, with notable mentions of refugees, but the rest of the body reports on a variety of related and/or unrelated issues. This represents noise for the topic modelling analysis, as it adds text data unrelated to our research question. For example, news flashes from the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* and *Bote der Urschweiz* partially contained over 150'000 characters. *SRF's Die Lage in der Ukraine* [the situation in Ukraine] also contained detailed information on the war in Ukraine, with only little information relating to refugees.

For this reason, long articles with relatively few mentions of our search terms were excluded from the analysis. This was done simply by calculating the relative frequency of our key terms (refugee and asylum-seeker) and adjusting it to a scale from 0 to 1 for our dataset. The bottom 5% of articles with less than 10 counts of our key terms and zero counts in the headline were removed. Additionally, the bottom 5% with only one count in the main text body and one count in the headline were also removed. Counts in the headlines were considered to limit the removal of potentially relevant articles. Almost 3'000 articles were removed with these considerations. Finally, the cleaning also included the removal of the majority of news agency names, photo description, author names and the cities the reporting occurred. The cleaned dataframe contained 15'465 news articles and 8'669'760 words (without punctuation), 9'995 articles for 2015 and 5'470 for 2022.

4.3 Data formatting

In order to conduct textual analysis, cleaned text data is not sufficient. The data needs to be formatted for it to be fit for automated textual analysis tools, since these tools use individual words as the basic unit of analysis. The primary goal of formatting, or pre-processing, is to reduce the sparsity of what

will later become the document-term matrix⁵, where the words of the entire corpus and their frequencies are summarised (Ledolter & VanderVelde, 2022). Data formatting for this analysis was primarily conducted via the *quanteda* package (Benoit et al., 2018)

Taking this into account, it is important to concatenate multi-word expressions, names, organisation and even locations, such as European Union, Angela Merkel, or Sri Lanka. Using the *RNewsflow* package (van Atteveldt, 2021), duplicates with an overlap of over 95% were removed, as they amounted to 2'774 documents, a surprising 17.9% documents of the corpus. Topic modelling algorithms are not well suited to deal with a high rate of different repeated documents, as opposed to a high rate of a few unique documents (Schofield et al., 2017). Finally, using the largest training model available for the German language⁶ by the *spacyr* package (Benoit & Matsuo, 2020), lemmatisation and part-of-speech tagging was applied to the corpus in order to account for all possible word flexions and reduce the number of words. The removal of punctuation, symbols, numbers, conjunctions, adpositions, as well as some specific adverbs was possible through the tagging.

Finally, the corpus was then tokenised and converted into a document-term-matrix, revealing the presence of 153'350 unique tokens with a sparsity of 99.03%. Of all the tokens, 66'698, or around 43% of all words, were singletons, that is, occurred only once in the entire corpus. This was to be expected according to Zipf's law as was the reason for the high sparsity of the matrix and why it had to be trimmed even further for analysis. Consequently, tokens occurring very rarely, that is, in less than 2% of documents, were removed. However, words that are rarely used are not the only problem. Words that occur very often also distort the model, as they are lexical items that carry no information, such as the stop words "and", "the", "a", etc. For this, the *stopwords-iso* collection was used to identify the stop words in the corpus and remove them. Apart from stop words, the 15 most common words based on count and document frequency were also removed, leaving the corpus with 1'528 unique tokens for 2015 and 1'822 unique tokens for 2022.

Considering that the aim of this investigation is to compare media frames between both years, the entire corpus was separated into two corpora, one for 2015 and one for 2022. Consequently, topic modelling was run separately

⁵A document-term matrix is a matrix in which the row dimension is given by the documents of the corpus and the column dimension by all individual words that appear in all documents. Entries in the matrix express words w in documents d . A matrix's sparsity is the proportion of sparse elements, that is, elements with zero frequency. A sparsity of 0% implies that all words in the corpus appear in all documents (Ledolter & VanderVelde, 2022)

⁶https://spacy.io/models/de#de_core_news_lg

for each corpus. Each corpus was further trimmed to include only words appearing in more than 5% and less than 30% of documents. Additionally, the fifteen top words were also removed for each corpus. The purpose of this final formatting is to ensure that only relevant words are included in the model. Moreover, since analyses can make use of variables, three more variables were added to the data, namely medium (whether it is online or print media), type (daily newspaper, weekly newspaper or magazine) and year. The latter is for purposes of simplicity and does not differ from the date variable. The final data used in the model can be seen in Table 4.2 below.

Year	Documents	Words	Sparsity
2015	8'963	534	90.52%
2022	3'713	662	89.64%

Table 4.2: Final characteristics of the document-term matrix used in the analysis

4.4 Methods

The chosen method for the comparison of the framing in Swiss news between 2015 and 2022 is, as mentioned above, the popular approach of topic modelling. Simply put, topic modelling discovers topics in a collection of documents and tags each document with the topics that it contains. More specifically, a topic model is a statistical model of language that outputs a list of topics and a weight for each topic for each document through probabilities. Each word is assigned a probability of falling under a certain topic, and each document is assigned a probability of being composed of certain topics. Since the topics are calculated by the model itself, topic modelling is considered an unsupervised model. In essence,

"a topic is defined as a mixture over words where each word has a probability of belonging to a topic. And a document is a mixture over topics, meaning that a single document can be composed of multiple topics. As such, the sum of the topic proportions across all topics for a document is one, and the sum of word probabilities for a given topic is one" (Roberts et al., 2019, p. 2).

Topics can be understood as the latent thematic structure of the corpus, that is, frames, which lie below the surface of the data and can be interpreted as the respective weighted list of words. Equating a frame with the model's topic is in line with the concept of equivalence framing, as the focus is on the presentation of textual information, therefore lexical choices per se, and not its effects as understood by emphasis framing. The present method thus relies on the recommendations from Cacciatore et al. (2016) by focusing on equivalence rather than emphasis framing. Therefore, in this investigation, frames are to be understood as the topics, that is, the cluster of words discovered by the model that have the highest probability of co-occurring. Since topic modelling uses mixed-membership clustering, meaning that each document must not be exclusively assigned to only one topic, multiple frames can be present in a single news article. Mixed-membership clustering thus enables both the inclusion of intra- and inter-story news/topic strength.

As Chapter 5 will show, there are many possible algorithms for producing topic models. The current analysis is based on the *Structural Topic Model* by the *stm* package (Roberts et al., 2019), which won the Statistical Software Award by the Political Methodology Society in 2018. Similarly to the well-known Latent Dirichlet Allocation, a structural topic model is also a probabilistic topic model. However, contrary to Latent Dirichlet Allocation, structural topic modelling allows for the inclusion of co-variates in the analysis, that is, document metadata. This approach is well-suited to estimate a relationship between discovered topics and metadata or to include meta-data in the modelling of topics. In the case of this analysis, structural was chosen over Latent Dirichlet Allocation, since it is assumed that the time of writing, as well as the respective news outlets, are potentially important meta-variables for modelling media frames in 2015 and 2022. More specifically, it can be safely assumed that certain frames are more prevalent at certain points in time. For example, news articles on the fence erected by Hungary are expected to appear only after the fence was constructed. Similarly, news articles on the accommodation of individuals in Switzerland are expected to appear only once asylum-seekers and refugees started to arrive in Switzerland. By including meta-data in the topic model, it is also possible to examine topics over time, which can be helpful in the validation and analysis of the model.

A caveat of both topic models is that the model requires the pre-definition of a number of topics k to be discovered by the model. This is problematic as it is impossible to pre-determine the number of topics a corpus might contain

before the actual modelling. The approach taken was to calculate different k and compare the results of each model. Initial comparisons were conducted between models with k values of 10, 15, 20, 25 up to 35 and inspecting the corresponding top fifteen documents assigned to each topic (see Chapter 4.5 for validation considerations). Moreover, there is also the possibility of mathematically calculating appropriate topic numbers for a given corpus, that is, held-out likelihood and semantic coherence tests. According to these tests, over 40 topics were recommended for the 2015 and 2022 corpora.

The final chosen topic number k for 2015 was 19 and for 2022 11. The choice of low k values is purposeful and geared towards the goal of discovering general and overarching media frames. As Grimmer and Stewart (2013) point out, one must regard all quantitative text models as wrong. The useful model for the analysis of general and overarching frames does not correspond to the analysis of over 40 topics. Models with the high k values recommended by the held-out likelihood and semantic coherence tests uncovered many smaller and more detailed yet similar topics. For example, these models contained over five topics that could be categorised under the same overarching and common theme, that is, accommodation, but in more detail (such as the location, city, or canton). A higher number of topics also included a higher probability of topics that were not entirely semantically coherent, that is, top documents could not be interpreted or regarded as a coherent topic. Fewer frames were chosen for modelling the 2022 corpus because (1) it has fewer articles compared to 2015 and (2) increasing the k value by one or two only differentiated the same overarching frame, that is, the frame was split into different sub-themes.

Considering that structural topic modelling was selected over Latent Dirichlet Allocation for this analysis, the metadata concerning the time (days), the news outlet (newspaper), the type of news outlet (type, that is, daily newspaper/weekly newspaper/magazine) and whether it was online or print (medium) was included in the model. The respective code can be seen below.

For 2015:

```
stm15_k19 <- stm(stm_corpus_15$documents,
                stm_corpus_15$vocab,
                K = 19,
                prevalence = ~ s(days) + newspaper + medium +
                type,
                data = stm_corpus_15$meta,
                init.type = "Spectral")
```

For 2022:

```
stm22_k11 <- stm(stm_corpus_22$documents,  
               stm_corpus_22$vocab,  
               K = 11,  
               prevalence =~ s(days) + newspaper + medium +  
               type,  
               data = stm_corpus_22$meta,  
               init.type = "Spectral")
```

While the focus of this analysis is not on corpus linguistics methods, the purpose of this investigation is the comparison of media frames between 2015 and 2022. Therefore, two relative frequency analyses of both corpora have been included to gain insights into words that have been relatively more common in one year than the other, potentially aiding in the overall interpretation and analysis of media frames. To conclude, the analysis consists in the inspection and comparison of the two fitted topic models, the two lists of the top ten terms for each topic, the share of each topic across the whole corpus, two topic correlation graphs, and the above-mentioned relative term frequency graphs. For visualisation and interpretation purposes, each frame has been given a name that best fits its cluster of words.

4.5 Validation

Following the principles mentioned above by Grimmer and Stewart (2013), and the recommendation by Chan and Rinke (2022) to include real-word task performances when interpreting topic models, the validation of the results was primarily conducted via three approaches, namely (1) the examination of topic-term relationships, (2) the examination of the top fifteen articles assigned to each topic, and (3) an in-depth literature review of previous studies using topic models.

Regarding the first approach, the examination of topic-term relationships was mainly made in conjunction with the visualisation of topic models via the R package *LDAvis* by Sievert and Shirley (2014). This enabled not only the visualisation of the topic-term relationships themselves, but also the prevalence of each topic in the corpus, its distance from other topics, and most importantly, the inclusion of the relevance parameter. This enabled the comparison of the corpus-wide frequencies of each term within a topic with topic-specific frequencies. In other words, the package goes beyond the weighted

list of words provided by the topic model and allows for a dynamic interaction of the relevance parameter in order to also investigate which of the words have a higher probability of occurring exclusively in a given topic. This allows for a better interpretability and evaluation of “word intrusion”, that is, how “semantically cohesive the topics inferred by a model are” (Chang et al., 2009, p. 2).

Additionally, topics were also investigated by reading the top fifteen documents assigned to each topic via the package *stminsights* (Schwemmer, 2023), which included not only a weighted list of words according to probabilities, but also FREX. FREX (Frequency and Exclusivity) is a calculated list of words, essentially equivalent to the relevance parameter of *LDAvis*, which “attempts to find words which are both frequent in and exclusive to a topic of interest” (Roberts et al., 2019). Therefore, FREX words are considered to be more interpretable since they do not only consider the probability, based on frequency, assigned to topic terms. Finally, the package also allows for the creation of correlation graphs, enabling further interpretation and validation possibilities.

The final approach to validation was conducted due to the existence of previous studies conducting topic modelling for the same purposes as this investigation. An in-depth literature review was conducted to compare and discuss the discovered topics/frames of the studies themselves and to serve as a basis for the contextualisation and interpretability of the discovered topics/frames modelled in this analysis. It is according to the insights from the literature, as well as the examination of the topic-term relationships and its top documents via *LDAvis* and *stminsights*, that the individual topic names have been deducted. As explained in 3.1, the identification of frames is a subjective task, as frames or themes do not “belong” to a certain lexical choice or cluster of words, but can be deduced from them.

Chapter 5

Literature Review Of Framing Analyses

There is an array of studies that use automated corpus-assisted analyses to investigate the 2015 “refugee crisis” in Europe, but with different methodologies. Griebel and Vollmann (2019) and Galantino (2022) use corpus linguistics in order to determine how pre-specified and migration-related keywords and collocations are related to other topics in news articles, such as terrorism or crime. Chan and Rinke (2022) examine the relationship between migration and terrorism in their corpora, yet do so through a sentiment analysis comparing the presence of fear and pity in articles. Mustafa-Awad and Kirner-Ludwig (2021) conduct a semantic analysis to locate frames and analyse how these frames affect ordinary citizens. However, in order to limit the scope of this review, only studies with a similar methodology to the current analysis have been selected. The only relevant studies analysing the 2015 events exclusively in Europe and employing an unsupervised frame analysis are by Greussing and Boomgaarden (2017), Heidenreich et al. (2019) and Czymara and van Klingeren (2019).

On the other hand, given the recency of the 2022 events, not many automated news analyses on the depiction of Ukrainian refugees in Europe exist (yet). More specifically, only two relevant studies have been identified, namely by Zawadzka-Palucktau (2022), who analyses the Polish press, and McCann et al. (2022), who compare the narratives between 2015 and 2022 using a corpus of all European anglophone media. The former study applies corpus linguistics methods, and the latter uses a mixed-method approach that combines sentiment analysis with qualitative thematic coding. While neither study applies unsupervised frame analyses, they have been included in the literature review given the lack of relevant studies and the need to include insights into media coverage of 2022.

5.1 Review of 2015 news analyses

The studies by Greussing and Boomgaarden (2017), Heidenreich et al. (2019) and Czymara and van Klingeren (2019) are relevant for this investigation for three reasons: They (1) applied different models of unsupervised topic modelling of (2) Germanophone media (3) during 2015. Despite these commonalities, as can be seen from Table 5.1, the three studies still differ in many aspects.

	Greussing & Boomgaarden (2017)	Heidenreich et al. (2019)	Czymara & van Klingeren (2019)
Countries	Austria	Germany, Hungary, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom	Germany
Timeframe	01/01/2015 – 27/01/2016	01/01/2015 – 31/01/2016	01/01/2015 – 31/12/2017
Database	Austrian Press Agency	Individual media archives	LexisNexis
Query	*flüchtling* OR *asyl*	asyl* or refugee*	ATLEAST2(!flüchtling!) OR ATLEAST2(!asyl!)
Newspapers	6	24	3
Documents	10'606	130'042	32'597
Method	Factor analysis with a principal component extraction method	Topic Modelling using Bayesian Latent Dirichlet Allocation	Structural Topic Modelling
Frame operationalisation	a network of the most frequent co-occurring words	recurring patterns of specific words	Cluster of words that represent a latent theme
Modelled frames	8	16	19

Table 5.1: Comparative overview of used data and methods for frame analyses in 2015.

While Greussing and Boomgaarden (2017) and Czymara and van Klingeren (2019) conduct their analysis exclusively on Germanophone media, Heidenreich et al. (2019) include newspapers from other countries and other languages, thereby providing a useful comparison between countries. Additionally, the three studies cover the whole year of 2015, but end at different periods. This is mainly due to different interpretations of when the “crisis” has ended, or until when its political, social, and economic consequences reach (Bitschnau et al., 2021). Coverage salience might have reached its peak

in 2015, but the salience of refugees remained high even after the crisis, as Czymara and van Klingereren (2019) showed. Germany, for example, saw additional peaks in January 2016, due to the sexual assaults on New Year's Eve; in December 2016, due to the terror attack in Paris; and also in the context of the parliamentary elections in September 2017. Moreover, by comparing the situation to other countries, Heidenreich et al. (2019) showed that salience is also different based on geographical location. Hungary, at the start of the Balkan route, saw a higher salience already in 2014.

Regarding the quantity of articles and newspapers, we see some differences. While it is evident that Heidenreich et al. (2019) have the largest absolute number of covered newspapers, its relative quantity per country is similar to Greussing and Boomgaarden (2017), amounting to an average of almost five newspapers per country. The relative average number of articles per newspaper is, however, the largest for Heidenreich et al. (2019), even when compared to Czymara and van Klingereren (2019), whose study covers three years. While a large database across different countries is a good approach for international comparison, a smaller amount of analysed newspapers across a larger time period provides a more detailed and consistent view of used news media frames. Greussing and Boomgaarden (2017) have the lowest yearly average of articles per newspaper, which might be the result of strict data pre-processing in an attempt to remove noise from the data and ensure only relevant news articles remain in the data. There is no right amount of pre-processing, however, since there is a tension between minimising noise by including articles that are only marginally relevant on the one hand and removing too many articles which may mean removing smaller or less covered frames on the issue along with noise. Rather than pre-processing the collected data, other studies try to address the issue during the data mining process with an appropriate query, just as in the case of Czymara and van Klingereren (2019), who mine articles with at least two mentions of the relevant keywords.

Considering the operationalisation of frames and the applied machine-learning methods, we see little difference on the operationalisation side, but large differences on the individual algorithms. On one hand, all three operationalise frames as "re-occurring" or "clusters" of words, which represent the important aspect of a *latent* theme. By focusing on clusters of words and therefore lexical items themselves, it is possible to rely on the equivalence definition of framing, as only the presentation of information is taken into

account. On the other hand, only one study employs the Latent Dirichlet Allocation, the most prominent method in topic modelling in practice. Greussing and Boomgaarden (2017) use the Principal Component Analysis, which is a type of factor analysis, but less performant and more difficult to interpret than the more discrete Latent Dirichlet Allocation (Clark, 2018). Czymara and van Klingereren (2019) use the method applied in this analysis, structural topic modelling.

Going into the results of their analyses, Table 5.2 shows a summary of the frames modelled by the studies, which were separated according to a typology of overarching frame categories. We see that all three studies have found similar and comparable frames in their analyses, though to a different degree, as studies with a higher frame number might have identified multiple frames within one category. Whereas Greussing and Boomgaarden (2017) summarise the frames dealing with internal and external politics under their “reception/distribution” frame, the other studies use a more differentiated view, identifying sub-frames such as “EU refugee policy”, “national refugee policy” or frames specifically related to the situation in countries themselves, such as “Turkey”, “Austria/Hungary”. Similarly, the higher granularity also enables a better view of the framing in humanitarian and internal politics frames. With Heidenreich et al. (2019), we see that the empathetic reporting of humanitarian frames consists of news articles reporting on individual stories, that is, of unaccompanied children and families. Regarding internal politics, we see that coverage can include topics ranging from elections, party politics, bureaucratic asylum procedures, to even social movements such as populism and the resulting right-wing extremism.

All three studies have common categories with the exception of politicisation frames, which Greussing and Boomgaarden (2017) did not identify in their model. This is interesting, as Czymara and van Klingereren (2019) categorise their “fear” frame as the most prominent one. They describe this as capturing “emotional and negative terms such as problem, crisis, and danger, related mostly to larger social and political concepts such as society, democracy, or freedom” (p. 11), confirming the association between asylum-related issues and lexical choices that deal with fear (Becker, 2016). Similarly, associated words of the “value and culture” frame by Heidenreich et al. (2019), such as “cultural”, “religious”, “social”, “society”, and “story” (p. 176), indicate lexical choices pertaining to more abstract concepts and hints at a framing of refugees as a cultural threat due to different values with regard to religion and democracy. One could assume that the most prominently present

Overarching Frame Category	Description	Greussing & Boomgaarden (2017)	Heidenreich et al. (2019)	Czymbara & van Klengeren (2019)
Accommodation	temporary and permanent provision of accommodation due to a higher number of arrivals	Settlement	Accommodations	Accommodation
Border Situation	situation at several borders, both inside and outside the EU	Securitisation	Border; Refugee movement; Refugee camps	Refugee Crossing; Border
Economic Association	long-term, and mostly negative, economic consequences of refugees on welfare and the labour market, as well as their integration	Economisation; Labor Market Integration	Economy; Welfare	Economy
Humanitarian	welcome culture and interest in the legitimate claim and stories of individuals through empathetic reporting	Humanitarianism	Humanitarian Aid; Human Interest; Unaccompanied children	Family
Internal Politics	political/social effects and discussions in the host society	Reception/distribution	National Refugee Policy; Elections	Election; Government; Asylum; Right-wing Populism; Right-wing Extremism
External Politics	political/social effects and discussions in other countries or the EU	Reception/distribution	EU Refugee Policy; Brexit	Route; USA/Russia; Turkey; EU policies; Austria/Hungary
Violent Behaviour Association	association between refugees/asylum-seekers and possible criminal and terrorist acts they might or have committed	Criminality	Crime and Terrorism	Crime; Terrorism
Flight causes	primary causes of refugee flows	Background Victimisation	War	Middle East War; Religious Conflict
Politicisation	political/social disagreement regarding the crisis	-	Value and Culture	Fear

Table 5.2: Typology and description of overarching frame categories found in the three reviewed studies.

frames should be similar across studies, yet this is not the case. This is probably an example of how results from text analyses can differ based on the methods used, the countries that were investigated, and, in the case of topic modelling, how many topics the model contains. This challenge includes manually coded text analyses.

The predominant frame in Greussing and Boomgaarden (2017), namely the “securitisation” frame, which is associated with lexical choices such as “border”, “border crossing”, “fence”, or “waiting”, can be related to the “fear” frame in Czymara and van Klingereren (2019). In their analysis, the securitisation frame is very much associated with a “stereotyped portrayal of refugees as an uncontrollable, dehumanised mass waiting to enter country” (p. 1756f.), thus confirming the overall negative framing of news frames regarding refugees and asylum-seekers. Greussing and Boomgaarden (2017) additionally find that, while all frames were present in the coverage at the start of the “crisis”, over time certain frames “crystallise into a more narrow set in the aftermath” (p. 1759). Notwithstanding, the analysis by Heidenreich et al. (2019) shows that predominant frames are very much country-dependent, hinting at the relevance of the geographic location and journalistic traditions of each country. Put differently, it’s not just the refugee flows that shape news coverage, but also how “we” react to them. They show that border situation frames are more predominant in countries near the Balkan or Mediterranean route; in Hungary, coverage started early since refugees started to arrive already in winter 2014; in Germany, there was a second peak due to the sexual assaults on New Year’s Eve; in the UK, the coverage remained high until after the Brexit referendum in June 2016; in Spain, there was a second peak between April and May 2016, which was related to concern over the EU-Turkey deal.

From these observations, we can assume that the current analysis will identify similar or comparable frames provided in the above-mentioned 2015 studies, given that they all cover Germanophone countries with comparable nationhood concepts (Brubaker, 2002). Moreover, it is safe to conclude that the number of topics will affect the granularity of frames, but that a topic number above 10 probably provides more desirably distinguishable results (see Table 5.1).

5.2 Review of 2022 news analyses

The studies of McCann et al. (2022) and Zawadzka-Palucktau (2022) have been chosen as they are the only relevant identified corpus-assisted studies analysing news articles in 2022. They diverge from the reviewed 2015 studies mainly in methodology and the analysed media—they use neither topic modelling nor is the corpus made up of Germanophone news articles. However, this does not imply that they are not able to provide relevant findings regarding news coverage of Ukrainian refugees.

	Zawadzka-Palucktau (2022)	McCann, Sienkiewicz, and Zard (2022)
Countries	Poland	-
Timeframe	01/03/2022 - 07/03/2022	01/08/2015 - 31/12/2015 & 24/02/2022 - 23/07/2022
Database	Direct download	Factiva
Query	refugee(s)	2015: Syria OR Syrian OR Iraq OR Iraqi OR Afghanistan OR Afghan 2022: Ukraine or Ukrainian
Newspapers	3	-
Documents	320	16'244
Method	Collocation Analysis	Mixed Methods: Sentiment Analysis & Qualitative Thematic Coding

Table 5.3: Comparative overview of used data and methods for analyses in 2022.

As can be seen from Table 5.3, McCann et al. (2022) analyse both 2015 and 2022, providing the first comparative work between both years. Their corpus is not country-specific but language-specific, meaning that they analysed European and business news in English. It is also noteworthy that they do not cover the whole year—in 2015 only news articles between August and December were covered, and in 2022, only between March and July. This approach focuses on a five-month period at the peak of both “crises”. On the other hand, Zawadzka-Palucktau (2022) focuses only on a single week immediately after the start of the Russian invasion. Nonetheless, the study is quite relevant because it examines Polish media, and Poland is a neighbouring nation that took in the largest number of Ukrainian refugees. Due to the

different foci, we see a large difference in the number of articles analysed. Unfortunately, no comparison can be made regarding the newspapers, since McCann et al. (2022) have not indicated which newspapers were analysed, but merely summarise them as “major news and business sources [in] Europe” (p. 13). Consequently, not even a list of newspapers or countries is provided, which can be considered methodologically intransparent.

Regarding their methodologies, we also see different approaches. McCann et al. (2022) use mixed-methods, which has a clear advantage when it comes to automated and unsupervised text analyses. This allows for a more in-depth qualitative angle to a pure quantitative analysis, which in their case allows for a differentiation of sentiment according to themes (or frames). Zawadzka-Paluckta (2022) use corpus linguistics, more specifically, a collocation analysis around the term “refugee” to analyse associated words. What both studies uncover is an overall more positive portrayal of Ukrainian refugees when compared to refugees coming from the MENA region.

In Zawadzka-Paluckta (2022), the top collocate category of “refugee” in 2022 refers to the act of helping refugees, including humanitarian aid. The second refers to geographical locations, e.g., Ukraine and Poland. The geographical collocate category of “Africa” was employed to discuss fake news reports on the construction of African and Asian men trying to exploit the Ukrainian refugee movement to sneak into Poland. From the collocation analysis, the authors conclude that Ukrainians are constantly referred to as “refugees”, which implies an absence of the interchangeable usage of refugee with other terms discussed in previous chapters. Another finding is the overall absence of the word “crisis” in 2022, which hints at a less problem-oriented portrayal of events despite the magnitude of displaced individuals.

In McCann et al. (2022), similar conclusions are arrived at through a sentiment analysis, which shows negative sentiment values and an “ambivalence towards asylum-seekers and refugees in 2015 compared to the strong support of displaced Ukrainians in 2022” (p. 5). More specifically, articles in which migrants and asylum-seekers were referred to as “economic migrants”, “illegal migrants” or “illegal immigrants” are on average significantly more negative. Regarding the qualitative theme analysis, there were approximately 45 identified codes. Key codes were also differentiated by their relative frequency and sentiment across both years (see Figure 5.1).

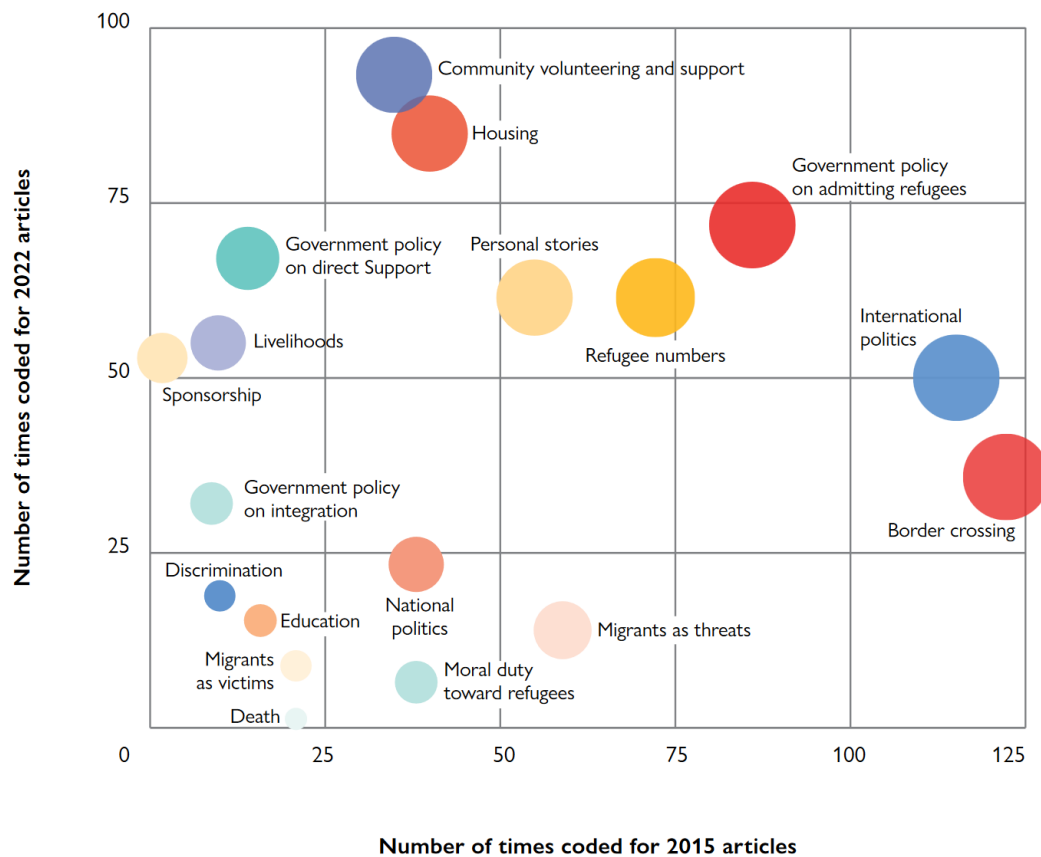


Figure 5.1: Relative frequency of the most common codes by McCann et al. (2022)

We clearly see that certain topics were more present in one year than another. Prominent differences relate to the codes of “border crossing” and “international politics”, as well as “migrant as threat”, which were more present in 2015. On the other hand, “community volunteering and support”, “housing”, and “government policy on direct support” was much more present in 2022. The qualitative analysis shows that there were no mentions of threats to cultural identity or to the economy in 2022. The economic crisis in Europe resulting from the war was not accompanied by economic concerns around the migrants. In fact, the opposite had actually occurred: Ukrainians were framed as an economic benefit—a similar observation in Poland was also found by Zawadzka-Paluckta (2022). Moreover, the authors find that there were many more articles on the legitimacy of claims in 2015 than in 2022. While articles in 2015 recognised the vulnerability of Syrians, they were also accompanied by mentions of counterfeit passports, thus questioning whether asylum-seekers were genuinely Syrian. In 2022, similar legitimacy claims were found only among the coverage of non-white Ukrainians or non-citizen

residents of Ukraine. Overall, the coverage around the “integration” narrative was shaped by the introduction of the TPD, which resulted in a much more “solutions oriented” coverage in 2022. McCann et al. (2022) conclude that issues of race, proximity, and gender played a major role in the narrative difference between both years.

From the observations of both studies, it can be expected that this analysis will uncover (1) different, eventually new, topics for 2022, (2) a different importance of similar or equivalent topics, and (3) an overall less problem-oriented news coverage regarding Ukrainian refugees. However, how far the current analysis will be able to uncover similar results needs to be put into question, since these insights were retrieved using different methods that are “closer” to the data compared to unsupervised modelling, such as corpus linguistics and qualitative coding.

Chapter 6

Results

This chapter presents an in-depth examination of the data, organising the findings by year. It begins with an overview of the distribution of topics, followed by a table that exhibits the deduced frames and their corresponding lexical choices. Additionally, a correlation graph is provided to illustrate the relationships between different variables. Finally, a selection of graphs is included to demonstrate the predominance of frames over time. Detailed descriptions of every frame and supplementary graphics may be seen in the Appendix. This chapter further provides an analysis of yearly relative term frequencies. These findings are presented in a separate chapter due to their distinct methodological approach, which focuses on corpus linguistics rather than topic modelling.

6.1 2015 Swiss media frames

19 media frames were modelled by the structural topic model on the 2015 corpus (for a detailed description of each 2015 frame, see Appendix A). As we can see in Figure 6.1, the most prevalent media frame modelled is the *Accommodation* frame (12%). This frame shows lexical items that refer to the overall need for increased accommodation capacities for asylum-seekers and their distribution among cantons and communes due to the sudden higher number of arrivals, hence showing co-occurring words such as “platz” [place], “unterkunft” [accommodation], “zentrum” [centre], “gemeinderat” [communal council], and “kantonal” [cantonal] (for a detailed list of words see Table 6.1). While this relates to the capacities of asylum centres on a federal level, on a cantonal and communal level the frame relates more to the political organisation, construction, or repurposing of infrastructure, such as civil protection shelters, for the reception of refugees.

Almost equally relevant is the *Human Interest* frame (11.8%), a term taken from Heidenreich et al. (2019) to describe a “personalised or emotionalised

perspective on unfolding events” (Greussing & Boomgaarden, 2017, p. 1751) of/by victims and other involved individuals. This frame is dominated by story script structures that mirror personalised or individual dramatised accounts, mostly relating to children and families, hence the presence of words such as “erzählen” [tell], “kind” [child], “familie” [family], or “bleiben” [stay].

The third most prevalent frame is *Politicisation* (7.8%), which draws its name from the typology of politics towards a topic proposed by van der Brug et al. (2015), describing an issue as politicised when it is highly contested as well as salient (see Figure 3.1). The frame includes documents with diverging opinions, commentaries, analyses around the entirety of events which problematise the “refugee crisis” on a national and European level. This is evident through the lexical choices used in this frame, namely “problem” [problem], “krise” [crisis], “lösung” [solution], and “europäisch” [european]. This theme encompasses not only negative or polarising perspectives on the presence of refugees themselves, but also humanitarian ones, ultimately hinting towards the ambivalent news coverage in 2015, confirming the reviewed literature in Chapter 5.1.

Other frames relate to the internal situation in Switzerland, such as *Swiss Party Politics*, *Swiss Asylum System*, *Swiss Asylum Praxis*, and *Money*. They discuss, among other things, the division of Swiss parties, particularly the

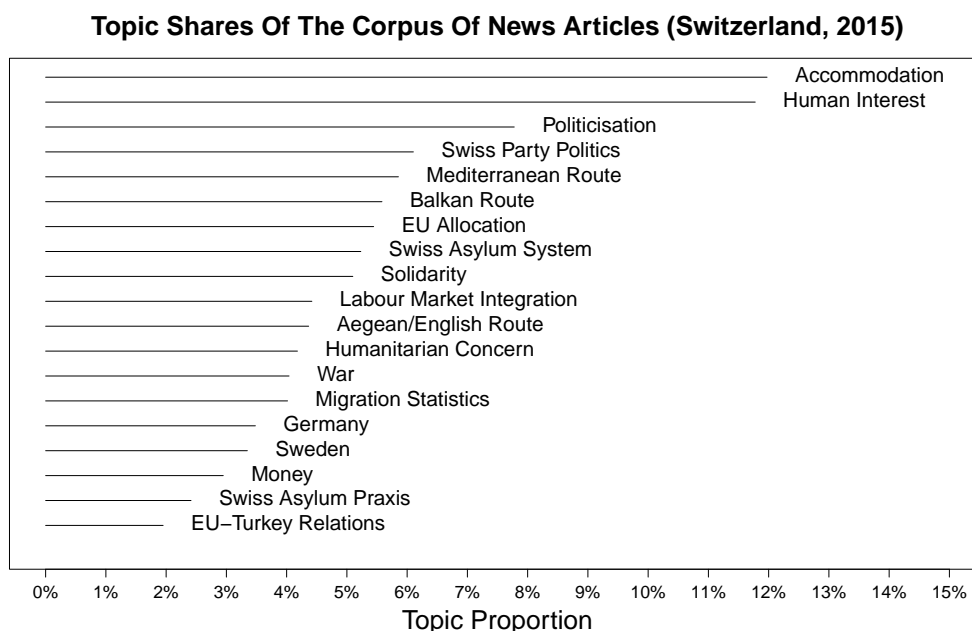


Figure 6.1: Topic share of each individual frame in 2015. Topic shares are the expected proportion of the corpus that belongs to each topic. Example: 2% of topics in the corpus treat EU-Turkey relations.

Overarching Frame Categories	Deducted Frame Theme (2015)	Top Terms
Accommodation	<i>Accommodation</i>	platz, unterkunft, unterbringen, asylbewerber, zentrum, unterbringung, verfügung, gemeinderat, person, kantonal
Border Situation	<i>Mediterranean Route</i>	mittelmeer, boot, italien, italienisch, schlepper, libyen, schiff, retten, küste, küstenwache
	<i>Balkan Route</i>	ungarn, österreich, polizei, serbien, ungarisch, zug, österreichisch, zaun, bahnhof, bringen
	<i>Aegean/English Route</i>	migrant, griechenland, insel, griechisch, behörde, lager, versuchen, gelangen, polizei, berichten
Economic Association	<i>Labour Market Integration</i>	integration, arbeit, arbeiten, vorläufig, erhalten, anerkannt, integrieren, projekt, wichtig, stelle
	<i>Money</i>	franken, kosten, million, geld, schweizer, beitrug, leisten, finanziell, bezahlen, zusätzlich
Humanitarian	<i>Human Interest</i>	kind, familie, jung, leute, wort, alt, erzählen, klein, haus, bleiben
	<i>Solidarity</i>	stadt, zürich, helfen, projekt, ort, privat, organisation, einsatz, gruppe, aktion
	<i>Humanitarian Concern</i>	syrien, syrisch, syrerinnen, million, aufnehmen, hilfe, unhcr, libanon, flucht, aufnahme
Internal Politics	<i>Swiss Party Politics</i>	svp, bundesrat, simonetta_sommaruga, partei, fordern, thema, sp, schweizer, forderung, klar
	<i>Swiss Asylum System</i>	bund, sem, person, asylgesuch, fall, verfahren, asylverfahren, asylsuchend, gesuch, lage
	<i>Migration Statistics</i>	prozent, zahl, steigen, liegen, deutlich, fast, person, vergleich, monat, knapp
	<i>Swiss Asylum Praxis</i>	eritrea, eritreer, asyl, bericht, heimat, schweizer, reisen, erhalten, reise, jung
External Politics	<i>EU Allocation</i>	italien, staat, brüssel, europäisch, griechenland, eu-staat, eu-kommission, verteilung, eu-land, regierungschef
	<i>Germany</i>	deutsch, angela_merkel, berlin, kanzlerin, flüchtlingskrise, flüchtlingspolitik, schaffen, politik, sprechen, rede
	<i>Sweden</i>	regierung, schweden, partei, erklären, gesetz, parlament, kritik, mehrheit, kritisieren, druck
	<i>EU-Turkey Relations</i>	türkei, euro, türkisch, milliarde, flüchtlingskrise, brüssel, präsidant, million, geld, syrisch
Flight Causes	<i>War</i>	is, syrien, irak, armee, afghanistan, präsidant, gewalt, frankreich, kampf, gefahr
Politicisation	<i>Politicisation</i>	politisch, problem, europäisch, staat, politik, lösung, brauchen, frage, krise, migration

Table 6.1: Structural Topic Model results for the 2015 topic model of Swiss media, categorized according to overarching frame categories. The top ten terms are ranked according to probability.

far-right SVP, in relation to events and organisational issues.. This includes the overburdening of the Swiss asylum system, terrorism concerns, as well as the legitimacy of asylum applications by Eritrean nationals. Almost on an equal footing are media frames which depict the situation on a European level. These include external politics themselves (*EU Allocation, EU-Turkey Relations, Germany*), but foremost the situation on border crossings and routes (*Balkan Route, Aegean/English Route, Mediterranean Route*). Other humanitarian frames apart from *Human Interest* are also present, namely *Solidarity*, which includes news coverage on volunteer projects, donations and civil initiatives, and *Humanitarian Concern*, which reports on the humanitarian situation unfolding in Syria and neighbouring countries.

The separation between internal and external affairs is clearly seen in the topic correlation graph (cf. Figure 6.2), where frames relating to Switzerland are seen on the bottom left, and frames relating to the external situation on the top right. In the middle of the graph, we see only three frames. *War* and *Humanitarian Concern* are geographically determined, since these frames refer to the situation in mostly Syria and Iraq, but *Politicisation* is singled out and between the two major nodes. This suggests that external affairs, such as *Sweden* or *Germany*, also possess a politicised framing. Regarding the correlation strength, the strongest correlations exist for border situation frames, but also around the frames concerning internal affairs, such as *Accommodation, Solidarity*, and *Human Interest*, as well as *Migration Statistics, Swiss Asylum System*, and *Swiss Party Politics*. One can conclude that articles tend to discuss either internal or external affairs, but rarely both simultaneously.

Thanks to the Structural Topic Model, which enables the inclusion of metadata in the topic modelling, it is also possible to estimate the temporal effects on topics, essentially rendering insights about the time(s) frames are estimated to be more relevant. As seen in Figure 6.3, we see that route or border crossing frames have different peaks. The *Mediterranean Route* has a strong peak around May 2015, the *Balkan Route* and *Aegean/English Route* frame in September. The latter coincides with what became known as the “crisis peak” for Western Europe. These peaks also coincide with many other frames’ peaks, especially for dates after September. This is for instance the case for *Germany, Humanitarian Concern, Politicisation, Swiss Party Politics*, and *EU Allocation* (see Appendix C for remaining graphs). Interestingly, *EU Allocation* has a strong peak after the *Mediterranean Route* peak, hinting towards a delayed effect, possibly mirroring the problematic situation of member states

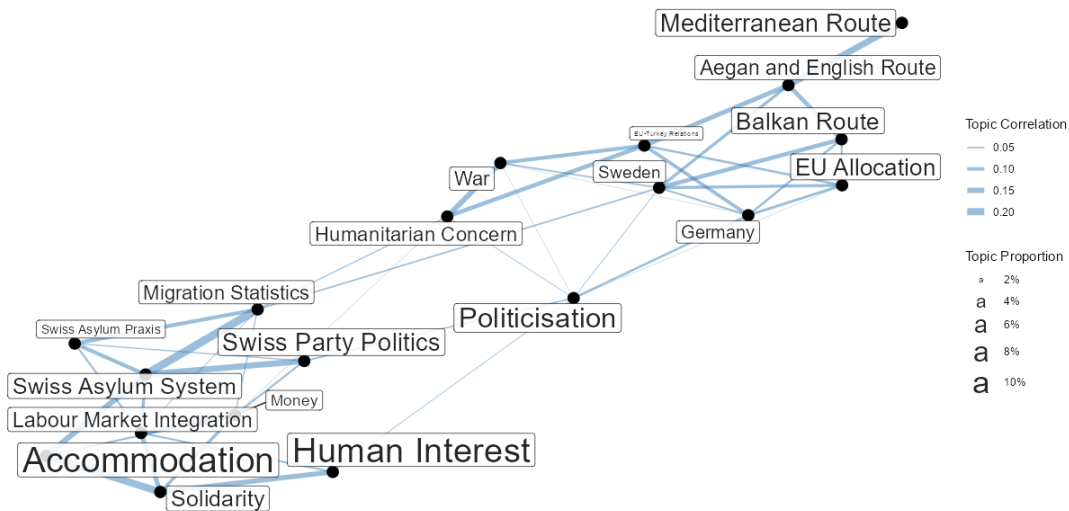


Figure 6.2: Correlation graph for 2015 media frames using stminsights package (Schwemmer, 2023). Edge thickness represents correlation strength and size of the topic name its proportion.

at the EU’s periphery in EU politics, as these carry the major burden of arrivals and demand more fair distributions. The most prevalent frame, *Accommodation*, has an overall strong effect on topic prevalence around the whole year, with multiple maxima. This implies it is not exclusive or relates only to the accommodation of the sudden and large “peak” of arrivals in September.

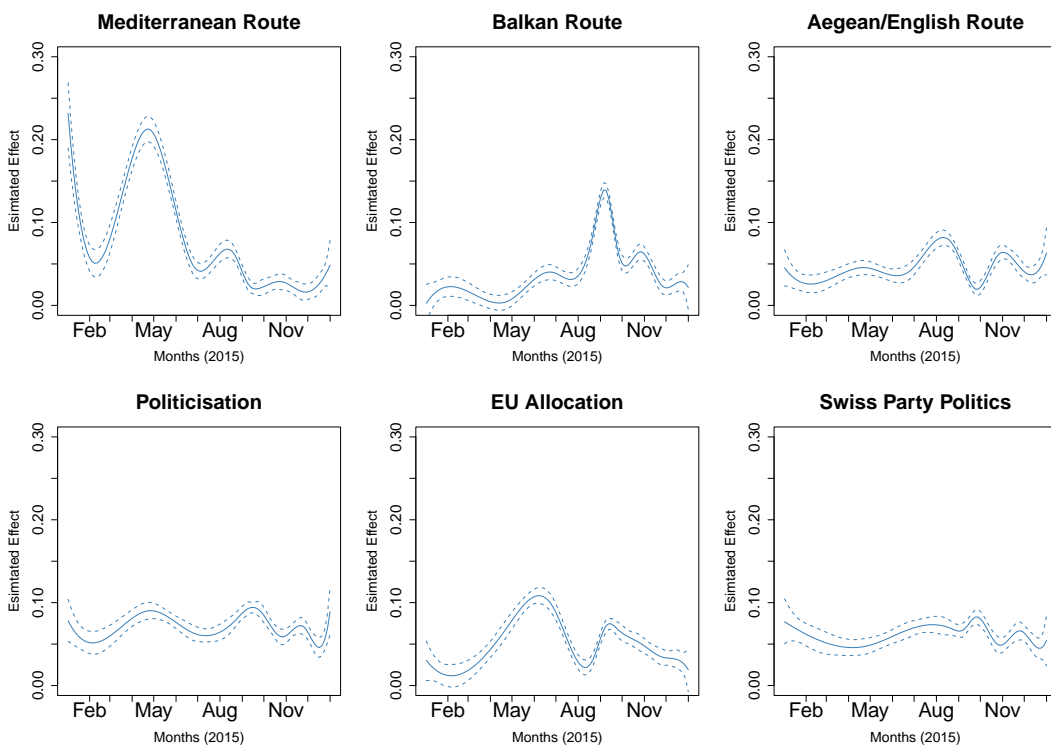


Figure 6.3: Estimated effect of time (date variable) on topic prevalence in 2015.

6.2 2022 Swiss media frames

11 media frames were modelled in the 2022 corpus¹ (for a detailed description of each frame, see Appendix C). The top two most prevalent frames are the same as in 2015, namely *Accommodation* and *Human Interest*. However, even though the overarching themes are the same, the cluster of co-occurring words is not. In 2022, the *Accommodation* frame includes words such as “gast-familie” [guest family], “wohnung” [apartment], and “privat” [private] (see Table 6.2 for a detailed list of words). While the *Human Interest* frame remains similar to 2015 in essence, words such as “mutter” [mother], “haus” [house] or “flüchten” [flee] indicate a more detailed description or focus on flight stories by families composed mostly of mother and children compared to 2015.

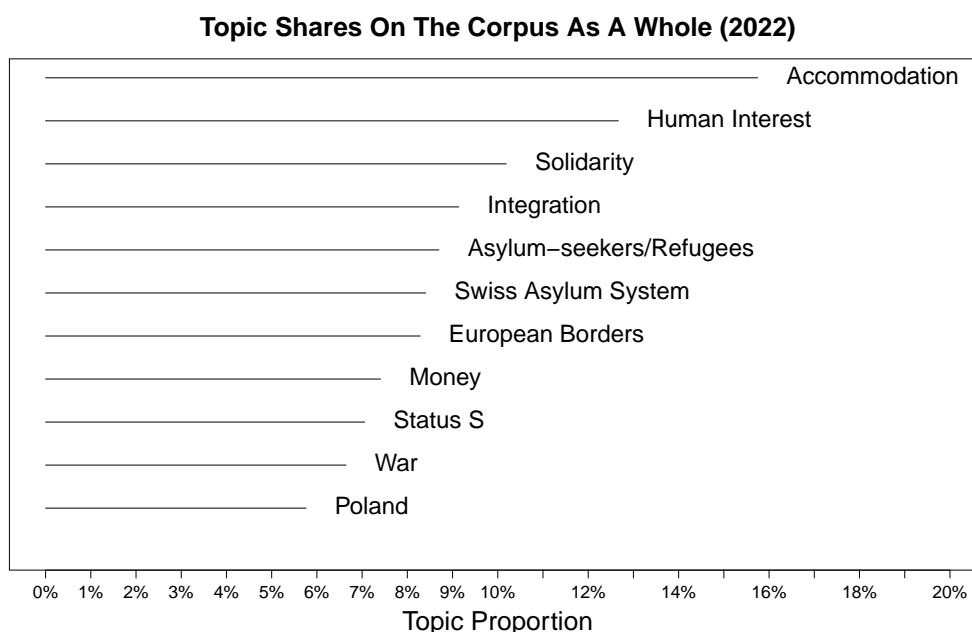


Figure 6.4: Topic share of each individual frame in 2022. Topic shares are the expected proportion of the corpus that belongs to each topic.

The third most prevalent frame in 2022 is *Solidarity*, which addresses the positive reception and willingness to help and support Ukrainian refugees, including protests against the war. This supports findings by McCann et al. (2022) and Zawadzka-Paluettau (2022) in their analysis of news articles in 2022. Contrary to 2015, which includes a media frame regarding labour market integration, *Integration* goes beyond the labour market and includes the educational qualifications of Ukrainians, their ability and economic benefit

¹Less frames were modelled for 2022 since the corpus is almost half the size of that of 2015 and increasing k by one and two only lead to further accommodation sub-themes

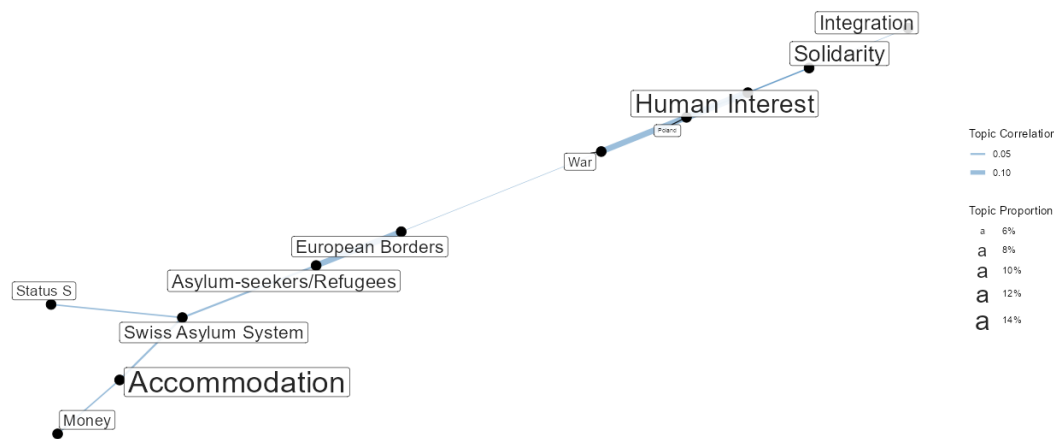


Figure 6.5: Correlation graph for the 2022 media frames using the *stminsights* package (Schwemmer, 2023). Edge thickness represents correlation strength and size of the topic name its proportion in the corpus (see Table 6.2. Thicker lines mean that two topics are more likely to be discussed in the same article.

for the Swiss labour market, and also the schooling of children, given that a significant proportion of refugees were minors.

Even though the focus is on Ukrainian refugees in 2022, frames reporting on other refugees are nonetheless present, namely *Asylum-seekers/Refugee* and *European Borders*. While the former reports on a variety of issues regarding asylum-seekers and refugees in Switzerland, the latter has a focus on European borders and encompasses border crossings, “illegal” migrants, and deportations. There is a relative lack of frames that address external situations in 2022, except *Poland*, which as a neighbouring country to Ukraine harboured and harbours the largest share of Ukrainian refugees. The frame *War*, beyond encompassing the reporting on the Russian-Ukrainian War, thematises the international response, such as sanctions, as well.

The correlation graph of the 2022 model reveals that the most robust connections are seen between the categories *Asylum-seekers/refugees* and *European Borders*, as well as between *War* and *Poland*. The first perspective suggests a correlation between predominantly non-Ukrainian individuals and the external politics influencing border crossings and border policies of European nations. Conversely, the second perspective examines the relationship between the repercussions of the conflict on the neighbouring country, particularly in terms of the reception and housing of Ukrainian refugees. Similar to the findings in 2015, there’s a correlation between *Human Interest* and *Solidarity*. However, it is worth noting that *Human Interest* in 2022 is also correlated to *Poland*, a border situation frame, suggesting a more direct humanitarian perspective on border crossing frames not found in 2015.

Overarching Frame Categories	Deducted Frame Theme (2022)	Top Terms
Accommodation	<i>Accommodation</i>	unterkunft, platz, stadt, unterbringen, gastfamilie, wohnung, unterbringung, privat, verfügung, bern
Border Situation	<i>Poland</i>	grenze, polen, million, stadt, polnisch, fahren, kiew, fliehen, flucht, bus
Economic Association	<i>Integration</i>	schule, jugendliche, integration, arbeit, arbeiten, deutsch, stelle, geflüchtet, sprache, integrieren
	<i>Money</i>	franken, sozialhilfe, geld, kosten, gastfamilie, aargau, finanziell, million, regierungsrat, gemeinderat
Humanitarian	<i>Solidarity</i>	hilfe, helfen, solidarität, unterstützen, verein, organisation, unterstützung, ort, organisieren, brauchen
	<i>Human Interest</i>	familie, mutter, haus, erzählen, alt, heimat, jung, spät, klein, flüchten
Internal Politics	<i>Status S</i>	ausweis_s, bundesrat, karin_kellersutter, aufnahme, schutz, schweizer, vorläufig, schutzstatus, svp, bund
	<i>Swiss Asylum System</i>	sem, bund, zahl, registrieren, bundesasylzentr, ausweis_s, bundesasylzentrum, zürich, zusätzlich, platz
	<i>Asylum-seekers/Refugees</i>	prozent, asylsuchender, fall, afghanistan, türkei, situation, syrien, zahl, führen, grund
External Politics	<i>European Borders</i>	europa, migrant, regierung, eu, deutschland, europäisch, staat, italien, illegal, grenze
Flight Causes	<i>War</i>	russland, präsidant, wladimir_putin, stadt, kiew, mariupol, million, angriff, truppe, teilen

Table 6.2: Structural Topic Model results for the 2022 topic model of Swiss media, categorized according to overarching frame categories. The top ten terms are ranked according to probability.

Concerning temporal effects, the majority of frames concentrate around the end of February, as the Russian-Ukrainian War started on the 24th of February. However, the only frames not pertaining to this overall trend are *Asylum-seekers/Refugees* and *European Borders*, which peak at the end of January/beginning of February to then rapidly decrease with the start of the war (see Appendix D for an overview of remaining graphs). *Human Interest* assumingly had a peak before 2022 as it continuously declined from January to March, suggesting that humanitarian perspectives are not exclusive to Ukrainian refugees. *Accommodation* shows a delayed effect, peaking only around April, yet reflecting the start of Ukrainian arrivals in Switzerland (cf. Figure 2.3).

6.3 Relative term frequency

Relative term frequency analysis identifies frequent words in documents in a target and reference group (Watanabe & Müller, 2023), indicating which words occurs more frequently in the target corpus as compared to its occurrence in the reference corpus, revealing its relative relevance to each corpus.

Considering Figure 6.7, different terms are used to refer to the affected individuals in both years. “geflüchteter”, the more positive and neutral description (as mentioned in 4.1), is the predominant designation in 2022, while “flüchtling” [refugee] is the top term in 2015, followed by “asylsuchender”

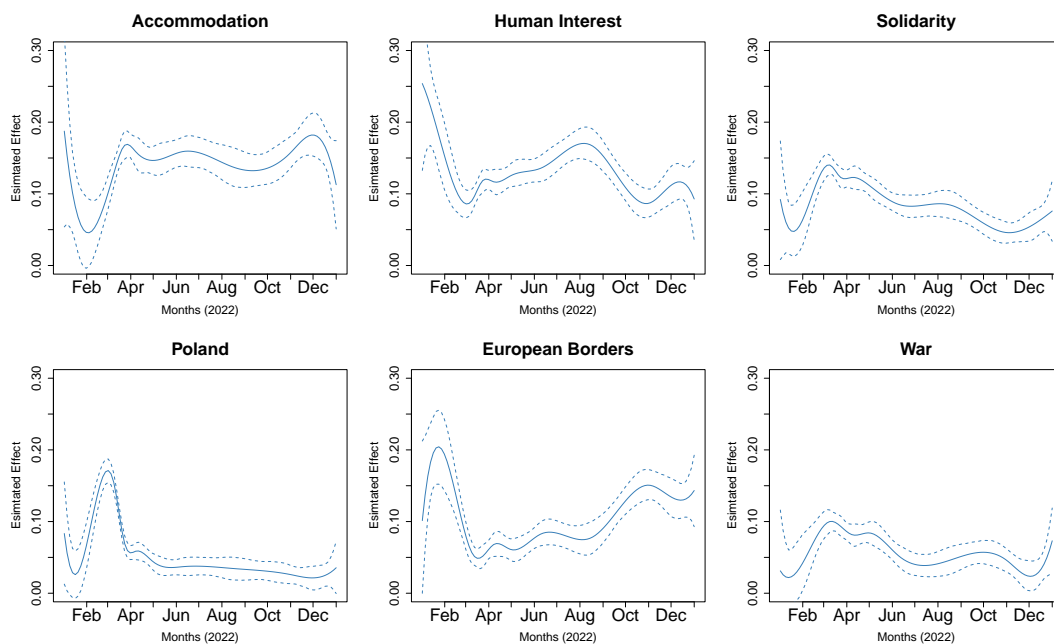
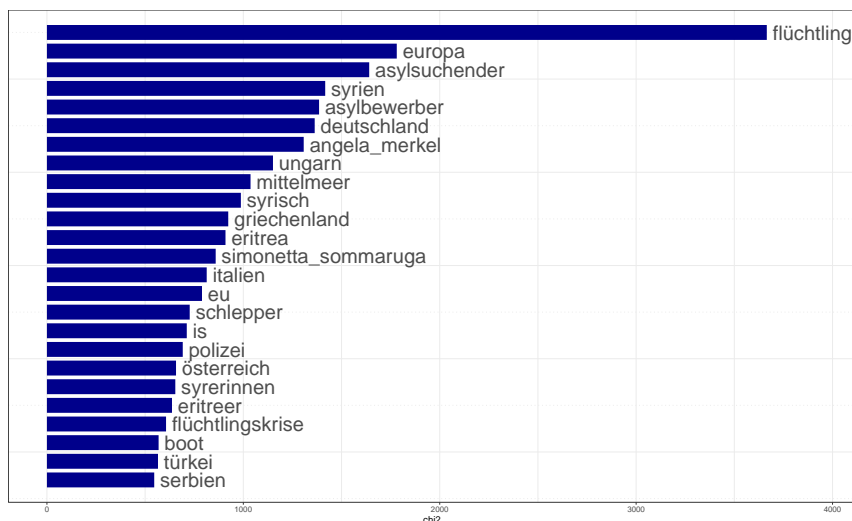
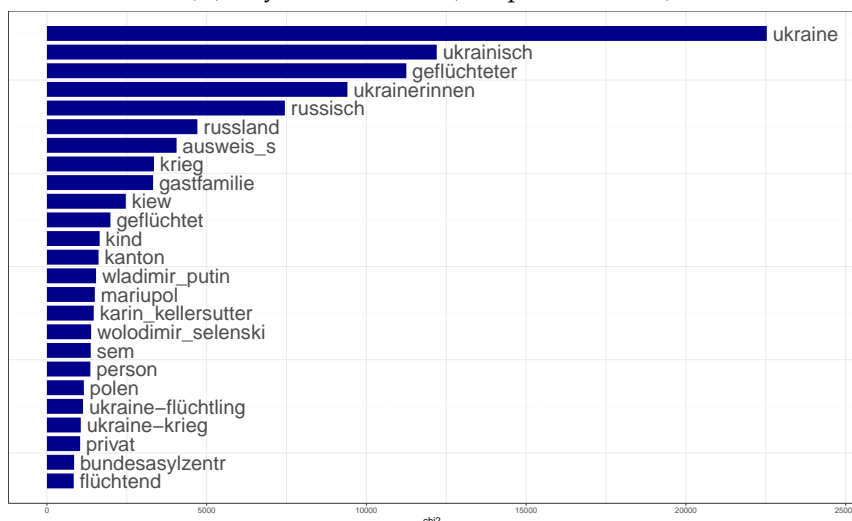


Figure 6.6: Estimated effect of time (date variable) on topic prevalence in 2022.



(A) Keywords of 2015 (compared to 2022)



(B) Keywords of 2022 (compared to 2015).

Figure 6.7: Relative term frequency calculated via a chi-square test for both years using quanteda (Benoit et al., 2018).

asylum-seeker ranking third. *Flüchtling* in 2022 is used only as "ukraine-flüchtling" [Ukraine refugee], a word connection not found in 2015. This finding represents a clear distinction in the designation of individuals seeking protection in Switzerland, with 2022 seeing the more positive and neutral term, as well as the direct attachment of the Ukraine term to the refugee term. This can be further compared to reference of national groups themselves: "ukrainerinnen" [Ukrainians] can be found in the top five terms of 2022, but "syrerinnen" [Syrians] and "eritreer" [Eritreans] is less used in 2015. Consequently, it can be assumed that the collective designation of displaced persons by their nationality is more prominent in 2022.

Moreover, and parallel to the media frames described in 6.1 and 6.2, 2015

has a strong focus on a variety of European countries (“deutschland” [Germany], “ungarn” [Hungary], “griechenland” [Greece], “italien” [Italy], “österreich” [Austria]) and Europe as a whole (“europa” [Europe], “eu” [EU]). This indicates an emphasis on news coverage of external politics and border crossings into not only the individual countries, but Europe as a whole. In fact, “flüchtlingskrise” [refugee crisis] appears in 2015 only. On the other hand, 2022 shows a strong relative frequency of terms on the Russian-Ukrainian war, affected cities and key political figures as well. The terms “geflüchtet” [fled] and “krieg” [war] are also exclusively key for the 2022 corpus only. This observation indicates that news coverage in the year 2015 predominantly centres around lexical choices associated with frames pertaining to the border situation. Conversely, in the year 2022, the vocabulary is more prominently associated with frames concerning the war, flight causes and internal issues, such as the status S and accommodation (evident in the keyness of “gastfamilie” [guest family]). Furthermore, another important finding from the graph above is the presence of crime related terms in 2015 only, such as “schlepper” [smuggler] and “polizei” [police], which is congruent with observations from the reviewed literature that put forth an association between asylum and crime in 2015 (see Table 5.2).

Chapter 7

Media Frame Analysis & Discussion

This chapter conducts a comprehensive analysis of the aforementioned data and establishes their connection to the broader context, current research, and the findings addressed in previous chapters. The objective is to identify and explore the differences and similarities in the portrayal of refugees between the two examined years, which are represented in each respective sub-chapter. Considering the nature of this investigation as predominantly exploratory, and acknowledging the inherent limitations of quantitative text models, the following discussion offers a possible interpretation of the findings and its potential implications.

7.1 Media Frame Analysis

Overall, the discovered media frames in this analysis seem to mirror a large share of the discussions and literature regarding the events of both 2015 and 2022. Comparable frame categories to the reviewed studies were uncovered for almost all frame categories for both analysed years, indicating an overall similar framing of issues related to refugees (see Appendix E). This implies that news coverage on refugees and asylum-seekers, if taking the current and other analyses into account, has a high probability of including themes such as their accommodation situation (accommodation frames); how refugees arrived in the respective countries through borders via certain routes (border situation frames); what economic consequences the presence of refugees have (economic association frames); how these refugees were welcomed in the country and also elsewhere (humanitarian frames); what consequences the arrival of refugees had on the internal and external political landscape with a focus on neighbouring countries (internal and external politics frames); and what has led to their escape in the first place, that is,

what war or situation they are fleeing from (flight causes frame). The similarity of these frame categories, as well as differences such as the absence of politicisation frames in 2022, will be discussed in more detail below.

7.1.1 Dominant media frames

Primarily, this analysis finds that the *Accommodation* and *Human Interest* are the most dominant media frames in Switzerland for both years. The framing of refugees in Swiss media thus entails a large proportion of themes dedicated to the provision of accommodation and to individual stories of/by the displaced. However, despite this commonality, the content of both frames cannot be understood as being equal.

On the one hand, *Accommodation* in 2022 is heavily influenced by the legalities of the status S, as it has different legal implications from other asylum-related statuses, such as a right to free movement (see Chapter 2.4.1). Consequently, Ukrainian refugees have the possibility of residing in private apartments or with guest families anywhere they wish to, which is mirrored in the co-occurring words of the frame (see Table 6.2) and the relative term frequency graph (see Figure 6.7b). *Accommodation* in 2022 is also inextricably linked to the willingness of the Swiss population to welcome Ukrainians into their homes, which resulted in 35% of Ukrainians being accommodated by guest families (Schweizerische Flüchtlingshilfe, 2022). This willingness, an outcome of an assumed positive attitude and solidarity with the affected, is also mirrored in the findings by McCann et al. (2022). They identified a high presence of community/volunteering support and housing themes in Anglophone media in 2022, including sponsorship (see Figure 5.1).

In contrast, *Accommodation* in 2015 is dominated by federal, cantonal, and communal capacities and organisational challenges, as this is the only accommodation legally possible for asylum-seekers in Switzerland. Considering that individuals pass from federal asylum centres to cantonal responsibility after a certain period of time, and subsequent accommodation must be organised by the respective canton/commune, allocation issues play a role in communal and cantonal politics in this frame. Many documents assigned to this frame also mirror opinions and concerns of local politics, reflecting a certain resistance or concern in settling asylum-seekers or refugees in their respective commune, which is a theme that is absent in 2022. However, this is not to say that limitations were not an issue in 2022. Issues in federal asylum centres, which functioned essentially as the primary contact point

for Ukrainian refugees, were also discussed under the *Federal Asylum System* frame in 2022, yet in conjunction with the possible overburdening of the ordinary asylum procedure, as asylum applications were also on the rise in 2022 and entailed the respective organisation of accommodation. The introduction of the Status S as a means not to overburden the normal asylum process was, in fact, an intended goal as stated by the Federal Council (Eidgenössisches Justiz- und Polizeidepartement EJPD, 2022).

Contrary to the accommodation frames, both *Human Interest* frames have similar lexical choices that mostly relate to personal stories and family. Its comparable prevalence in both corpora, also found by McCann et al. (2022), indicates that the Swiss media has a humanitarian perspective on both events, which has a higher probability of including emotions such as pity, compassion, and victimisation (Eberl et al., 2018; Greussing & Boomgaarden, 2017). Indeed, pity was found to be a prevalent emotion in Swiss media articles (Chan & Rinke, 2022), but whether this is the case for this analysis could not be specified from the top documents assigned to both frames alone and would require more qualitative investigation. Nevertheless, the prevalence of this frame stands in line with the rising humanitarian concern with refugees and asylum-seekers in international discourse (Galantino, 2022).

Focusing on the differences within this frame, it becomes apparent that the term "daughter" is present in the year 2022 (see FREX in Appendix C). This term, together with "mutter" [mother], mirrors the refugee demographics of the year, as the large majority of Ukrainian refugees consisted of women and children. Therefore, *Human Interest* primarily frames a specific target group in 2022. Additionally, when taking the correlation graphs into account, we see that the *Human Interest* is correlated with *Solidarity* in both years. This hints towards a possible association of elements of concern and compassion in Swiss society, underscoring its humanitarian perspective. However, in 2022, *Human Interest* is strongly correlated with *Poland* as well. Taking into account the lexical choices of *Human Interest* which include "haus" [house] and "flüchten" [flee], this correlation implies a strong framing on flight stories of families fleeing Ukraine through Poland. In 2015, *Human Interest* is not correlated with any border situation or flight cause frames, but with *Politicisation*. It can be therefore assumed that personal or individual stories were not exclusively empathetic and encompassed disagreement as well.

7.1.2 The presence and absence of politicisation

An important insight from the results is the presence of the *Politicisation* frame in 2015 and its respective absence in 2022. The frame, as described in Chapter 6.1, can be interpreted as the most important reflection of an ambivalent portrayal of refugees in 2015 (Holmes & Castañeda, 2016), as it reflects both problem- and solutions-oriented themes. On one hand, *Politicisation* can be compared to the “value and culture” frame by Heidenreich et al. (2019) and the “fear” frame by Czymara and van Klingeren (2019), as these frames are more problem-oriented and form the basis for the main public and political disagreement regarding the 2015 events. This theme ultimately reflects the association of asylum with unwanted migration in Switzerland, since it calls into question the legitimacy of asylum and the Swiss obligation to accept refugees in a similar fashion when asylum-seeker’s nationalities started to diversify in the 1980s and concerns around integration and cultural differences started to arise (Ruedin & D’Amato, 2015, p. 142f.). On the other hand, its correlation with *Humanitarian Concern* and *Human Interest* also hints at a more humanitarian and solutions-oriented perspective and is in line with the Swiss humanitarian tradition. Nevertheless, both themes, as implied by the lexical choices such as “problem” [problem], “frage” [question], “lösung” [solution]. “krise” [crisis], frame the presence of a problem that requires a solution, hence its interpretation as a contended, politicised issue. Moreover, it must be noted that the term “flüchtlingskrise” is relatively key to the 2015 corpus only (see Figure 6.7a) and confirms the insights by Zawadzka-Palucktau (2022).

Taking into account the absence of *Politicisation* in 2022, it is possible to arrive at conclusions of a significant differential framing of refugees between both years. The lack of a problem-oriented politicisation of refugees in 2022 seems to confirm previous investigations that reveal a more negative media bias towards refugees and asylum-seekers coming from the MENA region in 2015 (Eberl et al., 2018; Greussing & Boomgaarden, 2017; Mustafa-Awad & Kirner-Ludwig, 2021), as the polarisation is exclusive to 2015, where most displaced persons came from Eritrea, Syria, and Afghanistan. This bias can also be deduced from the conclusions by McCann et al. (2022) who find a more positive and non-ambivalent portrayal of refugees in 2022, which was especially surprising for Eastern European countries that showed great ambivalence in 2015. In conclusion, the absence of a politicising framing in 2022 runs counter to findings by Ruedin and D’Amato (2015), who conclude that politicisation of immigration in Switzerland is more likely to increase after

sudden peaks of arrivals, as was the case in 1998. While the sudden influx of Ukrainian refugees was definitely salient and therefore present in the media, especially in conjunction with the start of the Russian invasion, there is not much evidence of polarisation. According to Figure 3.1, high salience without disagreement, but rather political agreement and cooperation on the needed course of action, hints at a framing of refugees in 2022 as an "urgent problem" instead of politicised issue.

By considering not only the presence/absence of *Politicisation* in both corpora, but the interplay with other frames and the utilisation of key terms in each year as well, additional arguments can be derived that provide further evidence for the differential framing of refugees in Swiss media. Firstly, the framing of 2015 includes a variety of border situation frames, which suggests a prominent framing of the many and various efforts by displaced individuals to enter European countries, and in fact, Europe as a whole. The 2015 key terms, where a large proportion of key terms consist of European countries, also show a strong focus on terms related to routes and external politics. This juxtaposition between refugees and Europe, reminiscent of the construction of a division between Africa and Europe (Horsti, 2008), goes in line with a securitisation discourse as concluded by Greussing and Boomgaarden (2017), which combines the theme of border crossings with national security or stereotyped rhetorical structures, such as the portrayal of refugees as masses or waves. While rhetorical structures and their meaning cannot be analysed in a topic model, traces of issues with national security can be found in the presence of crime-related terms such as "schlepper" [smuggler] and "polizei" [police], "küstenwache" [coast guard] or even the word "flüchtlingskrise" [refugee crisis] itself (see Figure 6.7a). The difference to 2022, where news coverage on the route through Poland and external politics is also present, lies precisely in the inclusion of clusters of words that suggest a security discourse and the possible presentation of "migration as a threat". As mentioned in the previous chapter, the route frame *Poland* is actually correlated to the more humanitarian *Human Interest* frame.

Secondly, *Swiss Party Politics* is an internal politics frame that essentially frames the polarised Swiss political arena in relation to the events and is also absent in 2022. The presence of this frame reinforces the politicisation of the asylum issue in 2015, as it essentially focuses on the involvement of the far-right SVP on the asylum issue in the context of elections and asylum law revisions and is slightly correlated to *Politicisation* itself (see Figure 6.2). The top documents in this frame involve many conflicting comments and initiatives

made by the SVP, as well as the responses of other parties to it, ultimately confirming the salience of the asylum issue in their press releases (Gessler & Hunger, 2022), which was not the case in 2022.

Thirdly, the presence of *Swiss Asylum Praxis* in 2015 also indicates arguments for a politicised media coverage of asylum during the year. As mentioned in Chapter 2.4, Eritreans formed and form a large group of asylum-seekers in Switzerland despite the overall focus on the Syrian war. Due to the high number of applications by Eritreans and the general “crisis” momentum during 2015, their legitimacy and eligibility for asylum in Switzerland started being discussed and put into question by different Swiss parties. This represents a continuation of the disagreement and delegitimisation on the recognition of persecution in Eritrea that already began over a decade ago with the non-recognition of military conscription as individual persecution.

However, despite the large evidence for a politicised and differential framing of non-European refugees, 2022 was not apolitical. The *Status S* frame, which reflects the introduction of the status S, also includes a general discussion and politicisation on the differential treatment of non-Ukrainian refugees, whose status’ legalities are different and less advantageous. The differentiation between both refugee groups is also evident in the modelled *Asylum-seekers/Refugees* and *European Borders* frames of 2022, since asylum applications and boat crossings, especially from North Africa to Italy, have not stopped in 2022 and have continued to be a politicised issue. Nevertheless, results show that the framing of both topics lost prevalence with the start of the Russian-Ukrainian war and steadily rose again until the end of 2022, suggesting that media attention shifted away from non-Ukrainian refugees for a period of time. Apart from the presence of frames that address non-Ukrainian refugees exclusively, the fact that their framing works somewhat antagonistically to that of Ukrainian refugees implies that that framing was not only different for refugees across both years, but also within 2022 itself. This alludes to the categorisation of non-Ukrainian refugees as a latent issue in 2022, since they have not stopped to be politicised, but their framing has merely decreased in salience.

7.1.3 Unequal solidarity and integration frames

One further important aspect between the 2015 and 2022 frames refers to the main lexical choices and context of the solidarity and integration frames. *Solidarity* takes the third place in the list of most prevalent frames in 2022, which

on one hand mirrors the “resolute support for Ukraine and its citizens” (European Commission, 2022) mentioned by the European Commission and on the other hand, the overall positive attitudes and support towards Ukrainian refugees (Carrera & Ineli-Ciger, 2023; Dražanová & Geddes, 2023; McCann et al., 2022). The fact that words such as “hilfe”/“helfen” [help, noun and verb respectively] appear as the most probable words occurring in this topic in 2022 reflects the conclusions of the collocation analysis by Zawadzka-Palucktau (2022), which revealed that acts of helping refugees are also the top collocate category of “refugee” in 2022.

Additionally, contrary to 2015, *Solidarity* is correlated to a node encompassing *Integration*, *Human Interest*, *Poland*, and *War* in 2022, ultimately representing humanitarian, economic association, and flight cause frame categories. While further qualitative analysis would be necessary to draw a definitive conclusion, this could hint towards a solidarity movement that transcends borders, mirroring the international (or at least European) support for Ukrainian refugees and the condemnation of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, which is also included in *War* through the term “sanktion” [sanction] (see FREX in Appendix C). Moreover, while the positivity of this frame would require a sentiment analysis, the similarity of lexical choices across both years and its higher prevalence in 2022 is indicative of an overall positively valenced frame. This would also go in line with the sentiment analysis conducted by (McCann et al., 2022).

Concerning integration or economic association frames, different names for both years have been deduced from their respective lexical choices for a specific reason. In 2015, similarly to the reviewed studies, framing on integration often revolved around how to incorporate asylum-seekers and refugees into the labour market. The top documents assigned to *Labour Market Integration* mirror this pragmatic approach by covering many initiatives and projects initiated by authorities, employer associations, and civil society in order to proactively promote labour market integration and the hiring of asylum-seekers and refugees. In Switzerland, there is often a focus on rapid labour market insertion of refugees due to their relatively high unemployment rates and their respective welfare benefits, which often suffer from socio-political pressure (van der Brug et al., 2015, p. 190). As mentioned in Chapter 2.4, Swiss asylum law revisions have reduced the welfare benefits for provisionally admitted persons in the past, indicating that an association between asylum and a perceived low economic productivity (Holzberg et al., 2018) often plays a role in social and political integration discourses in

Switzerland.

In 2022, *Integration* included not only lexical choices that pertain to labour market integration themes, but also to themes that go beyond the labour market, such as the placement of children and teenagers into schools. Ultimately, the framing of integration in 2022 is different from 2015 because of the legalities of the status S, which, contrary to other statuses, enables almost immediate employment. According to McCann et al. (2022), the narrative on labour market integration of Ukrainian refugees was also accompanied by good educational backgrounds, often framing Ukrainians as an economic benefit for the host societies. This narrative was also found in the top documents of the *Integration* frame, which consequently shows a clear contrast in the narrative between the high economic productivity of Ukrainians and the supposedly low economic productivity of non-European asylum-seekers and refugees. Nevertheless, much criticism exists regarding the latter, as other statuses were affected by restrictive regulations that made the search for employment more difficult. In the past, certain groups of refugees/asylum-seekers were eligible to apply for a work permit only after a certain amount of time¹.

Moreover, the educational promotion of children and teenagers in the *Integration* frame of 2022 also contrasts to 2015, where it is not present, although all minor/school-aged individuals possess a right to education in Switzerland. The higher number of Ukrainian minors probably played a part in influencing the lexical choices of this frame, as almost half of Ukrainian refugees in Switzerland were below 18 or above 64, which led to certain perceived pressure on the educational system and schools in order to grant said education rights to all Ukrainian minors below 16 in a short amount of time.

The other economic association frame, namely *Money*, also includes an interesting contrast between both years. While the frame contains an emphasis on the asylum-related finances of communes and cantons, the costs of integration projects, and donations in 2015, *Money* in 2022 additionally contains the term “sozialhilfe” [social aid]. The top documents assigned to this frame in 2022 show a narrative of disappointment regarding the low social aid given to Ukrainian refugees, which consists of the same or similar amounts of allowance given to all other asylum-seekers and refugees under welfare. However, such a narrative was not found in 2015, hinting at yet another element of differential framing between 2015 and 2022.

¹As of the time of writing, regulations concerning work permits for temporarily admitted persons are much more relaxed and often don't require a permit anymore.

7.2 Discussion

Overall, in the analysis above, by comparing the topic models and their respective lexical choices in the framing of refugees in Swiss media, we find both inter- and intra-frame differences for 2015 and 2022. On the one hand, inter-frame differences represent a different framing in terms of the overarching theme, that is, if a given frame is not present in both years or has different degrees. We see relevant inter-frame differences that relate to politicisation, and consequently, party politics. The lack of a politicised framing in 2022 is one of the key findings of this comparative research, as it establishes a strong basis for discussing the inconsistent and ambivalent framing of refugees in Swiss media. Furthermore, inter-frame differences also suggest that there was relatively less reporting on foreign political affairs regarding refugees in 2022 than in 2015² (*EU Allocation, EU-Turkey Relations, Germany, Sweden*). This aspect could be attributed to an interest in the news coverage of overburdened EU member states and its consequences, which reflect a "broader sense of loss of control" (Heisbourg, 2015, p. 10) due to the inefficiencies of EU asylum policy, ultimately resulting in the portrayal of a "crisis" (Hess et al., 2017). Moreover, the prevalence of the *Solidarity* frame in 2022 emphasises relatively more positive attitudes towards Ukrainian refugees, going in line with findings from the reviewed literature of the same year (McCann et al., 2022; Zawadzka-Paluckta, 2022), and the general support and solidarity shown by the international community (Carrera & Ineli-Ciger, 2023).

On the other hand, intra-frame differences also provide relevant insights, as they represent differences in lexical choices within a common overarching theme. Relevant differences in this regard were found, especially concerning the accommodation and integration frames, whose lexical choices were largely shaped by the legalities of the status S. Additionally, border situation frames involved more security-related terms in 2015, indicating a securitisation discourse as argued by Greussing and Boomgaarden (2017). Taking these considerations into account, what does the distinct framing in both years imply? While there is no definite answer that could be given through a sole quantitative text analysis, the framing of 2022 suggests a new interpretation of the deservingness discourse in Switzerland, one that has not

²In 2022 there is naturally also a large focus on the Russian-Ukrainian War, which could've been considered as an external politics frame. However, given the inextricable link between the war and border crossings into Poland, *War* was categorised as a flight cause and *Poland* as a border situation frame.

been present since the arrival of refugees from communist regimes during the Cold War (Stünzi, 2022).

As mentioned in Greussing and Boomgaarden (2017), "crises are regarded as exceptional events that are able to interrupt journalistic routines and create opportunities for promoting newly emerging interpretations of an issue" (p. 1750). Accordingly, it can be said that a new interpretation, which consists of a framing of an unquestioned and unchallenged legitimacy of asylum, was promoted in 2022. This new interpretation can be mainly traced back to the activation of the status S in Switzerland and the TPD in the EU. Consequently, news coverage and its lexical structures didn't resort to the widespread challenges of federal asylum centre capacities or the allocation of asylum-seekers, a prominent theme in 2015, but to the search of private accommodation or guest families. Similarly, border situation frames were also relieved from lexical choices pertaining to dangerous border crossings, smugglers, fences, police, and refugee camps, as Ukrainian refugees fleeing by car or bus, by not requiring a visa, could cross borders without major issues.

Conversely, the presence of politicisation and other frames seems to suggest that the legitimacy of asylum was indeed challenged in 2015. In fact, the frames *Asylum-seekers/Refugees* and *European Borders* indicate that even in 2022 asylum did not remain unquestioned, but that the discourse of deservingness did not apply to non-Ukrainian refugees. This distinction remains quite evident in the usage of the key term "ukraine-flüchtling" [Ukraine-refugee] in 2022 (see Figure 6.7b), which points to a purposeful demarcation from its standard usage. This example insinuates that the mere use of the term "refugee" seems to trigger cues in the long-term memory of readers (Meltzer et al., 2020) associated with ambivalence. Consequently, the addition of the Ukrainian nationality becomes necessary in order to convey legitimacy to the term. This raises questions of double standards, especially when it comes to the legitimacy of involuntarily displaced war refugees, as both Syrians and Ukrainians escaped an internationally recognised war, yet only Ukrainians benefitted from the TPD. The activation of the TPD in 2022 and its non-activation in 2015 are heavily debated (see Ineli-Ciger (2023)), which is why even the Federal Council had to justify the non-activation of the status S in Switzerland prior to 2022. The main reasons given by the Federal Council were that (1) the 2015 asylum applications could've been handled by the ordinary asylum structures, whereas the large and sudden influx of Ukrainian

refugees could not, and (2) the more relaxed family reunification rights contained in the status S regulations would contradict "Switzerland's security interests, as it would hardly be possible to identify persons who pose a threat to Switzerland's internal and external security in the context of a merely expedited admission procedure" (Eidgenössisches Justiz- und Polizeidepartement EJPD, 2022, p. 6).

On one hand, the statement that large waves of asylum applications prior to 2022 were manageable by ordinary asylum procedures scrutinises the relative relevance of the "refugee crisis" term in 2015 and its absence in 2022 (see Figure 6.7a). More specifically, it raises questions as to why a "refugee crisis" framing is absent in 2022 if refugee arrivals were considerably higher and could not be managed by ordinary asylum procedures alone. This goes in line with conclusions by Hess et al. (2017), who argue that the 2015 events were not a crisis of refugees, thus contingent on the number of new arrivals, but of the European border regime. On the other hand, in using arguments of "internal and external security" for the non-activation of the status S prior to 2022, the Federal Council politically confirms the presence of a securitisation discourse by challenging the legitimacy of asylum grounds, even in the case of war, a usually unquestioned motive.

Considering that the deservingness discourse is more likely to apply to Ukrainian war refugees in 2022, yet is primarily politicised for refugees and asylum-seekers from elsewhere, it can be argued that variation exists in how Swiss media reacts to certain groups of displaced individuals. More specifically, the results of this analysis imply that framing differences exist between Ukrainian refugees, who are normally white and Christian, and Eritrean/Afghan/Syrian refugees, who come from the MENA region and are an ethnic and religious minority in Switzerland (and in Europe). While it is already known that immigrants with greater "cultural distance" are more likely to evoke threat reactions (Ruedin, 2020, p. 13), the results of this comparative investigation offer additional support for claims regarding the existence of subtle ethnic prejudice (Boomgaarden, 2017) and an overall negative bias in media frames regarding displaced persons from MENA (Eberl et al., 2018; Mustafa-Awad & Kirner-Ludwig, 2021). After all, it must be questioned whether distorted representations of refugees pertain to journalistic tendencies or are "inherently culturally and politically bound" (Mustafa-Awad & Kirner-Ludwig, 2021, p. 3).

However, despite all the inter- and intra-frame differences, framing similarities could also be uncovered. The prevalence of the *Accommodation* frame

in both years denotes a strong interest in the news coverage of where and how displaced persons will be settled in Switzerland. By the same token, the importance of *Human Interest* emphasises the engagement of media frames with presenting the perspective of (usually) displaced persons themselves through individual and personal accounts. Generally, it is also in humanitarian frames that we find similar lexical choices between both years, implying that the form of help and solidarity remains somewhat uniform.

Notwithstanding, it must be said that, on an overall level, there seem to be more differences than similarities. Considering that these framing differences can be interpreted as differences in the deservingness discourse of refugees, the possible effect of such a framing on attitudes and behaviours cannot remain unmentioned. As stated in Chapter 3.2, frames can be seen as templates for how to think about migration (Meltzer et al., 2020, p. 4). While causation cannot be reliably attributed, studies suggest that negative attitudes arise from presenting immigrants as a security threat (Igartua & Cheng, 2009), which can favour shares of parties with an anti-immigrant stance (Boomgaarden & Vliegenthart, 2007) or increase anxiety towards them (Czymara & Dochow, 2018). Conversely, a positive framing of refugees emphasising positive aspects might lead to increased perceptions of legitimacy (Schemer, 2014), which arguably played a role in 2022. Nevertheless, by formulating frames or templates that negatively influence the legitimacy and deservingness of displaced persons, as was rather the case in 2015, it can be said that narratives that separate refugee groups according to ethnicity or nationality become socially supported and continuously revived, ultimately affecting the way in which we view political asylum.

Attention must also be drawn to the limitations of this exploratory analysis. Firstly, the results pertain to these two specific topic models only and must be taken with a grain of salt. Different topic models, that is, topic models with different pre-defined k , lead to different results. Since the purpose of this investigation was to uncover overarching frames, lower k values were chosen. Consequently, higher k values would lead to more granularity in results and, therefore, more nuance in themes. Secondly, frames do not belong to a given lexical choice. Therefore, the overarching frame themes have been *deduced* from the top words assigned to each topic in the models. Validation measures, through the literature review, inspection of news articles, and visualisation tools, ensure higher interpretability and a more accurate deduction, but are not to be regarded as absolute. As the paper by Chang et al. (2009) suggests, quantitative topic models run the danger of "reading

tea leaves". Hence, all quantitative text models are to be regarded as wrong, but useful (Grimmer & Stewart, 2013). Thirdly, and as mentioned in Chapter 4.4, framing in this analysis is to be understood in its psychologically-rooted definition, that is, equivalence framing. The focus is thus on the information structure and content—the lexical choices—of news articles, making frames rather function as independent variables. The shortcoming of such an approach is that news articles are understood as independent from their political and social context, which is of course not the case. Public opinion, attitudes, and journalistic processes ultimately influence news coverage and, hence, framing. It is therefore hard to distinguish if frames affect attitudes or if pre-existing attitudes affect frames. Consequently, insights into accessibility and applicability effects, namely how news articles influence readers, were not included in the analysis but merely discussed briefly in the paragraphs above. After all, the lack of capacity to separate media effects should not be interpreted as evidence for their nonexistence. Despite these limitations, we can empirically underlie the framing differences between both years allowing a better understanding in what specific ways media coverage of Ukrainians was different.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

This exploratory analysis examined whether we see any differences or similarities in the framing of displaced persons in Swiss media between the years 2015 and 2022. While the former is popularly known as the year when the "refugee crisis" started, the latter revolves mostly around the Ukrainian displacement events that followed the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The focus on these two years stems from their widespread categorisation as recent mass displacement events that affected Switzerland and Europe as a whole. Prior to 2015, Switzerland had not seen a sudden arrival of displaced persons on its territory since the Kosovo War in 1998. Moreover, both 2015 and 2022 represent a different group of displaced persons. In 2015, the displaced came mainly from countries in the MENA region, such as Eritrea, Syria, or Afghanistan, and for distinct reasons as well; in 2022, the vast majority came from Ukraine and for the same reason: the Russian invasion.

While a large amount of literature already investigated the overall media discourse around refugees in 2015 (Eberl et al., 2018), indicating a rather ambivalent or negative portrayal, not many analyses were conducted for 2022 (yet). Nevertheless, given the international solidarity with Ukraine and condemnation of the Russian invasion, along with the first-time activation of the status S in Switzerland, the impression of a rather positive portrayal of refugees in 2022 is no secret and a conclusion that can be arrived at through an educated guess. The analysis of framing differences for these years thus represents an interesting opportunity to provide novel comparison grounds in studies on how the media frames displaced persons.

To do so, it applied structural topic modelling to corpora of news articles for the years 2015 and 2022, which include over 12'000 news articles in over 40 German-speaking news outlets. Equivalence framing was used as the underlying theory with which to analyse the news articles (Cacciatore et al., 2016), since it focuses on the information and content structure of the

articles themselves. This focus has been adopted as it recognises that a person's understanding of a problem, or information in general, is contingent on how that problem, or information, is presented (Kahneman & Tversky, 1984). While this study does not analyse the individual accessibility or applicability effects of framing, which are difficult to isolate due to a variety of factors, it does assume that effects exist and are contingent on the presentation and structure of information. Given the focus on equivalence framing, it is also the information structure that becomes the basic premise for how to operationalise framing theory in quantitative text analysis methods. More specifically, information is understood as lexical choices, that is, individual words themselves. It is by separating all news articles into individual words, without regard to word order, that structural topic modelling can calculate the probabilities of words across all news articles that are likely to co-occur. The resulting cluster of co-occurring words that define a topic is what this study understands as a latent theme and consequently a frame. The results of the structural topic model have shown that frames echo not only the overall events of 2015 and 2022 but also the findings of the reviewed literature, suggesting that the used topic models are sufficiently coherent and valid in order to provide insights regarding framing differences between both years.

The differences in framing between both years are manifold and consist especially of inter- and intra-frame differences. The results and analysis regarding inter-frame differences suggest that Swiss media frames were politicised in 2015. The presence of politicisation indicates widespread polarisation in party politics and a problem-orientation when it comes to displaced individuals crossing European borders. In 2022, polarisation and problem-orientation could rarely be found, except when it came to the framing of non-Ukrainian refugees, which indicates variation in how Swiss media frames certain groups of displaced individuals. Moreover, 2022 also saw more dominant humanitarian frames, hinting at a more positive reception of refugees by Swiss society.

The results and analysis regarding intra-frame differences suggest that the lexical choices pertaining to accommodation and humanitarian frames were largely influenced by the introduction of the status S, which enabled facilitated movement, housing, and employment rights for Ukrainian refugees. Conversely, 2015 contained more security- and crime-related lexical choices when it came to the framing of borders than 2022, since persons came primarily from outside of Europe. Notwithstanding, similarities in the framing

of both years were also found. These suggest that frames with a focus on accommodation and settlement of the displaced, as well as on individual and personal accounts, are the most dominant frames in both years, despite their intra-frame differences.

The uncovered differences in the framing of refugees in both 2015 and 2022 seem to insinuate that the deservingness of Ukrainian refugees for political asylum remained unquestioned in the media discourse of Switzerland. This unquestioned deservingness is of course mirrored in the activation of the status *S*, but when compared to the framing of refugees in 2015, it raises important questions regarding the legitimacy of asylum and ethnic prejudice. On the one hand, it raises the question of whether the legitimacy of asylum is fluid, or more specifically, whether the grounds for asylum change or whether it is more valid for a certain group of displaced persons that fulfil certain criteria. On the other hand, it must be questioned whether ethnicity, race, or religion play a role in the so-called "deservingness discourse". While research on these topics already exists, the overall media discourse in 2022 provides further evidence for the answering of these questions, as Ukrainian refugees, being white and mostly Christian, provide a new set of variables for comparative analyses.

This exploratory investigation sees itself as a mere first step in analysing the role and relevance of the 2022 displacement events for media studies regarding refugees and asylum-seekers. Consequently, possible future research could encompass a sentiment analysis of news articles in order to determine whether 2022 was indeed portrayed in a more positive light and, if yes, to what extent. Moreover, topic modelling analyses should not restrict themselves to only low k values, as higher k values could provide many more thematic insights and nuances into the framing of displaced persons. Qualitative and mixed methods can't also be forgotten, as these can provide detailed framing insights through qualitative coding. Lastly, comparative investigations on the effects of the 2022/2015 framing would enable further observations on whether different framings do indeed have different effects and, if yes, how these influence attitudes and behaviours towards the displaced.

In conclusion, it is important to recognise that the ways in which problems are defined, causes are diagnosed, moral judgements are made, or solutions are suggested have an impact on how people think or act. More specifically, the choice of explanation determines the nature of the problem's resolution (Rittel & Webber, 1973). Consequently, if certain groups of displaced persons are continuously framed in a negatively biased and problem-oriented manner, especially along the lines of ethnicity or nationality, media framing poses a danger by simultaneously determining a negatively biased resolution of the "problem". If such a framing is continuously revived and socially supported, it might have far-reaching effects on the long-term legitimacy of political asylum in Switzerland.

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Appendix A

Detailed 2015 Frame Description

Deducted Frame Theme (2015)	Theme Description	Top Words	FREX	Corpus Share
<i>Accommodation</i>	overall need for increased accommodation capacities for asylum-seekers and their distribution among cantons and communes. It has an emphasis on the politics between the different federal levels and the construction or repurposing of existing infrastructure for the accommodation of refugees.	platz, unterkunft, unterbringen, asylbewerber, zentrum, unterbringung, verfügung, gemeinderat, person, kantonal	unterkunft, unterbringen, gemeinderat, platz, unterbringung, asylzentrum, verfügung, zentrum, asylunterkunft, kantonal	12.00%
<i>Mediterranean Route</i>	boat crossings through the Mediterranean Sea, mostly from Northern Africa to Italy. The frame has a strong emphasis on numbers of crossings, rescues and deaths, as well as the involvement of smugglers and the coast guard.	mittelmeer, boot, italien, italienisch, schlepper, libyen, schiff, retten, küste, küstenwache	boot, italienisch, schiff, mittelmeer, küstenwache, küste, retten, libyen, schlepper, italien	5.90%
<i>Balkan Route</i>	border crossings across Balkan countries. It has emphasis on crossings by foot, car or trains, as well as the involvement of border control either via the border police or the closing of borders.	ungarn, österreich, polizei, serbien, ungarisch, zug, österreichisch, zaun, bahnhof, bringen	österreich, serbien, ungarisch, ungary, österreichisch, zug, polizei, zaun, bahnhof, richtung	5.60%
<i>Aegean/English Route</i>	border crossings to and from Greece (and France). While for Greece the emphasis is on the situation in the Greek islands and the Greek-Macedonian border, for France emphasis is placed on crossings through the English channel to the United Kingdom.	migrant, griechenland, insel, griechisch, behörde, lager, versuchen, gelangen, polizei, berichten	migrant, insel, griechisch, griechenland, lager, gelangen, versuchen, behörde, nacht, polizist	4.40%

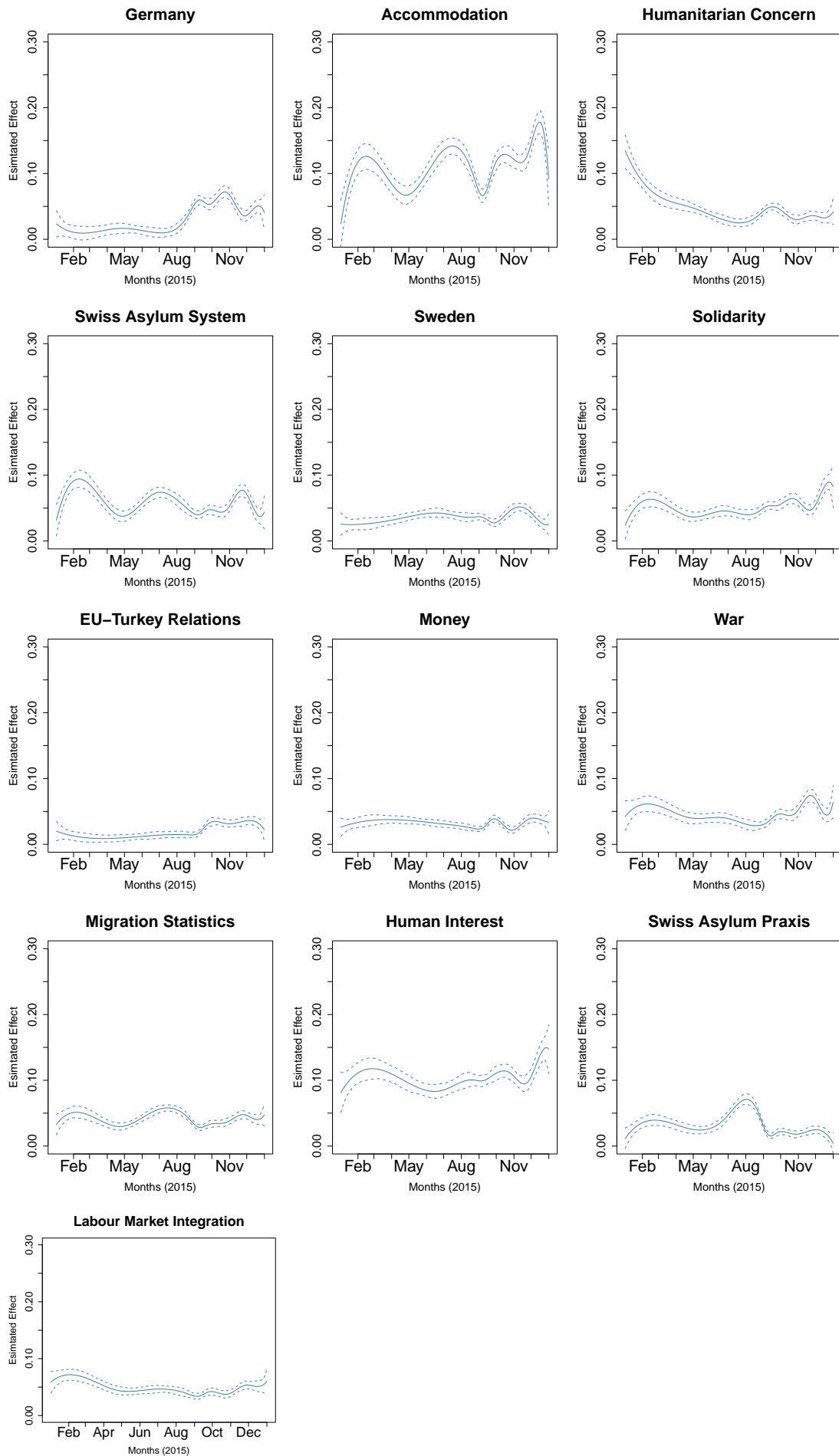
Deducted Frame Theme (2015)	Description	Top Words	FREX	Corpus Share
<i>Labour Market Integration</i>	labour market integration of asylum-seekers and refugees in Switzerland. The frame emphasises integration projects by employers and labour market regulations for asylum-seekers and refugees.	integration, arbeit, arbeiten, vorläufig, erhalten, anerkannt, integrieren, projekt, wichtig, stelle	integration, arbeit, anerkannt, arbeiten, integrieren, vorläufig, stelle, chance, beschäftigen, projekt	4.40%
<i>Money</i>	involvement of money. It has an emphasis on asylum related finances of communes and cantons, the costs of integration projects, and donations.	franken, kosten, million, geld, schweizer, beitrag, leisten, finanziell, bezahlen, zusätzlich	franken, kosten, beitrag, geld, million, finanziell, bezahlen, leisten, schweizer, zusätzlich	2.90%
<i>Human Interest</i>	humanitarian perspective on asylum-seekers and refugees. The frame is strongly dominated by individual and personal stories by and from associated persons regarding their journey and arrival in Switzerland, as well as commentaries by the Swiss population.	kind, familie, jung, leute, wort, alt, erzählen, klein, haus, bleiben	wort, erzählen, familie, alt, haus, weiss, fragen, paar, geschichte, kind	11.80%
<i>Solidarity</i>	solidarity towards refugees. The frame places emphasis on the role of donations, volunteers, and the organisation of projects by Swiss civil society, with a special focus on the role of churches.	stadt, zürich, helfen, projekt, ort, privat, organisation, einsatz, gruppe, aktion	zürich, stadt, privat, aktion, projekt, helfen, organisation, organisieren, freiwillig, engagement	5.10%
<i>Humanitarian Concern</i>	humanitarian situation of the Syrian War. It places a strong emphasis on the numbers of refugees fleeing the war and their settlement in refugee camps in neighbouring countries.	syrien, syrisch, syrerinnen, million, aufnehmen, hilfe, unhcr, libanon, flucht, aufnahme	syrerinnen, syrisch, syrien, libanon, unhcr, aufnehmen, bürgerkrieg, flucht, hilfe, humanitär	4.20%

Deducted Frame Theme (2015)	Description	Top Words	FREX	Corpus Share
<i>Swiss Party Politics</i>	Swiss party politics with regards to asylum policy and in general. Emphasis is put on the politicisation by the SVP, especially in the context of elections and revised asylum laws.	svp, bundesrat, simon-etta_sommaruga, partei, fordern, thema, sp, schweizer, forderung, klar	svp, bundesrat, simon-etta_sommaruga, sp, thema, partei, forderung, asylpolitik, fordern, parlament	6.10%
<i>Swiss Asylum System</i>	increase of asylum applications and impact on the Swiss asylum system. It discusses the numbers of asylum applications, emergency situations, the role of the Dublin system, as well as terrorism concerns.	bund, sem, person, asylgesuch, fall, verfahren, asylverfahren, asylsuchend, gesuch, lage	bund, sem, verfahren, asylgesuch, asylverfahren, gesuch, person, asylsuchend, prüfen, fall	5.20%
<i>Migration Statistics</i>	statistics regarding migration in Switzerland in general. Statistics relate to opinion surveys, the number of asylum applications, the immigrant population, employment, and social aid.	prozent, zahl, steigen, liegen, deutlich, fast, person, vergleich, monat, knapp	prozent, steigen, zahl, vergleich, deutlich, liegen, knapp, fast, anzahl, hälfte	4.00%
<i>Swiss Asylum Praxis</i>	asylum praxis with regard to Eritrean nationals. Emphasis is put on a newly introduced praxis, which restricts the recognition of Eritrean nationals as refugees.	eritrea, eritreer, asyl, bericht, heimat, schweizer, reisen, erhalten, reise, jung	eritrea, eritreer, bericht, asyl, heimat, reisen, reise, afrika, verlassen, jung	2.40%
<i>EU Allocation</i>	discusses EU politics. It has a strong emphasis on the role of the EU during the "crisis" and the allocation of asylum-seekers and refugees among member states due to increased pressure on periphery states.	italien, staat, brüssel, europäisch, griechenland, eu-staat, eu-kommission, verteilung, eu-land, regierungschef	eu-staat, eu-kommission, brüssel, verteilung, italien, eu-land, verteilschlüssel, staat, europäisch, quote	5.40%

Deducted Frame Theme (2015)	Description	Top Words	FREX	Corpus Share
<i>Germany</i>	situation in Germany with regard to the handling and consequences of the increased arrivals of asylum-seekers. It has a strong emphasis on party politics and German asylum policy after <i>Wir schaffen das</i>	deutsch, angela_merkel, berlin, kanzlerin, flüchtlingskrise, flüchtlingspolitik, schaffen, politik, sprechen, rede	angela_merkel, deutsch, kanzlerin, berlin, flüchtlingspolitik, rede, politik, flüchtlingskrise, innenminister, schaffen	3.50%
<i>Sweden</i>	situation in Sweden. It has a strong emphasis on the restrictive turn of Sweden's liberal asylum policy in order to curb asylum applications.	regierung, schweden, partei, erklären, gesetz, parlament, kritik, mehrheit, kritisieren, druck	regierung, schweden, gesetz, parlament, mehrheit, kritik, partei, wahl, druck, hart	3.30%
<i>EU-Turkey Relations</i>	political relations between the EU and Turkey. It has a strong emphasis on political efforts by the EU in order to control refugee flows passing through Turkey and the Aegean Sea.	türkei, euro, türkisch, milliarde, flüchtlingskrise, brüssel, prääsident, million, geld, syrisch	türkei, türkisch, euro, milliarde, flüchtlingskrise, brüssel, prääsident, regierungschef, gemeinsam, gespräch	1.90%
<i>War</i>	war in the Middle East. Emphasis is put on attacks by and on the Islamic State both in Syria and Iraq.	is, syrien, irak, armee, afghanistan, prääsident, gewalt, frankreich, kampf, gefahr	is, armee, irak, gewalt, kampf, afghanistan, gefahr, opfer, frankreich, prääsident	4%
<i>Politicisation</i>	diverging opinions, commentaries and analyses on the "refugee crisis". It has a strong emphasis on discussing the causes, solutions, impacts, meaning and politics of the crisis for Switzerland and Europe.	politisch, problem, europäisch, staat, politik, lösung, brauchen, frage, krise, migration	politisch, problem, krise, politik, lösen, lösung, wirtschaftlich, europäisch, welt, politiker	7.8%

Appendix B

2015 Frames Over Time



Appendix C

Detailed 2022 Frame Description

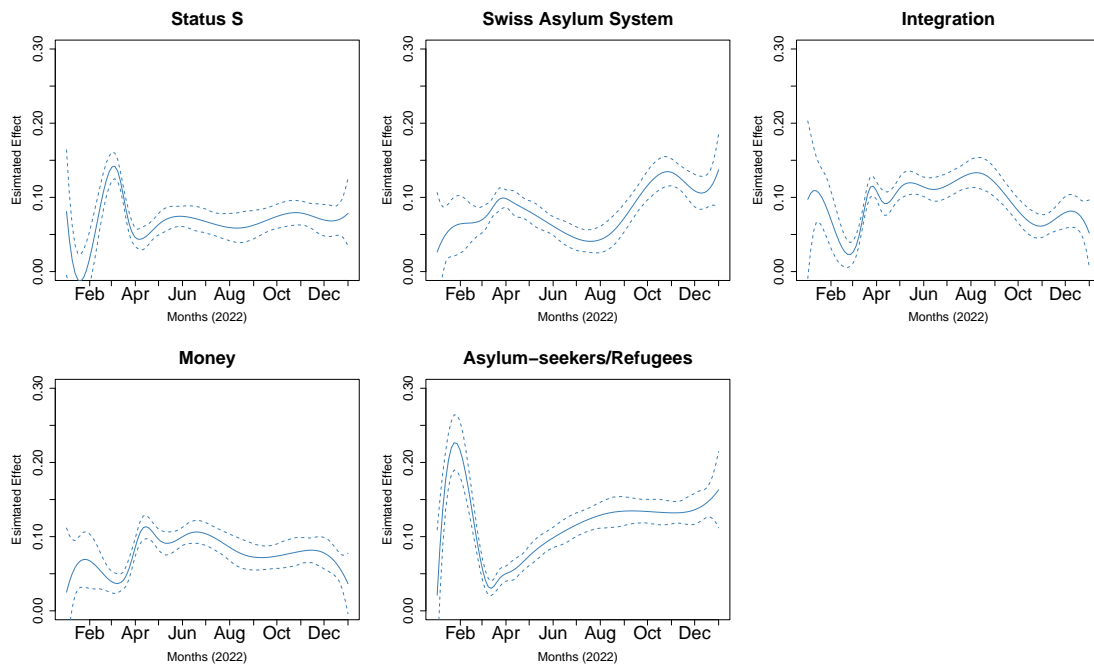
Deducted Frame Theme (2022)	Description	Top Words	FREX	Corpus Share
<i>Accommodation</i>	reception and accommodation of Ukrainian refugees. The frame has a strong focus on accommodation beyond asylum centres, that is, guest families, apartments, and other infrastructure.	unterkunft, platz, stadt, unterbringen, gastfamilie, wohnung, unterbringung, privat, verfügung, bern	unterkunft, unterbringen, wohnung, platz, zimmer, hotel, unterbringung, wohnraum, verfügung, privat	15.70%
<i>Poland</i>	urgent situation in Poland and the Polish border in connection with the arrival of Ukrainian refugees.	grenze, polen, million, stadt, polnisch, fahren, kiew, fliehen, flucht, bus	polen, polnisch, grenze, bus, fahren, kilometer, westen, fliehen, ungarn, bahnhof	5.80%
<i>Integration</i>	overall integration of Ukrainian refugees. Special emphasis is placed on the school situation of children and teenagers	schule, jugendliche, integration, arbeit, arbeiten, deutsch, stelle, geflüchtet, sprache, integrieren	jugendliche, schule, integration, integrieren, sprache, stelle, arbeit, firma, klasse, unternehmen	9.10%
<i>Money</i>	involvement of money. It has a strong emphasis on the social aid given to Ukrainian refugees and associated costs for communes and cantons.	franken, sozialhilfe, geld, kosten, gastfamilie, aargau, finanziell, million, regierungsrat, gemeinderat	franken, sozialhilfe, kosten, aargau, geld, finanziell, gemeinderat, regierungsrat, zahlen, beitrug	7.40%

Deducted Frame Theme (2022)	Description	Top Words	FREX	Corpus Share
<i>Solidarity</i>	solidarity initiatives by civil society. It focuses on donation campaigns, support projects, demonstrations, and volunteering across Switzerland.	hilfe, helfen, solidarität, unterstützen, verein, organisation, unterstützung, ort, organisieren, brauchen	verein, hilfe, organisation, organisieren, solidarität, helfen, spende, unterstützen, kirche, projekt	10.20%
<i>Human Interest</i>	humanitarian perspectives of Ukrainian refugees. The frame is strongly dominated by long individual and personal stories by women and children regarding their journey and arrival in Switzerland	familie, mutter, haus, erzählen, alt, heimat, jung, spät, klein, flüchten	mutter, erzählen, familie, tochter, vater, haus, alt, geschichte, eltern, spät	12.70%
<i>Status S</i>	introduction of the Status S. It emphasizes urgency and legalities behind the Status S, introduced by the Federal Council, as well as a comparison to other statuses	ausweis_s, bundesrat, karin_kellersutter, aufnahme, schutz, schweizer, vorläufig, schutzstatus, svp, bund	karin_kellersutter, bundesrat, bundesrätin, schutzstatus, ausweis_s, schutz, aufnahme, vorläufig, justizministerin, svp	7.10%
<i>Swiss Asylum System</i>	urgent situation of the Swiss asylum system. It emphasizes the need for capacity increases in asylum centers due to the sudden registration of Ukrainian which overburdens the overall asylum system.	sem, bund, zahl, registrieren, bundesasylzentr, ausweis_s, bundesasylzentr, zürich, zusätzlich, platz	sem, bundesasylzentr, registrieren, bundesasylzentrum, bund, registrierung, zahl, twitter, keller, staatssekretariat	8.40%

Deducted Frame Theme (2022)	Description	Top Words	FREX	Corpus Share
<i>Asylum-seekers/Refugees</i>	a variety of issues relating to asylum-seekers/refugees and asylum policy. The frame emphasizes issues within Switzerland, but also on issues worldwide	prozent, asylsuchender, fall, afghanistan, türkei, situation, syrien, zahl, führen, grund	afghanistan, asylsuchender, türkei, prozent, syrien, fall, asylsuchend, bericht, steigen, zentrum	8.70%
<i>European Borders</i>	discussions on border crossings of non-Ukrainian asylum-seekers and refugees into European countries. It emphasizes illegal border crossings, mostly through the Mediterranean Sea, and restrictive border politics of European countries, especially Italy	europa, migrant, regierung, eu, deutschland, europäisch, staat, italien, illegal, grenze	migrant, europa, italien, europäisch, deutschland, illegal, regierung, eu, staat, frankreich	8.30%
<i>War</i>	events related to the Russian-Ukrainian war and the involvement of the international community	russland, prääsident, wladimir_putin, stadt, kiew, mariupol, million, angriff, truppe, teilen	russland, mariupol, wladimir_putin, truppe, prääsident, moskau, sanktion, angriff, gebiet, usa	6.60%

Appendix D

2022 Frames Over Time



Appendix E

Frame Comparison

Overarching Frame Categories	2015 Media Frames	2022 Media Frames	Greussing & Boomgaarden (2017)	Heidenreich et al. (2019)	Czymara & van Klingeren (2019)
Accommodation	<i>Accommodation</i>	<i>Accommodation</i>	Settlement	Accommodations	Accommodation
Border situation	<i>Mediterranean Route; Balkan Route; Aegean and English Route</i>	<i>Poland</i>	Securitisation	Border; Refugee Movement; Refugee Camps	Refugee Crossing; Border
Economic Association	<i>Labour Market Integration; Money</i>	<i>Integration; Money</i>	Economisation; Labour Market Integration	Economy; Welfare	Economy;
Humanitarian	<i>Human Interest; Humanitarian Concern; Solidarity</i>	<i>Human Interest; Solidarity</i>	Humanitarianism	Humanitarian Aid; Human Interest; Unaccompanied Children	Family;
Internal Politics	<i>Swiss Asylum System; Swiss Asylum Praxis; Swiss Party Politics; Migration Statistics</i>	<i>Swiss Asylum System; Status S; Asylum-seekers/Refugees</i>	Reception/distribution	National Refugee Policy; Elections	Election; Government; Asylum; Right-wing Populism; Right-wing Extremism
External Politics	<i>EU Allocation; Germany; Sweden; EU-Turkey Relations</i>	<i>European Borders</i>	Reception/distribution	EU Refugee Policy; Brexit	Route; USA/Russia; Turkey; EU Policies; Austria/Hungary
Violent Behaviour Association	-	-	Criminality	Crime and Terrorism;	Crime; Terrorism;
Flight Causes	<i>War</i>	<i>War</i>	Background Victimization	War	Middle East War; Religious Conflict
Politicisation	<i>Politicisation</i>	-	-	Value and Culture	Fear

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