

MEDIA REPRESENTATIONS OF MIGRATION:

INCLUDE



**Discursive
constructions of
migrants, refugees
and asylum seekers
in Croatian media**

HELENA POPOVIĆ

KRUNO KARDOV

DRAGO ŽUPARIĆ-ILJIĆ

ORIGINAL TITLE:

Medijske reprezentacije migracija:
Diskurzivne konstrukcije migranata,
izbjeglica i tražitelja azila u hrvatskim
medijima

PUBLISHER:

Office for Human Rights and Rights of
National Minorities of the Government
of the Republic of Croatia

YEAR OF PUBLICATION:

2022.

AUTHORS:

Helena Popović, Kruno Kardov,
Drago Župarić-Iljić

REVIEWERS:

Margareta Gregurović, Senada Šelo Šabić

TRANSLATION:

Ad Hoc Centar za poduke i prevoditeljstvo
d.o.o

GRAPHIC DESIGN AND PREPARATION:

Mulberry goods d.o.o. za dizajn,
proizvodnju i usluge

PRESS:

Kerschoffset d.o.o.

CIRCULATION:

100

Cataloguing-in Publication data available
in the Online Catalogue of the National
and University Library in Zagreb under
CIP record 001154147

ISBN: 978-953-7870-37-9

The project was co-financed by the
Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund
of the European Union.

The content of this publication is the sole
responsibility of the authors. The views
and opinions expressed in this publication
are those of the authors and do not reflect
the views of the Office for Human Rights
and the Rights of National Minorities
of the Government of the Republic of
Croatia, nor those of the European Union.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Office for Human Rights and Rights of
National Minorities of the Government
of the Republic of Croatia
Mesnička 23, 10 000 Zagreb
Tel: +385 (1) 4569 358
E-mail: ured@uljppnm.gov.hr

Helena Popović, Kruno Kardov, Drago Župarić-Iljić

**Media representations of migration: Discursive constructions
of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in Croatian media**

Summary

The assumption of the importance of media for the construction of meaning in the society underpins research into media representations, which we see as being the dominant element in constructing social reality and not as a reflection (whether thwarted or true-to-life) of that reality. The media are means of providing information and the basic source of construction of meaning about social reality. Their impact is especially strong when they are dealing with phenomena, actors and processes in connection with which people lack personal experience. Reporting on migrants and refugees is an important aspect in the context of integration, seeing that, on the one hand, the media reflect dominant discourses in a specific cultural context, but at the same time they also produce those discourses. By defining the format and selecting, coding and framing the content, the media become relevant in the construction of meaning and, consequently, the forms of media reporting on these topics are capable of influencing the modification of structural prerequisites for informing and sensitising the citizens and other stakeholders in the migration management system and in the asylum and integration system, with a view to facilitating integration processes in local communities that receive/provide housing for these individuals.

For that reason, by using quantitative and qualitative analysis, this research disambiguates between methods of media reporting on migrants and refugees in Croatian national, regional and local media in 2018 and 2019. In this context, the attempt was to determine the frequency of appearance of media content, the key reporting categories in terms of topics covered, and the dominant characteristics of reporting on migrants/refugees/asylees that are capable of (co)creating the attitude of the general public. Analysis was guided by the main research question: How do Croatian media at the local, regional and national level represent migrants and in particular refugees/asylees with focus on reporting on persons under international protection who have arrived from third countries and have been accepted at different locations in Croatia under the refugee resettlement program?

The general purpose of the project 'INCLUDE – Intersectoral Cooperation in the Empowerment of Third-country Nationals,' within which this research has been conducted, is to collect data that can serve to monitor the success of integration of migrants into the Croatian society in general and, specifically, the success of integration of persons under international protection, and to contribute to further development of policies intended to facilitate integration of third-country nationals by strengthening legal and institutional capacities for their

reception and integration. In light of the foregoing, the purpose of this research was to offer some insights into media representations based on which it would be possible to formulate guidelines and recommendations for media reporting that could contribute to integration of third-country nationals in Croatia, primarily persons who have been granted international protection.

Previous studies indicate that, prior to Croatian accession to the EU, the topic of migrations in the media was hardly covered at all by media research. This changed in 2015, when the so-called Balkan corridor was created and reporting on migrations increased rapidly both in terms of reporting frequency and volume of reports. The media played an important role in the shaping of public perception about the so-called migrant crisis, not only based on the number of published articles but also through the use of dominant interpretive framework. Those studies showed that migrants were underrepresented in the media, that the phenomenon received negative and/or incident-focused reporting and that cases of increased interest in reporting on the topic varied depending on social context (the Balkan corridor or the period after that), but also depending on the type of medium being analysed. In terms of qualitative approach, however, analysis often involved the reporting methods, in which context it has been shown that the actors involved were discursively constructed dichotomously; either as passive, helpless victims or as a threat, as 'fake refugees' who actually pose a threat for the citizens and resources of the receiving country.

In continuance of previous research, this study also looked at the dominant themes covered by media with nationwide reach (web portals: jutarnji.hr, večernji.hr, 24sata.hr, net.hr, tportal.hr, index.hr, hrt.hr, dnevnik.hr, rtl.hr), whose interest in the topic of migration and refugeehood increased during the so-called migrant crisis (2015/2016) and continued after the closing of the Balkan corridor. In addition to that, the study also included regional media (glas-slavonije.hr, slobodnadalmacija.hr) and local media (karlovački.hr, kaportal.hr, o34portal.hr, pozega.eu, quirinusportal.com, portal53.hr, brodportal.hr, sbplus.hr, regionalni.com, varazdinske-vijesti.hr, zadarski.hr, zadarskilst.hr) that reported on the process of arrival, reception and early integration of third-country nationals that have been granted refugee protection and that arrived in Croatia between 2017 and 2019 under the resettlement program.

Research was conducted on a purposive sample, where the sample framework comprised of web portals of national and regional media organizations and local web portals covering towns where persons granted international protection were housed, which included eight counties and the following cities/towns and local communities: Zagreb,

Velika Gorica, Zaprešić, Karlovac, Duga Resa, Zadar, Sisak, Slavonski Brod, Varaždin and Požega.

In order to encompass media content that includes migration-related topics with focus on integration, the research involved the application of the following criteria: identification of articles based on keywords *migrant/refugee/asylum* and words deriving from those words (for example, *asylum-asylee-asylum seeker*), identification of articles pertaining only to Croatia (national/regional/local level) and identification of articles where the main topics are migration, refugeehood or asylum. In data processing, the unit of analysis was media content that featured migrants/refugees/asylees as the main topic and that can be carved out and analysed as an independent unit, or in other words an article/post on a web portal with accompanying title, subtitle and photos.

Data analysis was quantitative and qualitative, conducted by using descriptive statistical methods to develop distributions by publication time and type of medium (national, local) and by qualitative analysis of content with focus on identification of topics and textual and linguistic representations. With high intercoder agreement, a total of 3,044 media articles were processed, published in the period between 1 January 2018 and 31 December 2019.

Research results indicate that in 2018 and 2019, the frequency of media publications about migrants and persons under international protection was almost equal (1,600 articles in 2018 and 1,444 articles in 2019). Variations and specific increases in the number of news reports in some periods were primarily influenced by certain events, which suggests that the migration phenomenon often receives incident-focused reporting. The biggest number of news reports about migrants, refugees and persons under international protection was present in national media (85% of the news reports), which was followed by regional (9%) and then local media (6%).

From the basic quantitative analysis of key themes that appear in migrant and refugee reporting we can conclude that the primary approach was reporting from the aspect of security (34% of all articles) and politics (30% of articles). This was followed by international relations (15%), migrant routes (7%) and integrations (7%), whereas themes connected with the media and social networks, justice system and humanitarian activities were each represented by no more 2.5%. The most represented theme in migrant reporting was security (33.87% of the published articles) and the three most commonly used terms within that theme were 'migrants', 'police' and 'area' (and derivatives of those words). Within the theme of security, three sub-themes have been identified: crime prevention, migrant rescue and protection of the local population. Crime prevention with the purpose of protecting the

national border, territory and citizens generally involves reports about border police activities aimed at capturing smugglers. The police are discursively constructed as capable, self-sacrificing and brave, smugglers as unscrupulous criminals, and migrants either as victims of the smugglers and/or as persons engaged in illegal activities. Migrant rescue as a sub-theme includes security issues pertaining to the migrants themselves, such as their risking of their lives while passing through Croatian territory. Migrants are discursively constructed as reckless people setting off on a dangerous journey with little likelihood of a positive outcome, who create problems for the police and often even for the Mountain Rescue Services, seeing as their rescue requires the use of time and resources. Protection of the local population as a sub-theme pertains to the security of citizens residing in areas around migrant routes and the security of their property. Migrants are often presented as persons who break into other people's houses, steal and destroy property and rarely as those in need of help. Although stories of locals helping migrants and showing sympathy with them do appear too, warnings to readers of the fact that the local population is at risk is a far more frequent occurrence.

The second most represented theme (30.39% of the published articles) pertains to politics, both institutional and extra-institutional politics, political competition between different political parties, as well as competition or cooperation between different levels of decision-making (national, county, local level) and activities of civil society associations. Analysis of the most frequently used words shows that these are: migrants, Croatia, police, Ministry of the Interior, Božinović (and derivatives thereof). The coding process involved the identification of three sub-themes: Political positions taken by various actors in the structure of institutional politics (the Government, the Parliament, the President, other national institutions, political parties, independent MPs/councilmen, etc); political positions about the migration phenomenon taken by civil society actors who form the opposition to the actors who are part of the structure of institutional politics; and political positions about the migration phenomenon contemplated in a social context that are taken by various social actors, such as experts, scientists, commentators, columnists. A continuous discursive struggle between various actors is apparent, especially about two specific topics: The question whether competent government institutions violate the migrants' statutory rights or not (in actions at borders); and how the expressed attitude toward the migration phenomenon can win over the favour of voters, and ultimately their votes? Consequently, within the theme of politics there is a dominantly negative discursive construction of the migration phenomenon, where migrants are predominantly

discursively constructed as a population that causes contention and represents a serious social and political problem.

The thematic category 'International relations' (15.44% of published articles) pertains to foreign and supranational organisations and institutions, but also to bilateral or multilateral relations between different countries, discussions and positioning of various countries in regard to the migration issue. Topics covered include meetings of EU member countries in which migration and different policies and political processes are discussed (such as the solving of the 'migrant crisis', international solidarity, the Dublin Regulation). There was great media coverage of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (so-called Marrakesh migration pact), seeing that it caused much debate and controversy about whether Croatia should be one of the signatories of that pact. There is a discursive struggle even on an international level about how Croatian police treats migrants at borders, in which context this thematic category involves criticism from the outside, directed at police actions but also at Croatia's official policy about migrants.

The theme 'Migrant route' (7.06% of published articles) involves articles dealing with broader movements of migrants, or their getting 'stuck' or 'camping' at the usual migrant routes, often in camps along the border with Bosnia and Herzegovina. Countries of origin of migrants travelling on those routes are also mapped out and, based on that, their movement is implicitly or explicitly (de)legitimized and irregularized. Migrants are generally presented as a potential threat, people who get rid of their documents for an instrumental reason – because they do not really meet the requirements for asylum, people who have mobiles and money and who are just waiting for an opportunity for the *game* – an attempt to cross the border irregularly in order to reach the European Union.

The theme 'Integration' (7% of published articles) includes articles that deal with the issue of integration of persons under international protection in local communities, various integration programs and activities, problems in the integration system, refugees' life stories and the program of resettlement in Croatia. During processing and analysis, two separate sub-themes were identified: presentation of the integration program and its stakeholders and presentation of persons under international protection. A key characteristic of media reporting within the sub-theme of the integration program and its stakeholders is the aspect from which refugees are viewed as a problem in terms of implementation policy and coordination between various stakeholders or in terms of support that should be provided by the administrative system and the local community. Integration requires certain resources that come from the government in this case, with the use of EU funding. Good

coordination is a priority in order for the country and local community to be able to support the integration process, which will be facilitated by including refugee children in the education system and adult refugees in the labour market. The ultimate goal is for refugees to become citizens who will contribute equally as everyone else to the development of the society. This way, integration of refugees is discursively constructed as a highly-regulated policy process with specific stages and necessary steps that have to be taken, while at the same time, despite the overall positive tone of the articles, refugees are constructed as persons in need who are unable to clearly see their own position, articulate their demands or speak of their experiences. Media presentation of refugees in the context of the second sub-theme which deals with reporting on the actual refugees who are included in the process of integration has two key characteristics. On the one side, refugees are approached from a humanitarian aspect, presenting them as victims of war, giving details about them that serve to portray them as family members. On the other, refugees are shown as not really being completely helpless; instead they are presented as highly motivated people, willing to learn new skills, a new language or even undergo professional retraining in order to get independent as soon as possible, which suggests that they do make use of the initial support given to them and make progress in the integration process and that the moral equation of social support and their own personal contribution is balanced. Through stories that have been reported in recent years about refugees who have made it despite the odds, despite all the hardship and difficulties, they have been constructed as active citizens in the economic domain, who do not want to depend on government help.

The theme 'Justice system' (1.81% of published articles) includes articles reporting on the activities of justice institutions. This often involves cases of seeking protection of rights before courts, but also various other legal aspects connected with migrations, dealing primarily with litigation and asylum seekers' court cases, with words most often used being 'court', 'migrants' and 'Croatia'. Here, too, one can see the discursive struggle between civil society organisations and competent government institutions: e.g., over the death of Madina Hussiny and the charges brought against the volunteers from the Are You Syrious? association for helping her family.

The theme 'Media and social networks' (2.40% of published articles) includes meta-media reports in which the media deal with the issue of media themselves (including social networks), tackling the spreading of disinformation ('fake news') and/or hate speech in the society, which as a result has a negative impact on people's perception of migrants and spreads fear and moral panic.

The thematic category 'Humanitarian activities' (1.68% of published articles) deals primarily with the activities of various humanitarian civil society organisations, religious organisations, cultural workers and with the activities of other social actors in the providing of various types of direct humanitarian aid to refugees and migrants.

Category 'Other' (0.43% of the published articles) comprises articles with themes that did not classify into any of the other categories, of which several pertained to the following economic issues: strategic reserve, employing migrants in the context of the labour market, and economic losses suffered by businesses as a result of the border between Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina closing.

When analysing gender and gender roles, there is significant distinction in the representations, which are extremely conservative. Migrations appear as primarily male domain, in archetypical categories men are dynamic, active, they are in motion, whereas women are static, passive and vulnerable, staying in the same place. This archetype of a woman is reaffirmed in numerous articles where the police 'rescue' freezing and exhausted women, some of whom are also pregnant, in which context the brave policemen, appearing as their rescuers, 'carry them in their hands,' going as far as helping them in childbirth in the middle of a forest. As actors, women are most often directly represented within the thematic code of integrations, because those articles primarily deal with acceptance of families in a certain place, focusing on their daily routines and family lives. The conservative approach in gender representation can be seen here as well, with women being most often associated with home and children, and men with employment issues.

In general, the results, which are comparable to those of other research into media reporting that was carried out in earlier years but also in the observed time period, indicate that we have a clearly outlined security-based interpretive framework in the presentation and understanding of migrations. The humanitarian approach, which dominated at the time when the Balkan corridor was established, in 2015 and 2016, was present in the observed period only as an indicator of openness of the Croatian society, but it was also used in political debates as an aspect that could be interpreted even as a certain naivety of the previous political power holders. This type of attitude toward migrations has been retained as unchanged in this period only by those civil society actors who engage in public debate about the actions of the police in their treatment of migrants and asylum seekers or in discursive struggles between political actors, but those struggles now take place within a broader narrative about the necessity to protect borders and about the importance of controlling migrant movements. This is to some extent a

reflection of broader changes in European policies that are transferred to the national level in various aspects. The migrant problem is framed as a global and pan-European problem that Croatia can neither handle nor has contributed to alone. This dominant securitization framework, as opposed to the humanitarian one, decreases in presence as the media reports rely less on sources of information coming from central government actors. However, a departure from national security administrative apparatus opens up the field of cultural threat and fear spreading on the one hand, and of humanitarian narratives on the other. In the first case, media reports can be compared to the phenomenon of moral panic, where, as a final act or a means to increase panic and fear, there is even the calling of the military forces to the borders as a result of continuous reports about how migrants are found, captured, hunted or, potentially even more fear-inducing, about how traces of their presence have been found but their exact location within the national territory remains unknown. In the second case, which is mostly present within the theme of integration, but also within the theme of humanitarian activities, there is a departure from the negative towards the positive tones, in which context key actors are civil society organisations, cultural and education workers, different actors from the local communities outside the domain of institutional policy, including the refugees themselves and journalists.

It can be observed that, mainly as a result of new strategic orientation of national migration policy on the Schengen perimeter, new distinctions are made in the media in an attempt to reconcile the simultaneous attempts to stop migrants at borders and accept and integrate desirable-profile refugees, who get settled in local communities under the European resettlement program. This implies a discursive 'chiselling out' of differences, which has become a constant in media representations, or in other words, it implies an attempt to distinguish between 'non-deserving migrants' and 'genuine refugees', while 'asylum seekers' remain in a kind of a limbo. The related processes of construction of meaning are the most dominant characteristic of media reports in the observed period and perhaps represent the key to understanding media representations of migrants, refugees/asylees and asylum seekers. Seeing that migrants are discursively constructed as the threatening Others, they cannot be included in the symbolic order of the national community, and consequently they represent the idea of what the national community *is not* – this opens up space for construction of migrants that is in contrast to the normative sociocultural characteristics of Croatian national identity, which potentially represents a problem in integration processes.

Analysis of media representations has shown that reporting on this

theme is often sensationalist, which involves dramatization, patheticness and emotional manipulation of the audience, with the intention to rouse strong positive or negative feelings. Frequent reports typically belong to the dominant media formats that include criminal activities and crime pages, narrativized personalized tragedies and topics suited for ideological and identity-based political battles deprived of any proper argumentation. Articles originally produced by other media are often published, which results in repetition of content in different media, which significantly reduces diversity in reporting and in the approaches used. In a great number of published articles there is no indication of the source (original author), which represents violation of journalistic ethics. Additionally, this theme is frequently reported in a simplified manner, non-critically, and reports are often made based on insufficiently verified information, sometimes even demonstrating a lack of knowledge of the subject-matter reported.

Media reporting on migrations as a social phenomenon usually exhibits the incident-focused reporting style (focusing on accidents, police actions, political controversies); however, in the rare reports that deal with normalization of everyday life in the context of refugee resettlement and their integration into the Croatian society there are noticeably elements of propaganda reporting which reflects the intentions of the authorities. If we add to that the fact that the media rely primarily on official sources, both in quantitative terms (in terms of the number of articles reporting the positions of government representatives) and in qualitative terms (in the sense that those positions are generally not questioned), thus non-critically supporting the dominant official policy of those in power, one can safely conclude that most of the media reporting included in this analysis is in synergy with the discourse of political power holders and that the role of the government, politics and the media is crucial in the legitimization and (re)structuring of political, economic and social constellations.

In light of the foregoing, in order for media representations of the migration phenomenon to change, which is certainly necessary, one has to dig deeper and make structural changes that would fundamentally transform the way of functioning of the media and professional journalistic practices, with focus on public interest and social emancipation.



Contents

- 18 **Introduction**
- 22 **Migration, asylum and integration policies: the Croatian context**
- 30 **Migrants in the media**
- 42 **Research into media representations in the digitalisation context**
- 46 **Research methodology**
- 54 **Representation of migrants and refugees in the media**
- 60 **Diachronic perspective**
- 68 **Thematic categories**
- 116 **Local media: reporting characteristics**
- 124 **Discursive distinctions: gender aspect of reporting**
- 132 **Discursive distinctions: political practices and language signification**
- 142 **Discussion**
- 154 **Conclusion**
- 158 **References**

Introduction

1. The number of international migrants worldwide is continually and gradually increasing, having reached more than 281 million (IOM, 2019), while the number of forcibly displaced persons worldwide as a result of different crises (persecution, war, violence, human rights violations) is progressively increasing, having reached more than 82 million persons (of whom 26 million refugees) by end of 2020 (UNHCR, 2021).

Analyses of media representations, which can be defined as symbolic representations of social reality, are frequently the focus of specialised and scientific research of various social phenomena. Their analysis, in the context of media content coding, opens up insight into dominant social values, but also into the intertwined nature of the interests of social actors in positions of power. They are part of the production process in media industries, which takes place through ritualized journalistic practices. The media 'form a mixed sub-domain where practically all public communication discourses appear' (Škiljan, 2000) and consequently, apart from the media that play a dominant role in the production of symbolical representations, various other actors from other domains also affect their formation, to some extent, with actors from the political domain playing the dominant role in the process due to their structural position and public function. In the context of representative liberal democracy, the media have been normatively given an important role in monitoring the activities of political actors, seeing as the political community elects its representatives through an election process that serves to legitimize their position in the social structure. In that constellation, the initial assumption is that citizens have the right to know what political representatives are doing on their behalf and the important role of informing about that is played by the media and journalists (Popović and Rodik, 2021). The media are most often the primary means of providing information and the basic source of construction of meaning about social reality. Their impact is especially strong when they are dealing with phenomena, actors and processes in connection with which people lack personal experience. As a result, media reporting on migrants and refugees¹ is an important aspect in the context of integration as a post-migration process, because on the one hand, the media reflect the dominant discourses within a specific social context and, on the other hand, participate in the production of discourses that contribute to the phenomena of social inclusion or exclusion of different social groups. By defining the format and selecting, coding and framing the content, the media construct social reality to a great extent and, consequently, the forms of media reporting on these themes are capable of influencing the modification of structural prerequisites for informing and sensitising the citizens and other stakeholders in the migration management system and in the asylum and integration system, with a view to facilitating integration processes in local communities that receive/provide housing for these individuals. This publication presents results of a research conducted as part of the 'INCLUDE – Intersectoral Cooperation in the Empowerment of Third-country Nationals' project, co-financed by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and implemented by the Government Office

for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Republic of Croatia (OHRHRNM). The general purpose of the mentioned project, within which this research has been conducted, is to collect data that could serve to monitor the success of integrating migrants into Croatian society and to contribute to further development of policies for integration of third-country nationals through the strengthening of legal and institutional capacities for reception and integration of migrants and refugees. In light of the foregoing, the purpose of this research was to offer some insights into the media representations, based on which it would be possible to formulate guidelines and recommendations for media reporting that could contribute to integration of third-country nationals in Croatia. For that reason, by using quantitative and qualitative analysis, this research identified the characteristics of media reporting on migrants and refugees in Croatian national, regional and local media in 2018 and 2019. In that process, the attempt was to determine the frequency of appearance of certain media content, the key reporting categories in terms of themes covered (thematic categories) and the dominant characteristics of reporting on migrants that are capable of (co)creating the attitude of the general public. Consequently, the main research question was: How do Croatian media at the local, regional and national level represent migrants with special focus on reporting on persons under international protection who have arrived from third countries and have been accepted at different locations in Croatia under the refugee resettlement program?

The first chapter of this study gives a description of the national legal, institutional and policy-based context relevant for understanding the phenomenon of migration, asylum and refugees in the Croatian society. Then there is an overview of previous research dealing with media and the migration phenomenon. The third chapter describes the methodology used, after which there is an overview of results on an aggregated level in regard to representation of migrants and refugees in the media. The central element of the study are the results of the qualitative analysis of the content of media reporting intended to identify the dominant topics in reporting on migrants and refugees in Croatian media in the observed period. The study also deals with the ways that gender is discursively constructed, including meanings that are constructed around the key signifiers: 'migrant', 'refugee', 'asylum/asylee'. The discussion offers an attempt to explain some of the basic insights, in which context special attention is drawn to the production of new discursive distinctions between the terms 'migrant' (as an undesired and threatening irregularized factor), 'refugee' (as the more desirable, acceptable, genuine person under international protection

who is arriving under a controlled and approved resettlement program) and 'asylum seeker' (as a potentially suspicious person, suspected as a fake refugee, somewhere in a limbo until their status of international protection is approved in accordance with the standard procedure). In line with previous research, securitization is still the key framework for understanding media representations of the migration phenomenon, but with the establishment of a European resettlement program and consequently the importance of the process of integration of the received refugees, the categories of migrant, asylum seeker and refugee are discursively reconstructed in media space, which implies the construction of new meanings. As demonstrated in this study, this is a controversial process which involves the creation of distinctions between regular and irregular migrants, which have their force and effect in media representations and in specific cases only due to government monitoring and status approval mechanisms, while at the same time, those discursive distinctions do not have the same meaning for the actual local communities.

Migration, asylum and integration policies: the Croatian context

2. Pursuant to the Act on International and Temporary Protection (Official Gazette 70/15, 127/17), international protection in Croatia includes the asylum status and the subsidiary protection status. In this sense, persons under international protection, as *de facto* refugees, include, from the normative and legislative drafting perspective, asylees and persons under subsidiary protection. The terms and conditions for granting international protection under the Act on International and Temporary Protection prescribe definitions of the terms asylum, subsidiary protection and temporary protection. 'Asylum shall be granted to applicants who are outside the country of their nationality or habitual residence and have a well-founded fear of persecution owing to their race, religion, nationality, affiliation to a certain social group or political opinion, as a result of which they are not able or do not wish to accept the protection of that country (Art. 20); Subsidiary protection shall be granted to an applicant who does not meet the conditions to be granted asylum referred to in Article 20 of this Act if justified reasons exist to indicate that if returned to his/her country of origin he/she would face a real risk of suffering serious harm and who is unable, or, owing to such risk, is unwilling to avail himself/herself of the protection of that country (Art. 21(1)); Temporary protection is protection approved in an extraordinary procedure, in the case of a mass influx or an imminent mass influx of displaced persons from third countries who cannot be returned to their country of origin, especially if a risk exists that due to the mass influx it is not possible to conduct effectively the procedure for approval of international protection, for the purpose of protecting the interests of the displaced persons and others who request protection (Art. 28(1)).'

Traditionally, Croatia has been an emigration country, and consequently, alongside an effort to keep the local population, there is constant need for foreign, immigrant labour. According to available statistical data from the Ministry of the Interior (MoI, 2022), in the last months of 2020 there were foreigners in Croatia, EU and third-country nationals, from a total of more than a hundred countries across the globe, who only comprised just about 2% of the general population. After the former trends of forced displacement during the war in the 1990s, there has been more intense emigration of Croatian citizens since Croatia's accession to the EU, which, together with the negative demographic situation caused by the natural population decline (depopulation) and the situation surrounding irregular migrations on Croatian borders, has become one of the main topics in the public domain. The issue of presence of refugees and forced migrants in the Croatian territory over the last 30 years has been primarily connected with resettlement during the Croatian War of Independence. In late 1990s, there were refugees from Kosovo arriving in the country and some from remote parts of the world, from the Asian and African continent. Since the signing of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the EU in 2001, Croatia has harmonized its migration-related legislative and institutional framework with the *acquis communautaire* of the EU, in a process referred to as Europeanization of asylum, migration and border policy, thus building its own national asylum and integration system, through adaptation and fulfilment of Union standards (Lalić Novak, 2016). Since the first Asylum Act, which entered into effect in 2004 and applied until end of 2021, when the current Act on International and Temporary Protection (Official Gazette 70/15, 127/17) entered into effect, more than ten thousand individuals have sought international protection in Croatia. By the end of 2021, protection was granted to 1018 individuals, 880 of whom had full asylum status and 138 were granted subsidiary protection (MoI, 2022b).²

During the so-called refugee/migrant crisis between September 2015 and March 2016, when approximately 660,000 refugees and other forced migrants transited through the Croatian section of the Balkan corridor, only about two hundred of them sought asylum in Croatia (Šelo Šabić, 2017). Croatia's reaction to the phenomenon of mass arrival of refugees and other forced migrants was pragmatic and largely in line with the policies of neighbouring countries, in which context it acted as just one in a chain of countries that allowed strictly controlled entry and supervised and organized transit of persons across its territory. Croatian government had practical support from various actors, specifically stakeholders in the asylum and integration system during the process of crisis management of the Croatian section of the Balkan

(humanitarian) corridor. Situation on the borders with Serbia and Slovenia received much media coverage as the nation watched great masses of people ‘on the move’ arriving in the country and passing through it. Croatian citizens’ reminiscence of their own war-time experiences as displaced persons and refugees emerged as a strong solidarity-inspiring element that motivated some citizens to help the refugees. Esterajher (2015) noted at the time that the mass arrival of refugees reminded people of their experiences of being refugees themselves during the Croatian War of Independence, seeing as Croatian citizens demonstrated great humanity and empathy for the refugees once again. The opening of the reception and transit centres (refugee camps) in Opatovac and in the vicinity of Slavonski Brod in the autumn of 2015 was accompanied by media reports showing trains full of people, food, clothes and blankets being distributed, faces waiting for their turn to move on from the camp and continue their journey. Local population in Croatia generally did not have the opportunity for direct contact with refugees placed in closed camps, owing to the short time they stayed there (i.e., due to the organized transit through Croatia). After the closing of the Balkan corridor in March 2016, Croatia continued its policy of preventing irregular migrations through Croatian territory from the direction of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina towards Slovenia and western Europe. At the same time, it began to take on the obligation of shared responsibility and solidarity among member states in terms of accepting a certain quota of asylum seekers and refugees under the relocation and resettlement program and to ensure their reception and integration. Owing to the securitization and criminalization of migrations that ensued after the closing of the corridor, the topic of migrations became controversial and sensationalized in the media and public opinion became polarized, leaning more and more to the negative side of the spectrum (Hameršak and Pleše, 2017; Župarić-Iljić and Valenta, 2019).

After the closing of the Balkan corridor, based on Croatia’s participation in the European resettlement and relocation program of third country citizens or stateless persons who meet the requirements for international protection, the providing for Syrian refugees from Turkey was carried out (Ministry of the Interior, 2019). By virtue of three adopted decisions the Government committed to receiving a total of 400 persons under the resettlement program. So far, 250 have been received. In two resettlement cycles seven groups of Syrian refugee families arrived from Turkey in the period from November 2017 to August 2019.³ In 2020, the implementation of the measure was stopped due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. Refugees who arrived under the resettlement program were placed in several local communities across

3. See more about the program and Croatian experiences with resettlement in Mol (2019) and Župarić-Iljić (2020). At the same time, despite the fact that there was a plan based on the Government decision made in 2015, i.e., an intention to relocate 1433 seekers of international protection from Italy and Greece, by the end of 2017, only 21 persons from Italy and 60 from Greece were successfully relocated (Croatian Legal Centre, 2019).

Croatia: in Zadar, Slavonski Brod, Zaprešić, Zagreb, Velika Gorica, Sisak, Karlovac and Požega. These are mostly smaller urban centres whose citizens either experienced what it was like to be a refugee first hand or had the experience of giving refugees a place to stay during the Croatian War of Independence, but lacked any significant (or had very little) experience with asylum, with these ‘new’ refugees and the demands and requirements of their reception and integration. In light of that fact, the new communities gave a relatively satisfactory and supporting welcome to their new neighbours (Ajduković et al., 2019), with or without previously implemented programs and campaigns intended to sensitize the local population to their new neighbours.

Considering that good-quality reception and integration of refugees into the Croatian society has been required for many years, the country has so far adopted several strategic documents attempting to regulate this area. Based on the ‘Migration Policy of the Republic of Croatia for the Period 2013–2015’ (Croatian Parliament, 2013), the most recent currently applicable strategic document was developed: ‘Action Plan for Integration of Persons Granted International Protection for the Period 2017 to 2019’ (Government of the Republic of Croatia, 2017). It mostly focused on providing social and other assistance to refugees and partly on their economic empowerment and independence, but also on activities in terms of their integration into the broader society and the life of the local community. The action plan envisaged three objectives that were to contribute to sensitising the general public and the professionals and that involved some kind of media engagement: 1) sensitizing the public and mitigating social prejudice, by way of implementing a public campaign on the national level; 2) sensitizing professionals by way of implementing measures of education of professionals in the social welfare system, healthcare system, police, labour market, education and civil sector who are involved, as well as continued informing of employers, unions and employment services about the rights of persons who have been granted protection; 3) supporting the initiative of the media, the civil society and the citizens in connection with integration, through measures intended to support the relevant projects and measures of support for partner programs implemented by civil society organizations in the promotion and nurturing of diversity of cultural expression (Government of the Republic of Croatia, 2017: 27–29).

Results of a recent international research project called MIPLEX – *Migrant Integration Policy Index*, which measures policies intended to integrate immigrants (Solano and Huddleston, 2020) showed once again that migrant integration policies in Croatia are slightly unfavourable. The reason lies in the fact that implementation of those policies,

following the period of harmonization with the EU *acquis*, has become impaired by what are often discretionary actions of government officials and by a lack of targeted institutional support in many integration domains. It seems that, for the purposes of a more systematic dealing with integration of foreigners, the required administrative capacities are still underdeveloped because at places there is a lack of political will, coordination and intersectoral cooperation between competent institutions (Giljević and Lalić Novak, 2018; Ajduković et al., 2019; Župarić-Iljić, 2020). In many aspects, the integration system seems insufficient for inclusion of refugees into the society, one of the most important problems being unsystematic and insufficient delivery of Croatian language courses.

As one possible way of improving the integration system, based on the results of a research and evaluation process within the project ‘Supporting implementation of integration policies for migrants’, financed under the EU’s ‘Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance – IPA 2012’ and co-financed by the Office for Human Rights and the Rights of National Minorities, a ‘Framework for the integration of persons who have been granted international protection at the local level’ has been developed (Office for Human Rights and the Rights of National Minorities, 2018). In the evaluation of the implementing part of the integration framework, based on research analysis and conclusions, a series of recommendations was made, of which the part about ‘Systematic sensitisation and education of stakeholders in the system and sensitisation of the public’ is especially important for the purpose of our research. The Framework, as one of the strategic objectives, recognizes the promotion of inclusion and social cohesion in local communities and, consequently, emphasis should be put on measures focused on informing and sensitising citizens, in which context the media could play a crucial role. Despite the fact that the Framework suggests and recommends a series of useful measures that could help facilitate initial integration of refugees in their receiving local communities, there has never been any evaluation as to whether those recommendations ever got implemented in practice. The idea behind creating a clear media and communications plan seems to still be awaiting realization.

Finally, a study was conducted in 2018 within the project ‘Supporting the Integration of Third-Country Nationals in Need of International Protection,’ co-financed by the AMIF, with the Government Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities as the project holder (Ajduković et al., 2019). The general purpose and objective was to identify capacities, demands and challenges of integration of third-country nationals under international protection in local (towns,

municipalities) and regional (regions, counties) self-government units and to find out about the attitudes of Croatian citizens and their willingness to accept and integrate this population. The results of the study suggest that Croatian citizens generally have a neutral attitude toward asylees, with a mild perception of economic threat (fear of competition for resources) and cultural threat (fear of losing their own culture) as a result of their arrival in their local communities. They are generally willing to establish a possible close relationship with asylees as neighbours or work colleagues. At the same time, more than 90% of citizens note that traditional media (printed and online newspapers, television and radio) are their most frequently used source of information about the issue of refugees and migrations, while 45.8% also use social networks as an additional source of information. The study has shown that media presentation of asylees is perceived by citizens as ‘slightly negative’ (Ajduković et al., 2019: 42), concluding that it is ‘extremely important to show local population examples of good practice and successful integration of asylees, and to inform them about their culture and customs in order to prevent the development of prejudice and discrimination’ (Ajduković et al., 2019: 85). In this context, representatives of local self-government units believe that media can help inform the local community. A good share of examinees from county structures believe that working on sensitisation should primarily focus on the media, whereas specialists institutions (social welfare centres, schools, employment services, medical institutions and other) also allocate the task of sensitising the public mostly to the media, with their own potential cooperation in promoting the life stories of asylees and promoting good integration practices.

Experiences of receiving refugees under the resettlement program have brought new challenges for local and regional self-government units where, following a brief stay of refugees in the reception centres in Kutina or Zagreb, their integration into the society and the life of the local community should continue. Zapata-Barrero, Caponio and Scholten (2017) remind us of the conflict between multilevel national integration policies and local realities of (non)implementation of specific integration measures. Nevertheless, in the local context, cities and towns that receive refugees under the resettlement program are becoming increasingly aware of their active role in the integration process. City of Osijek is among the first cities that has developed a kind of an action plan for local integration of third-country nationals, underlining the role of media as agents that, by informing their fellow citizens and reporting on positive stories about refugees and migrants, could mitigate any potential negative attitudes among citizens that might hinder the success of integration (Havelka, Šehić Relić

and Poljak, 2018). One of the measures of the 'Action Plan of the City of Zagreb for the integration of applicants for international protection and persons granted international protection for 2022' involves informing and sensitising the public through local electronic and printed media and through social networks about the integration of applicants for international protection and persons granted international protection, and about the reasons that motivated them to come to this country and about their culture and tradition (City of Zagreb, 2022). Other communities that have received refugees under a resettlement program and that have not developed separate local integration plans could potentially include in their future development strategies the measures that pertain to informing and sensitising citizens, suggesting the role of the media in that process, inspired maybe precisely by the examples of the cities of Osijek and Zagreb.



Migrants in the media

Migrations are an important political issue in all of Europe, and increasingly so in the Croatian context as well. Almost half of the examinees in a Eurobarometer survey conducted in 2017 on a sample of 28,080 citizens of EU-28 countries see migration as one of the two most important social and political issues, while at the same time 61% of Europeans find that they are insufficiently informed or completely uninformed about migration and integration (EC, 2018). According to Gallup's data from September 2020 and based on its migrant acceptance index, among 145 analysed countries, Croatia ranked fourth least accepting of migrants, right after Northern Macedonia, Hungary and Serbia, and side by side with Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro (Esipova, Ray and Pugliese, 2020). According to a 2019 RESOMA study, the media played an important role in the shaping of public perception about the so-called migrant crisis, not only based on the number of published articles but also through the use of dominant interpretive frameworks (Sharif, 2019). Media reporting about migrations and refugees in the European and global context has become one of the leading topics of interest to the media. For example, a critical analysis of the discourse within media representations of migration in the national press in Italy and Great Britain has been conducted by Croatian authors Bezić and Petrović (2019), who concluded that the position of migrants in Europe is constructed based on a binary opposition of *Us* and *Them*, which has only been amplified in the context of the so-called refugee/migrant crisis. Increasing media focus on migrations was connected with the subsequent increased perception of uncontrolled migration (including asylum-based migrations), which ensued after the closing of the Balkan corridor, as the main problem on national and EU level. Krzyżanowski, Triandafyllidou and Wodak (2018: 6) claim that immigration has become a highly politicised topic in recent years, especially in the sense of ideologization of discussions, but at the same time, it has become the key point of efficient dictating of attitudes about migrations delivered to the public by politicians.

Public discussions and presentations of asylum-seekers and refugees in media space help (co)create and shape public opinion about them, as Mrakovčić and Gregurović (2020) remind us. Increased media reporting we have seen in recent years in the entire EU began as a response to increased numbers of asylum seekers arriving in the EU, with the main approach being that of media construction of migrants as victims (Berry, Garcia-Blanco and Moore, 2015; Georgiou and Zaborowski, 2017). This humanitarian interpretive framework was common in both western and central Europe (*Mittleuropa*), even though the latter presented its region exclusively as transit countries on the migrant route further to western Europe.

On the other hand, security themes in the media appeared simultaneously with the humanitarian ones. Some believe that the conflicting interpretive frameworks used in the media and in political debates converged to some extent during the mass arrival of refugees in Europe in 2015. The advocates of left-wing political options and mostly independent media used the ‘moralising’ interpretive framework, underlining the need for protection and solidarity, while on the other hand, those leaning toward the right-wing political options imposed a security-based interpretive framework dealing with ‘threat and risk’, bringing asylum-seekers and migrants into an opposition in relation to the members of their own nations (Triandafyllidou, 2018: 215). However, political tensions and disagreements within individual societies were then mitigated by the use of a common interpretive framework that she refers to as ‘rationality’, which was used by both advocates of empathy and humanism and by those advocating the closing and distancing, to finally reach a point of agreement on the fact that the situation, which has been constructed as a crisis and an emergency, should be managed rationally, practically and efficiently. That was how, eventually, solidarity was reconciled with control and order, allowing politicians to present their positions in the media as staying true to European values of justice and humanity, while still fulfilling the need to re-establish control and order (Triandafyllidou, 2018).

In somewhat more specific reporting on the establishment of the Balkan corridor, the media focused on what De Genova referred to as the ‘border spectacle’, which implied vivid, expressive and dramatic scenes of chaos, fear and desperation of the masses (De Genova, 2002; as cited in Hameršak and Pleše, 2017: 17). Vollmer and Karakayali (2018: 120) noted that what happened in the first months of the migration crisis in the second half of 2015 was somewhat similar to the experience we saw thirty years ago, when hundreds of thousands of refugees fled from the war in former Yugoslavia, arriving in the then newly unified Germany. In 2015, German media, even the tabloids, never used any negative or hostile expressions when reporting on newcomers from the Middle East. In order for such a mass arrival to be easier for the German public to accept, the media offered an archetypal presentation of refugees, as credible, deserving and in need of help, which is significantly different from the presentation given nowadays, in recent times, of refugees as people on the move, perceived as economic migrants, or in other words, ‘fake refugees without credibility.’

It seems that the refugee archetype includes a universal set of characteristics, such as poverty, passivity or helplessness and gender-related behavioural patterns. A ‘good refugee’ is female, poor, helpless and of a certain nationality (Esses, Medianu and Lawson, 2013.). The positive

effect of media reporting intended to sensitise the audiences is expected to arise through personal interviews with refugees, where they are portrayed as victims who carry the trauma of losing their home, country, their way of living and perspective. In the mainstream media, the voices of migrants themselves are mostly missing, with those of the political elite and other creators of public opinion being the dominant ones (Consterdine, 2018). Despite the fact that, in principle, it is possible for media to offer information about refugees that would include their own perspectives and explanations of their actions (for example, in the form of pre-approved interviews), this is not very common in media practice. Reasons behind that can vary: from lack of interest on the part of the refugees themselves, stable and routinised practices of journalists disinclined to innovate, to far deeper problems involving the silencing of the voices of refugees in order to prevent them from being perceived as the subjects of a potential political action or intervention, or one’s own emancipation or improvement of one’s own status or life opportunities. In light of the foregoing, it is necessary to examine the interpretive frameworks used in Croatian media to construct and interpret the phenomena of migrations and refugeehood.

Research into media representations of migrants and refugees in the Croatian context

In Croatian scientific community, research into the topic of media representations of migration and refugeehood had been relatively scarce and underrepresented before the time of the Balkan corridor, when it increased rapidly in both frequency and volume. A study by Goldberger (2004) was one of the first studies in Croatian science which used the approach based on the interpretive framework theory to understand the representation of immigrants in the media, using the example of representation of immigrants in US press following the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. The author noted that media reporting started off on a positive note, underlining the contribution given by immigrants, but then shifted to an extremely negative, almost racist one, with a clear political implication that, as such, it has the ability to impact the formulation of a future migration policy.

At about the same time, at the moment when the Croatian asylum system was in its infancy, Benčić et al. (2005) conducted a study dealing with the attitude of the media and the public toward the then newly established Croatian asylum policy and with the attitude of the government and the society toward asylum-seekers. Based on a descriptive analysis of selected newspaper articles published between 2001 and 2004, the authors concluded that there are not enough articles dealing

with this topic and, moreover, that there is a negative tone in them, together with a misuse of the terms ‘asylum-seeker’, ‘asylee’ and ‘(illegal) migrant’ and a deliberate distortion of facts by the journalists who are either insufficiently informed about the issue or are presenting it in a way that is tendentious, which often contributed to the creation of moral panic (Benčić et al., 2005: 43–45). The authors called attention to the identified negative, discriminatory statements voiced by a part of the general public about asylum-seekers when an attempt was made to establish a reception centre in Stubička Slatina in 2004, at which occasion the local population used the so-called NIMBY (*Not in my Back-Yard*) arguments to defame the asylum-seekers as job-stealers, carriers of diseases and contagions, potential terrorists and criminals (Benčić et al., 2005: 48; cf. Hubbard, 2005; Petrović, 2013).

An overview of research into the coverage of the topic of asylum in Croatian media before accession to the European Union was given by Župarić-Iljić (2013: 211–212), concluding that ‘in the period of establishment of the asylum system, specifically from 2003 to 2009, asylum-related topics were covered scarcely and unsystematically, very often with a negative tone and inappropriate terminology.’ In light of the expected accession to the EU, the opening of the reception centre for asylum-seekers in the Zagreb city district of Dugave in 2011 attracted media attention to the issues of an efficient model of reception and integration of asylum-seekers and refugees in the society. In some individual incidents that involved asylum-seekers from the Porin Reception Centre, the journalists’ unprofessional approach to reporting involved the use of generalising, sensationalist and tendentious reporting style, which was often intended to negatively portray and stigmatize asylum-seekers and asylees, according to the author.

In the year before the beginning of the refugee/migrant crisis, in 2014, the Office of the Ombudswoman conducted an exploratory study in an attempt to detect implicit or explicit hate speech, racism and intolerance in online texts about migrants, asylum-seekers and asylees, concluding that negative, stereotype-promoting, discriminatory and sensationalist expressions were nevertheless not dominant, seeing as they appeared in a small number of the analysed articles (10 out of 78) (Office of the Ombudswoman, 2014: 16). The terms ‘asylum-seeker’ and ‘asylee’ are often misused, and even the term ‘illegals’ was used to refer to a person found irregularly (i.e. illegally) crossing the national border.

After that there was a whole series of studies that analysed media coverage of the so-called migrant/refugee crisis in 2015 and 2016, when approximately 1.3 million refugees and other forced migrants arrived in Europe. Reporting dealt with the challenge of managing the arrival and

transit of a huge number of refugees and other forced migrants along the corridor that was established for that purpose, the so-called Balkan corridor. In the media and expert discussions it became commonplace to refer to events occurring along the eastern Mediterranean route and the Balkan corridor in 2015 and 2016, and thus discursively construct them as ‘migration/migrant/refugee crisis’ (Župarić-Iljić and Valenta, 2019). Although the media used crisis-based discourse owing to the extent of the mass arrival, the actual crisis was naturally in the territories where the refugees had come from, primarily war-torn Syria but other places as well (Iraq, Afghanistan, Eritrea). Some media discussed the humanitarian crisis in overcrowded refugee camps in Turkey or in transit camps along the Balkan route, the crisis of European values and the crisis in regard to member states’ expression of solidarity in connection with receiving or rejecting refugees (De Genova et al., 2016; Hameršak and Pleše, 2017; Župarić-Iljić and Valenta, 2019).

For a better overview of the analysis of media coverage of migrations and refugeehood during and after the Balkan corridor, existing research into the media and migration phenomenon can, based on central point of interest, be categorized as follows:

- a) Diachronic approach to analysis of reporting on national and European migrant and refugee policy during and after the existence of the corridor (humane/humanitarian aspect vs. securitization): Lalić (2016), Bagarić and Mandić (2019), Čepo, Čehulić and Zrinščak (2020);
- b) Opposition between the discursive construction of the country’s way of dealing with the crisis in contrast to the approach taken by neighbouring countries (Croatia’s humane/humanitarian approach vs. rejection policies of its neighbouring countries): Zekić Eberhard and Levak (2016), Cvrtila, Slijepčević and Levak (2019);
- c) Construction of a crisis-like nature of the mass arrival and the risks brought by the presence of refugees on European and in Croatian territories: Jurišić, Vesnić Alujević and Bonacci (2017), Berbić Kolar and Gligorić (2017), Slijepčević and Fligić (2018);
- d) Interrelatedness of media content, sources used and ownership structure of the media organization: Hrnjić Kuduzović (2017), Bilić, Furman and Yildirim (2018);
- e) Categorization and visual portraying of refugees as passivized victims or as social, political or other constructed threats: Baričević and Koska (2017), Stević and Car (2017), Car, Čančar and Bovan (2019), Pintarić (2019), Šarić (2019), Vezovnik and Šarić (2020);
- f) Analyses of interpretive frameworks that include intolerant and discriminatory speech (anti-migrant, anti-refugee, Islamophobic and

- xenophobic speech): Babić and Kuntić (2018), Kadić Meskić (2019), Dobrić Basanež and Ostojić (2021);
- g) Reporting style and discursive presentation of migrants and refugees based on a sensationalist approach, stereotypes and a populist rhetoric, and effects thereof on audiences: Hoffman (2015), Kalebić Maglića, Švegar and Jovković (2018), Takahashi, Skoko and Pavić (2018);
- h) Analysis of media content in terms of the representation of certain subgroups within the refugee population (e.g., children, unaccompanied minors, women): Soko and Majstorović (2019), Peran and Raguž (2019);
- i) Use of conceptual metaphors to describe migration and refugee phenomena in media and expert terminology: Gradečak, Milić and Župarić-Iljić (2021).

In light of the foregoing, central focus of research into media reporting on migrations and refugees from the period when the Balkan corridor was active to this day involves, on the one hand, an analysis of media representations of national and supranational (European) policies pertaining to refugees and migrants, primarily in terms of the boundary between humanitarian and security-based approaches used in those policies. On the other hand, research is also focused to a great extent on how the media represent refugees and migrants in the Croatian context.

A diachronic approach to analysis of reporting on national policy pertaining to migrants and refugees during the period of activity of the Balkan corridor has been the subject of several studies. In the expert analysis by Lalić (2016) it was pointed out that the official Croatian policy had already shifted direction between the humane/humanitarian and the security-based approach, seeing that, while in the autumn of 2015 discourses and narratives about solidarity and humanity were more present in the media compared to discourses involving criminalization and securitization, once the Balkan corridor closed, the discourses and narratives shifted in the latter direction. This is also evident from a study by Bagarić and Mandić (2019), who analysed methods of media coverage and media presentation of migration-related topics connected with the Balkan route, including the tragic death of six-year-old girl Madina Hussiny on the Croatian-Serbian border near Šid. After the closing of the Balkan corridor the media began to disambiguate more intensely between 'deserving refugees' and 'undeserving economic migrants', and the change in those signifiers marked the authorities' turn from the humanitarian to securitization approach, according to Čepo, Čehulić and Zrinščak (2020). Then, in 2018, all migrants got categorized as the 'threatening Others' for

Croatia and the EU, regardless of their ethnicity or nationality, which was something that can be attributed primarily to external conditioning employed by the EU in the desire to protect its borders (the so-called 'Fortress Europe' concept) and in particular to protect the 'European way of life' (2020: 490–491).

Discursive construction of Croatia's approach to dealing with the 'crisis', compared to the approach taken by its neighbouring countries, seemed at times as a synergistic agreement of most national media with the proclaimed humane/humanitarian actions taken by the then centre-left Government. National media used an especially critical or negative tone in articles that criticised the controversial measures of the Hungarian authorities, such as erecting a barbed-wire fence along its borders and rigid deportations of migrants, which was characterized as an undesired and inhuman approach to dealing with the 'crisis' (Zekić Eberhard and Levak 2016). Meanwhile, in the beginnings of the Balkan corridor, in the fall of 2015, most Croatian media predominantly offered content showing migrants and refugees in a positive or neutral light, as noted by Cvrtila, Slijepčević and Levak (2019), who assumed that this was the case because the Croatian Government reacted with moderation and humaneness to the arrival of such a mass of people (as opposed to the reaction of Orbán-era Hungary), in which context the majority of Croatian citizens expressed empathy due to their own refugee experiences during the Croatian War of Independence (cf. Esterajher, 2015; Banjeglav, 2022).

Connected to some extent with these intra- and inter-country relations, we see the construction in the media of the arrival of refugees and other forced migrants as a 'migrant/refugee crisis', which is reflected, for example, in the study by Jurišić, Vesnić Alujević and Bonacci (2017). The authors found that the mutual conditioning of media and political agendas became evident when Croatian politicians began to intensely employ the language of 'crisis' in order to incorporate that element in their appearances and pre-election political programs during the election campaign that was taking place at the time, in which context the biggest and most polarized public debate was sparked by the nationally charged topic of mutual border blockade between Croatia and Serbia, attracting the largest number of comments. Berbić Kolar and Gligorić (2017) found that, at the beginning of what was terminologically defined as a '(migrant) crisis,' migrants were perceived as people in need of help, only to later be perceived as a potential threat, being presented in the media as a direct threat and danger to the society that needs to be transferred beyond the national borders. This is somewhat in conflict with the findings of Slijepčević and Fligić (2018), who claim that, despite the fact that there were other contextual and nationally

specific preconditions that could have brought the Croatian reaction closer to the Hungarian model (such as traditionalism, homogeneity and strong religious affiliation of the population and the conservative right-wing political options being in power), there was no serious escalation of the fear of the 'Others' during the so-called migrant crisis.

Analysis of the media in terms of the interrelatedness of media content, sources used and ownership structure of the media showed that, in the structure of sources, the most frequently used ones were those that belonged to national, government or international organisations ('elite sources') and less frequently they included NGOs, experts and citizens, with migrants being used as a source of information in only about 10% of the analysed articles (Hrnjić Kuduzović, 2017). Considering the ownership structure and political orientations, Bilić, Furman and Yildirim (2018) noted the fact that most digital media adapted their reporting style to the widespread moral panic that was increasingly felt in the public based on representations of migrants as terrorists and sexual harassers in foreign press and in politicians' statements, in which context those closer to the right-wing political spectrum predominantly used stereotypical and xenophobic presentations of migrants in their reporting. On top of that, private media exhibited less diversity of opinion and were more guided by the logic of showing scandal, crisis and disaster, which was motivated based on the market demand for sensationalist news (2018: 76–77).

Many studies dealt with visual portrayal and categorization of refugees as passivized victims or as social, political or other constructed threats or dangers. In the study conducted by Baričević and Koska (2017) reference is made to an earlier unpublished study from 2015 – in which Baričević, Matešić and Šipić, analysing online editions of national news publications from 2004 to 2015, reached the conclusion that 'national media use racially and gender-charged discourse to construct migrants/asylum-seekers/asylees as a social 'problem,' putting them at the same time inside a framework of criminals [...] in reports about arrests, smuggling, deportations, deviant behaviour' (Baričević and Koska, 2017: 43). The authors noted that, to a smaller extent, the victimization framework was also present in articles dominated by 'migrants' sad life stories,' mostly tragically overemphasized, with the aim of causing empathy in the readers and presenting 'us' as the humanitarians and 'them' as the victims who have fled from problem countries. On the same note, in a comparative survey of public media services in Croatia and Slovenia and their styles of reporting on migrants, Vezovnik and Šarić (2020) underlined that they are often portrayed as victims, suffering and powerless, but not at the same time as potentially politically active persons. Through

this, as users of mainstream media content, we get a portrayal of the 'victimised other' in the framework of human rights and humanitarianism, which additionally negates the subjectivity, agency and political beliefs of migrants. A similar conclusion was reached by Stević and Car (2017) when dealing with the analysis of visual portrayal of migrants and refugees, with the focus on so-called iconic photographs, because those representations, apart from their visual appeal, include a dramatic stereotypization of migrants either as sufferers, desperate people, a voiceless mass on the move, those who need 'our' help and, conversely, those who are not in need of protection or who are not really deprived of anything (for example, showing young migrants with 'expensive mobile phones') (2017: 35–36). Another study clearly noted the shift in the methods of presentation, because prior to the Paris terrorist attack (in November 2015), visual materials more often showed women and children in transit on the Balkan corridor, whereas after the attack mostly young men were shown, involving as a result the questioning of the 'actual' motivation of their leaving their countries of origin, and presenting them as threats to the European, western lifestyle (Car, Čančar and Bovan, 2019). Apart from the dimensions of security and cultural threat, Pintarić (2019) noted that media could play a role in the process of dehumanization and alienation of migrants, through their representation as a health threat and a risk of an epidemic, which was present even earlier in the Croatian context (cf. Benčić et al., 2005). Šarić (2019) found that, although various social actors spoke 'about' refugees and 'for' them, in many news reports broadcast on Croatian National Television (HRT), refugees were given a 'voice', if only for a short time, even though the most prominent elements in the visual representation were nevertheless the humanitarian approach of Croatian authorities, empathy on the part of the general population and the local community, with adherence to the official argument of the government: that those people were actually only in transit through Croatia.

Some of the studies deal with interpretive frameworks that include intolerant and discriminatory, anti-migrant, anti-refugee, Islamophobic and xenophobic speech. Dobrić Basanež and Ostojić (2021) concluded that discrimination of migrants occurs (i) through discursive language forms that can reveal xenophobic attitudes of the journalists themselves, dehumanization of migrants and their portrayal as being dangerous; this is especially present if media reporting noncritically reflects the official positions and attitudes of politicians and other creators of public opinion, which imply a perception of migrants as a threat, risk or danger. Babić and Kuntić (2018) analysed articles targeted against refugees and against Islam, referring to examples of hate speech that involved

identified stereotypes, pejoratives, degrading or dehumanizing tones (aimed at violation of dignity, reputation and honour), direct or indirect incitement to hatred or endorsement of discrimination. From a somewhat different point of view, Kadic Meskic (2019), analysing the national report on Islamophobia for Croatia in 2019, noted that in some media and social networks there were only sporadic expressions of intolerance, hate speech and the spreading of fake news on the part of a handful of radical right-wing politicians, against Islam as a religion and against Muslims in general. Nevertheless, the author underlined that these were just isolated incidents that were mostly condemned by the authorities and by the public, without any rising trend of Islamophobia as was seen elsewhere in Europe, believing the reason behind this to lie in the traditionally good coexistence and cooperation of the national majority and minorities and also in the century-long institutional recognition of Islam as an officially accepted religion in Croatia.

Representations of migrants and refugees in the media that seem to favour the sensationalist approach, stereotypes and populist rhetoric, in which context their effects on the public are also analysed, derive to some extent from the aforementioned ones that deal with anti-refugee, anti-Islam and xenophobic narratives. Hoffman (2015: 9) concluded that reports on refugees published in the autumn of 2015 on the web portal *Dnevno.hr* involved intolerant and discriminatory speech, even hate speech, and that 'radicalization of public discourse is aimed at normalizing discriminatory messages in all media, and that the constant atmosphere of competing for readers/viewers/listeners made sensationalism an acceptable tactic.' Contemplating the effects that this style of reporting could have on the audience and examining the influence of exposure to different interpretive frameworks of newspaper articles on the perception of threat that could come from migrants, a study by Kalebić Maglica, Švegar and Jovković (2018) confirmed the effect of exposure to a certain interpretive media framework; specifically, the participants that were exposed to a negative tone article during the migrant crisis had a greater perception of migrants as a cultural, social, health and economic threat. Attempting to describe the connection between migrant movements and the increasing populism in Europe in the context of the so-called refugee crisis, Takahashi, Skoko and Pavić (2018: 106), hinting slightly at the argument of victim's responsibility, concluded that the 'refugee crisis' was the element responsible for the rise of populism because in 'some EU countries it emboldened radical nationalist political options, xenophobia and intolerance of immigrants.'

Analysis of media content in regard to representations of certain sub-groups within the refugee population is present in the study

conducted by Soko and Majstorović (2019). The authors analysed the presence and representations of refugee children in the media, concluding that visual representations dominate in comparison to the textual content, without any actual analytical texts, and that in the textual part children appear merely as secondary actors in the topic at hand. Moreover, visual representations often involved the violation of the UNICEF ethical reporting guidelines on non-revealing the identity of children, whose visual portraits were not adequately anonymized. A similar conclusion was reached by Peran and Raguž (2019) when they analysed the predominantly sensationalist stories about the destinies of refugee children used to attract the readers' attention, and very rarely involving the testimonies of refugees themselves and of citizens or volunteers as the source, or without any indication of the source whatsoever. The study by Borčić and Glavač (2021) about the discourses of Croatian women politicians used in the media in connection with the so-called migrant crisis indicated that the dominant myth recreated in their statements was the one about the refugee as a good, devoted mother.

Analysis of media reporting on migrations, as well as the analysis of the use of certain concepts in the terminology chosen by experts but also in public discourse, showed that the reports often involved the use of various inadequate conceptual metaphors. Gradečak, Milić and Župarić-Iljić (2021) noted that the metaphors most often used are those connected with large-scale and chaotic natural or biological occurrences (flood/wave/tsunami, river/sea) and those connected with animals (infestation, invasion, swarm), all contributing to tendentious media reporting. The authors concluded that the use of conceptual metaphors from the natural world connected with water (migration flow, flow of refugees, wave of refugees) was the dominant framework in which this topic was presented as an intrusive, unstoppable and dangerous process, present in part not only in media reporting and public opinion, but also among experts in the field of migrations and asylum.



Research into media representations in the digitalisation context

Further to the above provided overview of research conducted in connection with the media and migrations, in order to make an introduction into this specific study, it is necessary to give a brief explanation of the contemporary context of media production, seeing that we treat media articles as documents produced in specific conditions. Contemporary media production that includes the practice of coding media content has been marked by commercialization of the media and dominance of the profit logic, which turns information into merchandise and treats it ever more so as any other product in the market (Popović, 2015). Radical profit-oriented logic results in precarisation of journalistic work, the imperative of productivity, sensationalist reporting intended to attract audiences, simplified approach to phenomena being covered, clickbait journalism – where eye-catching headlines serve as bait that leads to content that is ‘surplus’ or second-grade and frequent use of media hyperbole (*hype*) (Wien and Elmelund-Praeskaer, 2009) – all caused by the imperative to attract audiences in the context of attention economy.

Apart from the trend of commercialization of media, accompanied by dominance of profit-based logic of their operations, journalistic work has been affected by technological changes as well, more specifically the spreading of digital technology, which we have witnessed over the course of the last three decades. Technological innovations change the old forms of public communication and journalistic production of content from the grounds up. In this sense, we can differentiate between traditional mass media and social networks. Social networks contribute to citizen’s visibility in the public domain, enable their participation in alternative forms of production and distribution of information (Bossio and Bebawi, 2016). They are in fact a repository of individual posts and sharing of all kinds of content on various platforms. Unlike social networks, which are primarily oriented towards communication, traditional mass media and ‘new’ media versions in the form of informative web portals are oriented towards information (Curran, Fenton and Freedman, 2012). The latter are also subject to different social expectations and criteria: there is a whole series of legislative acts applying to them, according to which they have a responsibility for their actions in the public, unlike the actions on social networks. Traditional media have professional journalists, whereas social networks are open for participation of all citizens in the communication process. Owing to everything listed above, and despite the change of context, informative media play an important role nowadays in informing citizens and creating and guiding public discussion about matters of public interest. Traditional mass media have adapted to the new media environment by digitalization, by

shifting to or complementing their technological platforms by online versions. Digital versions of the original platform are created which, when it comes to *production practices*, differ somewhat from the original, seeing that each technology requires specific skills. However, there is a tendency to combine different practices that used to be separate before the digitalization, primarily due to reduced input costs and faster production intended to keep up with the competition. For example, media content produced for the television or the newspapers will have similar content reported in the television network portal or in the online version of the newspapers.

Of course, this kind of convergence occurs in the context of adaptation to audience practices. More specifically, according to an Ipsos⁴ Media Puls study (N=7120) for Croatia, which pertained to the first quarter of 2020, 76.6% of the subjects use the Internet on daily basis +. By age groups, more than 80% of the subjects from each of the listed age categories use the Internet, only the 60–74 age group have a lower Internet use percentage (49.1%). However, convergence is also the result of commercial aspirations, because one cannot miss the opportunity of maximum possible reproduction and distribution of the produced content. Commercial aspirations have also led to increasing homogenization of content, which is reflected in scarce production of original content, and substitution of that practice by reproducing and copying, repeatedly redistributing the same content. Loss of diversity in terms of approach and contents is apparent not only between different media organizations but also between two or more technological platforms within the same media organization. One should also add that, unlike media production prior to digitalization, when various types of media content were categorized and organized more clearly, nowadays there is also a convergence and mixing of reporting segments and genres, combining of information, entertainment and propaganda material, overlapping of different sections, and alike. This is especially visible if we observe the content of web portals, where it is increasingly difficult to group or categorize content by type, as it is done in traditional journalistic reporting based on the organizational aspect of reporting segments, or in television reporting based on program genres. This also makes any analysis of media representations more complex, seeing that specific systematization of processes and organisation of content is restricted.

Apart from understanding the coding practices, specifically production of media content and the meaning derived from it, analysis of media representations extends toward the domain of reception, which implies the decoding of media contents, because the aim is to identify the potential influence of media representations on attitudes and

4. The authors wish to thank the research agency Ipsos for providing data required for this research draft.

behaviours of audiences, i.e. the general public. Although analysis of media representations alone is not sufficient to reach conclusions about reception and influence of the media on audiences, such conclusions are nonetheless often implicitly or explicitly made. The assumption underlying these conclusions is that the media affects audiences and that a change in media representations could result in changing the public attitude toward a certain phenomenon or a certain social group. In the broader sense, we could say that analysis of media representations contributes to understanding the cultural and historical context within which a certain text was produced, because they are the result of common meanings that are part of that context. Ultimately, however, one should also take into account the restrictions in the analysis of media representations, these being that, ultimately, it involves specific interpretation of meaning on the part of the researchers themselves, an interpretation that could significantly differ from the producer's intention and from the meanings derived by audiences that interpret the media representations on daily basis.



Research methodology

5. 'Migrant', 'refugee', 'asylum/asylee' were three keywords used when searching articles, regardless of any differentiation between legal and sociological understanding of these concepts, particularly the extensive use of the term 'asylee' in previous versions of the Asylum Act as a *de facto* refugee, i.e. a foreign national who has been granted asylum (international protection). The new term, 'persons under international protection' includes both the status of asylum and subsidiary protection (see footnote 3). However, 'person under international protection' and 'person under subsidiary protection' were not separate search categories, but they did indirectly appear in articles that contained the keyword 'asylum/asylee.'

Relying on previous research dealing with the issue of media and migrations, this research focuses not only on media reporting on migrants and refugees in the context of certain atypical or incident-related social phenomena (which the media prefer anyway), such as the Balkan corridor or the 'migrant crisis' resulting from its closure, but also on reporting on the 'normalisation' of daily life in the context of resettlement of refugees and their integration in the Croatian society. Just like in previous research, in order to map out the dominant discourses that contribute to the shaping of public opinion (attitudes found in the general population), it is necessary to analyse the dominant media on a national level; however, apart from that, research also includes regional and local media of relevance in the communities that received persons under international protection between late 2017 and late 2019.

The purpose of the research is to determine ways in which the media, in the broader sense, reported on the migration phenomenon, and in the narrower sense, about the integration of refugees in the Croatian society. Consequently, articles were identified based on keywords 'migrant', 'refugee' and 'asylum'⁵ (including derivatives of those words). Based on the findings, the authors formulated guidelines and recommendations for media reporting that could contribute to integration of third-country nationals who have been granted international protection in Croatia.

The aim of the research was a quantitative and qualitative analysis of media content on national and local level in the Republic of Croatia, which pertained to reporting on migrants/refugees/asylees.

Research objectives were the following:

- RO1. Determine the frequency of appearance of media content about migrants/refugees/asylees on national and regional/local level.
- RO2. Determine the key thematic categories of reporting on migrants/refugees/asylees.
- RO3. Determine the dominant characteristics of reporting on migrants/refugees/asylees that could shape the attitude of the general population.

Research problem: According to some data, the degree of acceptance of migrants in the Croatian society is relatively low (Esipova, Ray and Pugliese, 2020); in order to try to understand why it is so, it is only logical to look to the media and not only to other social institutions. The media are the primary means of providing information and the basic source of construction of meaning about social reality. Their impact is especially strong when they are dealing with phenomena, actors and processes in connection with which people lack personal experience. It is precisely why action research is generally focused on mapping

out the situation as is, in order to formulate guidelines for initiating a certain positive social change. Media reporting on migrants and refugees is an important aspect in the context of integration, seeing that, on the one hand, the media reflect the dominant discourses in a specific cultural context, but at the same time they also produce those discourses. As a result, the following research questions are asked:

Main research question: How do Croatian media at the local, regional and national level represent migrants/refugees/asylees with special focus on reporting on persons under international protection who have arrived from third countries and have been accepted at different locations in Croatia under the refugee resettlement program?

Also, answers to the following specific research questions were sought: How often are migrants/refugees/asylees represented in Croatian media on the national and regional/local level?

Is it possible to identify, from a diachronic perspective, changes in media representations of migrants/refugees/asylees?

Which themes dominate the media representations of migrants/refugees/asylees on national and regional/local level? How is gender discursively constructed in media representations of migrants/refugees/asylees?

Sample

The sample comprised web portals of national and regional media and local web portals reporting on locations where persons who have been granted international protection are staying. Research includes relevant media with national reach and a large audience share, considering that that kind of media reflect and construct dominant discourses in the society. However, regional and local media have also been included, and they are relevant for the purposes of this research owing to the fact that they may potentially be reporting more intensively about topics of relevance for the specific local community that are not covered by dominant, nationally oriented media. Although local media are mostly characterised by a limited reach and they have a small audience share, their importance is reflected precisely in their focus on a specific community or locality. This research encompassed eight counties that have received persons granted international protection, which include the following cities/towns: Zagreb, Velika Gorica, Zaprešić, Karlovac, Duga Resa, Zadar, Sisak, Slavonski Brod, Varaždin and Požega.⁶ Citizens of Zagreb, Zaprešić and Velika Gorica tend to read national media (seeing that they thematically cover those areas), and consequently they were not analysed under local media, as was the case with other cities/towns and the counties they belong to.

6. Based on a proposal of the Government's operational Plan for Accommodation of Persons Granted International Protection in the Republic of Croatia in 2019, following an extensive consultation process with representatives of local and regional self-government, it was proposed that refugees be accommodated, based on the number of available state-owned accommodation facilities, in the following cities/towns: Bjelovar, Daruvar, Duga Resa, Karlovac, Koprivnica, Kotoriba, Lepoglava, Lipik, Osijek, Požega, Sisak, Slavonski Brod and Zagreb. Subsequently, based on administrative capacity for sustainable local integration, the following cities were also taken into consideration for accommodation purposes: Čakovec, Osijek, Rijeka, Varaždin, Velika Gorica and Zaprešić. Notwithstanding the foregoing, in 2019 persons granted international protection were accommodated primarily in Sisak and Karlovac under the resettlement program, and as had previously been the practice, in Zagreb, for those who had been granted international protection under the 'regular' procedure.

Selection of specific media with national coverage was made based on rating analyses (AdScanner for the Agency for Electronic Media, Ipsos Media Puls, Gemius, SimilarWeb). Considering that the audience share of local media is very low, they are often not the focus of interest of rating agencies and consequently, selection of local media was performed based on expert assessments. With the help of Croatian Journalists' Association, heads of local branches of the Association, who are active as journalists in local communities, were contacted and based on their assessments, a selection was made of local media estimated as relevant for the local communities in question.⁷

7. The authors wish to thank the secretary of the Croatian Journalists' Association, Mrs Iva Borković, for providing the journalists' contact details. The following heads of branches of the Croatian Journalists' Association were contacted by telephone: branches in Karlovac County, Sisak-Moslavina County, Brod-Posavina County, Varaždin County, Zadar County, including a journalist who is active in Požega-Slavonia County, seeing as there is no branch of the Association there.

1. National media

Web portals of televisions with national concession and the largest audience shares:

- a) www.hrt.hr – Croatian Radiotelevision
- b) dnevnik.hr – NOVA TV
- c) rtl.hr – RTL television

Web portals of daily newspapers with the largest readership shares:

- a) www.24sata.hr – 24sata
- b) www.jutarnji.hr – Jutarnji list
- c) www.vecernji.hr – Večernji list

Most visited web portals (electronic publications):

- a) net.hr
- b) tportal.hr
- c) index.hr

2. Regional media relevant for the field of research

- a) Slobodnadalmacija.hr – Slobodna Dalmacija
- b) [Glas Slavonije](http://GlasSlavonije)

3. Local media

- a) Karlovac: kaportal.hr and karlovacki.hr
- b) Požega: o34portal.hr and pozega.eu
- c) Sisak: quirinusportal.com and portal53.hr
- d) Slavonski Brod: brodportal.hr and sbplus.hr
- e) Varaždin: regionalni.com and varazdinske-vijesti.hr
- f) Zadar: zadarski.hr and zadarskilst.hr

The research observed a time period of two years, specifically media articles published between 1 January 2018 and 31 December 2019.

This period was defined based on the following criteria:

In the period between November 2017 and August 2019 there was the largest number of arrivals and of persons granted international protection under the third-country nationals resettlement program, who were *de facto* Syrian refugees arriving from Turkish camps to local communities in the Republic of Croatia.

It wasn't until late 2017 that Croatia began to implement the resettlement program, which lasted until the summer of 2019 and was suspended in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Data collection and processing methods

Selection of media content was made based on the following criteria:

1. Identification of articles based on keywords (and their derivatives): 'Migrant' as a general category, 'refugee' and 'asylum/asylee' to include the subgroup that is of interest to this research.
2. Identification of articles pertaining only to Croatia (national/regional/local level)
3. Identification of articles where the observed element connected with the keywords represents the main theme of the article (articles dealing with migrations, refugeehood and asylum, exclusively or in correlation with other themes).

The sample comprises all articles that meet the criteria listed above. Sampling that would involve reducing the number of articles in terms of days, weeks or months of publication would significantly detract from the understanding of media reporting on the migration phenomenon. This is particularly true because, as it subsequently turned out, segments of certain narratives and stories that reappeared throughout the entire observed period would be left out.

In data processing, the unit of analysis was defined as the media content that featured migrants/refugees/asylum/asylees as the main theme and that can be carved out and analysed as an independent unit, or in other words an article/report on a web portal with accompanying title, subtitle and photos. Data was processed in Excel and NVivo programs.

Analysis involved the quantitative and qualitative approach, although the primary focus was on qualitative analysis.

The quantitative approach involved descriptive statistics and analyses of frequency of media reports, analyses by time of publication, media sources and similar, but also other quantitative analyses of qualitative data such as thematic codes.

Qualitative analysis of content was primarily focused on identifying

thematic codes, based on textual and linguistic representations. Coding was approached inductively – a process that implies constant revision of concepts and categories derived *from data*, in this case the analysed articles. The process is recursive and reflexive and it is performed by iterations between the mentioned levels of analysis. Data is grouped, analysed and interpreted based on key terms and identified themes. The theme is defined as a code recorded through the process of data analysis; it is connected with research objectives and the research question and comprised of elements identified in the text, and it gives the researchers a basis upon which they can interpret data (Bryman, 2012). When identifying themes, one looks for repeating content, original typologies and categories, frequently used terms, unusual or recurring syntagms, metaphors or analogies, transitions (content changes), similarities and differences in describing phenomena. Other important things in identifying themes are the statements given by various actors that were represented in the media and their mutual relations, seeing as that helps delineate a certain social domain and the practices present in it.

The created thematic codes (code=theme) are mutually exclusive (each article is allocated only a single code) and, considering that it is possible for articles to deal with multiple themes, where this was the case, the attempt was to determine the main thematic set that represented the main issue that the article dealt with. Naturally, in this context one should note that any mutually exclusive categorization which is primarily performed with respect to the identified differences between categories, is always reductionist in nature and based on the coder's interpretations.

Coding was performed by two coders. After 10% of media articles were analysed, the coders performed the first aligning of the codes and developed a coding system. Once 30% of media articles were analysed, the second and final aligning and revision of codes was performed. A total of 3,044 media articles were processed, with high intercoder agreement (Cohen's kappa=0.81).

The final coding system comprised the following codes:

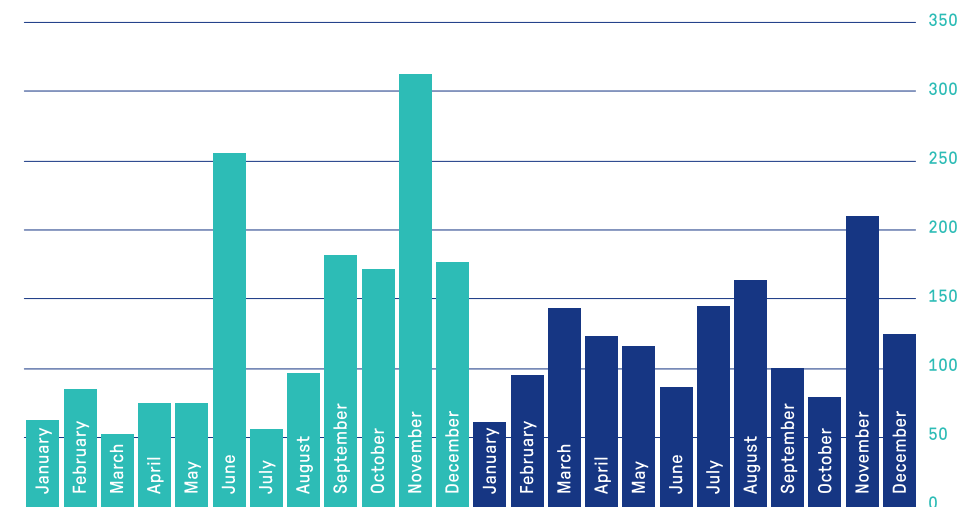
1. Security
2. Politics
3. International relations
4. Migrant route (initially this code was designated as the 'Balkan route' considering the usual geographical area covered in the media, but during data processing, it was renamed to 'migrant route' in order to properly include writings about other migrant routes that appeared in the data (the Mediterranean, EU, Schengen Area countries,...))

5. Integration
6. Media and social networks
7. Justice system
8. Humanitarian activities
9. Other.

Seeing as the research is focused also on the broader characteristics of media reporting, a gender analysis was also performed, specifically in terms of the dominant roles and characteristics that are ascribed to both women and men in the media's discursive constructions.

Representation of migrants and refugees in the media

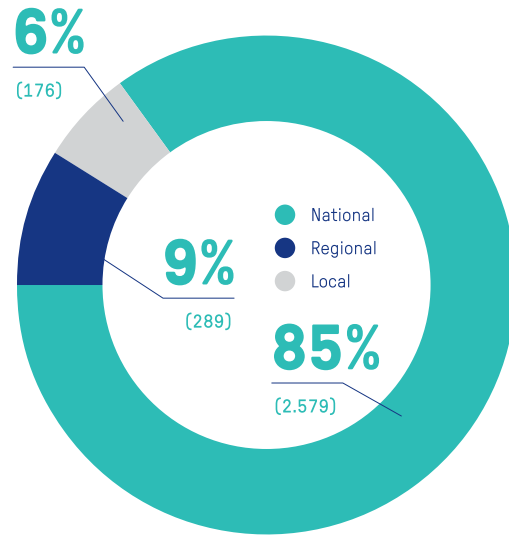
Figure 1. Number of reports in 2018 and 2019 by months (N=3044)



Analysis of frequency of media reports dealing with the phenomenon being studied has shown that in 2018 and 2019 a relatively equal number of media articles were published, 1,600 articles in 2018 and 1,444 articles in 2019. In this two-year period, an average of 127 articles were published a month, in which context there were significant variations in the number of reports by individual months. Certain periods with much more media reports, such as June 2018 and the autumn of the same year, emerge as particularly significant. November 2019 was also characterised by a greater number of media reports (Figure 1). Increase in the number of articles dealing with migrants and refugees in June 2018 was influenced by a specific event that took place end of May at Donji Srb, when the police fired shots in an attempt to stop a van transporting migrants, wounding two children in the process. In November 2018, there was an increased number of articles dealing with several different events, such as fake news about migrants on social networks and some electronic media, which was accompanied by many comments given by numerous politicians and a political controversy surrounding the Marrakesh migration pact. In November 2019, a significant number of articles covered an incident that took place in Gorski Kotar, where a policeman attempting to prevent the passage of a group of migrants on route to Slovenia shot a migrant, who ended up in surgery in Rijeka Hospital. Observably, all of these specific increases in the number of reports in certain periods were primarily influenced by specific incidents, which is consistent with the findings of previous research on media reporting about migrants and refugees, which indicated that the migration phenomenon often receives incident-focused reporting.

Quantitative analysis of the initially assigned codes that pertained to media reach (national, regional, local media) indicates that during the observed period the largest number of media reports dealing with migrants, refugees and persons under international protection were found in national media (a total of 2,579 articles or 85% of the reports), which is followed by regional (289 reports or 9%) and finally by local media (176 reports or 6%) (Figure 2).

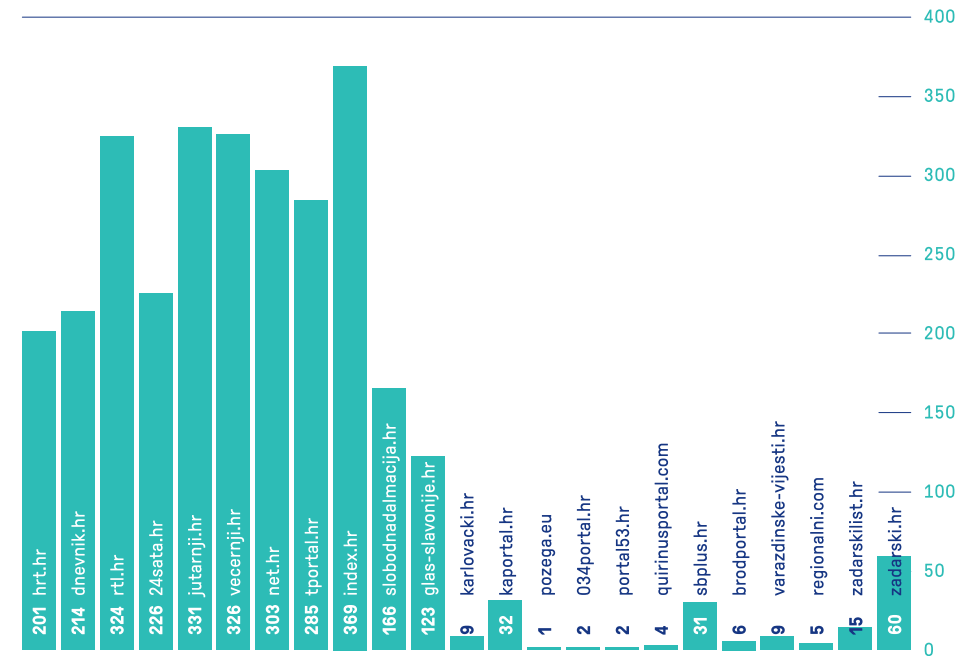
Figure 2. Share of reports in 2018 and 2019 by media reach (N=3044)



It should be noted that the increased representation of media reports on migrants, refugees and persons under international protection in the national media is not the result of any sampling bias, but that this can instead be explained by some other factors, such as greater catchment area and audience reach, vicinity of the capital as the political centre, greater availability of various sources enjoyed by national media, greater capacities of media organisations, and alike. Representation and selection of national, regional and local media in the initial sample did not affect these results, considering that the same

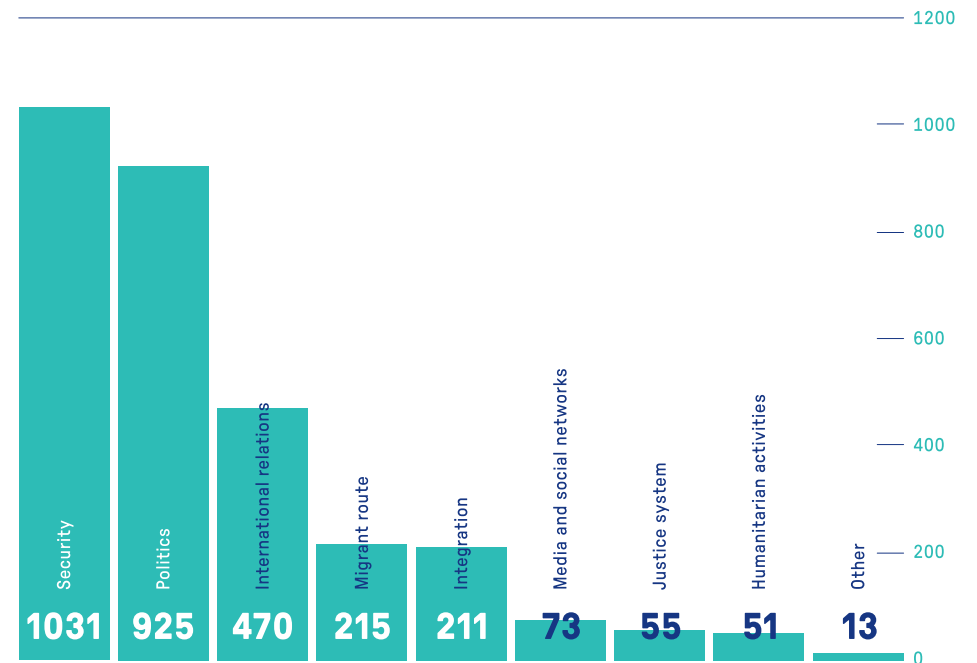
results are obtained when analysing the number of reports by individual medium. In each individual national medium there is greater frequency of media reports than in regional media, with the least reports being found in all of the local media (Figure 3). On average, a national medium had 287 reports in the observed period, a regional medium had 145 and a local medium had 14. In this context, local media exhibited significant deviations, with only 3 out of 12 analysed local media publishing most of the analysed material, which has led to the median for local media for the entire two-year period amounting to only 8 reports.

Results of the qualitative analysis give us additional insights. Qualitative data analysis showed multiple different themes that were represented in the analysed articles over the course of these two years. Based on the frequency of individual themes, one can observe that reports about migrants and refugees in the media generally had the underlying element of security (1,031 or 34% of all media articles) and politics (925 or 30% of the articles). This is followed by international



↑ **Figure 3.** Number of reports in 2018 and 2019 by media (N=3044)

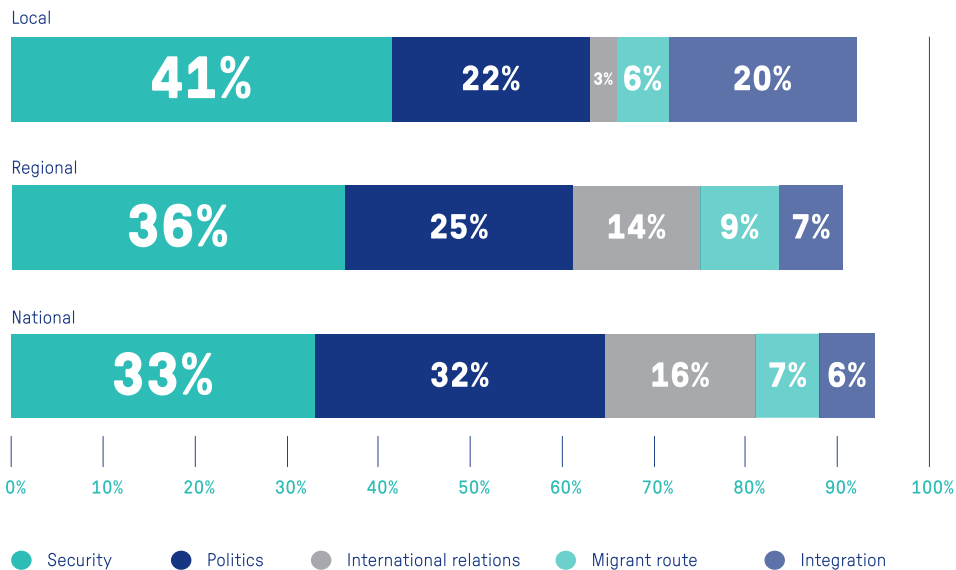
↓ **Figure 4.** Frequency of media articles by themes (N=3044)



relations (470 or 15%), migrant routes (215 or 7%) and integrations (211 or 7%), whereas themes connected with media and social networks (73 articles), justice system (55 articles) and humanitarian activities (51 articles) were each represented by no more 2.5%.

If we look at the way different media reported on migrants depending on their catchment area and audience reach, we can observe that national media follow this kind of distribution of frequency of themes, regardless of the specific national medium. Analysis of data at an aggregated level and by individual national and regional media reveals that national and regional media mostly report on migrants and refugees from the point of view of security and politics, with only minor variations in terms of which of those two themes is the primary and which secondary in any individual medium. Moreover, both in national and regional media, the third most frequent theme is international relations, followed by migrant route and integration (Figure 5). When it comes to local media, these results indicate that their reporting is in fact somewhat different from reporting in regional and national media. Local media report more extensively on migrations from the point of view of security compared to regional and national media, whereas interest in politics drops as the reach of the medium decreases: local media report least on this theme, regional media report some more, and national media report the most. Apart from that, local media report less on migrants from the point of view of international relations and more on migrant and refugee integration (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Shares of most frequent themes in the media by reach





Diachronic perspective

From a diachronic perspective, the results indicate that during the analysed period there were no significant changes in media representations in terms of certain timing patterns or trends. During this period there were no major changes in the holders of political power or in the main determinants of migrant policy, which could possibly be correlated with changes in representation of migrants and refugees. Thematic categories were constant and repetitive, in accordance with the overall presence of individual themes. The only exception was the thematic category 'media and social networks,' which appeared sporadically over the course of the entire period, only to increase rapidly in November 2018.

During the entire two-year period there were two motifs that were continuously present in media reporting: 1. (Criticism/justification) of the actions of official Croatian politics vis-a-vis migrants; 2. Territorial protection and maintenance of order. These motifs are reflected in individual media stories that received great media coverage in the analysed period.

More specifically, the first motif is recognisable in descriptions of events pertaining to actions of the Croatian police toward migrants, pushbacks over the border with Bosnia and Herzegovina and individual incidents. The first news of potentially illegal actions on the part of the police appeared already at the beginning of the analysed period, in January 2018, and increased media coverage was given to public statements of the 'Welcome' and 'Are You Serious?' initiatives, which claimed that refugee children were denied their applications for international protection, in contravention of the applicable laws, which the Ministry of the Interior denied. Various cases took turns in the media throughout the entire period until December 2019, when the media reported on the case of alleged deportation of Nigerian students from Croatia – the motif was the same.

Another continually appearing motif was that of territorial protection and maintenance of order, in which context media reports were about police actions. For example, in July 2018, the media covered migrants' attempted escape from the police in a stolen Volkswagen Golf, in September 2018 migrants who stole a bus, in November there were reports about home break-ins at Platak and the fear among the locals, including the fear experienced by the population of the hinterland of Opatija. In July 2019, reports covered a verbal exchange on a bus in Zagreb (an incident that was initially described in the media as 'horror on a ZET bus: Migrant knifes a group of young men,' only to later transpire, following police enquiry, that the migrant insulted a young man but had no knife on his person). In October 2019, there were reports about how the citizens of Vrgorac feared migrants who broke into their

homes, and similar stories. Examples of stories with almost identical structure followed one after another, with the reporting aimed primarily at stigmatizing migrants and causing fear in the audiences, with reassurance that the police are doing their job successfully in maintaining order and security: the main message being that migrants were a problem.

There were two personalized cases that had the longest presence and greatest coverage in the media: one of them involved the death of a young girl from Afghanistan, Madina Hussiny, in November 2017. Although the initial event preceded the analysed period, the story was still present in the media all throughout 2018 and contributed to occasional increased reporting intensity in certain periods. For example, in February 2018, the media reported on the involvement of the Ombudswoman, who called for an investigation by the State Attorney's Office of the Republic of Croatia into the circumstances of Madina's death. In March, the event was referred to again, in reports about the public statement of the Are You Syrious? association, claiming that the girl's family had been deported from Croatia again. In April, the media reported on the decision of the European Court of Human Rights delivered to the attorney of the Hussiny family, imposing an interim measure on the Ministry of the Interior to find accommodation for the family in a suitable community where they will not be exposed to demeaning behaviour. That same month, associations Are You Syrious? and Centre for Peace Studies claimed that the Ministry of the Interior was putting pressure on a law firm that protected the rights of refugees, and also on the activists of those two organizations, involving (among other things) requests sent to the activists to appear for a voluntary police interview at the same time when the associations had previously announced a press conference. In May, the media reported on an injury sustained by that same family's three-year-old when a door collapsed on him at the premises of the court in Osijek. In June, the media covered an announcement made by the Centre for Peace Studies about how the Afghan family was 'free at last' because they had been transferred to a reception centre for asylum seekers in Kutina. In September 2018, the story appeared in the media once again, in a report covering a related event concerning the appealable court decision issued with respect to a volunteer of the association Are You Syrious?, wherein the misdemeanour court in Županja ruled that the volunteer had helped little Madina's family cross the border 'illegally'. During the analysed period, this story, from different angles however, reappeared within different themes: politics, security and justice system.

A similar pattern of increased media reporting over a longer period of time was evident in the personalized narrative of Syrian migrant

Wadie Ghazi, who sent an appeal on social networks asking for help in finding his five-year-old daughter Allsa in September 2018. Media reporting began with that appeal for help, forwarded by the association Are You Syrious? The media reported on accusations made by the Syrian migrant about how they had been separated by Croatian police, who sent him back to Bosnia and Herzegovina. The police issued a missing person report for the little girl, and the Ombudswoman announced the initiation of proceedings with regard to that case in order to shed light on the circumstances of her disappearance and the accusations made against the police. The media then reported on the migrant's transfer to the Reception Centre for Asylum Seekers in Zagreb, after which new information was published, provided by the police, about that specific Syrian migrant having been previously registered in Montenegro without any child. The next report was about how he fled from the Reception Centre. One month later, in October, the story emerged again in the news (this time in the context of the migrant route theme), when media reported on that Syrian migrant/asylum seeker being located in Italy and reproducing his statements about how he was still looking for his daughter and that the search for her was the reason he had come to Italy, but that he intended to go back to Bosnia and Herzegovina to look for her there once again. In December, the media reported that it was a scam and that Ghazi was in the Netherlands at that moment. Media reporting on this topic ended in March 2019, when the police issued a crime report. This story also switched between different reporting perspectives (themes), involving the themes of security, politics and migrant route.

Apart from the mentioned narrativized and personalized stories, there were a few other events that received extensive and relatively long media coverage and that could be categorized under so-called 'crime pages.' For example, there was a police shooting that resulted in two children being wounded during an attempted migrant smuggling at Donji Srb. The actual event took place in May 2018, when Zadar police shot at a van with migrants in an attempt to stop it, wounding two children in the process, but failing to prevent the smuggler's escape. The following month, the smuggler was arrested, but media reports continued in increased intensity, considering that that incident triggered the meeting of the Croatian Parliament's Domestic Policy and National Security Committee, which was followed by statements made in the media by the Minister of the Interior about the police having acted within their powers and that he supported those actions. NGOs also got involved, filing a complaint against the police actions with the Ministry of Interior's Internal Control. Next, reports were given about the replies and statements issued by the Minister of the Interior.

Reporting continued in July, because the Police Union of Croatia issued a press release in which it defended the police officers and reprimanded the media for the way they reported about the case, which in turn triggered a response from the Croatian Journalists' Association. A similar example was an accident at Slatina Pokupska (August 2018), when a smuggler driving a van with 11 migrants lost control of his vehicle and slid off into the river Kupa, at which occasion a woman lost her life. Reports covered the rescue attempts and the police 'hunt' for the smuggler through the forest and landmine riddled areas. The chase was covered in the media for days, 'abettors' were arrested and the smuggler (who was, as was often underlined, from Serbia) was finally caught in the attempt to cross the border. The third example was a case when, during a police action, a police officer shot a migrant in Gorski Kotar, with different versions of events being reported – the question was raised as to how the migrant got shot in the first place? Circumstances of the event were reported and then second-guessed (the police officer slipped, the gun went off, after which the police officer carried the migrant in his arms for several kilometres). The migrant ended up in surgery at the clinical hospital in Rijeka and was in a life-threatening condition at first. The discussion in the media about the circumstances of the event involved the participation of the police, the Government, civil society organisations, the Police Union, physicians from Rijeka hospital, a team of experts invited to inspect the scene, and others. Other issues of interest to the media that resulted in increased reporting intensity were matters suited for political and ideological confrontation: the Marrakesh migration pact, the Reception Centre for Asylum Seekers in Petrinja and unrest at Maljevac Border Crossing. The first example, the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, the so-called Marrakesh migration pact, received media coverage in November 2018. More intense media coverage began with the statements made by right-wing political parties in which they expressed their opposition to the pact. Coverage additionally increased and was dedicated more time in the media upon the news that the President, Mrs Kolinda Grabar Kitarović, was against the pact and would not attend its ratification in Morocco. Reports then covered statements and comments made by the Prime Minister and other political actors about the President's position, referring to her previous statements from a time when she spoke positively about the pact. Then the President's new statements were reported and ultimately the increased media coverage ended in December, with statements by the Minister of the Interior who attended the ratification of the migration pact. The second case was the construction of the reception centre for asylum seekers in Petrinja. The media 'case' began in December 2018, with the

legal claim filed by the Mayor of Petrinja against a fellow citizen due to her Facebook post accusing the Mayor of hiding from the citizens the agreement he made with the Government regarding the construction of a reception centre for asylees in Petrinja, claiming that she was spreading misinformation. It was then revealed that the construction of such a centre was indeed being prepared and that funding had been secured for that purpose. Disagreement on the part of the local population ensued, followed by the shifting of responsibility for the 'problem' between representatives of local, county and national-level government. The Town Council of Petrinja got involved, as well as the Ministry of the Interior of Sisak-Moslavina County, the War Veterans' Initiative of Petrinja, and representatives of various political parties (primarily MOST). After months of pressure, primarily led by the War Veterans' Initiative, the project of construction of the reception centre for asylees in Petrinja was finally abandoned in May 2019. The third example pertained to reporting on migrants' protests at Maljevac Border Crossing, which was accompanied by requests made by right-wing political actors to urgently send the military to the borders ('MP representing HRAST, Mr Hrvoje Zekanović, stated in a press conference held at the Parliament on Thursday that he would, in light of the increased inflow of migrants, use any means necessary to protect the sovereignty and the borders of Croatia, even the armed forces,' Index.hr, 25 October 2018, 'Sačić at Maljevac Border Crossing: Send the military to the border,' Hrt.hr, 26 October 2018, 'Drama at Maljevac Border Crossing: Migrants breaching the police line, special forces blocking entry into Croatia!', Tportal, 24 October 2018). The situation was presented as chaotic and migrants as a threat to the national territory. The border crossing was closed due to migrant blockade, which had repercussions on the travellers, economic operators and other citizens, and in that context, even a specific individual – the culprit who allegedly persuaded the migrants to head for the border (an Iraqi asylee in Croatia) – was singled out. Media coverage was brimming with elements of an emergency situation.

All of these examples of longer or shorter-lasting stories, which were covered with great intensity, exhibit the characteristics of media hyperbole (hype) as a strategy employed to win and keep audience attention. This involves the creation of an 'incident' with elements of confrontation, with the intention to provoke a certain degree of exultation and emotional excitement, offering the audience the possibility of identifying with one of the protagonists (Wien and Elmelund-Praeskaer, 2009). After the initial event, which is the base element of the story, various actors become involved in the public discussion, offering new sources of interpretation and options to take a certain side. Finally, as

yet another characteristic of media hyperbole according to Wien and Elmelund-Praeskaer (2009), all these cases involve reporting on an event that is a good representation of broader and more complex problems and phenomena surrounding the issue at hand.

When it comes to reporting on integration, we see the phenomenon of episodic reporting, where the media report on certain phenomena and processes connected with specific events, relying most often on statements made by relevant social actors or at least involving personalized examples of Syrian families who are given propaganda-style reporting, with elements of sensationalism in the reports about them and their daily lives, with the intention of appealing to the audiences and making them sympathetic and accepting. This kind of pattern can be seen primarily in regard to events connected with the program for resettlement of refugees from Turkey. Reporting usually begins with the announcement of arrival of a certain group to Croatia and their placement at the Reception Centre for Asylum Seekers. What follows are numerous reports about the actual process of resettlement in local communities, with material about specific families or events in regard to their employment and education being reported last. In this context, there is the example of the arrival of the second group of Syrian refugees in Croatia in 2018. They were placed in Zadar and Slavonski Brod ('Croatia welcomes the second group – 36 more Syrians'). This piece of news, which received media coverage for the first time in January, was still covered in February, when the media reported on cases of individual families and employment issues ('SYRIAN from Aleppo, a city that sustained terrible damage during the war, finds job in Zadar'). Again, in April, reports were made about a similar case of resettlement in Slavonski Brod. In October and November 2018, there were numerous media reports about incentive measures for employing refugees and about the experiences of employers who gave them jobs ('Ćorluka Home for the Elderly and the Disabled and Hospice, which is also active as a healthcare institution, is the first Croatian economic operator to make use of the measures offered by the Croatian Employment Service...'). In June 2019, there was much coverage in the media of news pertaining to adaptation of government-owned flats across numerous counties for accommodation of refugees and for the requirements of resettlement of persons under international protection, in a number of towns (e.g., Požega, Karlovac, Sisak). In November 2019, there were more media reports announcing the arrival of new groups ('Ten Syrian families arrive in Karlovac,' 'The first two families from Syria move into flats in Karlovac, three in Duga Resa, and more are on the way'), which was followed by specific stories about the individual families and about the citizens' humanitarian activities reported

in December 2019 ('Nine families from Syria looking for a new place under the sun in Karlovac; meet one of them,' 'Karlovac organizes lunch for asylees from Syria'). It is evident that this reporting style is episodic, generally following the recommendations of the Ministry of the Interior or other authorities.



Thematic categories

Security

The dominant theme in reporting on migrants is security. This is reflected not only in the number of articles that include the security issue (33.87% of the published articles), but also in the appearances of actors whose scope of competence includes national security: article *headlines* alone refer to the Minister of the Interior, Mr Davor Božinović on 289 occasions, to the Ministry of the Interior on 211 occasions, and there are as many as 756 references to the police (N=3044). In the body of articles dealing with security, the two most frequently used words are ‘migrants’, ‘police’ and ‘territory’ (and derivatives of those words).

Security as a theme involves media reports dealing mostly with the issue of protecting the national borders and territory and the security of citizens and their property, as well as with illegal activities of migrants and smugglers, and with ensuring the security of migrants themselves. Within the security theme, three sub-themes have been identified: crime prevention, migrant rescue and protection of the local population. Crime prevention with the purpose of protecting the national border, territory and citizens generally involves reports about border police activities. Media reporting on these topics regularly pertains to police actions taking place somewhere on the road, with migrants being discovered in vehicles and/or smugglers being chased and caught. These are some types of syntagms used in reference to migrants: ‘illegal migrants ran from the police,’ ‘illegal migrants jumped,’ ‘migrants jumped from cargo truck,’ ‘migrants tried to escape,’ ‘chase after migrants,’ ‘migrants arrested...,’ whereas the following ones appear in reference to smugglers: ‘chain of smugglers broken,’ ‘police stopped smugglers,’ ‘chain of smugglers arrested,’ ‘chase after a smuggler’... Information provided in such articles is repetitive, given in the form of news, and most often includes a reference to the location where it happened, the number of migrants found, type of vehicle, vehicle licence plates for the purpose of identifying the country, and/or smugglers’ citizenship.

According to Police Administration of Primorje-Gorski Kotar County, a Serbian national (25), driving a van full of illegal migrants, caused a traffic accident on Saturday at the Rijeka bypass road near the Orehovica junction, after which he attempted to escape and push a police vehicle off the road. The accident happened at around 8 o'clock this morning. The van with Austrian licence plates arriving from the direction of Čavle toward Draga junction, driven by a 25-year old citizen of Serbia, failed to stop when so signalled by the Croatian police and, as we have learned so far, attempted to push a police vehicle off the road (NET.HR, 24 NOVEMBER 2018).

Zagreb police conducted a criminal investigation with respect to a 34-year-old Turkish national who was smuggling migrants. On Tuesday, at around 12:45 at the A4 highway Zagreb-Goričan, at the Sveta Helena rest area, police officers stopped a vehicle, an Iveco Daily van, with German licence plates, driven by a 34-year-old Turkish national. Inspection of the vehicle revealed that there were 15 individuals in the load space, who were seekers of asylum in the Republic of Croatia (DNEVNIK.HR, 28 DECEMBER 2019).

Apart from people smuggling, the 34-year-old Turkish national has been criminally charged with obstructing an official in the performance of official duty and for damaging the property of another. As reported by Zagreb police, he was driving the van which was stopped on Zagreb-Goričan highway, Sveta Helena rest area at 12.45 h on 24 December. Police officers found the driver to be acting suspiciously and conducted an inspection of the load space of the van, only to find, as the police reports, 15 asylum seekers (VEČERNJI.HR, 28 DECEMBER 2019).

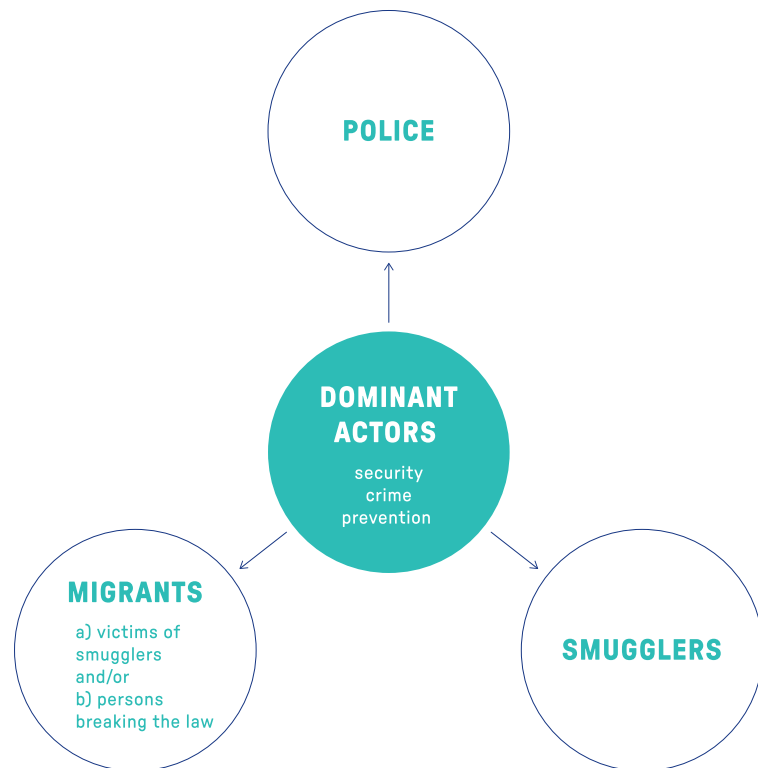


Figure 6. Key actors in the crime prevention sub-theme

After the police stopped a car and a van with Serbian licence plates, it was found that ten migrants had entered Croatia illegally. They were citizens of Pakistan, Iraq and Iran. In accordance with applicable procedure, they will most likely be returned to Serbia, from where they are suspected to have come to Croatia. Two Serbian nationals and one Hungarian national have been arrested (HRT.HR, 5 MARCH 2018).

The sub-theme of crime prevention regularly features the police, the smuggler and the migrants as the main protagonists (Figure 6), in which context the police is discursively constructed as capable, self-sacrificing and brave, the smugglers as unscrupulous criminals, and the migrants either as victims of smugglers and/or as persons engaged in illegal activities.

Rescuing of migrants (from the harsh natural elements or from their own recklessness) as a theme involves security issues that pertain to migrants themselves and that include their risking of their lives when crossing Croatian territory, for example, cases of fatalities, mostly due to drowning when crossing rivers, or all kinds of injuries, hypothermia, exhaustion and alike. Syntagms such as the following are dominant: 'migrants rescued from a river,' 'officers carried... in their hands,' 'wounded migrants,' 'exhausted migrants,' 'freezing migrants,' 'injured migrants,' 'migrant drowns'... These types of police actions take place in 'inaccessible,' 'challenging,' 'hilly,' and 'woody,' even 'mine-riddled' terrain, in harsh and cold climate conditions where the police, upon being alerted of their presence, discover migrants or rescue them from all kinds of trouble.

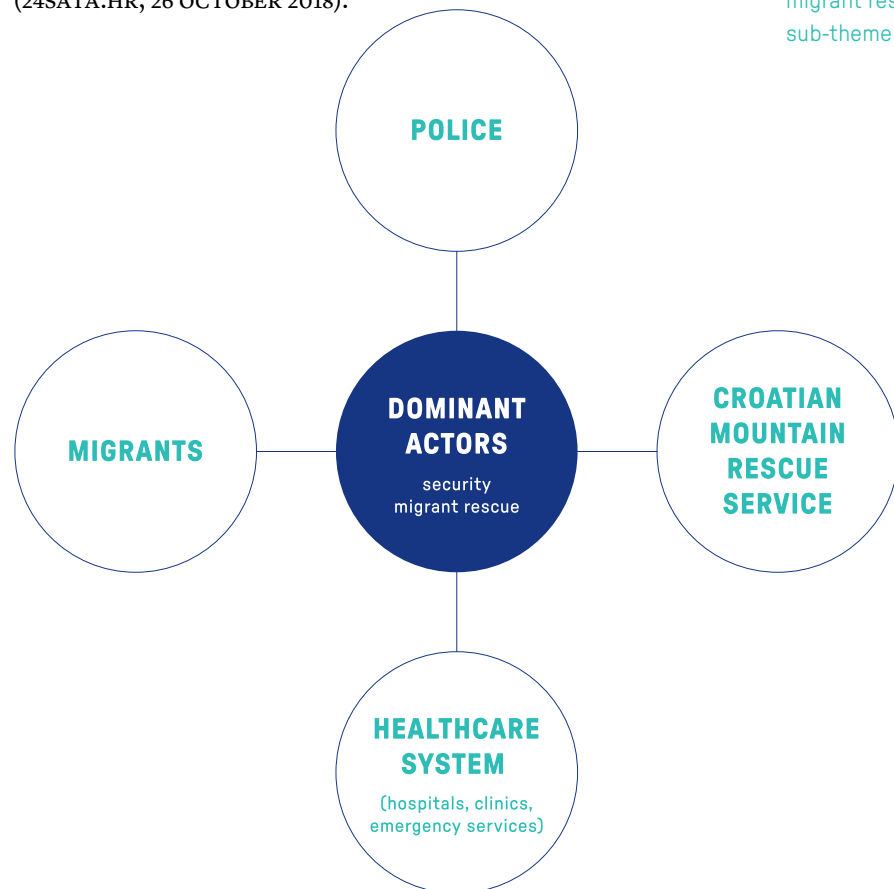
The police reported that 'while engaged in securing and monitoring the national border', around 13:00 hours at Bogovolja, near the river Korana they found a man lying in the grass, with his leg injured and loudly calling for help. His leg was immobilised by two wooden sticks and tied by cord, so police officers requested the intervention of Karlovac emergency services, which arrived at around 13:45 hours. 'Seeing as the site where the man was located was inaccessible by vehicle, police officers led the emergency service providers on foot to the injured person so that they could administer first aid. Then they all carried the injured man together to the ambulance, which transported him to Karlovac hospital,' reported the Ministry of the Interior at its website. They also noted that the injured migrant had no documents and claimed he was 30 years old and a citizen of Pakistan. (VEČERNJI.HR, 13 MARCH 2019).

A boat of the White Water Rescue Team searched the river Dobra in the morning hours looking for a missing migrant. He has been found, as we learned from the Croatian Mountain Rescue Service. According to sources from Karlovac General Hospital, he is well (DNEVNIK.HR, 30 NOVEMBER 2018).

Police officers carried children aged between 1 and 10, and women, too, on their hands, treading through half-meter deep snow. The children and women received medical treatment at the site and were then transported to Gospić General Hospital (RTL.HR, 16 JANUARY 2019).

A mother with a small baby and a pregnant woman who entered Croatia at the Golubić Border Crossing were rescued on Friday by members of the Croatian Mountain Rescue Service. After a group of migrants entered our country, the women got stranded in treacherous terrain so the Croatian Mountain Rescue Service had to be called. They received information that there was an injured woman accompanied by a baby and a pregnant woman (24SATA.HR, 26 OCTOBER 2018).

Figure 7. Key actors in the migrant rescue sub-theme



Police Administration of Lika-Senj County reported that its officers found a group of exhausted migrants this afternoon, at around 14:30 hours, and gave them something to eat and drink (JUTARNJI.HR, 7 AUGUST 2019).

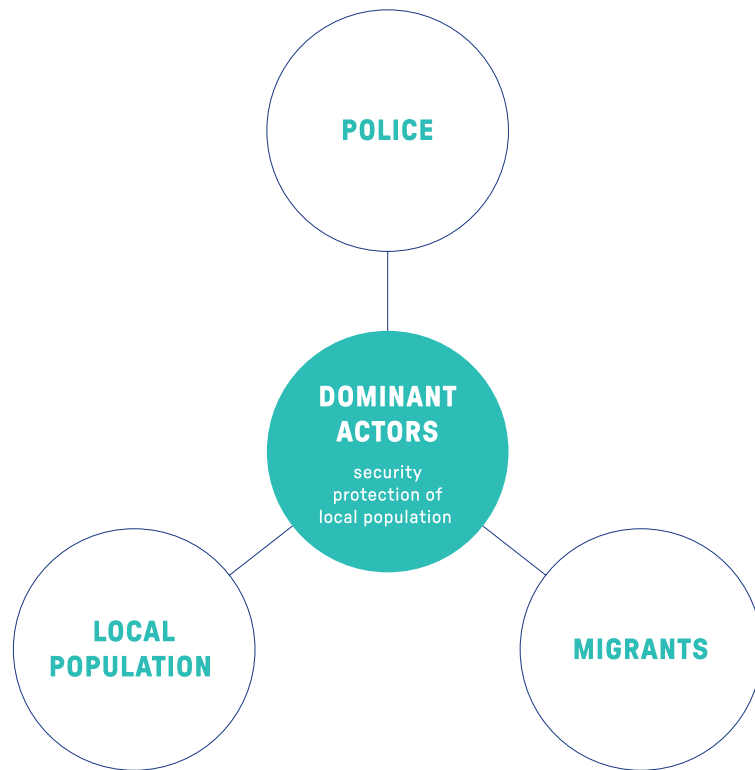
Migrants are constructed as reckless people setting off on a dangerous journey with little likelihood of a positive outcome, who create problems for the police and often even for the Mountain Rescue Services, seeing that their rescue requires the use of time and resources, not to mention that they put themselves at risk in the process. Moreover, in many cases they also require medical treatment, which implies the involvement of the healthcare system as well (Figure 7).

Protection of the local population as a theme includes the security of citizens living in the areas along the migrant routes, including the security of their property. The most represented 'protagonists' are local people, migrants and the police (Figure 8). Within this theme, migrants are often presented as persons who break into other people's houses, steal and destroy property, and they are rarely presented as those in need of help.

More and more migrants are roaming the roads of Karlovac County, reports Radio Mrežnica. The photos show a group of migrants who started out from Petrova Gora last night at around 20:00 hours, from the direction of Muljave toward Vojnić, following the main road. It was a group of young men who set off on foot, further on the way toward their destination, after sunset. Along the route that they took, there have been more and more break-ins into abandoned houses and summer houses (INDEX, 3 JUNE 2018).

The most recent case has been recorded in Široka Kula near Gospić, where about 20 migrants showed up out of nowhere in a church yard. Local population hasn't found much help in calling the police every day, because, as they say, they are constantly living in fear. For this reason they have begun to lock themselves in their homes and are even afraid to take their livestock out to pasture (RTL.HR, 21 MAY 2019).

The focus is on local population that live along migrant routes whose daily lives, often represented in an idealised version, have been significantly altered because they no longer 'feel safe', they are forced to change their habits (lock their homes and cars) and are afraid to go out alone, in the evening or at night. Syntagms that appear are the following: 'migrant wave,' 'migrants break into,' 'locals uneasy,' 'locals feel disquieted and afraid'... However, stories of locals helping migrants



(by giving them food and drinks, clothes...) and sympathising with them also appear, for example:

There were about six or seven of them today, these poor people were heading toward the village, exhausted. But this summer I have seen a lot of them. One of them even came up to my house, I felt sorry for him so I gave him something to eat. I gave him a jar of jam and a loaf of bread, and he was very thankful, reminisces Ivana Gal. The locals maintain that the migrants are not dangerous, but according to some, they do lock their doors as a precaution nevertheless (RTL.HR, 24 NOVEMBER 2019).

Still, the warning given to readers about how the local population is threatened by migrants appears far more often.

I am afraid and I do feel uneasy. Our dog usually lies in front of the house and when it barks at night I know there are migrants passing by the house, says Anđelka (62) from Keići near Generalski Stol (24SATA.HR, 21 AUGUST 2018).

Figure 8. Key actors in the protection of local population sub-theme

As you may remember, we have written on several occasions about large groups of migrants, mostly younger men, who were seen in the area around Rijeka, travelling on their route to western Europe. This was not always a pleasant experience for hikers, field-trip takers and generally anyone who would come across people they cannot communicate with and that are quite different in culturological terms from everything we are used to in our region and this part of Europe, as Riječanin reports (RTL.HR, 25 AUGUST 2018).

Despite the fact that the Ministry of the Interior has been assuring the public that the border is secure and that there are enough police officers, the population residing along the migrant route is in fear, having witnessed frequent break-ins into homes and summer houses, and there have even been cases of car theft. People do not really go out at night unless it is absolutely necessary, in fear for their own safety (VECERNJL.HR, 28 NOVEMBER 2019).

Within the security theme, and presented as a finale of attempts at arrest, capture or rescue of migrants, information is given about whether they expressed their intention to seek asylum or the process of readmission has been initiated. Despite the fact that the dominant presentation of the police is of them as capable and active in the capture of smugglers and migrants, efficient and well-equipped in the protection of national borders, or as self-sacrificing and brave in migrant rescue operations (Slatina Pokupska), within this theme there is also questioning of police actions and their justifiability, especially in cases of shooting or injuring of migrants by the police (case of migrants being wounded at Srb, the case that occurred in Gorski Kotar), and the capacity of the police in terms of manpower needed to control irregular migrants' attempts to enter Croatian territory and/or pass through it.

Politics

The second most represented theme (30.39% of the published articles) pertains to politics. This code covers political topics and actors in Croatia. It includes institutional politics, political competition between various political parties, including the competition or cooperation between different decision-making levels (national, county, local) and extra-institutional politics that primarily involves the activities of civil society associations, as well as the mutual relationship of all the actors involved. Different political positions pertaining to the migration phenomenon are represented, including the problems and potential solutions that are connected with migration management. Analysis of the most represented terms shows that these are: migrants, Croatia, police, Ministry of the Interior, Božinović (and derivatives of

these words), which could serve as an indicator for mapping out key topics and actors signifying the migration phenomenon in the political domain. In media reporting the dominant sources are those that represent the Government and its official policy, especially the policy of the ministry competent for security, the Ministry of the Interior, minister Davor Božinović, Croatian Police, General Police Director, Head of Border Department of the Police and the Police Union. Apart from them, media representations also included the Domestic Policy and National Security Committee, President of the Republic of Croatia, individual representatives of political parties in Croatia, as well as the Ombudswoman and civil society organisations, primarily the Centre for Peace Studies, Are You Serious? and the Welcome Initiative.

The coding process involved the identification of three sub-themes: mutual relationship of extra-institutional and institutional politics, which includes political positions on the migration phenomenon taken by civil society actors from the opposition, as opposed to actors who are part of the structure of institutional politics; political positions on the migration phenomenon taken by actors who are part of institutional political structure (Government, Parliament, President, other government institutions, political parties, independent MPs/councilmen, etc.); and political positions on the migration phenomenon contemplated in the social context and taken by different social actors, such as experts, scientists, commentators, columnists, clergy...

A continuous discursive struggle between various actors is apparent, and this is very well illustrated by frequent syntagms such as: 'associations seek,' 'Police Director responds to Ombudswoman,' 'MoI rejects allegations,' 'Božinović points a finger at,' 'Prime Minister reacts,' 'Parliament Committee seeks,' 'Mufti responds to President'... Analysis of news reports made over the period of two years reveals a dialogue form: a social actor gives a statement to the media, publishes a report, organizes a press conference, writes a press release, comments on social networks, or alike, which in turn initiates reactions by other actors, regularly those with opposing positions:

Centre for Peace Studies (CPS) informed the public on Monday that the Ministry of the Interior (MoI) has prevented CPS to enter the reception centres for asylum seekers in Zagreb and Kutina since September, refusing to extend the agreement on mutual cooperation with that association which has worked at reception centres for 15 years, referring in this context to the MoI's action as unlawful (NET.HR, 12 NOVEMBER 2018).

Ministry of the Interior (MoI) rejected on Monday the allegations made by the Centre for Peace Studies (CPS) that the Ministry has been denying them

access to the Reception Centre for Asylum Seekers in Zagreb. 'The allegations made by the Centre for Peace Studies, interpreting the non-signing of the Agreement on mutual cooperation in the provision of support to seekers of international protection accommodated at the Reception Centre for Asylum Seekers as a political decision intended to intimidate, marginalize and alienate an organisation that has been making public warnings of unlawful actions by the Ministry's employees toward refugees, are completely untrue and unacceptable,' reported the MoI officially (DNEVNIK.HR, 12 NOVEMBER 2018).

Allegations and defences/counter-allegations are exchanged, in which context the media also tend to provide, in a part of the news report, a framework based on which one can identify some kind of editorial policy of the news medium, but in most reports the press releases and posts on social networks are simply reported in full, without any editing, interpreting or comments.

Discursive struggle 1. Are competent government institutions violating migrants' legal rights or not?

The sub-theme that is continuously the subject of media reports includes a discursive struggle between government authorities and civil society organisations (Figure 9), whose activities are focused on migrants. These are primarily the Centre for Peace Studies (CPS), Are You Serious? and the Welcome Initiative. Apart from the associations, another party that actively participates in this matter is the Ombudswoman (who belongs, structurally, to institutional politics, but operates as an independent institution authorized by the Croatian Parliament). These social actors continually draw attention to unlawful treatment by the Ministry of the Interior and the police of irregular migrants who come to Croatian territory, seeking that these people receive a humane treatment that is in accordance with international conventions and human rights, basing their allegations on testimonies of migrants themselves, but also of very different actors who are active on the local or global level with whom they interact.

The following cited passages show a typical example of communication:

Ombudswoman Lora Vidović cautioned the Ministry of the Interior (MoI) today that it was systematically denying her access to data on police treatment of migrants who claimed to have been beaten, to have had their money confiscated and to have been sent back across the border without observance of proper legal procedure in that regard. The Ministry of the

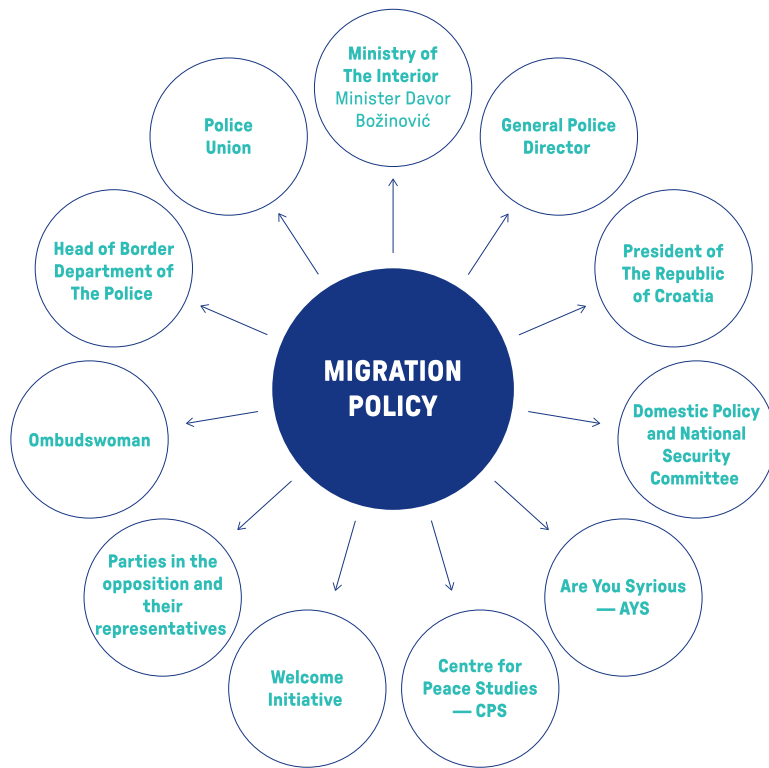


Figure 9. Key actors within the extra-institutional and institutional politics theme

Interior of the Republic of Croatia, responding to an enquiry sent to it by RTL, said that it was in constant communication with the Ombudswoman but also with other institutions of the Republic of Croatia that requested more detailed information or explanations regarding the treatment of migrants by the Croatian police. 'Everyone has received answers and explanations' (RTL.HR, 18 OCTOBER 2018).

Centre for Peace Studies, Welcome Initiative presented on Wednesday a report on unlawful deportation and violence in Croatia. They pointed out that collective, unlawful deportation of refugees by the police at borders continues regardless of numerous cautions by both national and international institutions and organisations (DNEVNIK.HR, 3 APRIL 2019).

Platform 112 demanded on Tuesday that Croatian Prime Minister Andrej Plenković and the minister of the interior Davor Božinović urgently stop what they referred to as intense attacks on the part of the Ministry of the Interior on human rights organisations, to make investigations by independent institutions possible and to penalize those who violate human rights instead of those who protect them (TPORTAL.HR, 23 OCTOBER 2018).

The response given by competent government institutions that seeks to legitimize their actions focuses on denying all the allegations as a result of lack of evidence, on discrediting the work of civil society organizations and on discrediting migrants, with a view to imposing a security-based framework instead of a humanitarian one. The position of the MoI is illustrated in the following news clipping in which minister Božinović reacts to the allegations:

'Well, this is yet another fruitless attempt to point the finger at the Croatian police, which, I repeat, is implementing national law, implementing European law,' said the minister. (...) 'We have, on numerous occasions, called upon all those who have contacts with the migrant population to explain to them, precisely due to their risking of their lives, to explain through contacts that they obviously have, that Croatia as a sovereign country does not and will not allow illegal entry into the Republic of Croatia,' said the minister. 'Croatia is implementing Schengen law by granting asylum to those who seek it,' he underlined. Božinović said that about 80 percent of all asylum seekers in Croatia disappear during the process while awaiting the decision of competent authorities, which indicates that this legal option is being abused. This is referred to, as he explained, as secondary migration. 'Once they are identified by competent authorities of Austria, Germany or any other member country, they get returned to Croatia. And then you have a closed circle. People who do not wish to be in Croatia go to third countries that do not wish to accept them, but send them back to Croatia, and Croatia is then supposed to provide for those who did not wish to be there in the first place,' he said (DNEVNIK.HR, 16 MAY 2019).

Figure 10. Arguments of opposing sides

Figure 10 presents the main arguments of the opposing sides that appeared in the media during the two-year period:

OMBUDSWOMAN

- The MoI has no independent system of control and there are no investigations of cases involving irregularities and violation of migrants' rights.
- The Police does not abide by the Protocol on the treatment of unaccompanied children - foreign nationals, unaccompanied children and minors do not get adequate treatment by Croatian institutions.
- The Office of the Ombudswoman has no access to data that the MoI should provide for the Office to be able to work without

COMPETENT GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS

- The MoI implements European policies of sustainable and legal migrations, treats migrants lawfully, by applying the concept of refusal of entry and thus protects the national border and the citizens of the Republic of Croatia.
- Field checks of police administration offices were conducted and there were no instances where irregularities were found, there have been no cases of overstepping of authority.
- Croatian police is the target of domestic and international NGOs.

- hindrance. Access to case files and data in the information system is withheld.
- Inadequate communication: there is insufficient data about the relationship toward migrants. Responses by competent institutions are superficial and one-sided.
- State Attorney's Office is supposed to conduct investigations but it does not, which leads to an impression being created in the public that the laws do not apply to the police.
- There is no clear condemnation by government officials of violence to migrants.

CIVIL SOCIETY ASSOCIATIONS

- The police use physical violence on migrants, misappropriate and destroy their property.
- Croatia's official policy violates migrants' rights. This is systematic institutional violence, not sporadic incidents.
- EU policy tacitly tolerates violence to migrants.
- The MoI has publicly discredited civil society organisations that alert to unlawful actions by the police, and obstructed their work (by denying access to the Reception Centre for Asylum Seekers, failing to extend the cooperation agreement, etc.), while at the same time it allows other associations to conduct their activities (this has not been explicated by the associations, but it is evident that competent government institutions cooperate with associations of Christian provenience, which do not explicitly criticise them).
- The police put pressure on associations and activists, but also on lawyers who defend migrants (by requesting them to appear for informative interviews, by filing crime reports against them...)
- The police refusing the entry of migrants leads to crime increase and smuggling

- Civil society associations help migrants in illegal activities of assisting irregular entry into the Republic of Croatia (or in other, more severe words, they take part in people smuggling) instead of telling them that they will not be able to cross the border and that any attempt will be dangerous for them.
- As a result of the activities of such associations, Croatia will have trouble joining the Schengen area (which means that their actions are against the interests of the state).
- The number of illegal entries increases, migrants take part in criminal activities (apart from crossing the border, migrants also break into people's homes and destroy property).
- Migrants abuse the concept of asylum: they generally do not wish asylum in Croatia. They are not refugees but mainly economic migrants.
- Illegal migrations lead to crime increase and smuggling.

Discursive struggle 2. How can one use the migration phenomenon to win the favour of voters and get their votes?

The second sub-theme includes the competing of actors within institutional politics, i.e. between different political options and positions. As already noted, the media primarily open up space for representatives of the government, but representatives of the opposition are also present, attempting to discredit the government and its policies from various political positions. When it comes to migration policies and relationship toward migrants, left-wing and centre political options have a more open attitude to migrants and their integration, whereas right-wing political options exhibit an exclusive attitude. Although this difference can be observed, for example, in statements made

by representatives of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and those by representatives of radical right-wing political parties, all political options, regardless of their position in the ideological continuum, nevertheless discursively construct migrations and migrants as a social problem, which is also comparable to results of the presented previous research. For example, a representative of SDP, Ranko Ostojić, who has been SDP's representative with the greatest presence in the media when it comes to this issue (during the previous government and migrant crisis of 2015, he was minister of the interior and in the observed period he was the president of the Domestic Policy and National Security Committee of the Croatian Parliament), criticizes the government (HDZ) and reminds that, when SDP was in power during the 2015 migrant crisis, migrants were treated humanely. However, he primarily and continuously warns that the Government is unable to successfully monitor the border (but that it ought to), which is evident in the fact that migrants are 'captured' hundreds of kilometres away from the border, that a possible refugee wave might ensue, including an invasion of migrants in the Adriatic region (which would be bad for Croatia), that Croatia is in danger of becoming a 'hotspot'— all these are problems that the authorities are avoiding to comment, manipulating information about the number of irregular border crossings in an attempt to hide the true situation. This can be illustrated by the following quote from a news report:

SDP's Saša Đujić reiterates that the migrant problem⁸ in the mentioned county is 'taking serious proportions.' Five days ago, five houses were broken into in Begovo Razdolje, one of which was occupied by an old married couple. Also, the police has intercepted five migrants in downtown Rijeka. This is becoming widespread, claims Đujić and says that citizens expect the Government to find a solution until 'even greater damage occurs,' before 'blood is spilled (...)' Ranko Ostojić (SDP) claims, however, that the armed forces, guarding their outposts deep inside the Croatian territory, captured a thousand migrants who, as he ironically put it, passed through the 'impenetrable Croatian border' (RTL.HR, 10 MAY 2019).

8. All the words given in italics in the primary data represent the interventions of the authors of this publication, unless indicated otherwise.

Owing to the abuse of the legal concept of political asylum, according to MP from the ranks of SDP and former minister of the interior Ranko Ostojić, who very successfully handled the large refugee wave three years ago, Croatia has already become a hotspot, reports Slobodna Dalmacija. Reception centres for temporary reception of asylum seekers are overcrowded and migrants use this legal option mostly just to stay free, to be able to continue their journey further to the West. This generally takes three days, but if they get arrested in Slovenia or Germany, or anywhere else,

they are returned to the country in which they first sought asylum, and that is Croatia. This way, we have practically already become a hotspot and we have a problem that the authorities are still silent about – claims Ostojić and adds that it is a matter of days when migrants will appear in the Adriatic region as well (JUTARNJI.HR, 14 JUNE 2018).

One can see here that, while the primary intention is to criticise the Government, migrants are at the same time negatively represented as a special social group that is dangerous, causes damage and might potentially escalate into something even more serious; in other words, migrants are a social problem that requires a solution, and the current Government is unable to provide such a solution.

Right-wing and radical right-wing parties (Most, Hrast, Živi Zid, Croatian Party of Rights (HSP), Croatian Sovereignists, The Independents for Croatia, The Homeland Movement) express their attitudes in accordance with an ideological position that is exclusive of migrants, constructing them discursively as a threat to domicile population: migrants who are coming are not refugees but economic migrants or terrorists, they (deliberately) do not have any identification documents, but they do have money and last-generation mobile phones. They are mostly men of military service age, coming from countries where there is no war, resulting in a massive number of uncontrolled immigrants, which will change the national structure of the population, which in turn will jeopardize vital national interests.

HRAST'S MP Hrvoje Zekanović said at the press conference held at the Parliament on Thursday that, considering the increasing inflow of migrants, he would use any means possible to protect the sovereignty and the borders of Croatia, including the military, should that become necessary. (...) 'In recent weeks we have seen a great migrant danger and migrations that have become a threat for Croatia. Hundreds and hundreds of migrants, which is unprecedented, are attempting to enter Croatia by force, even getting into confrontations with the Croatian police in the process,' said Zekanović (INDEX.HR, 25 OCTOBER 2018).

Nizar Shoukry (Most) proposed that work begin immediately on fortification barriers, from the south of the country toward the east. We should start from the south because we have our upcoming tourist season to protect, because no tourist would come if they heard migrants were entering without control. And also toward the east because with those technical barriers we would channel their movement and push them toward a control point where the police would wait for them and control them (HRT.HR, 3 NOVEMBER 2018).

Criticism of the work of the Government includes the following elements, in brief:

- The Government does not provide for the security or protect the property of its citizens and it is failing to protect the local population from illegal migrants;
- Seeing that the police is incapable of handling such a large number of irregular migrants, in order to protect the borders and sovereignty of the country, the military should be dispatched to the border;
- HDZ Government has been bootlicking the European Union (Brussels) and consents to supra-national policies that are detrimental to Croatia (for example, the Marrakesh migration pact (Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration). The Government is bootlicking the EU in order to join the Schengen Area. This is evident, for example, in the following news clippings:

Retired general Željko Sačić is of the same opinion, having expressed deep concerns about the state of security in the country, especially the security of citizens living along the border, but also those residing in the interior, especially Lika and Dalmatia. He has appealed to the authorities competent for maintaining the constitutional order and national security to finally start doing their job efficiently. Minister Božinović offers no optimism, the National Security Council has not been convened, as if the situation was normal, while at the same time we are witnessing an extraordinary one, especially at border crossings, said Sačić. This is not the spreading of fear, but a realistic concern about national security, he said (VECERNJI.HR, 7 NOVEMBER 2018).

(Member of Most Nizar Shoukry at a press conference) About 10 to 15 thousand migrants can be received here. I ask the minister, what is going to happen in Slavonski Brod? Will there be a hotspot here? Is this what Croatia has been blackmailed with for joining Schengen Area? Who is paying for this, Croatia or the European Union? (VECERNJI.HR, 11 MAY 2019).

It should be noted, however, that parties of the right-wing and radical right-wing opposition are not alone in their discursive construction of migrants as a threat. The most frequent statements come precisely from political representatives in power, who more or less explicitly warn of the threat that migrants represent: they can cause insecurity, financial and economic instability, and destroy Croatia's efforts to join the Schengen Area:

Prime Minister Andrej Plenković pointed out at a lecture he gave tonight at the Faculty of Law in Split that the migrant crisis has reflected in recent

years on the political architecture of EU member countries, impacting the results of the elections and that Croatia is on a key migrant route that can change everything. 'We are on this key migrant route from Turkey, across Greece, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, the intensity of which can change everything – it can change our security, our status in our efforts to join the Schengen Area, our relationships with neighbouring countries, and ultimately our financial and economic stability,' said Prime Minister Plenković (VECERNJI.HR, 24 OCTOBER 2018).

According to government representatives, for the purposes of defending their policies that are oriented toward the interests of the citizens ('Croatia will not become a hotspot for migrants'), migrants are not people whose lives are in danger, they are actually economic migrants who break into people's homes, devastate property and represent a threat for the security of the locals:

Croatia has so far considered it important to apply the principle of solidarity. In recent years we have resettled 192 migrants and this is a model based on which Croatia has so far been seen as a responsible EU member country, but one that has at the same time positioned itself firmly in the battle against irregular migrations and border protection. Moreover, it is very important to tell apart people who really are in need from economic migrants – as sources from the Ministry of the Interior report (VECERNJI.HR, 23 JULY 2019).

First and foremost, the police treats them humanely, maybe even too humanely. A warning for all those who attempt to cross the border illegally: 'Come on, people, don't do that, stay where you are.' Look at other countries around us, for example Hungary. How they are dealing with the issue. By putting up a wire fence. He added that the citizens are feeling insecure. 'There is little mention of what those who manage to cross the border illegally do afterwards, and it involves breaking into people's homes and summer houses. There is a feeling of unease in our citizens but we simply do not have enough police officers to protect our border,' said Jagić (INDEX.HR, 19 NOVEMBER 2019).

(Head of Border Department of the Ministry of the Interior and member of the General Police Directorate Zoran Ničeno) People from Gorski Kotar, he noted, sought police assistance due to migrants destroying their homes, mountain lodges and summer houses. He added that not only did they use some of those houses as places to sleep, but that they devastated them entirely, for example, by lighting a fire in the middle of the living room despite

the fact that there was a fireplace, by relieving themselves all around the house, and in one case, even by devastating a chapel (VECERNJI.HR, 29 NOVEMBER 2019).

(Božinović) Croatian police enforces the law and prevents illegal entry into Croatia at the border line. Why do you think the European Union would give us that much money for radars and thermal imaging cameras for the strengthening of our potentials at the border unless it didn't want those people entering through there,' he answered with a counter-question. He rejected the criticism that Croatian police was acting inhumanely. 'Everyone knows what legitimate and legal entry into a country means,' said the minister, among other things, in the Interview of the Week (HRT.HR, 15 DECEMBER 2018).

Clashes between parties can also be seen at various political levels of governance, including the already mentioned national government level, but also regional and local self-government. This becomes especially pronounced in municipalities and counties that are more affected by irregular migrations because they are situated at migrant routes and the passage of migrants changes their daily lives. For example, the Delnice branch of the Croatian Party of Rights (HSP) organized a demonstration against illegal entry of migrants into Croatia:

'Citizens were having terrible problems. You have people coming in the middle of the night, knocking at your doors and windows, throwing pebbles at your window to see if anyone is home. And these are predominantly senior citizens living here, who get really distressed by such goings on,' explained Ivan Piškorić, president of the Delnice branch of HSP (DNEVNIK.HR, 29 JUNE 2019).

A municipal mayor criticises the work of the Government, as evident in the next paragraph from an article containing the statement of the mayor of Mrkopalj municipality (Croatian People's Party (HNS)):

Mayor of the municipality in which an incident occurred last night says that Mrkopalj is most threatened because migrants have been a nuisance to them for two years already. He added bitterly that their appeals to the minister of the interior have been in vain. 'I heard the other day a statement by a police union representative who said that this was currently one of the worst ministers the Ministry of the Interior has ever had and I can hardly disagree. Police officers are doing a good job in the field but there has to be some understanding for them, they are out in the field 24-7. Whether they are sufficiently motivated, I wouldn't know, I doubt it, but the part about

them being able to withstand that, physically and mentally, I don't think so. It is easy to preach from the capital; security and trust – you bet! (RTL.HR, 28 NOVEMBER 2019).

Reaction at the local and county level is also visible in those localities where one planned the construction of reception and accommodation facilities for asylum seekers or persons under international protection. For example, there was the case of planned construction of reception centre for asylum seekers as part of the project 'Establishing infrastructure and strengthening the capacities of reception centre for asylum seekers in Mala Gorica' near Petrinja. After being pressured by the local community, the local government, despite the fact that it had been aware of the plan, began shifting responsibility for the 'problem' to higher decision-making levels:

(Mayor Dumbović) My photo has been published on every portal together with a photo of a mujahideen. My grandchildren asked me: 'Granddad, are you bringing mujahideen here?' I find this unacceptable because it constructs an idea that it is the mayor who decides about refugees in Petrinja, while in fact he makes absolutely no decisions in that regard (INDEX, 7 DECEMBER 2018).

(Mayor Dumbović) Petrinja paid a huge price in the Homeland War and we will not let anyone treat our town based on the 'out of sight, out of heart' policy, to have someone point a finger to a place on the map and say 'this is the place for a refugee housing centre', without asking us first. It is us, the citizens of Petrinja, that people should be asking about this (INDEX, 7 DECEMBER 2018).

The third sub-theme includes very different political approaches to the migration phenomenon, which are contemplated in a broader social context and taken by various social actors, such as experts, scientists, commentators, columnists, representatives of religious communities... Although this sub-theme is the least represented, it does involve a somewhat more comprehensive interpretation of the migration phenomenon, from different perspectives. This is where the loudest criticism of antimigrant attitudes can be heard, in the broader context of the Croatian society as a whole:

(Hrvoje Klasić) So why does a nation with such a rich and mainly positive experience with (e)migration perceives migrants from other countries as a natural disaster? One of the reasons that are reported is the fact that these migrants today belong to a culture that is completely different from our own.

Which is, naturally, totally unlike the uncanny similarity of Dalmatian or Slavonian customs and those found in the Tierra del Fuego or Quebec. Some, mostly 'right-wing groups' and 'conservative Catholics' see the 'wrong' religion as one of the problems, specifically the fact that most of the migrants are Muslims. For their information, coexistence of Catholics and Muslims in Croatia has lasted for centuries. And not just that. The Muslim contribution to the development of Croatian society has been immeasurable. Whether these were prominent physicians, scientists, artists, athletes, ordinary workers or Croatian war veterans (NET.HR, 13 NOVEMBER 2018).

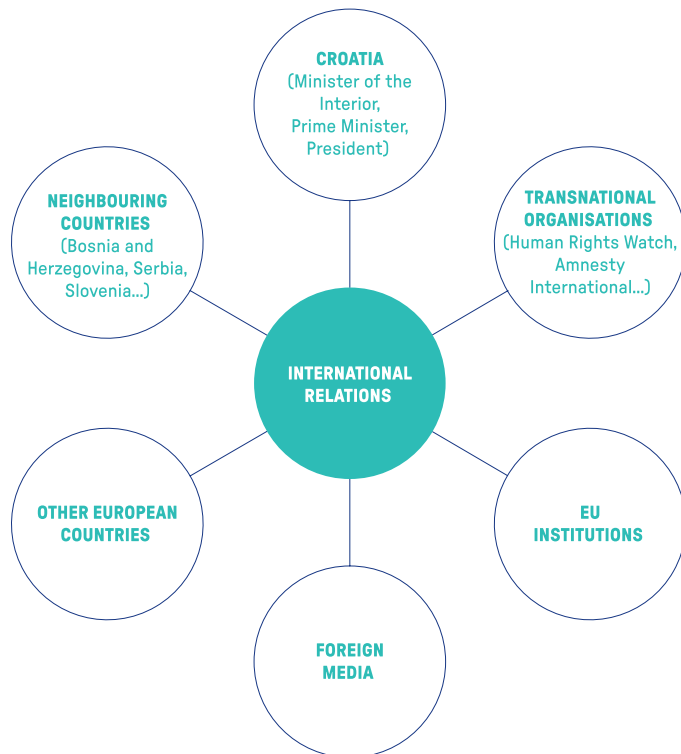
By analysing these three sub-themes that involve, in different ways, political actors who are active in the domain of politics, one can see that a negative discursive construction of migrants and the migration phenomenon, primarily as a political problem, is dominant. The associations and the Ombudswoman explicitly advocate migrants' rights and underline the humane perspective as the one that should be predominant, criticising procedures that do not respect human rights or comply with the legal framework. Migrants are the focus of their social action and treatment of migrants on the part of government institutions is a central issue. However, if we analyse the second level, which includes institutional politics and various political parties (as well as independent MPs), we can see that the core issue becomes changeable, with the aim of discrediting competing parties and politicians. The by-product of this discursive conflict is the fact that migrants are continually (explicitly or implicitly, intentionally or unintentionally) negatively represented, even by parties that should be 'more open' to them based on their ideological position. Migrants (and all sub-categories of migrants) are becoming a means to achieve the main objective of discursive conflict: the favour of the public (i.e. the voters). If we add to that the characteristic that is inherent in the media, which is the tendency to put focus on actors and topics that involve conflict and controversy in order to attract audiences, it should come as no surprise that migrants, when it comes to their media representation in the domain of politics, are dominantly discursively constructed as a population that causes controversy, poses a threat and represents a serious social problem.

International relations

This theme is closely related with the previous one but it pertains to national and supranational organisations and institutions, as well as to bilateral and multilateral relationships between different countries. Policies of the EU dominate, including the relationship between the

EU and third countries, discussions and positioning of different countries in the context of migrations. This includes reports by transnational organisations that oversee the work of individual countries in a specific area. This category includes reports from other countries that pertain to or impact Croatia in some way. Frequent syntagms include: 'Croatia will get,' 'Croatia will do all it takes,' 'Croatia will protect its national interests,' 'Croatia will not permit illegal migrations,' 'Croatia fulfils its obligations,' 'Croatia does not meet the standards,' 'Croatia guards EU's longest external land border,' 'joining the Schengen area,' 'reform of the Common European Asylum System,' 'comprehensive approach to the EU,' 'migration problem should be resolved at the source,' 'EU's external border,' 'Božinović met with his Albanian counterpart,' 'Božinović in Berlin,' 'Plenković met with Kurz to talk,' 'Council of Ministers in Bucharest,' 'cooperation within the neighbourhood,' 'migrant crisis in the neighbourhood,' 'Mayor of Bihać blames,' 'Amnesty International's report seriously accuses,' 'Božinović responds to allegations,' 'President responds sharply,' 'serious accusations by the Serbian Commission,' 'UN's Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants accuses'... This is the third thematic category by

Figure 11. Key actors with-in international relations theme



representation, accounting for 15.44% of the articles. Most frequently used terms in these articles are the following: 'Croatia,' 'migrants,' 'Bosnia and Herzegovina' and 'EU.' This is at the same time indicative of the key relations that are covered by media reports in the context of international relations: Croatia and the EU, and Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Most frequently appearing actors are: Croatia (Minister of the Interior, Prime Minister, President), EU institutions, neighbouring countries, other European countries, transnational organizations and foreign media (Figure 11).

When it comes to international relationships that affect the territory of Croatia and the EU, reporting covers the topics of EU member countries' meetings discussing migrations and various policies, for example reforms of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), review of the Dublin Regulation, mutual relationships of various member countries in the solving of the migrant crisis, defining of responsibilities of individual member countries in the context of the solidarity mechanism in connection with migrant quotas, analysing the position of individual member countries that are 'under the influx' of migrants, i.e., the first EU member countries on the migrant routes, and the roles of non-EU member countries in the migrant crisis (Turkey, northern Africa, western Balkans). Reports also covered the activities of the European Commission, the European Council, Frontex and the meetings of EU member countries' ministers of the interior. There were also reports about the President's presentation at the 15th informal meeting of 13 EU member countries' heads of state without executive powers, the 'Arraiolos Group', where one of the central topics was the refugee crisis and EU security challenges.

Predominantly, reporting is based on statements by political representatives in power who represent Croatia in the EU (the Prime Minister, Minister of the Interior). Consequently, Croatia's position in the EU is predominantly constructed in the media in line with official government policies, specifically in the following manner:

— The European Union is not united when it comes to migrations and Croatia is leaning toward countries within the EU that want a common platform for the solving of the migrant crisis, unlike the countries of the Visegrád Group, whose members are exclusive and non-cooperative.

Croatia to take part in the Brussels meeting of a large group of EU countries that will discuss a common platform for migrant issues; Croatia belongs at that desk because that part of Europe is not trying to resolve the problem

neither by turning a blind eye nor by closing borders (VECERNJI.HR, 24 JUNE 2018).

So far, apart from the countries of the Visegrád Group (Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia), Orban's new ally is Italy, which has shifted to the opposite side, certainly not for the first or last time in history, and Austria and Slovenia are also becoming increasingly harsh. This is already a third of all EU member countries. Croatia finds itself in a complex situation. Plenković's Government has a humanitarian approach and in line with that, the Republic of Croatia has accepted the refugee quotas, thus siding with countries such as Germany, France and Spain (VECERNJI.HR, 31 AUGUST 2018).

— Croatia advocates in the EU the strengthening of capacities of non-EU member countries from the western Balkans and thus contributes to the visibility and development of the entire region.

Minister Božinović in Marrakesh: Let me remind you that it was through our efforts that we have managed to sensitise the EU in some way to the issue of countries along the Balkan route, because without Croatia, the matter of migration through Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Macedonia would not be on the agenda,' Božinović said (NET.HR, 9 DECEMBER 2018).

— Croatia's joining the Schengen Area: Croatia has been strongly supported in its efforts to join the Schengen Area, including through financial aid. Financing of law enforcement continues, which includes operating costs, equipment and training of the police.

'It gives me great pleasure to see that the work of Croatian border police is recognized. It is one of the best trained European border police forces and it efficiently guards our borders and successfully deals with illegal migrations on daily basis. Croatian police prevents illegal entry into Croatia, i.e., into the European Union,' said Božinović, as was cited in the press release. He reminded that the Croatian border is the EU's longest external land border and that precisely due to that reason cooperation with Bavaria on this issue is extremely important for Croatia. 'I am glad that, elsewhere in the EU and here in Bavaria, this contribution of the Croatian police is recognized,' underlined minister Božinović (RTL.HR, 9 MAY 2019).

— Croatian police are doing an excellent job protecting the 'EU's longest external land border' (frequent syntagm), which is something that has been recognized in the EU and often commended. *'Croatian police commended in the European Union for their work of guarding*

the external border,' said Minister of the Interior Davor Božinović on Monday in Brussels, where he is attending the meeting of the Justice and Home Affairs Council. 'EU member countries' ministers of foreign affairs can be the best judges of the role of the Croatian police, which is indispensable for the EU at the moment,' said minister Božinović (JUTARNJI.HR, 2 DECEMBER 2019).

— The problem of illegal migrations should be shifted away from the external borders of the EU and Croatia is successful in protecting its national interests in the EU; consequently there will not be any reception centres in Croatia and no one will allow for Croatia to become a hotspot.

Božinović says Croatia will not become a migrant hotspot (NET.HR, 8 JUNE 2018).

Apart from political processes in the European Union, the media also covered the Marrakesh migration pact extensively, seeing as it caused a lot of controversy about whether Croatia should sign it or not. While centre-left parties and the Government advocated its signing, President Grabar-Kitarović and the right-wing political actors believed that the pact should not be signed because, according to them, it was detrimental to Croatia.

Reports dealing with this topic also covered bilateral meetings between Croatia and other countries (Turkey, Albania, Austria, Germany,...) but more attention was paid to neighbouring countries, for example, Slovenia, which is potentially (due to arbitration) blackmailing Croatia in connection with its joining the Schengen Area and raising a fence on the border with it, whereas Croatia does not want fences because it has a capable police. Attention was also paid to Serbia, which has contributed to the chaos on the border due to visa liberalisation for some countries with a potentially a large migrant population, and which has falsely accused Croatian police of violence to a minor (report by the Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration, KIRS).

Nevertheless, most media coverage within this topic was given to the relationship between Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina because a refugee camp was erected at their border, with a large number of migrants who are staying there in very poor conditions. Emphasis was on the complex relationship between Croatia as an EU member country that 'guards the EU's external borders' and its neighbouring country, Bosnia and Herzegovina, at the border of which migrants wishing to make it to the EU countries are amassing. In this context it was underlined that Bosnia and Herzegovina was responsible for the increasing numbers of irregular entry of migrants into Croatia (and even that it

was actually helping migrants cross the border, by accommodating them at the improvised camp, Vučjak, just kilometres away from the border with Croatia),

Migrants who leave Bosnia and Herzegovina in hope of finding happiness in the west have tried for months to make it through Croatia to the rest of Europe. They are doing all this with the assistance of the police of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who are literally leading them to the camp right at the Croatian border. This allegation was made in the report made for Nova TV Dnevnik, which showed footage of migrants walking in line, claiming them to be accompanied by the police of Bosnia and Herzegovina not far from Bihać. This footage is supposed to have been shot a couple of days ago, and the Head of the Border Department of the Croatian Ministry of the Interior, Zoran Ničeno, stated that events such as that one occur on daily basis (JUTARNJI.HR, 19 AUGUST 2019).

In articles with a less negative tone it is noted, however, that Bosnia and Herzegovina is unable to cope with the migrant crisis it is faced with, both in organisational and financial terms, and that it requires help. However, apart from the confrontation about the border police, articles highlighting successful cooperation of both countries' border police appear as well. Nevertheless, the relationship between Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina is presented primarily through tensions; this was especially true in the second half of 2019, when political representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina claimed that they had evidence that Croatian police was violent to migrants and used the pushback method to forcefully and unlawfully return migrants to Bosnia and Herzegovina, entering its territory in the process, which also implies a violation of the country's territorial integrity.

Bosnia and Herzegovina's Minister of Security Dragan Mektić accused Croatian police officers once again of forcefully returning irregular migrants to the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina and violating the territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the process, claiming to also have evidence in support of that allegation. We have all the information, about them entering our territory armed, we have footage of what they are doing with migrants who cross over to Croatia from Bosnia and Herzegovina, they beat them, take their money and mobile phones, and push them back to us (INDEX.HR, 1 AUGUST 2019).

Bosnia and Herzegovina's Minister of Security Dragan Mektić accused Croatian police officers once again of forcefully returning irregular migrants to the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina and violating the territorial

integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the process. He claims to have evidence in support of that allegation. We have all the information, about them entering our territory armed, we have footage of what they are doing with migrants who cross over to Croatia from Bosnia and Herzegovina, they beat them, take their money and mobile phones, and push them back to us, said Dragan Mektić in a statement reported by Sarajevo web portal Faktor (HRT.HR, 1 AUGUST 2019).

In the context of international relations, the theme pertaining to how the Croatian police treat migrants is also important, in which context this thematic category involves criticism from the outside, directed at police actions and at Croatia's official policy about migrants. Accusations (such as those also made by civil society associations active in Croatia) pertain to illegal treatment of migrants, withholding of fundamental human rights, including the right to asylum, unlawful pushbacks, physical violence to migrants, including women and children, confiscating of personal belongings and stealing money, destroying mobile phones, bullying of migrants, making them walk back across the border with Bosnia and Herzegovina barefoot, and alike. Multiple different international organisations have also given similar warnings: UNHCR, Human Rights Watch (HRW), Amnesty International, Border Violence Monitoring Network (BVMN), No Name Kitchen, UN's Special Rapporteur on human rights...The criticism even goes beyond the official Croatian policy and targets the European Union as well, claiming that it is ignoring the goings-on at the borders of Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, and tacitly tolerating violence in order to protect its own borders.

The move made by the European Commission sends a message that serious human rights violations are no obstacle for joining the Schengen Area; the Commission should investigate such actions committed by Croatia instead of rewarding it for them, writes this human rights organisation. 'Unlawful and forceful pushback of asylum seekers and migrants without due legal procedure on the part of Croatian authorities should disqualify Croatia as a candidate for joining the Schengen Area,' says Lydia Gall, senior researcher on Eastern EU and Western Balkans at Human Rights Watch. By ignoring the Croatian abuse of migrants at the border, the message is sent that the respect of human rights as a prerequisite for joining the Schengen Area is nothing but empty talk, it is reported (24SATA, 8 NOVEMBER 2019).

UN's Special Rapporteur stated that 'abuse by Croatian border police is a clear violation of those persons' human rights.' His conclusion is that such actions by the Croatian police actually have no real effect, in that they do

not deter migrants from their intention to continue on their journey to the European Union, but that they have only caused the network of smugglers and organized crime to flourish, requiring urgent attention and action by all the countries in the region (TPORTAL.HR, 1 OCTOBER 2019).

Apart from various reports issued by the mentioned organisations, foreign media also reported on this theme: The Guardian, Swiss newspaper TA, German public news service ARD, Swiss public television SRF, British BBC, German Der Spiegel, Bosnian and Herzegovinian web portals Faktor, Klix.ba, daily newspaper Oslobođenje and others, whose reports were cited by media in Croatia.

'Beaten and robbed' is the title of a BBC article about 'how Croatia is policing its borders.' The video report published on the home page of BBC's web portal reported that migrants trying to enter the European Union via Croatia had been illegally expelled back to Bosnia by the police. Some even said that the police had beaten up and robbed them, reported BBC and added that one police officer, who wished to remain anonymous, even told them that he had participated in three 'pushback' operations. We have contacted the Ministry of the Interior in connection with the BBC's report and we will publish their response when we get it (HRT.HR, 29 JULY 2019).

Warnings of the mentioned organisations appear again in the form of a dialogue, followed by retractions by representatives of the political power, primarily the Ministry of the Interior and minister Davor Božinović, who reiterate that there is no evidence in support of those allegations and that Croatia's treatment of migrants complies with the law.

Ministry of the Interior (MoI) stated today that the Human Rights Watch report contained very general accusations about alleged inhumane treatment of migrants on the part of Croatian police and that it contained no specific evidence. 'It is important to account for the fact that, because they were deterred from entering Croatia by police officers or were subjected to some other regulated procedure that returned them to the country from which they entered Croatia unlawfully, migrants most often falsely accuse police officers of violence, expecting that such accusations will help them in another attempt to cross the border and continue further toward the countries of their destination,' the MoI explains (INDEX.HR, 8 NOVEMBER 2019).

In conclusion, the discursive struggle regarding this topic is fought even at the international level, in which context it seems that international humanitarian and human rights actors have failed in the observed

period to elevate the issue to the level of a media and political agenda that would spark a reaction by the European political elite and judicial authorities in terms of seeking an official response of Croatian authorities on these issues.

Migrant route

This category includes articles that pertain to broader movements of migrants and the usual migrant routes that are created from the point of setting off on their journey to their desired destination. The routes pass through several countries bounded by their borders and characterized by their specific geographical features. Apart from their movement, articles in this category also describe the occurrences at specific single locations, 'getting stuck' somewhere on the route, due to various circumstances, primarily policies of countries that close their borders. Reports cover the approaches of different countries situated along migrant routes, in which context the media focus is on regional movements that include southeast Europe, owing to Croatia's geographical position, of course, but also other migrant routes (the Mediterranean, EU, Schengen Area countries and other). This category accounts for 7.06% of the total number of articles. Most frequently used terms are: 'migrants,' 'Bosnia and Herzegovina,' 'police,' 'Croatia,' 'border' (and derivatives of those words), while frequently appearing syntagms within this theme are the following: 'entered Croatia,' 'number of crossings on the rise,' 'new migrant route,' 'hundreds of migrants set off on their journey,' 'slow inflow,' 'new wave expected,' 'new wave threatens'... Reporting about the routes primarily signifies movement but also making camp at a single location as a result of obstacles. When it comes to outlining migrant routes based on movement, the directions of movements of migrants are mapped out, including the countries and borders that are part of those routes, as well as geographical features of individual routes, which are named based on the political and geographical toponyms: the Balkan route, south Balkan route, west Balkan route, east Mediterranean Balkan route, east Mediterranean route, central Mediterranean route, southern migrant route... Routes are created and disappear depending on obstacles, the situation at borders (closed or passable) and characteristics of the climate along the route. Movements are defined by the seasons of the year: 'in spring the route will reawaken,' routes are 'harsh,' cold (Plješivica mountain) and they change based on actions of social or natural factors.

Hundreds of migrants that are staying in the territory of Una-Sana Canton in Bosnia and Herzegovina are attempting to cross the border with Croatia every day but, owing to increased police monitoring of the Croatian side

of the border, they have now opted for routes passing through inaccessible and dangerous terrain, such as Plješivica mountain, which could lead to fatalities in the upcoming winter months, cautioned the county's Mountain Rescue Service on Thursday (INDEX.HR, 13 SEPTEMBER 2018).

Countries of origin of the migrants on those routes are also mapped out: '...mostly Africans (from Algeria and Morocco) and Pakistani and Afghan nationals' (Jutarnji.hr, 10 February 2018), which implicitly or explicitly (de)legitimizes their movements. In this context, the implied meaning is that any movement originating at a place that is not war-stricken is not justified. The migrants' ultimate destination, based on the reports, are the countries of western and northern Europe that are often represented based on the neo-colonial, dichotomous key – the affluent, well-regulated West, offering good opportunities, as opposed to the poor, unregulated East, which is without any prospects. In this context, the position of Croatia is interesting – it is a part of the route, a transit area on the way to other destinations, but at the same time it itself 'migrates,' shifts in media representations – can be interpreted at points as belonging to the ever-promising West, which is especially underlined by its membership in the EU (migrants persistently 'attack' the Croatian border, which is 'EU's longest border' and they wish to 'make it to the EU'), while at other points it is seen as a land that cannot match the western countries as a result of a standard of living that is unfavourable even for the local population, much less any potential migrants. Belonging to the West appears in the context of 'defence' and protection of territory from migrants in transit, while the depicting of Croatia as the 'outskirts' that are no match for the West, often appears in the context of migrants' potential stay and/or seeking of asylum in the country.

Along the routes, migrants are often presented as a group in motion, on the go (like a pack), wandering through unknown lands. This is uncontrolled and unregistered movement, and the populated places that the route passes through are faced with a problem because the passage of migrants implies a disturbance of their every-day lives, involving break-ins, police actions and disturbance of the peace and quiet that the locals used to enjoy. Moreover, the routes are dangerous and exhausting even for the migrants, which implies in particular natural obstacles such as rivers, forests and mountains, which pose a risk. Individuals moving on the routes are not just 'illegal' migrants, but there are also smugglers and those routes are also described not only as people smuggling routes but also as routes for the smuggling of weapons and drugs.

Seeing as Croatia has been on one of the 'busiest' migrant routes, the Balkan route, used by migrants and refugees to illegally advance to western Europe, the country's territory is the setting for incidents comparable to those seen in action movies, involving people smuggling and even international organized crime groups (JUTARNJI.HR, 25 APRIL 2019).

Frequent descriptions of migrant routes involves 'intimidation by numbers,' i.e., the providing of statistical data pertaining to illegal crossings and announcement of arrivals: 'hundreds of migrants,' 'long lines of migrants attempting to cross the border,' 'inflow of migrants increases,' 'new migrant wave,' 'great wave of illegal migrants'...

If the inflow of migrants continues at this rate, it can be expected that the Croatian police might arrest more than 15 thousand migrants attempting to enter Croatia illegally by the end of the year, which is by far the greatest number since March 2016, when a large migrant wave coming to Europe from the Middle East, Asia and Africa was stopped. The warning that the issue of illegal migrants was becoming increasingly difficult and serious came from the highest-ranking officers of the police and of the Border Department of the Ministry of the Interior at a meeting of the Homeland Security System Committee held on Tuesday. 'The pressure on national borders is only going to become greater...' (JUTARNJI.HR, 26 SEPTEMBER 2019).

About 60,000 migrants from Arab countries arriving on the new route toward Velika Kladuša and Bihać (Tportal.hr, 17 May 2018).

Apart from migrant movements, the migrant route is also described in articles that involve stopping, 'camping' at a fixed place, living in camps along the border with Bosnia and Herzegovina. This also involves the testimonies of migrants who 'got stuck' at the border. Reporting is oriented at individual stories and experiences of travelling along the route. One type of representation of migrants in border camps is them being depicted as victims of violence by the Croatian police and the pushback policy, with reported testimonies of people that corroborate such actions.

'They threw away the phone, took the money, the border police, Croatian police take all the phones, all the money, they don't return anything, you understand?!,' said one of the migrants. *When asked about the number of times they attempted to cross the border, he said they tried on several occasions. A teacher from Bagdad tells us how he escaped from Iraq because of his conflict with the current government. After two of his daughters were killed, he decided to flee from the country. He arrived at the camp one day before*

us. 'I hear a lot of stories but I will only believe it when I see it,' he said. He offered to translate the stories of peoples who wanted to share them with us. 'He says that the Croatian police beat them up and swore at them,' he added. After having been through the same experience, an Afghan family got stuck at this spontaneously put together camp, where people being returned from the border all come (RTL.HR, 6 SEPTEMBER 2018).

The second type of articles includes individual testimonies about the journey they took, the place where they are at the moment in the context of their general movement, and their intended goals and desired destinations. In this type of articles migrants are mostly constructed as tenacious, those who have 'been through the wringer' but are still hopeful for a better tomorrow, with very different reasons for migrating; they are presented as people who need help and support, who are escaping from extreme poverty, war...

'Game' is a term used by migrants for any attempt to escape across the border to the west. Some people that this story is about have played that game for more than twenty times. Sometimes enduring beatings, tears and blood. But they have no intention of quitting (JUTARNJI.HR, 29 NOVEMBER 2019).

However, when the actual place where they are 'camping' is described, with a great mass of people crammed in improvised conditions, which is typical for reception centres in Bosnia and Herzegovina, focus shifts to chaos, poor living conditions, hazardous sanitary conditions, spreading of various diseases among migrants (HIV, tuberculosis, hepatitis), violence among the migrants themselves, but also violence between migrants and the police. Camps are presented as the breeding ground for crime and smuggling, and potentially terrorism, too.

And so these 5000 migrants make up more than 10% of the population of Bihać. Due to fear of such a large number of migrants and potential violence, crime and even terrorism, the police of Una-Sana Canton often conducts all kinds of operations. On the day of our arrival in Bihać, at the order of the Cantonal Court in Bihać, police officers of the Ministry of the Interior of Una-Sana Canton commenced with the operation referred to as 'Raid,' which involved a search of facilities used by migrants and a search of their persons. The operation took place in the Students' Home in Borići and the tent camp near that building. Police officers armed with rifles closed off the entire area and inspected each corner of the building and the tent camp. The operation involved the participation of the Directorate of the Ministry of the Interior of Una-Sana Canton, which provided 40 police officers to

serve as support, and the participation of Bihać Police Station, Criminal Police Department of Bihać Police Station, and the Criminal Police Sector. During the search, officers discovered several cold weapons, brass knuckles, marijuana and other items. Two individuals were arrested, an Afghan and a Pakistani national, for committing a criminal offence in the territory of the city of Bihać (VECERNJI.HR, 19 AUGUST 2018).

The migrants' staying at a camp somewhere between their point of departure and the destination, instead of the 'natural' migrant movement, raises tensions. This kind of situation poses a risk for the domicile population. There is general reporting on migrants as a potential threat, people who get rid of their documents for instrumental reasons because they do not actually meet the requirements for asylum, people who have mobile phones and money and who are just waiting for an opportunity for 'game' – an attempt to illegally cross the border in order to 'make it to the EU' (a frequently used phrase).

As announced by the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina, there are about 70 thousand migrants in the inland part of Greece who might head west once the weather improves. Approximately 800 defeated foreign members of ISIL, who have recently surrendered to the Kurdish forces in Syria and who are not wanted either by the Kurds or their home countries, might also pose an additional security problem. It is estimated that some of them will attempt to join the migrant wave, with or without falsified documents, in an attempt to reach Bosnia and Herzegovina, which must be prevented (NET.HR, 8 APRIL 2019).

Within this theme, migrants are, naturally, the main actors, but they are represented in different modalities: as a depersonalized mass, as a group or through representations of individuals.

Integration

The thematic framework pertaining to integration includes media articles that deal with the issue of integration of refugees/asylees in local communities, various integration programs and activities, problems of the integration system, refugees' life stories and programs of resettlement from other countries. A total of 7% of the media articles belong to this category and the most frequently used terms in the category are 'refugees,' 'asylum' and 'family,' whereas some of the recurrent syntagms are 'Croatia accepted/took in,' 'resettled in Croatia,' 'Croatia committed to,' 'resettlement program,' 'wish to stay in Croatia,' 'families found refuge,' 'new home.' In this thematic framework, two

specific sub-themes were identified: presentation of the integration program and stakeholders and presentation of persons under international protection.

Presentation of the integration program and its stakeholders involves the presentation of different actors, projects, resettlement programs and partnership agreements, various stakeholder activities, educational meetings, expert round tables and alike. This most often involves actors who take part in the integration processes one way or another, for example through civil society organizations, schools, national and local authorities, scientists and researchers. As far as NGOs are concerned, the most represented one is the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), in which context media reports very often refer not only to the organisation itself but also specifically to the head of that organisation at the time, Tvrtko Barun. Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) had significant presence in media reports in 2019 in its capacity as the Ministry of the Interior's implementation partner in the integration process, whereas in 2018 the role of providing information about resettlement and integration programs was mostly played by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). They were followed by other NGOs, such as the Centre for Peace Studies, Are You Syrious? and others. Among government authorities, the most frequently appearing ones are the Ministry of the Interior and the Government Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Republic of Croatia. Other frequently appearing actors are mayors and heads of various city/town offices, school teachers and principals.

Common media reports within this sub-theme involve presentations of specific projects, meetings pertaining to integration or resettlement programs, or in other words, specific measures intended for integration purposes. As a whole, integration is presented as a process comprised of three key elements: housing, education and employment. In this sense, media reporting focuses precisely on these three domains, with reports on resettlement underlining housing in government-owned apartments, those on education underlining professional retraining programs and Croatian language learning, and those dealing with employment reporting about measures intended to stimulate employers to hire refugees, including the labour market demands for workforce in some professions, predominantly in the hospitality sector.

When presenting the resettlement program or announcing the arrival of refugees and their housing in government apartments, specific numbers of refugees are regularly indicated to show that there are relatively very few of them. In addition to that, indication of the fact that the exact number and the basic profile of the refugees are known, the announcement of their arrival in groups ('first group,' 'second group')

and references to key elements, such as their initial placement in the reception centre for asylum seekers and then relocation to individual cities or towns, implies a controlled nature of the process, which is sometimes even explicitly said, making it clear that refugees do not pose any security risk: 'adding that refugees, just before they arrived, passed all the security assessment and medical and other examinations, their status as refugees has been confirmed and they have been familiarized with all the laws, regulations, customs and life-style existing in Croatia' (24sata, 29 October 2019). If there is a problem, then the problem is not the refugees themselves, but rather it is the organisational issue of housing and coordination of various authorities and stakeholders, or the mobilization of resources. Moreover, the refugees that are to arrive in local communities or are already there are regularly reported as being family members, or the fact is underlined that they are coming as entire families, which highlights the humanitarian aspect and decreases the possibility of those people being seen as a security threat.

Specifically, these are four children with their parents and the father is the only one who works, mainly manual labour jobs (...) (ZADARSKI.HR, 8 FEBRUARY 2019).

This year a special problem will be the families of six single mothers who will lose their apartments (24SATA, 23 JUNE 2019).

These are families that arrived in Croatia from Turkey within the resettlement project (VECERNJI.HR, 17 JULY 2019).

(...) announced that two families of refugees from Syria arrived in Sisak and that eight more will be received in the upcoming weeks (VECERNJI.HR, 17 JULY 2019).

(...) committed to take in a total of 250 persons, which commitment will be fulfilled by the arrival of ten more families later this summer (VECERNJI.HR, 17 JULY 2019).

(...) whose objective is for the refugee families to fit in nicely and, after receiving initial support, become fully fledged members of the society, contributing to it in all aspects - cultural, economic, social and other. (VECERNJI.HR, 17 JULY 2019).

The first ten families that arrived have already begun integrating in Sisak as their new permanent home, while ten more families are currently staying at

the Reception Centre for Asylum Seekers in Kutina (24SATA, 29 OCTOBER 2019).

In mid-November, a total of 48 Syrian nationals are going to arrive in Karlovac, specifically ten families that have refugee status (24SATA, 29 OCTOBER 2019).

Despite the overall positive tone of the articles, the actual arrival and integration of refugees are put into the broader framework of European policies, underling that this is an ‘international commitment,’ ‘expression of solidarity of Croatia as an EU member country’ or ‘sharing of responsibility with third countries.’ The fact that European funds have been prepared for the furnishing of government-owned apartments is also underlined. The resettlement program is presented as ‘sustainable,’ ‘safe’ and ‘humane migration management,’ as a ‘tool for managing lawful migrations and prevention of smuggling.’ In this context, the receiving of refugees is in fact constructed as a necessity, or in other words, something that is not entirely the expression of one’s own will and intent, but rather as a means of resolving a broader issue in a controlled fashion, in which sense integration is just a consequence of this necessary, but not completely voluntary political decision.

‘With this kind of controlled migration management, specifically through the resettlement program, the Republic of Croatia and the other EU member countries are in fact establishing a protection mechanism which is primarily intended to protect human lives and avoid undesired situations that have happened before in illegal migrants’ attempts to cross the Mediterranean,’ underlined the Ministry of the Interior (24SATA.HR, 26 JANUARY 2018).

This is a pilot project of resettlement of Syrian refugees and the Government of the Republic of Croatia has committed to accept a total of 150 of them. The resettlement project includes elements of integration into the local community, so that these people may, after some time, become fully fledged members of the community (ZADARSKI, 31 JANUARY 2018).

The Ministry of the Interior reminds that the housing of resettled individuals is implemented by the Republic of Croatia based on their participation in the European resettlement and relocation program of third country citizens or stateless persons who meet the requirements for international protection, in accordance with the conclusions of the European Council (INDEX.HR, 19 APRIL 2018).

The MoI reports that Croatia is continuing with controlled migration management through the resettlement program (...) (INDEX.HR, 11 JULY 2018).

This differentiation between unregulated migrations and a regulated resettlement process implies, to a certain extent, processes of selection, both on the part of competent authorities and of refugees themselves. In this sense it is underlined that the refugees themselves have chosen Croatia, which implies motivation and potentially successful integration.

Persons who come to Croatia this way, unlike those who enter the country irregularly, know that Croatia will be the country in which they will build their future (...) (INDEX, 27 DECEMBER 2018).

This is a voluntary process because these individuals or families have chosen precisely Croatia as the country of their final destination, the place where they want to live (ZADARSKI.HR, 30 JANUARY 2018).

Syrians who are in Zadar did not enter Croatia illegally; instead, they had requested to come to Croatia and be allowed to seek asylum here while they were still in Turkey. They are a part of the pilot project of support to the Government of the Republic of Croatia in refugee resettlement (24SATA, 30 JANUARY 2018).

In this broader process, refugees are presented as the ‘new inhabitants,’ ‘new citizens,’ ‘new neighbours,’ Croatia as their ‘permanent address’ and the towns where they will be resettled in are referred to as their ‘new homes’ in which refugees will have a ‘new beginning,’ ‘start a new life,’ have ‘a better and brighter future,’ ‘peace,’ ‘security’ and as places that offer support by various actors, reflected in the ‘forthcomingness’ and ‘solidarity’ of the local community. Refugees and the local community are usually referred to as actors without a voice that is fully their own, because they are primarily talked about in the third person by representatives of various bodies, experts or civil society organisations, mostly in a positive tone.

Noting that the integration process requires cooperation between multiple institutions, the minister said that so far in the integration process there have been no problems in local communities (JUTARNJI.HR, 27 DECEMBER 2018).

By receiving Syrians fleeing from the war, Karlovac really showed what it means to be a meeting-point city (KARLOVACKI.HR, 15 DECEMBER 2019).

This is the part to which Croatia has committed, and when it comes to relocation of refugees from Italy, it has already shown its own willingness to be

greater than people's willingness to come to Croatia (INDEX, 27 DECEMBER 2018).

As far as we are concerned, we are happy and glad to be the first city in Croatia to accept the refugees that have come. I truly believe that the city of Zadar is a great example of good integration (ZADARSKI.HR, 8 FEBRUARY 2019).

Another specific and frequent issue that appears as a motif in integration is the economic dimension. Unlike the general media reports, where economy was not significantly represented in the context of migrations as one of the main themes, when it comes to integration, labour market demands appear to be the prominent issue. It is underlined that refugees will not become a burden for the society and it is also highlighted that they will not represent competition for current workers, seeing as there is a lack of workforce and a real demand in the society to integrate the refugees in the economic domain.

According to the Director of JRS, Croatian employers look for workers among the refugees on daily basis, and, according to him, response has been very good because refugees are happy to be able to earn a living with their own two hands. He reports that JRS has been getting requests from employers from all kinds of sectors, practically on daily basis in recent weeks, from the construction sector, to hospitality, tailoring and carpentry, where dozens, or even hundreds of workers are needed (VEČERNJI LIST, 25 APRIL 2018).

(...) there are many employers who contact us every day, looking for new employees (24SATA, 5 JUNE 2018).

The people who are coming here should not be regarded solely as victims, because they bring a lot of capacity and know-how that can enrich this community, says Nives Ivelja (Zadarskilist.hr, 12 June 2018).

The job in the hospice could have been applied for by anyone, because the measure allows for that possibility. But it was not just anyone. It was these people (RTL.HR, 13 NOVEMBER 2018).

Croatia needs to know which profile of migrants it wishes to keep because it is faced with a shortage of workforce as a result of emigration (GLAS.HR, 1 MARCH 2019).

There are refugees in Rijeka and in Zadar, too. We intend not to have them all in Zagreb, but rather to have all of Croatia profit from their skills and knowledge (TPORTAL.HR, 7 JUNE 2019).

The integration system is generally presented by different actors as 'underdeveloped,' 'inexistent,' 'in its infancy,' and that consequently different actors underline their own commitment and effort invested in coming up with different solutions, whereas civil society organisations are willing to help and remain at the disposal of local communities.

Although some things about refugees caught them by surprise, Klarin noted that, with dedication and effort, they succeeded in providing them with the basic elements of health care and social security. Currently there are 27 individuals (seven families) living in Zadar and the men are employed, but of course, that employment did not happen on its own, said Klarin (TPORTAL, 30 NOVEMBER 2018).

The head of the Jesuit Refugee Service of South-East Europe, Father Tvrtko Barun, said that they were happy and proud to put their experience and knowledge to use for the requirements of Croatia, the MoI and the NGO sector, in order to help with the integration of about a hundred refugees that are to arrive in Croatia from Turkey (NET.HR, 27 DECEMBER 2018).

A school in Kutina has set up a special team of people who attended special training to make sure that they could give the best possible education to children seekers of international protection and asylees (HRT.HR, 13 MAY 2019).

We devote the most time to overcoming the language barrier because we get students who can speak hardly any Croatian, and this is a prerequisite for success. All this takes several months, instead of just a month or two, which is the regular duration of retraining for simple jobs such as waiter, cook, simple jobs in the construction sector (HRT.HR, 13 MAY 2019).

A key characteristic of media reporting within this thematic set is the fact that refugees are viewed as a problem in the context of implementation policy and coordination between various stakeholders or in the context of support that should be provided by the administrative system and the local community. Integration requires certain resources that come from the government in this case, with the use of EU funding. Good coordination is a priority in order for the country and local community to be able to support the integration process, which will be facilitated by inclusion in the education system and in the labour market. The ultimate goal is to help refugees become citizens who will equally contribute to the development of the society. Croatian society, local community and the refugees themselves are most likely passive actors here, as they are talked about by experts and other actors. Even when refugees do appear at certain events or when statements given

by citizens, entrepreneurs or refugees are reported in the articles, more media space is given to the other mentioned actors nevertheless. In this sense, within this sub-theme, voices of refugees and citizens serve only as examples that illustrate the statements made by representatives of government bodies and different stakeholders who work on the organisation or implementation of various programs, including integration programs. This way, integration of refugees is constructed as a highly-regulated policy process, with specific stages and necessary steps that are specifically handled, while on the other hand, despite the overall positive tone of the articles, refugees themselves are constructed as persons in need who are unable to clearly see their own position, articulate their demands or speak of their experiences. In other words, despite the fact that, within this theme, integration is referred to as a 'two-way' process that depends on the local community and on the refugees themselves, media reports portray both the local community and the refugees as people who are without much influence themselves, but instead are required to take certain steps in a relatively unregulated system or a system that is still developing: 'Government will help them pay their utility bills and they will have to learn Croatian, find employment and start a new life' (Hrt.hr, 4 December 2019). There have been quite a lot of problems with the organising of Croatian language courses for persons under international protection, in the practical sense, owing to cancellation of courses, insufficient number of classes, inability of employed asylees to attend, and alike (cf. Ajduković et al., 2019). The second theme within this thematic unit dealing with integration encompasses media reports about refugees and persons under international protection themselves. This involves presentation of refugees in their specific local communities, in which case they are often characterised as active actors. Unlike the previous case, where refugees were mostly presented as passive objects being resettled, relocated or housed, these are instances when the refugees themselves are given a voice and described in the context of their real lives, which may involve personal or family history. Most often the actors are the refugees themselves, but also citizens and locals who are somehow connected with the refugees, the journalists and various actors who assume the roles of experts (e.g., teachers or volunteers for civil society organisations). Representation of these actors reflects a different representation of sources in media reporting, so that, to some extent, this departure from sources that are associated with government bodies, signalizes a more humanising approach. The headlines of the articles alone imply that this is the case, often giving emotional messages or referring to people by name (already in the headlines): 'Abi the Syrian,' 'Our Syrians find employment in construction, they are building a new life

in Zadar!' 'Hayani family from Syria: We love Croatia and Slavonski Brod,' 'Salah used to be a reputable businessman,' 'Mustafa the Syrian,' 'A heart-warming story of Syrian refugees,' 'Emotional encounter,' 'Reza, Puria, Azimi, Safaa: We will speak Croatian, we are Croatians now.' Nevertheless, despite the fact that refugees are given a voice in these instances, that does not mean that media reports represent them in different life segments. In fact, there are several typical motifs that we see in media reports, and they pertain to learning, being capable of self-support and a feeling of belonging to this society.

In media reports, refugees are predominantly presented as people who, after much hardship, a difficult passage along the migrant route and a life of uncertainty, have finally found peace and security and who feel welcome and accepted here, as if this is their home. Often there are reports citing refugees' statements about how they like Croatia, which reflects a certain moral economy of integration, where the government and the local community accept and support refugees and, in turn, refugees get emotionally attached to the country that accepted them.

Despite the fact that most refugees from the Middle East see west European countries as their target, some of them do find their home in Croatia (RTL.HR, 27 DECEMBER 2018).

Croatia is my new home and I see my future here, says Iranian national Puria, who came to Croatia two years ago as a refugee (HRT.HR, 27 DECEMBER 2018).

As he recalls, he has been through a lot, the story of his life is not an easy one, but he has decided to build a new life in Croatia (ZADARSKI.HR, 6 FEBRUARY 2019).

I love Croatia, people are great here, and the weather is also great (SLOBODNADALMACIJA.HR, 7 FEBRUARY 2019).

Whenever I'm returning to Croatia from a trip abroad, I feel like I'm coming home – says Ruben (VEČERNJI.HR, 5 JANUARY 2019).

'I intend to live here. I don't need to go any further. For me, Croatia is better. I have waited a year and two months and then I got asylum,' told us Salah Badah, a migrant from Syria who used to be a successful businessman, with ten employees, until about four years ago, and who now works as a construction site worker (RTL.HR, 28 AUGUST 2018).

Refugees are usually portrayed as highly motivated for integration and for using the support that is offered to them. They are eager to gain new

knowledge, to learn and undergo retraining in order to find a job and be able to support themselves independently.

Little Adel's father is one of those who have already begun receiving additional education and he hopes to work as a cook soon (VEČERNJI LIST, 5 APRIL 2018).

Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Zaire, Ukraine and Syria are their homelands, but for a year or two already, they have been living in Zagreb. And they are eager to learn (VEČERNJI LIST, 14 APRIL 2018).

(...) they and their teachers alike awaited with great anticipation the beginning of a 90-minute workshop (VEČERNJI LIST, 14 APRIL 2018).

In Zagreb she has been undergoing retraining to become a caregiver and she's looking for an apartment for herself and her sons, because she has been staying at her brother's place for a while already. She has also been learning Croatian at the university (JUTARNJI.HR, 27 MARCH 2019).

This agronomist by occupation is currently retraining to become a cook and is actively working at the JRS as an unofficial translator and an assistant to his fellow countrymen, helping them to get by as easily as possible (JUTARNJI.HR, 27 MARCH 2019).

They have been very well accepted because they are lovely, hard-working and motivated, with excellent knowledge of mathematics (HRT.HR, 14 DECEMBER 2019).

Also, a frequent motif that is associated with learning is the knowledge of language, which is generally considered as an important step in the integration process. Mastering the language is perceived as a great challenge, especially because there is no sufficient or systematically organized language learning, but also because language is implicitly presented as a key indicator and integration-facilitating factor. It is precisely for that reason that the demonstration of one's knowledge of Croatian in media reporting occurs relatively frequently and indicates their motivation, effort and desire for integration.

Nevertheless, during the introduction and getting to know one another, 30-year-old Wadak, a graphic designer from Aleppo in Syria, who came to Croatia two years ago and who now spoke about himself in fluent Croatian, got the greatest accolade (VEČERNJI LIST, 14 APRIL 2018).

We have been living in Zagreb for a year, we are working and learning Croatian, and everything is alright. Croatian is very hard but we like learning (RTL.HR, 27 DECEMBER 2018).

Samira is another person who started a new life in Croatia. She is satisfied, she says, because she is working and learning the language. She finds grammatical cases to be the most challenging thing about learning Croatian (HRT.HR, 27 DECEMBER 2018).

Ayman has learned to speak Croatian so he explained to the journalists in our language about the time when he arrived in Croatia (SLOBODNADALMACIJA.HR, 7 FEBRUARY 2019).

During the breaks between lessons he likes to play football in the yard. His Croatian is pretty good, there are even hints of Kajkavian dialect emerging from time to time (JUTARNJI.HR, 27 MARCH 2019).

Her student Ruja Abdo has already learned Croatian in Kutina and speaks the language a bit. When asked by the journalist if she had any friends, she answered immediately: 'Yes, you do.' She then added: 'One Ana and one Anđela,' when asked about the names of her friends, and replied 'I don't know' to the question about her favourite school subject. It was only at the question about how she liked it at school and in Karlovac in general that she needed the interpreter's help, to which she then replied in Croatian: 'Yes, good, good, nice' (HRT.HR, 14 DECEMBER 2019).

Just like in the previous thematic set, the presentation of refugees also involves the issue of the labour market and employment. In the actual presentation of refugees, the focus is on their entrepreneurial spirit, there are stories of their success despite the economic, social or other unfavourable circumstances. In this sense, refugees are represented as persons with an entrepreneurial spirit who succeeded despite the odds, who are not an economic burden but contribute to the economic development of the society.

It is not the least bit easy for beginner entrepreneurs to succeed in the market. And when these are people from a socially sensitive social group, this path is even harder. The Taste of Home Association, which brings together immigrants, refugees and asylees, after having struggled for a while, still boasts an increasingly good performance in the demanding catering market (HRT, 3 JANUARY 2018).

After the initial donations, they were emboldened to independently and self-sustainably operate in the market, which is anything but easy (HRT, 3 JANUARY 2018).

Ever since the first night I spent at the Reception Centre for Asylum Seekers in Kutina, I have been full of ideas about things I could do, things I could start. Many people told me: 'Go to Germany, it is easier there.' But I responded that it is just as good here, that one can get by here as well (ZADARSKI.HR, 6 FEBRUARY 2019).

This migrant has managed to succeed, in Croatia, funnily enough! (SLOBODNADALMACIJA.HR, 7 FEBRUARY 2019).

If you are looking for a hairdresser in Zagreb, our recommendation is Ayman's salon! A story of hard work, integration and a new beginning, with plenty of administrative obstacles in a system that needs to be improved as soon as possible so that more of our new fellow citizens could actively participate in our social and economic life, by contributing their skills and ideas, as the Jesuit Refugee Service notes (SLOBODNADALMACIJA.HR, 7 FEBRUARY 2019).

'I have never waited for any government to help me, I help myself, I am my own government', says Okoli (DNEVNIK.HR, 7 MAY 2019).

Media reporting within this sub-theme is specific because the journalist plays a more active role in this context and appears as one of the actors in the report. Reports in the form of dialogue between the journalist and the refugee are common, with the journalist telling the story, familiarizing the reader with the background, depicting the atmosphere, interpreting and describing emotions. The journalist is often the one who gives details about the refugee's family history and the life they used to live, often noting that the refugees had gone through all kinds of hardship, thus representing them as victims. This image of a victim is additionally highlighted by hints of the journalist's different treatment and a special sensibility for the feelings of the person they are interviewing, in which context, despite the positive tone and a humanising approach, the refugees are implicitly constructed as different.

A few days ago I visited him again, but this time we spoke Croatian in their home in Diklo, near Zadar. We did not need an interpreter, except for a few words, which nine-year-old Fadel helped his father with. In the year and a half since I've last seen this family, a lot has changed in their life. Abdul, as his Croatian friends call him, is a changed man. He is smiling and is

much more relaxed, without any of that former distress and fear in his face (SLOBODNADALMACIJA.HR, 26 APRIL 2019).

As soon as Lajan Majeed (29) opened the door to her Zagreb apartment where she is living with her family, seven-year-old Dahren immediately grabbed us by the hand and led us in (Jutarnji.hr, 20 JUNE 2019).
It can be anything, anything you want, a gift, a new experience... For example, I want a boyfriend – I said in an attempt to break the ice. They laughed (RTL.HR, 28 DECEMBER 2019).

The reasons that made them escape and the hardship they went through before they got protection in Croatia will only be presented here in brief, or not at all. Our intention is to give them the right to say no more than they are willing to share, including the right not to have their photo taken if they do not wish it. Most of the refugees in Croatia are reluctant to talk to the media or to be put in the spotlight. They just wish to start a new life as ordinary citizens (JUTARNJI.HR, 20 JUNE 2019).

Media representations of refugees within this sub-theme exhibit two key characteristics. On the one hand, refugees are approached from a humanitarian aspect, constructing them as victims of war, presenting details about them that portray them as family members and people who used to be successful in their professions. However, they do not appear as completely helpless, but instead they are presented as people who are highly motivated and willing to learn new skills, a new language or even opt for professional retraining in order to get independent as soon as possible, which suggests that they do make use of the initial support given to them and make progress in the integration process, and that the moral equation of social support and their own personal contribution is balanced. Stories about refugees who had come to Croatia in previous periods (before the refugee crisis connected with Syria), who succeeded despite the odds, despite all their previous hardship and unfavourable circumstances, construct them as citizens who are active in the economic domain, who are independent of government aid and who contribute to society. However, in this initial stage of the integration process, despite the personal approach in reporting, refugees are nevertheless constructed as different. The focus on their learning, with reports about how they learned to say hello in Croatian, saying that children acted as interpreters or translators for their parents, actually contributes to the infantilization of refugees. This is further contributed to by the choice of the sources of information used in the reporting, which indicates that even in this thematic framework in which refugees are given a voice, their experiences are

not stand-alone experiences, but rather that the validity of those experiences is confirmed by other actors. For example, we have various experts talk about the context and the practical issues (NGO volunteers, teachers and others), including the journalist themselves or citizens who helped the refugees. On the other hand, refugees are mostly given space to express their emotions, their feeling of connectedness with their new community, the motivation to learn, change and adapt, or in other words, expressions of gratitude for the help they got.

Media and social networks

This involves articles that include self-referential reporting about the field of the media or, more specifically, articles in which the media deal with themselves and with social networks.

Bickering on social networks has become a part of our day-to-day lives but nobody thinks too much of it, apart from the actors involved, until those actors become TV personalities, former colleagues – at that point it becomes interesting for the public as well. This time the ‘clash’ was between HRT’s Maja Sever and RTL’s Zoran Šprajc, and the reason behind their argument was Šprajc’s comment on the case of the five-year-old migrant Allsa Ghazi, whose father has been looking for her in Croatia for two weeks (TPORTAL.HR, 26 SEPTEMBER 2018).

The articles deal with the spreading of disinformation (‘fake news’) and/or hate speech in the society, which has a negative impact on people’s perception of migrants and spreads fear and panic. Instances of spreading hate speech involve the political party Živi Zid, local TV station Z1TV (the ‘Bujica’ TV show, which was also broadcasted by other local television stations), the case of the priest on Facebook but also anonymous comments on social networks. The spreading of ‘fake news’ and hate speech in the media also involves the reporting on the decision of the regulatory body, the Electronic Media Council, to penalize local TV stations for broadcasting ‘Bujica,’ and a reprimand by the Ethics Committee for violating the Election Code of Ethics addressed to Živi Zid for hate speech and inciting to violence in the comments on their Facebook profile. In addition to that, reports dealing with this theme were given from the perspective of experts and police officials.

A significant number of articles were published also on account of several cases when it was precisely the incitement against migrants in the public domain, as the media interpreted it, that resulted in specific negative reactions. One such case involved a citizen of Samobor

who filed a police report against workers who were legally staying and working in Croatia, who she believed were migrants when she saw them.

After weeks of political and media tirade against illegal migrants, one resident of Samobor filed a police report recently against a group of ‘illegal immigrants.’ They turned out to be employees of Mate Rimac’s company (24SATA.HR, 7 NOVEMBER 2018).

Another case pertains to a man who, as reported in the media, lied about having been attacked by migrants, due to which the police charged him with a misdemeanour. Unlike other thematic units, media reporting within this theme was particularly represented in November 2018, when the reports suddenly increased in number. Out of the total number of articles, 2.40% are part of this category, and the most frequently used terms were ‘migrants,’ ‘police,’ ‘hate,’ ‘fake’ [news], and the recurrent syntagms were the following: ‘spreading on social networks,’ ‘spreading hysteria,’ ‘hysteria surrounding migrants,’ ‘fake news about migrants.’

Justice system

The justice system theme includes articles reporting on the activities of justice institutions. This often involves cases of seeking protection of rights before courts, but also various other legal aspects connected with migrations, with articles dealing primarily with litigation and asylum seekers’ court cases. Out of the total number of articles, 1.81% belong into this category, with the most commonly used keywords being: ‘court,’ ‘migrants’ and ‘Croatia’ and the most frequent syntagms including: ‘European Court of Justice ordered/instructed,’ ‘USKOK dropped,’ ‘criminal charges made,’ ‘Constitutional Court postponed/issued.’

Here, too, one can follow the discursive struggle between civil society organisations and competent government institutions: it has been reported that, in connection with the death of Madina Hussiny, the Welcome Initiative and the CPS filed criminal charges to the State Attorney’s Office against the police officers involved, but that the charges were dropped. On the other hand, it was also reported that a volunteer of the AYS association was convicted for helping the family of Madina Hussiny. Reporting also included the case of a Swiss court that ruled not to return asylum seekers to Croatia under the Dublin Regulation due to asylum seekers’ being subjected to violence by the Croatian police.

Centre for Peace Studies (CPS) filed criminal charges to the State Attorney's Office against unknown perpetrators who are police officers, for suspicion of illegal actions committed on the border of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (HRT.HR, 18 DECEMBER 2018).

Moreover, the media also reported on a non-final judgment against an asylum seeker for stealing a mobile phone and on a prison sentence imposed on a migrant for stealing a car. Case law also deals with smugglers, in which context the media report on the fact that the Municipal Court in Karlovac is overburdened by numerous cases of smuggling initiated against foreign nationals.

The media also covered the news about an important change in case law: a decision by the Constitutional Court confirming that family violence can be a reason for granting asylum.

Humanitarian activities

This theme deals primarily with the activities of various humanitarian civil society organisations, religious organisations, cultural workers and with the activities of other social actors in the providing of various types of direct humanitarian aid to refugees and migrants. These articles make up 1.68% of the total number of published articles and the most commonly used terms are 'refugees' (which is contributed to by the name of the most common actor in this context, the Jesuit Refugee Service), 'people' and 'Croatia,' with the syntagm 'they/we help migrants' being representative of this theme. This category is dominated by the work of the Jesuit Refugee Service (Father Tvrtko Barun), which organisation participates in the integration processes (it acts as a partner to the MoI in the implementation of refugee resettlement and integration program) and in this context it organizes various activities that involve other actors as well.

Being a friend, being supportive, being close; these are the main tasks of the Jesuit Refugee Service, a non-profit religious association that has been active in Croatia since 1993. Father Tvrtko Barun has been working in the Reception Centre for Asylum Seekers in Dugave in Zagreb since 2014. Countries from which these people come are diverse: Syria, Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Morocco. This young priest is committed to making all those people's stay in our country a happy one (HRT.HR, 5 JANUARY 2018).

Other associations are far less represented. There is occasional mention of the Welcome Initiative and the Croatia Helps Association, which brings children from Syria to the Adriatic. There is also the

House of Hope, established by a pastor of the Baptist church in Zagreb for the purpose of integration of vulnerable groups, the Dugave Library and the project of literary sensibilization for refugees, and others. It is interesting that the truly active participation of civil society organisations such as Are You Syrious?, the Welcome Initiative and the Centre for Peace Studies in the processes of integration and assistance for migrants is generally not categorized within the thematic framework of humanitarian work (although this work is not challenged by anyone either) but that it is categorized under political action instead (which always implies strife and conflict). There is a clear difference in media representations of these organisations compared to the Jesuit Refugee Service and the often mentioned Father Tvrtko Barun.

It is evident that the media interest in reporting on humanitarian activities increases at certain times, specifically on World Refugee Day or during the Festival of Tolerance, and especially during the Christmas holidays. Apart from organisations whose professional work is humanitarian, there are very few reports about humanitarian activities of citizens who help migrants (by providing food, accommodation, transport,...).

Other

This category (0.43%) comprises articles that did not classify into any of the other categories. Several of them pertained to economic issues: strategic reserve, employing migrants in the context of the labour market, and economic losses suffered by businesses as a result of the border between Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina closing; however, because there were very few of this kind of articles, there was no basis for categorizing the economy as a separate theme that would be identifiable in reporting on the migration phenomenon. Apart from the economy, there are several other, very diverse themes in this context, which, in the broadest sense, pertain to some segments from the domain of culture (comics, Mediterranean, tourism...)

Local media: reporting characteristics

9. Regional media relevant in the counties of interest in this research are printed newspapers that have their online versions, and those are Slobodna Dalmacija (12.1% in Zadar County) and Glas Slavonije (1.3% in Brod-Posavina County); the latter has significant readership only in Osijek-Baranja County (19.7%), whereas Slobodna Dalmacija has significant readership in several counties (23.9% in Šibenik-Knin County, 39.8% in Split-Dalmatia County and 25.0% in Dubrovnik-Neretva County). Among local media, only *zadarskiilist.hr* has significant reach on the local level (24.2% in Zadar County), which is why it was included in the analyses of Ipsos Media Puls. (Source: Ipsos Media Puls, period from 1 January 2020 to 31 March 2020, average reach by county).

One of the initial assumptions made in this research, which in fact determined the sample of media by reach, was that local media will be more oriented toward informing the local community. Local media play a specific role in the media field, which primarily pertains to reporting on topics that are of interest to the local communities, or in other words, issues that directly or indirectly affect the residents of a certain locality, but that do not represent a reporting segment of the national media. Thematic orientations of local media include events, actors and processes that are relevant in that locality and they are often narrowly defined, although there could be a broader thematic reach, because global trends and events do have repercussions on the local population as well and could be covered in the media and contextualized in ways that would bring them closer to the local population. However, if we do remain on the basic level of reporting about actors who are active in specific localities and about events that take place there, it can be expected that local media will report on refugees coming to the local communities that constitute their readership.

It is precisely for those reasons that, in addition to media with national reach, which are relevant due to greater circulation and significance in the society, this research also included regional⁹ and local media (Figure 12) that are relevant in the communities into which persons under international protection were resettled between late 2017 and late 2019.

It has already been mentioned that during the observed two-year period the largest number of media reports dealing with the analysed phenomenon were found in national media (a total of 2,579 articles or 85% of the reports), which is followed by regional (289 reports or 9%) and finally by local media (176 reports or 6%) (Figure 2). On average, a local news medium published no more than 14 articles in the two-year period. Not only that; local media exhibited significant deviations, too, with only 3 out of 12 analysed local media publishing most of the analysed material, which has led to the median for local media for the entire two-year period amounting to only 8 reports.

On an aggregated level we see differences in the frequency of themes in different media (different in terms of reach). Local media tend to report on migrants in the context of the security theme more (41%) than regional (36%) and national-reach media (33%). On the other hand, interest in the thematic set pertaining to politics declines as the reach of the medium drops: local media report the least on this theme (local media 22%, regional media 25%, and national media 32%). Apart from that, local media report less on migrants from the point of view of international relations (only 3%) and they have a relatively larger

BROD-POSAVINA COUNTY (Slavonski Brod)	KARLOVAC COUNTY (Karlovac, Duga Resa)	POŽEGA-SLAVONIA COUNTY (Požega)	SISAK-MOSLAVINA COUNTY (Sisak)	VARAŽDIN COUNTY (Varaždin)	ZADAR COUNTY (Zadar)
6 brodportal.hr	32 kaportal.hr	2 www.034portal.hr	4 quirinusportal.com	9 varazdinske-vijesti.hr	60 zadarski.hr
31 sbplus.hr	9 karlovacki.hr	1 pozega.eu	2 portal53.hr	5 regionalni.com	15 zadarskilist.hr

share of reporting on migrant and refugee integration (20%). In this sense and generally in terms of media by reach, it can be said that local media provide greater coverage of issues related with migrants and refugees within the kind of frameworks that are relevant directly for their local community, which means that they deal less with national politics and international relations and more with integration and security (or in other words, events that take place in the local environment) (Table 1).

Medium	Security	Politics	International relations	Migrant route	Integration	Other themes
National	33%	32%	16%	7%	6%	6%
Regional	36%	25%	14%	9%	7%	9%
Local	41%	22%	3%	6%	20%	8%

Despite the fact that the share of the themes of politics and international relations decreases in proportion to media reach, if we look at the regional media individually, we see that the two regional media do not share the same approach to covering migrations. As evident from Table 2, Glas Slavonije has a relatively high share of international relations (20%) and similar shares of security and politics (28% each), whereas Slobodna Dalmacija did not have as many reports on migrants dealing with the theme of international relations (9%) but that it had a relatively high share of the security theme (43%). Both media gave almost equal coverage to migrant and refugee issues, within the themes of migrant route and integration. In the analysed period in general, the

Figure 12. Cities, counties, the media included and the number of reports in the two-year period.

Table 1. Shares of thematic reports by media reach

largest share of reports dealing with the migrant route pertained to migrant movements from Bosnia and Herzegovina through Lika and Gorski Kotar, unlike previous periods when the movements mainly involved Serbia and eastern Slavonia. In 2019, the media began to give increasingly great coverage to migrants moving from Bosnia and Herzegovina on their way to western countries, passing even through Dalmatia. The reasons behind this fact can be found in the ways that media reported on this issue. In Slobodna Dalmacija migrant movements often involved reports in the context of thefts of citizens' cars, police actions connected with smuggling or various security-related efforts. Oftentimes there were even reports from individual villages in the border region, reporting on the fear of the local population, which ultimately resulted in the formulation of the issue of migrant move-

Table 2. Frequency of reports by themes in regional media

Medium	Security	Politics	International relations	Migrant route	Integrations	Other themes
Glas-slavonije.hr	34 (28%)	35 (28%)	25 (20%)	11 (9%)	8 (7%)	10 (8%)
Slobodnadalmacija.hr	71 (43%)	37 (22%)	15 (9%)	14 (8%)	12 (7%)	17 (10%)

ments as a security issue. On the other hand, Glas Slavonije paid more attention than Slobodna Dalmacija to international relations, among other things through special media reports connected with broader European policies, given in the form of interviews and commentaries with various experts and scientists.

When it comes to local media, it should first be underlined that there is generally very little reporting on the migration phenomenon, which significantly restricts the possibility of analysis and of making definite conclusions. The largest number of articles were published by zadarski.hr, 60 articles, which is double than the medium that comes next based on the number of articles (Table 3); however, the reason is the fact that that medium is part of the portfolio of Hanza Media, which also owns Jutarnji list and Slobodna Dalmacija, so there is greater likelihood of (legitimate and legal) recycling of content between these publications. This is also evident if one looks at the source (authors) of the articles.¹⁰ On the web portal zadarski.hr only about a third of the texts are signed with the author's name and last name, initials or a reference to the editorial board, whereas the rest was produced by others, usually precisely Jutarnji list or Slobodna Dalmacija.

Although local media had the largest share of reports pertaining to integration, at an aggregated level, when one looks at individual local

10. This is an issue that requires a separate analysis, because even though the media indicate different authors of articles (for example, author's name and last name, initials, name of the medium itself, HINA, other sources), this often does not correspond to actual authorship, which can be seen when several media publish an article with almost identical content and refer to different 'authors'. This is part of the so-called *copy-paste production*, which has escalated with the widespread use of digital technology, but also as a result of other factors that shape daily journalistic practices (commercialization of the media, precarious work conditions,...).

Medium	Security	Politics	International relations	Migrant route	Integration	Other themes	Total
Kaportal.hr	19	2	1	3	6	1	32
Sbplus.hr	8	13	1	3	5	1	31
Zadarskilist.hr	5	2	0	0	6	2	15
Zadarski.hr	25	13	2	3	10	7	60

media, it is evident that we are actually dealing with a very small number of articles: Zadarski.hr published 10, which is the highest number, whereas the three media Kaportal, Sbplus and Zadarski list published 5–6, and the other local media published less than 3. There were also some local media that did not publish a single article on this theme during the analysed period. This pertains especially to media covering Požega-Slavonia, Sisak-Moslavina and Varaždin Counties. Specifically, among media with reach across Požega-Slavonia County, Požega.eu published no articles dealing with integration (generally only one article was published in the two-year period and it dealt with security), and o34portal published only one article in mid-2019, announcing that refugees were going to live in government-owned apartments in Požega. The media of Sisak-Moslavina County (Portal53 and Quirinusportal) published no articles on integration, and the few articles that were published in those media (2 and 4, respectively) in the observed period mainly dealt with security and politics (primarily about the case of reception centre for asylum seekers near Petrinja). The media of Varaždin County also had no reports connected with specific cases of integration (Varaždinske Vijesti had 2 articles connected with civil society projects and the youth, dealing with the general migration and integration issues, Regionalni had one article in September 2019 in which it gave information about the number of refugees living in Varaždin and Međimurje Counties, but this was only the citing of news from the national medium Net.hr). In this sense, it can be said that only the media of Brod-Posavina, Karlovac and Zadar Counties reported on integration issues that were connected with their relevant local communities. In those media we see that the reports pertained primarily to a specific resettlement program, involving the announcement of arrival of Syrian families to local communities, reports about individual families and furnishing of government-owned apartments for the requirements of housing refugees. If we see these findings in the context of the resettlement program, we notice that the media in the last three counties reported on integration issues in accordance with the cycles of resettlement and integration programs. The

Table 3. Number of reports by themes in local media¹¹

11. Data is presented only with respect to local media that have published more than 10 articles during the observed period.

first refugees in the resettlement program arrived in Zadar in January 2018, which the media reports covered. Consequently, the media in Zadar County (Zadarski and Zadarski list) published the biggest share of articles on specific issues involved in integration in 2018, whereas those published in 2019 dealt mostly with the integration system in general. Already in January both media reported on the arrival of 40 new citizens from camps in Turkey. That was followed by reports connected with the enrolment of children in schools and later that year there were reports on life stories and family stories, including several reports on how these individuals were accepted in local communities, some of which reports dealt also with negative comments and hate speech on social networks. Generally speaking, media reports had a positive tone. Situation with the media in Brod-Posavina County is similar. Refugees arrived in Slavonski Brod under the resettlement program for the first time in April 2018. Consequently, the first media reports in local media connected with the integration theme were published that month. Brodportal and Sbplus reported in April 2018 on the arrival of refugees in several articles, and in subsequent reporting periods they reported about specific stories (Brodportal), publishing critical-toned articles about their reception in the local community and the problem of recurrent departure of refugees from Slavonski Brod to west Europe countries (Sbplus). In the case of Karlovac County, the arrival of refugees was connected with the second cycle of resettlement, which took place in 2019. Refugees arrived in Karlovac in August 2019, which coincides with the time when reports connected with integration started to appear in local media. So, Karlovački published in October an article about ten families moving into government-owned apartments in Karlovac, and Kaportal, which had more reports, published as early as in June 2019 an announcement of the arrival of forty or so refugees in Karlovac and Duga Resa, noting that they will be housed in government apartments. In October and November, reports announced the arrival and resettlement of two families in Karlovac and three families in Duga Resa, which was followed by reporting on how they were accepted in the local community later in December. This is another case of mainly positive-toned articles.

In the first three cases, a lack of media reporting on the integration of refugees in local communities can be explained precisely by the dynamics of the resettlement program. In the analysed period, the resettlement program brought the largest number of refugees to Karlovac, Zadar and Brod-Posavina Counties. In Varaždin County there were no refugees under the resettlement program in this period; instead, three refugees who were unaccompanied minors were housed in Varaždin under the reception option, so this could very well be the

reason why this topic was not covered in local media. However, this can only be a partial explanation seeing as, for example, in the case of Sisak-Moslavina County there was significant reception of refugees under the resettlement program (50 individuals), but the migrant issues generally and refugee issues specifically were not among the issues reported about by local media.

In conclusion, we can say that local media coverage of the migration phenomenon was generally scarce, despite the fact that this phenomenon impacted them directly, but that there were some differences between individual media – both in qualitative and quantitative terms. Owing to increased importance of local media in the context of democratic processes, especially in the context of increasing concentration of global media corporations, their capacities should certainly be strengthened.



Discursive distinctions: gender aspect of reporting

If we analyse gender-related structures in reporting on migrations, it can be seen that gender representations are conservative. Migrations are primarily a male domain and reports use archetypical categories – men are dynamic, active, they are in motion, whereas women are men's property, static, passive, staying in the same place, they are pregnant, give birth and stay with children, they are being led, dragged along, assisted, carried around, protected, defended and so on, as exemplified below:

Two young men also took two women with them. The policemen pushed one of them away as he got near. The women were standing on the bridge, while the migrants were yelling louder and louder from the other side. Again, shouts could be heard: 'No Croatia, Germany'. It is obvious that migrants only want to pass through Croatia to get to Germany. As the two men kept trying to cross the bridge, dragging two women along, the clamour of the other migrants was getting louder and louder. (...) The video then shows the migrants helping one of the women crossing the bridge, who was closest to the tear gas, as it seems (INDEX.HR, 19 JUNE 2018).

(Martin Pauk, The Independents for Croatia) Since irregular migrants do not respect at all the immigration laws of the countries they come to, including Croatia, I'd set up well-stocked machine gun nests in the second line of defence, behind the wire fence and border police as well as the most elite platoons, just to make them realize that we are serious, that Croatians are not wimps like the Swedes and that we are ready to protect the safety of our homes, towns, women, mothers and sisters (24SATA, 6 NOVEMBER 2018).

Everything's fine until someone's home, or, God forbid, child or wife gets hurt. The police are doing their job, but there isn't enough of them. Four police officers to twenty migrants. What can they do? – Mate Vujčić wonders (RTL.HR, 2 NOVEMBER 2019).

The archetype of a woman as being passive, static and vulnerable is reaffirmed in numerous articles, where the police 'rescue' freezing, tired, exhausted women, who are often infantilized and put in the same category with children.

The van was full of migrants, including vulnerable groups – women and underage children (NET.HR, 25 DECEMBER 2018).

As N1 discovered, the night was calm and migrants slept on the ground, keeping warm by the fire they had lit. There are about 250 of them, including women and children (INDEX.HR, 25 OCTOBER 2018).

To make sure they get help as quickly as possible, the police officers carried children aged between 1 and 10 and women on their hands all the way to their vehicles, treading through half-meter-deep snow. The children and women received medical treatment at the site and were then transported to Gospić General Hospital (Net.hr, 18 January 2018).

'Why were Croatian border police put in a position where they must make crying children and their mothers walk out of our country on a cold, rainy night?', the association wonders... (NET.HR, 12 MARCH 2018).

Motherhood and pregnancy are also highlighted as particularly fragile conditions, with brave policemen, appearing as their rescuers, 'carrying them in their hands' and even helping them in childbirth in the middle of a forest.

After crossing the border, a pregnant woman and a mother with a six-month-old child got trapped in the mountain. The terrain is extremely treacherous, Dalmatinski portal learned from Srđan Vrsalović, head of Croatian Mountain Rescue Service's helicopter rescue. 'The mother hurt her leg. One team went on foot and we took off from Firule shortly after 2 PM. We pulled all three of them up into the helicopter and took them to the hospital in Knin, where doctors and the police were waiting for them,' said Vrsalović. He pointed out that the rescue operation was extremely demanding (INDEX, 26 OCTOBER 2018).

The police searched the terrain on foot because it is quite inaccessible and Plješivica mountain is also covered with deep snow. Just before 2 PM, they found a child, a pregnant woman and 13 male individuals in the snow, who had crossed the state border illegally. Considering that the pregnant woman was in the very last stage of pregnancy and of poor physical health, members of Split Special Police Unit carried her in their arms to their vehicle. They immediately set off for Gospić to meet the ambulance, which was already on the way (DNEVNIK.HR, 24 MARCH 2019).

The MoI has warned that going on a journey in severe weather conditions and across challenging terrains can be deadly. On Tuesday at Lička Plješivica, while protecting the national border, the Croatian border police from Korenica Police Station noticed and rescued five exhausted irregular migrants – a pregnant woman, two children and two men – who got stranded in inaccessible terrain and cold, the MoI stated. Today, at about 4.15 PM, irregular migrants were noticed at Plješivica by police officers from Korenica Border Police Station. Migrants were trapped in inaccessible terrain near Škipine (VEČERNJI.HR, 10 DECEMBER 2019).

(Title) Migrant woman gives birth on the road near Sisak, gets help from police officers (INDEX.HR, 6 NOVEMBER 2019).

(Title) Policemen help irregular migrant from Iraq give birth in the forest near Glina (TPORTAL.HR, 6 NOVEMBER 2019).

Dichotomous key identifies women as weak and men as strong. In situations referred to above, these 'strong' men are positive 'protagonists' – rescuers, usually 'our' policemen, members of the Croatian Mountain Rescue Service, household members and veterans. However, there is also a negative representation of 'strong' male migrants, who are often discursively constructed as young, strong, fit for military service and tough, implying that they are not people in need of help, but rather that they pose a potential threat above all else. This threat penetrates into 'our' territory (like a military invasion). In this sense, 'territory' may include different segments, from national territory to 'women' as a territory.

(Local woman from Šapjane) There's a sense of fear. We lock our doors, leave the lights on in our houses and yards at night. When I'm coming back from work in the evening, I ask my boys to wait for me in the yard (NET.HR, 3 NOVEMBER 2018).

Young, single men are particularly subject to especially negative discursive construction, since they are usually portrayed as a physically strong threat. In a particular context, this can be interpreted as an attempt to justify animosity towards migrants, because how could someone weak, a victim, be portrayed as a threat?

The manager of the mountain hut on Platak, Nedžad Brkić, has encountered migrants as well: They are all men. Of 500–600 people here around Platak, I have seen only one woman, so if you ask me, these are all rather dangerous young men under 30 (DNEVNIK.HR, 16 MAY 2019).

Residents of this village on the Slovenian border have been struggling with irregular migrants for 20 years. 'In the past, when irregular migrants were Romanians, Bulgarians, Albanians and so on, there were children and women as well and they came by bus. Now, there's not a single woman among them,' Mihanjek said (DNEVNIK.HR, 21 NOVEMBER 2019).

Women, and especially women with children, appear in media reports as a 'calming' factor: if women and children migrate as well, if they go beyond the archetype of being static and passive, there is a feeling of

understanding for them because they certainly would not go on such a journey if it was not out of necessity. Besides, women are not associated with violence, war or conflicts, so their presence is preferable. They are harmless and their presence guarantees that the reason for migration is justified. In contrast, the migration of young single men is perceived as 'foreigners' conquering new territories.

Just like the constructions depicting women as weak, vulnerable, fragile and exhausted, their roles are traditional as well: the wife, the mother and the family woman. For instance, when reporting about a traffic accident in which a van with migrants slid off into a river, several media outlets quoted the same sentences: 'As we know, the woman who tried to save her children died in the van, as she could not be resuscitated. Her husband and two children are in the hospital in Sisak (Hrt.hr, 26 August 2019). It is not completely clear where the reporters got the information that the woman was trying to save her children (while the husband, i.e. the father was not), seeing as the woman drowned in the sinking van and everything happened in a matter of seconds. In this case, we can also recognise the archetype of the mother sacrificing her life for her children.

Although less frequent, there is also the traditional role of a woman as the helper, who make sandwiches, provide clothing, etc. for migrants:

Nothing, not even the expressions of satisfaction or the large eyeglasses on her face, could hide her exhaustion and care for the people taken in by her and her husband Huso, who had left for Germany just before our arrival, (24 SATA, 15 APRIL 2018).

In the rare reports where women are 'villains', they are discursively constructed as deceitful liars, like the case where the police rescued a 'pregnant woman' who turned out not to be pregnant, or as 'abettors' in smuggling chains. However, it must be pointed out that such cases are extremely rare:

The police have found that the 14 suspects, aged 20 to 47, including one woman, smuggled at least 119 persons between late July and mid-October on at least 13 occasions (NET.HR, 7. DECEMBER 2018).

(Title) Migrant smugglers: 13 arrested, including one woman. They pocketed around HRK 700 thousand (RTL.HR, 28 AUGUST 2019).

As actors in media reports, women are most often associated with the home and children, forming an integral part of the family. Therefore, they are often represented within the thematic code of integrations,

because such articles primarily deal with acceptance of families in a certain place, focusing on their daily routines and family lives. In such cases, we can see the traditional male and female roles, with the father in the centre as the head of the family. The father is commonly associated with employment, while the mother is associated primarily with the home and children. She looks for a job only if she is a single mother, but then it is explicitly said that the husband died in a war.

Of course, this can be 'justified' on the grounds of conservative cultures these families come from. However, if we also consider other dimensions of reporting on migrations, it is evident that these are primarily conventions that are present in the Croatian society.

After having been through the same experience, an Afghan family got stuck at this spontaneously put together camp, where people being returned from the border all come. Ali, together with his pregnant wife and three small children, flew from Iraq to Belgrade. After spending three months in Serbia, he paid smugglers two thousand euros to take him and his family to western Europe (RTL.HR, 6 SEPTEMBER 2018).

'We love it in Zadar, we feel safe. The town is beautiful and we would like to thank Mr Ninčević for welcoming us. I am a pastry chef by trade and I have also worked at a perfume shop. I can't wait to start working here,' said Abdel Kader Al Swere (29), who came to Zadar with his wife Hala and their three small children (24SATA, 30 JANUARY 2018).

I feel reborn. This is a second chance for me and my family. We ran for our lives from the war in Syria and I can see that we are now safe. We are beyond grateful to everyone for how they have welcomed us. These are the words of Shukri Hami (32) from Idlib in Syria, who arrived in Zadar in January with his wife and three children in a group of 40 refugees (24SATA, 12 FEBRUARY 2018).

'Now I just want to find a job, earn money and make sure that my wife is alright, that she is healthy,' - told us Said Ahmad Ibrahim, whom we visited together with his wife Gulistan Ammi in their new home in Karlovac (VECERNJI.HR, 15 DECEMBER 2019).

In rare instances where there is no 'head' of the family, the woman is referred to as the mother:

They settled down in Turkey for some time, but unfortunately, life in Turkey wasn't kind to them in that country either. The head of the family died of a heart attack. 'In such moments, it is hard to lose a loved one, someone you

found support in. But, regardless of the pain and suffering, we had to find strength and keep going,' said the mother, Alia Muslim (40), suppressing her tears (SBPLUS, 26 APRIL 2018).

In the context of reporting on integration in Croatia, there have also been descriptions of activities of associations which, besides giving general advice to learn the language, culture and customs and to find a job, have also focused on women in particular:

In specifically developed 'Women for Women' workshops, women will be encouraged to express their qualities, to regain awareness of their own value and to prepare themselves for an independent life in a new environment. There will also be weekly workshops organised for about 130 refugee children, designed specifically to target certain age, level of knowledge of Croatian and duration of stay in Croatia (HRT.HR, 5 APRIL 2018).

The majority of participants did not even know basic Croatian. Our students taught them to read and write in the Latin script in Croatian. The idea was to include women as much as possible because they are least likely to be given an opportunity to learn the language, considering they spend more time taking care of children and find it more difficult to get a job (JUTARNJI.HR, 4 MARCH 2019).

'Our team will also organise and hold a series of workshops dedicated to children and women, as well as intercultural meetings of citizens and migrants. Our goal is to create a trusting relationship and build the foundation for a future friendly and professional collaboration,' stated the Jesuit Refugee Service (INDEX.HR, 5 APRIL 2018).

When it comes to the analysis of gender and gender roles in media reports, it can be seen that women are discursively constructed as the antipode of men – vulnerable and weak victims in contrast to indestructible, strong heroes. However, men, who represent strength, have been given a double role: 'our' men – heroes and 'their' men – violent, potentially intimidating migrants. Media reports are not limited to just these models, but they undoubtedly represent the dominant reporting framework. Media representations of women are also usually limited to a few traditional roles: wives, future mothers, mothers and helpers.



Discursive distinctions: political practices and language signification

This research was focused primarily on the analysis of articles involving the general term ‘migrant’ and terms ‘refugee’ and ‘asylum’ in the belief that this would include refugees/asylees as the main subjects of the integration processes. However, in the search for such articles, the term ‘asylum seeker’ appeared in media representations as a relevant and commonly appearing category. Generally speaking, in media reports, the represented actors have rather varying signifiers: asylee, migrant, asylum seeker, refugee, person under international protection, immigrant, illegal asylum seekers, illegal immigrants, normal migrants, real refugees, etc. All these terms appear in the media content analysed. However, political actors in power have been continuously and intentionally drawing a clear distinction between migrants and refugees with a view to, on the one hand, justify controversial policies towards migrants on the border and, on the other hand, to present the arrival of refugees who are part of the relocation and resettlement quotas arranged on an international level as the only acceptable method of reception and protection seeking.

If we consider the discursive constructions appearing in the media, cocreated by reporters and their sources (mostly political actors in power), it can be seen that the meanings of the circulating terms migrant – asylum seeker – refugee (person under international protection) form some kind of a continuum with two poles – good and evil. This polarity starts with migrants, portrayed as persons on the move with bad intentions. They are followed by asylum seekers, who are captured and arrested or who have arrived, are not on the move and have questionable intentions. Finally, there are persons under international protection, who have been chosen for resettlement, who are not on the move and have good intentions. While the categories of migrant and refugee (person under personal protection) are juxtaposed in a black-and-white dichotomy (illegal migrants, illegal, irregular and uncontrolled migrations as opposed to legal, regular and controlled migrations of refugees who have been cleared and verified by relevant institutions, i.e., persons under international protection), the third category, the one ‘in-between,’ often in a limbo between illegal moving and a legitimate stay, is the ‘asylum seeker’ category. Asylum seekers are particularly controversial and there is a discursive struggle fought about what they *signify*, i.e., about defining and classifying them clearly.¹² There are few actors trying to bring complexity into these simplified representations in the media, mostly associations dealing with human rights, the Government Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities, other entities working on integration and some parts of the academic community, but they are relatively less present in the media as sources.

12. The complexity of interpretation and failure to understand that asylum seekers are persons who expressed their intent to apply for international protection is contributed to by all the aforementioned dimensions of doubt about the veracity and credibility of the applicant's intention and about the fact that Croatia could actually be someone's desired refuge in the national asylum and integration system, rather than a mere stop on their way to more desirable destinations in western Europe.

In the discursive construction, the distinction is migrant – person moving for various reasons which are most often not ‘good’ enough to evoke sympathy, acceptance or help. This is ‘illegal/unlawful’ movement which needs to be penalized, so migrants are ‘arrested’, ‘shot’ and ‘captured’. They must be fought because they penetrate into national territory and pose a threat:

Migrants keep coming in. Only a few days after a Syrian stole an Opel Astra in the Biokovo hinterland, a group of migrants tried to break into two vans in the centre of Vrgorac, as Slobodna Dalmacija reports. The police have their hands full on both sides of the border (RTL.HR, 2 NOVEMBER 2019).

(MoI) The police protect the borders at all costs The Republic of Croatia deployed a significant number of police officers to protect the border with the Republic of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is at the highest risk of illegal migrations (DNEVNIK.HR, 13 MARCH 2019).

(Minister Božinović) ‘(...) it must be said clearly that nobody wants these people in Europe,’ Božinović said. ‘If the Croatian police did not protect the border this way,’ the Minister says, ‘the situation with migrants in Slovenia, Austria and even in Croatia would be much different’ (RTL.HR, 17 DECEMBER 2018).

(Minister Božinović) ‘At this point, authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina are working together with partners and conducting a comprehensive investigation. However, this is yet another indicator that countries must protect their borders like Croatia does. This confirms that our approach is correct and this is our message to Bosnia and Herzegovina and other countries – they must protect external borders, otherwise anybody can get inside,’ said Božinović. He added that this case proves that waves of migrants can also bring persons whose intentions toward Croatian and EU citizens are not good (INDEX.HR, 20 FEBRUARY 2019).

The descriptions of ‘capturing’ migrants also show their discursive dehumanization by drawing implicit or explicit analogies with animals: they walk in groups and are being captured (‘captured migrants’), causing material damage along the way:

We would help these people because it is the humane thing to do, but when we see what they are doing – breaking in, destroying, burning, breaking things... Ajvar relish and Red Bull. Food that migrants are buying at a store in Lič. In need of refreshment, with small jars and cans in their hands, they walk through Gorski Kotar, along forest paths that maybe no one has ever

set foot on before. They are on their way to a better future. However, what they are leaving behind on that path looks awful. Forget about broken plates, ransacked houses or fires lit in the middle of other people’s rooms. Over the past few months, uneasiness and fear have been a part of everyday life in Gorski Kotar. That is the problem. Through no fault of their own, the people of Gorski Kotar live in new circumstances. They are embittered. They do not know what to do. Their land has turned into the Wild West. (VECERNJI.HR, 19 MAY 2019).

Catching and capturing migrants are activities that cost the country a lot (from police and Croatian Mountain Rescue Service interventions to healthcare):

(Police Union President) Jagić concluded that ‘these migrants, after all, come at the expense of us, the taxpayers.’ He also added that he did not understand why someone would even try to cross the border if they knew it was illegal and they should not be doing it (DNEVNIK.HR, 19 NOVEMBER 2019).

Migrants are ‘fake refugees’ with a hidden agenda – mostly economic reasons implicitly seen as an *a priori* exploitation of a generous welfare state, which is (still) a perceived characteristic of the desired recipient country, to some degree. An ‘economic migrant’ in this context connotes being rational, calculating and even selfish, especially if we take into account the fact that these same migrants ‘have money’ and all ‘have a mobile phone’. It is interesting that the expression ‘seeking one’s fortune’ in the Croatian cultural context signifies a legitimate and justified reason for leaving your country. However, that saying, which used to be associated with extreme poverty, is in this context translated into something entirely different:

The fact is, things have changed a bit – thousands of people are waiting on the Croatian border, mostly economic migrants, people who want to make it to the rich western countries, they are not fleeing from their collapsed countries. There are certainly some thieves, bandits and criminals among them – because, if you are wanted for a serious crime, is there anything better than getting a new identity in a well-governed country a few thousand kilometres away? (INDEX.HR, 4 NOVEMBER 2018).

Migrations are certainly one of the key issues of our time and as such, they require a serious approach. However, it has turned out that an approach which does not make a distinction between refugees and economic migrants benefits mostly human traffickers and organizations pushing their own

political agendas on the pretence of providing help. These are the people who find an Arab wearing a tracksuit and a gold chain exotic and cool, while a Croatian with the same outfit is nothing but a redneck in white socks. These are the people who help impoverished people worldwide, but at the same time rest on the shoulders of our own poor people with their NGOs. They criticise others for their lack of Christian morality, failing to understand that the Christian imperative to help those in need does not mean making them dependent on the state budget (VECERNJI.HR, 8 DECEMBER 2018).

Another negative connotation associated with ‘the migrant’ is more or less explicitly related to terrorism – these are all young men in their prime (Since migrations are defined by movement and activity, the question is whether weak people can migrate at all?), who are an implicit threat, a potential army against which ‘borders must be protected’ at this spot, once again as the Bulwark of Christendom. Migrants have hidden intentions which are not always good for Europe, they are deserters leaving their homeland to fight against other countries.

(Minister Božinović in Turkey) ‘In a few weeks, our mission from MoI will come to Turkey and choose another 100 people from the camps to come to Croatia. However, it is important that no wrong steps are taken in these integration efforts, because everything that eventually turned out to be a failure of the EU integration policy has come back in the form of very radical events in recent history,’ Božinović said (INDEX.HR, 30 JANUARY 2019).

One year ago, one of our experts [name not indicated] forecasted that new migration routes would pass through Croatia and that the strongest pressure would come from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro. I published this forecast with arrows indicating the route and many scoffed at the text. This forecast has now been fully confirmed. From what can now be seen in the field, he says that these groups of migrants are scouts testing and checking future routes for much larger groups of migrants. Many who have dealt with these groups have noticed that a lot of them have military training and are very fit. A trained eye will also notice their good clothes and footwear as well as top-quality phones and navigation devices. Our departments have noticed they have credit cards they can use at any ATM and that they receive money on their accounts successively, after they have reported how far they have come on the route (VECERNJI.HR, 4 NOVEMBER 2018).

Migrants are also associated with smugglers: they are often victims of smuggling (‘unfortunate migrants’), but regardless of their portrayal as victims in this context, the phenomenon of irregular migrations itself is

closely related to smuggling, with one leading to the other. Smugglers who transport people across borders illegally in exchange for money are the biggest ‘villains’. They are insensitive, calculating and would stop at nothing. In this criminal environment, they are also associated with drug and arms traffickers. Therefore, migrations have been continuously associated with illegal activities and crime.

On the other hand, ‘asylum seekers’ live in uncertainty, waiting to be granted or denied their international protection. They are the cornerstone of the discursive struggle between civil society organisations active on the national and supranational level and the representatives of official government. These are persons who have come to a country irregularly (either arriving without a valid visa or staying once their visa has expired), but who have the right to seek asylum, which consequently implies instituting a specific procedure. While civil society organisations claim, according to the testimonies of migrants expressing their intent to seek asylum, that the Croatian police do not act in accordance with due procedure and deny them their legal right to seek asylum, making them go back across the border to the territories of other countries, representatives of competent government institutions allege that ‘asylum-seekers’ most often exploit the concept of asylum, pointing out that such people are no refugees.

In that sense, there are two conflicting examples involving asylum seekers. The first one is the death of a young girl, Madina Hussiny and her family’s multiple attempts to be seek asylum in Croatia multiple times. As pointed out by civil society organizations (CPS, AYS) in the media, this case is a typical example of cruel and illegal actions of Croatian competent institutions. The second case involved the Syrian migrant Wadie Ghazi, who sought asylum in several countries, including Croatia. His story was widely reported because he claimed he had lost his daughter in Croatia due to a police arrest, which turned out to be untrue. This case served Croatian competent institutions as proof that they are right claiming that, in accordance with negative stereotypes, asylum seekers are deceitful and abuse the concept of international protection, thus abusing the system.

(Minister Božinović) Most of them are economic migrants who have no real need for international protection. He noted that the majority of migrants trying to cross the Croatian border have no real need for international protection, since they are mostly economic migrants whose illegal crossings, abuse of the asylum system and secondary movements call into question the survival of the Schengen Area and the European asylum policy. ‘To achieve their goal of entering some of the countries in western and northern Europe, irregular migrants falsify their personal identity information and usually

have no ID documents at all because they hide, throw away or destroy them. Also, migrants are not coming to Croatian borders directly from areas where their lives and safety were threatened. On the contrary, persons trying to cross the Croatian border irregularly have passed through at least one EU member state where they could have sought international protection. Had it been found that they actually needed it, they could have exercised their right to such protection', said the Minister (DNEVNIK.HR, 14 AUGUST 2018).

Due to the abuse of international protection rights, this year we have 1,627 asylum seekers and persons expressing their intent to seek asylum. They spend 25 days in the asylum seekers reception centre in Porin, on average, which is approximately the time they have to wait for their asylum seeker's identity card. The problem is they then try again to cross borders illegally and this is why we have so many police interventions in the first place – explained Zoran Ničeno, Head of Border Department of the MoI and member of the General Police Directorate (VECERNJI.HR, 29 NOVEMBER 2019).

In order to shift from being perceived as an 'undeserving' migrant to become an asylum seeker, migrants pass a test to justify their movements, with the media constantly reporting whether they have expressed their intent to seek asylum or not.

Yesterday, at around 5:30 PM, the policemen in charge of suppressing illegal migrations found 71 people in a forest near Zlobin, who have been put in detention for further identification due to lack of identity documents. Checks conducted so far have shown that all these foreign nationals are in Croatia illegally. None of them have expressed the intent to seek asylum and, consequently, they will be subjected to procedure in accordance with the Foreigners Act (INDEX, 23 NOVEMBER 2019).

If they do not express the intent to seek asylum, it is implied that they are conmen. On the other hand, if they do seek asylum, but afterwards try to go to some other country in western Europe, they are not loyal, Croatia is not good enough for them, it is not their desired destination. This again implies they are actually economic migrants who simply wanted to buy some time before their illegal transfer via smuggling routes. It is precisely loyalty that is often highlighted in articles about asylees (persons under international protection), since it is repeatedly pointed out how they chose Croatia as their new home voluntarily, through resettlement.

Asylum seekers who stay in Croatia waiting for the outcome are sometimes described as being prone to excessive behaviour (primarily

men): 'threatened to jump' from a pole, 'knifed' another passenger on a bus, committed serious thefts, attacked a guard verbally and physically, Iraqi national who has been granted asylum 'is persuading migrants to cross the border illegally' at Maljevac and so on.

According to the first reports, the police engaged with an international protection seeker. On Tuesday night, there was an incident in Vatikanska street in Dugave, in a ZET bus. Zagreb police has reported that police officers engaged with persons involved in the incident in Vatikanska street. The first reports claim that the incident involved an international protection (asylum) seeker. The police is yet to provide other details about the incident. According to some information circulating the media, the attacker allegedly used a knife, while others claim he used scissors (VECERNJI.HR, 31 JULY 2019).

When reports about asylum seekers are neutral or positive-toned, they mostly concern the life at reception centres, and children in particular. Finally, when the media report about 'real' refugees, they usually have a positive approach towards them and even incorporate elements of propaganda, probably with the intention of encouraging a positive attitude among audiences, in accordance with the prevailing policy of the country and dominant discourse. Persons under international protection are victims, it is suggested that they are modest, want peace and a simple everyday life – they are just good people. It is pointed out that they are part of a legal procedure and that Croatia is their choice.

Syrians who are in Zadar did not enter Croatia illegally; instead, they had requested to come to Croatia and be allowed to seek asylum here while they were still in Turkey. They are a part of the pilot project of providing support to the Government of the Republic of Croatia in refugee resettlement (24SATA, 30 JANUARY 2018).

In this category, the fundamental 'unit' being reported about is the family. These are people who have suffered the horrors of war, who are coming here as part of the agreed resettlement quotas, and they require accommodation:

Two Syrian families have come to Karlovac. For them, just like for eight more families that are also going to arrive over the next 14 days, the Central State Office for Reconstruction and Housing Care has furnished ten apartments. The families, who have fled the war in their homeland without any possessions, will be able to start a normal life. The apartments have been furnished to suit the families' needs. This cost the country about

HRK 1 million, 75% of which was covered by the grant from the European Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (NET.HR, 17 NOVEMBER 2019).

After the poor conditions they used to live in, this family has so far seen only a part of the culture in the country they have chosen as their permanent home (HRT.HR, 20 JANUARY 2018).

Asylees (persons under international protection) are people ‘just like anybody else’, who are trying to find peace and happiness for their family. They are kind and gentle. Their culture is different, but they want to learn and integrate. They have chosen Croatia as their new home deliberately, they love Croatia and Croatians and the last thing they want is to be the country’s financial burden.

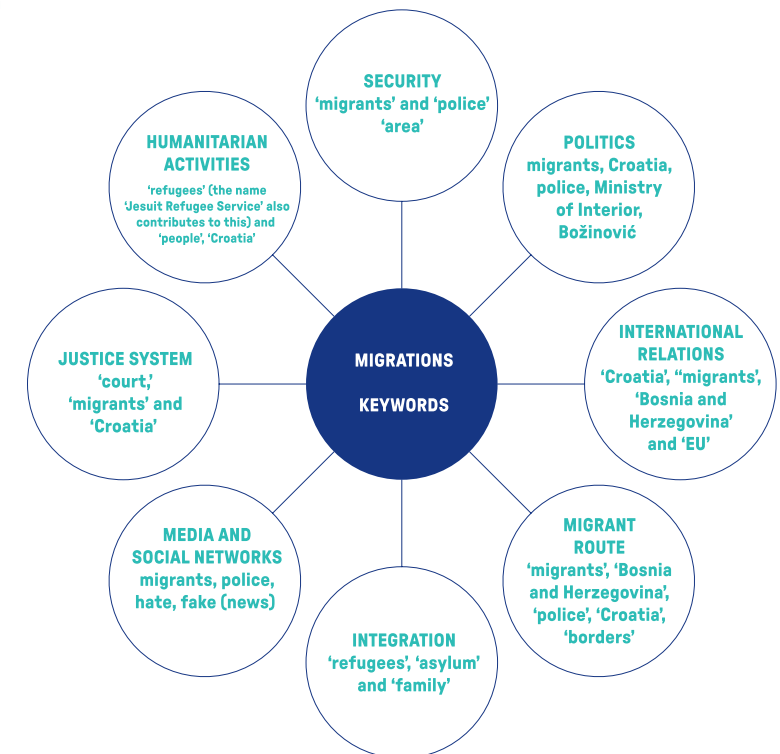
These terms and distinctions made this way actually represent types of migrants because ‘migrant’ is an umbrella term for all other signifiers. Therefore, the terminological distinction in the dichotomous key of black and white, aimed at legitimizing certain status policies, does not really work all that well in the practical circulation and construction of meaning (cf. Robertson, 2019). A good indicator of this is the Government’s attempt to establish a reception centre for asylum seekers in Petrinja, which was met with resistance from both local politicians and ‘Petrinja defenders’, who represented the locals:

(War Veterans’ Initiative) Our entire county has been completely neglected and systematically destroyed, especially Banovina and Kordun, which were soaking in the blood of our veterans during the Homeland War. Illegal migrants are everywhere, they have been destroying, stealing and breaking into abandoned buildings. The people are afraid, and rightly so. We are afraid for ourselves and our children because we can see what is happening around us. We are rightly afraid that they are not coming to be integrated, live and work, as we are witnessing every day (JUTARNJI.HR, 9 MAY 2019).

We can see that the attempt to create a clear, but mutually exclusive discursive distinction between the types of migrants leads to confusion about terms and meanings. In the example above, asylum seekers are equated with ‘illegal migrants’. Use of that term itself might not be as significant if this did not imply a systematic discrediting of the general group (migrants), while at the same time attempting to affirm the status of its subgroup (refugees/persons under international protection and, in case of Petrinja, asylum seekers), which subgroup is ‘treated’ differently because, depending on the context, there is an attempt to present a subgroup as being different from the group to which it belongs by definition.

Generally speaking, in addition to the aforementioned results, the analysis of media representations during this two-year period gives us some general insights and raises some new noteworthy questions that should be discussed separately.

Figure 13.
Keywords within
specific themes



If we take a look at Figure 13, we can see some of the most frequent keywords repeating under individual themes: 'migrant' appears in all themes except integration and humanitarian activities, where the signifiers 'refugee' and 'people' appear instead. Another frequent keyword is 'Croatia', which is always among the most frequent ones, except under thematic categories security and integration. 'Police', however, appears under security, politics, migrant route and media and social networks, while 'Bosnia and Herzegovina' can be found under international relations and migrant route. Although some keywords are repeated, every theme also has a distinctive keyword which, combined with the recurrent keywords, indicates the thematic content forming distinctive categories: 'area' (security), 'MoI' and 'Božinović' (politics), 'EU' (international relations), 'borders' (migrant route), 'family' and 'asylum' (integration), 'hate' and 'fake' ('news') (media and social

Discussion

networks), 'court' (justice system) and 'people' (humanitarian activities). Even though this is not enough to fully encompass the complex nature of discursive constructions of meaning, it can serve as one of the indicators of the understanding and thematic organising of the migration phenomenon in Croatian media. This phenomenon falls primarily within the boundaries of national states as formations covering a certain territory (area) defined by borders, within which a repressive apparatus is mobilised (police, ministry, minister) and competent legal authority is defined, which indicates the domination of the securitization-based interpretive framework of this phenomenon. A distinctive discourse is formed in integration and humanitarian activities, where 'people', 'families' and 'refugees' fall under the humanitarian interpretive framework, i.e. there is a clear distinction between the 'victim', who needs to be treated 'humanely' (refugees) and the 'danger' from which we must 'defend' ourselves (migrants). The humanitarian approach, which dominated at the time when the Balkan corridor was established, in 2015 and 2016, was present in the observed period only marginally, as an indicator of openness of the Croatian society, but in political debates it was used, to some extent, as an aspect that could be interpreted even as a certain naivety of the previous political power holders. Therefore, our results point to certain similarities with other studies highlighting the aspect of security in representations and interpretations of migrations as a social phenomenon (cf. Berbić Kolar and Gligorić, 2017; Car, Čančar and Bovan, 2019; Dobrić Basanež and Ostojić, 2021).

To some extent, this is a reflection of broader changes in European policies that are transferred to the national level in various aspects, with some of the changes being regarded as external conditioning by the EU for the purpose of protecting the borders (Čepo, Čehulić and Zrinščak, 2020). The issue of migrants is presented as a global, broader European problem that Croatia neither created nor can resolve. However, it is making every effort to solve this 'issue', 'protecting the longest land border of the European Union' (recurrent syntagm). In that sense, migrants are distant, they do not represent an integral part of the Croatian society and/or are not recognised as a subject of public policies because Croatia is not their desired destination in the first place. Therefore, the fundamental goal is to solve the 'issue' elsewhere, within the EU or in the countries outside the EU, preferably in the countries of their origin. Accordingly, the discourse of media reporting, which reflects the hegemonic discourse, suggests that migrants are primarily a burden in terms of safety and administration. The dominant narrative portrays migrants as people who have no intention of staying in Croatia and who do not see Croatia as their

desired destination, but pose a problem because of their 'onrush' onto the border and uncontrolled movement across the Croatian territory. Even the transit itself is problematic: when they cross borders illegally, they break the law, waste resources of the police, medical services and other public institutions, destroy resources and change the lives of local people living along 'migrant routes'. The very syntagm 'protection of borders' from migrants suggests that national integrity has potentially been compromised and that there is a threat from which we must be protected. Migrants are also dangerous because there is a risk of them 'getting stuck', i.e. remaining within the country's territory on their way through it, due to border closure policies of other European states, causing fear that Croatia will become a hotspot for migrants.

That way, at the same time, the media discourse confirms what has been discovered in the studies of attitudes towards migrants, namely that they can pose both a real and a symbolic threat at the same time, with the former occurring as a result of a perceived threat to personal and national safety, economic power and material prosperity of a society, and the latter being reflected in a perceived threat to national identity and cultural values of one's own group compared to the 'threatening Others' (cf. Pereira, Vala and Costa-Lopes, 2009; Mrakovčić and Grgurović, 2020). Both dimensions of the threat, which combined are understood as an 'integrated threat' (Stephan, Ybarra and Bachman, 1999), can take the form of discriminating practices against migrants, not only in institutional treatment and daily encounters, but also in media representations.

Writing about 'categorical fetishism', Crawley and Skelparis (2018) reminded us that official discourses about people on the move neglect or often oversee the complexity of human mobility conditioned on a combination of social, economic and political factors, which means that the lived experience of migration goes above and beyond and transposes official classification, conceptual and policy-based categories that are present in legal, political and other professional discourses and policies. Our analysis has also shown how the use of terms migrant, refugee (and asylum seeker) by the media actually reinforces the constructed, but simplifying dichotomy even further: 'refugees' as those who are allowed, deserving and welcome and 'migrants' as those who are unwanted, fake and threatening, as a phenomenon which – through the media as well – re-establishes a mechanism that is present among politicians and other public policy makers and that essentially separates and discriminates ones against the others, even though refugees, too (as a special group of forced migrants, especially in the asylum seeking phase) are at the risk of falling prey to defamatory representations. In this regard, media reports rarely make complex

associations between the macro-level of this social phenomenon and the life stories of both groups that would shed a light not only on the complexity of their motivation for migration, but also on the potential changes in the status and life positions of somebody who is 'on the move', which often eludes one-dimensional labels or shifts in the course of so-called mixed migration flows. When it comes to their status, individuals 'on the move' can sometimes belong to two or more different predefined categories. Also, they often tell their story to the authorities by constructing it in a way which corresponds to a predefined legal category, such as, for instance, asylum seekers during the refugee status determination procedure (cf. Zetter, 2015).

In this context, social reality, of course, is a reality that is more complex than deliberately or accidentally simplified presentations of something that could be described as a migration path, where it is possible to go back and forth between different statuses or to give up on them. For instance, one can go from a forcibly displaced person, international migrant with an expired visa or an asylum seeker back to a smuggled irregular migrant, irregularized and rejected asylum seeker and even a potential human trafficking victim, only to eventually obtain a desired legal or regularized residence status under a resettlement program or find some other permanent, sustainable solution for persons looking for an opportunity to have a safe and better life away from their country of origin.

However, even the term 'refugee' is not free from problematic political connotations, which can be seen in the institutional categorical fractionation (refugees as opposed to migrants), whereby the 'label' refugee actually recreates a discourse of resistance to their arrival, resistance to one of the groups at the expense of the other, and resistance to both groups, as Zetter reminds us (2015). In the local context, we have seen that the period immediately after the closure of the Balkan corridor (although the Balkan route is still used) also marked a change in national policies and media discourse and attitudes, when all of a sudden refugees in transit to Germany and other western countries due to the border closures gradually became (just) migrants who got stuck because they were stopped and rejected at the borders. According to some research (Čepo, Čehulić and Zrinščak, 2020), a change in the use of terms, namely from 'refugee', which was used in the first phase, to 'migrant,' which is now used as the dominant term, suggests a discursive change from 'welcome, refugees' to 'stop migrants'. The change in these signifiers represents the authorities' shift from the humanitarian to the securitization approach. However, according to the authors, there is no specific, inherent, nationally relevant reason that would explain such a shift better than the impact of external conditioning by

the EU and the implicit assumption of the role of a border police officer, in which role Croatia protects other western EU member countries from unwanted, irregular migrants.

It seems that the methods of media reporting on migrants and refugeehood, which involve the aforementioned aspects of dichotomous categorizations and the dominance of the dimension of threat, are, to some degree, similar in the majority of the countries in the region. These are the countries on the migrants' Balkan route, where 'migrants are perceived as an object and a problem' (Vuletić and Filipović, 2019; 135). As we have seen earlier, the desubjectification of migrants, combined with the hegemonic rhetoric about threat and security, is the fundamental determinant of media reporting in Slovenia (Vezovnik and Šarić, 2020). Based on an analysis of media content on Bosnian and Herzegovinian portals, Kržalić and Kobajica (2021) concluded that the media in Bosnia and Herzegovina shape and present migrants in negative-toned reports, contributing heavily to sensationalism and politicization of an already complex subject. Consequently, this leads to discriminating, stereotypical and stigmatising tendencies in the Bosnian and Herzegovinian public as well as to a possible loss of public trust in competent government actors. An analysis of texts and visual presentations in Car, Čančar and Bovan (2019) produced similar conclusions, i.e. that in both formats the people were initially predominantly addressed as 'refugees' and portrayed as victims. While Hungary, and later Slovenia as well, was portrayed as being hostile toward refugees, Croatia was presented as a sympathetic, friendly, welcoming environment. However, these interpretive frameworks changed after the Paris terrorist attack (November 2015). Ever since then, refugees have been more commonly portrayed as 'migrants' and a threat, which was well before the Balkan corridor was closed.

Our analysis shows that explicit associations between migrants and religion, or denotative presentation and highlighting of the fact that migrants are members of a different religion, are not that common, unlike in some other countries in central and eastern Europe (e.g. the Czech Republic, see Jelínková, 2019). Although a study by Babić and Huntić (2018) identified anti-refugee and anti-Islamic rhetoric on some less visited Croatian web portals (mostly right-wing), here we can see that explicit associations between migrants and Islam can be found primarily under the theme of security and politics, especially among political actors of the radical right-wing ideological orientation. Such associations are normally indicated by using toponyms of the countries of origin (Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan...), by highlighting the country where refugees were initially placed (Turkey) or their last location on the way to western Europe (Velika Kladuša in Bosnia and

Herzegovina) and their personal names. Nevertheless, there are more subtle, implied differences that can be inferred from the characterization of migrants as young, single men (unlike the connotation of ‘family’), who are strong and fit for military service, fighting, knifing others, causing trouble and organizing protests on the border, who keep trying the game (attempting to enter and cross national territory), who have suspicious intentions, a hidden agenda and mission, who may even be following instructions by unknown third parties, because they have money (meaning they are not who they claim to be) and so on. All of this is a part of the broad imaginarium that sees migrants as a threat to others, which is especially present in the countries of the Visegrád Group (cf. Goździak and Márton, 2018), but also in our local context during the observed period.

This creates a discourse that revolves around defending national territory, but also the territory of the EU, which entails defending European culture and values, however imaginary the attempt to think of them in terms of some homogenous categories may be. In this case, the symbolic threat is present mostly implicitly. However, it is present directly in the rhetoric of right-wing political parties and even in the President’s statements, with the motif of a threat to Christian and civilizational values also finding its way to the analysed national and regional media, including in the form of racist posts and fake news published by certain politicians from extreme right-wing political parties or citizens on social networks. Therefore, the burning security issue pertains primarily to territorial control and physical damage caused by migrants on their journey. The image of migrants thus created is still an image of deviancy, mostly of persons hiding, running, moving at night, not revealing their real economic reasons behind entering European countries, and risking their lives doing so, but also endangering the property of people living in the areas they pass through. Seeing that migrants are discursively constructed as the threatening Others, they cannot be included in the symbolic order of the national community, and consequently they represent the idea of what the national community is not – this opens up space for construction of migrants that is in contrast to the normative sociocultural characteristics of Croatian national identity: ‘locals are afraid of migrants’. Based on the results of our research, it can be concluded that migrations are discursively constructed primarily as a ‘male’ domain. To some extent, this also implies double discrimination against women in the media, who are portrayed as ‘invisible’ compared to men or, based on a stereotypical and patriarchal key, as associated family members dependent on men (cf. Morokvašić, 2014). The archetypical portrayal of refugees in the media as helpless women (and children), who are

persecuted, poor and of a certain nationality, only supports the hegemonic, masculinized portrayals and narratives where women are in any case less ‘threatening’ and more ‘vulnerable’ than male refugees (Freedman, 2007; Esses et al., 2013). On the other hand, the discursive construction of women as a ‘calming’ factor, whose presence in migration flows is desirable in this context (connotations of family, peace and guaranteed security), puts men in an unfavourable position because their representations in the discourse carry the connotations of violence, war, conflict and conquering.

Using the theme of security as an example, three sub-themes were identified in media reporting: crime prevention, migrant rescue and protection of the local population. This prioritizes security of the national borders and territory, and, in terms of people’s security, protection of the locals from migrants as well as protection of migrants from the dangers of the environment and difficult routes they take. It is certainly hard to counterargue that local security is not something that every citizen desires and expects from their government authorities. However, tendentious media framing, including in the thematic category of security and migrant route, uses conceptual metaphors in reporting in order to describe potential and actual incidents in a sensationalist tone and key (‘migrant wave,’ ‘migrants break into,’ ‘inflow of migrants increases,’ ‘great wave of illegal migrants’, etc.) (cf. Gradečak, Milić and Župarić-Iljić, 2021). Hameršak and Pleše (2021) warned us that Croatian forests, mountains and rivers that migrants travel across were becoming a danger to their life, health and safety, seeing as the border and territorial protection and control policies turn them into a so-called ‘armed environment’ that serves the purpose of stopping, deflecting, restricting the movement and deterring migrants from national territory. The discursive dehumanization found in the descriptions of efforts to ‘capture’ migrants is reflected in our research in the conceptual metaphors and analogies with animals (hordes, packs, groups of migrants) who are hunted down like wild game (‘captured migrants’) because they cause damage to the natural environment and the local population’s property (homes, summer houses) on their way through Croatian forests. For instance, Bagarić and Mandić (2019: 2348) wrote how ‘the most read Croatian portals portrayed migrants as victims struggling with the hardships of life, misfortune and harsh weather, being at the mercy of a brutal European policy of closed borders and barbed wire’. On the other hand, our research has shown that, as they were passing through Croatian natural landscape, migrants were presented by the media as being reckless, much to their own detriment, which is why their rescuing required the use of national resources.

In reporting, the media primarily relies on official sources, both quantitatively (in terms of the number of articles that report the views of government representatives) and qualitatively (in terms of those views generally not being questioned), thus non-critically reinforcing the dominant official policy of persons in power. This can partly explain the fact that the media is dominated by negative representations of migrants as a population that causes controversy, poses a threat and represents a serious social problem. The official policy of the conservative right-wing government has securitization tendencies and we have also noticed that the securitization framework, as opposed to the humanitarian one, decreases in presence as the media reports rely less on sources of information coming from central government actors, which Hrnjić Kuduzović (2017) includes in 'elite sources', which is consistent with the findings of previous research (Korkut et al., 2020). In the analysed period, the humanitarian approach to migration was retained as unchanged only by those civil society actors who engaged in public debate about the actions of the police in their treatment of migrants, but those battles now take place within a wider securitization framework involving the necessity to protect borders and control migrant movements, which also represents a hegemonic position of political representatives in power (cf. Šelo Šabić, 2017). In such discursive struggles, civil society organizations (and the ombudsman) criticize how migrants are treated by the police (as an extension of the official politics), relying on the argument that human rights and the existing legal framework are being violated, while the holders of official political power defend themselves by denying such accusations and claiming that the legal framework is being complied with. In this case, based on the structuralist key, it is possible to recognise a meta-narrative of this discursive struggle, forming around the poles 'human' vs 'inhuman' (actions, treatment). What is interesting is that, based on the political and ideological key, voices coming from liberal left-wing civil society organizations boil down to the argument about the necessity of compliance with the law in democratic countries, which is a good indicator of the normalization and dominance of conservative right-wing values, which are also reflected in the securitization-based interpretive framework. Radical right-wing groups also add to this by exacerbating the issue, treating the migration phenomenon based on the key of enemy threat. This political and ideological gap is also reflected in the way in which the humanitarian interpretive framework appears in another aspect: reporting about humanitarian activities. When it comes to humanitarian activities, there is one dominant association – the Jesuit Refugee Service, most often represented in the media by Tvrtko Barun as the head. This can be partly linked with the

association's structural position, considering that, during the observed period, it was the official partner of the ministry competent for integration policies. Moreover, this same ministry has an antagonistic relationship with other civil society organizations (AYS, Welcome Initiative, CPS), which reflects the mutual association of social actors based on their political and ideological orientation. In this context, it is interesting that the media representations of the Jesuit Refugee Service's humanitarian activities are not associated with political engagement, but rather with humanitarian work (which nobody can deny or perceive in a negative way). In contrast, the humanitarian work of other secular civil society organizations is associated exclusively with political action or activism. Therefore, the specificity of humanitarian activities and integration is clearly discursively constructed. Specifically, there is a departure from the negative towards the positive tones, in which context key actors are civil society organisations, cultural and education workers, different actors from the local communities outside the domain of institutional politics, including the refugees themselves and journalists. Such media reports, although still mainly episodic and focused on covering specific events, often come in the form of a 'heart-warming human-interest story'.

In relation to these insights, it is necessary to highlight the significance of integration, which, thanks to the implementation of the third-country nationals resettlement program, emerged as a theme that was not that common in the past, at least judging from previous research conducted in Croatia. It is precisely the theme of integration that had the largest number of articles speaking positively about migrants and being dominated by the humanitarian discourse, in which migrants were portrayed as persons with their own histories, families, desires and motifs, often expressed by themselves. Although representations of victims, passivity and even infantilization are present here as well, this is more often implicit and, as it seems, not the intended effect, but rather a consequence of specific types of reporting, which is fairly common among other marginalized groups as well. The occurrence of such media representations evidently opposes the wider narrative and does not sit particularly well in a wider discourse, as visible in the relatively sharp distinction between that and other themes. As a rule, this theme had very little in common with other motifs. In media coverage, individual events are viewed from different interpretive angles, but this is not the case with the theme of integration. In some way, this theme is constructed in opposition to other themes and concerns some kind of a desirable solution to the problem, and that solution is migration control and regulation by using selection mechanisms (selection missions of the Ministry of the Interior and partners), resettling and

integrating a specific number of people who belong to a clear profile. In the thematic set 'integration', we found no examples of media reporting that would give a critical reflection of the positions of various actors regarding the understanding and questioning of the integration policy as the most desirable model of managing linguistic, ethnic, cultural and other differences in the receiving communities and in the society as a whole. In recent years, we have witnessed a local turn (cf. Zappata-Barrero, Caponio and Scholten, 2017) from understanding integration as a top-down process in which the general national policy is passed on to a local area for the purpose of ensuring the two-way process of the local population's and refugees' adaptation to each other, towards the understanding of integration as a local model of managing differences and as an immigrant acculturation strategy, which can even take place in three directions and also involve countries of origin and countries of transit, especially in an attempt to reunify families and/or in resettlement programs.

Our research suggests that integration is represented in the media as a complex, but regulated policy process in a relatively unregulated or still developing reception system in areas where refugees arrive through a resettlement program. This is how, in fact, as a result of new strategic orientation of national migration policy on the Schengen perimeter, new distinctions are made in the media in an attempt to reconcile the simultaneous attempts to stop migrants at borders and accept and integrate desirable-profile refugees. As highlighted multiple times in the overview of results, the Croatian Government has committed to participating in the European program of resettlement and relocation of third country citizens or stateless persons who meet the requirements for international protection, including the providing for Syrian refugees from Turkey. This implies a discursive 'chiselling out' of differences, which has become a constant in media representations, or in other words, it implies an attempt to distinguish between 'non-deserving migrants' and 'genuine refugees', so the related processes of construction of meaning are the most dominant characteristic of media reports in the observed period and perhaps represent the key to understanding the overall image of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in the media. It must be pointed out that this study, just like some other ones (Augoustinos and Quinn, 2003; Baričević and Koska, 2017; Crawley and Skleparis, 2018), has found that media reports tend to mix up basic terms serving as signifiers in the classifications deriving predominantly from legal, status-related and regulatory terminology, as well as that such terms are used inconsistently and unsystematically. Most often, this involves equating the terms 'migrant', 'asylum seeker' and 'asylee', which may be confusing for an average recipient of media content.

However, what is new in our local, Croatian context, is the fact that, after the Balkan corridor had been closed, the resettlement program came at the right time to perpetuate that dichotomy and the opportunistic version of humanitarianism (in addition to the security-based one, which has been present permanently and continuously), expressing the official attitude of the MoI and other stakeholders that Syrian refugees in Turkish camps represent a suitable and desirable profile of people, who are guaranteed protection and an opportunity to start a new life in Croatian local communities under controlled and regulated humanitarian mechanisms. Media representations of refugees who arrived under resettlement programs thus became a rewarding media topic in reports that passed on official government narratives, predominantly noncritically, about a welcome being extended to that population, with occasional glimpses of criticism in articles discussing the challenges and flaws in the reception and integration system on the national level and in local communities. Finally, if we move away from the discussion about what we 'found' in media representations to what we 'did not find', it can be noticed that economy does not appear at all as a theme that would discuss the positive or negative impacts of migration movements on the Croatian economy. Migrations represented in the media do have indirect economic repercussions, such as the mobilisation of national resources to address security issues, integration costs (furnishing apartments and ensuring other rights), potential impact on tourism or impact on employment and the labour market in the context of integration. However, economy is not present as an issue of interest or in the form of an extensive economic analysis. Therefore, the initial thematic code 'economy' was excluded and few articles belonging to that category were classified under 'other'. This can be understood, to some degree, in the context of an extremely small number of immigrants in the Croatian population. However, considering the trends, failure to address that social issue, which is important for the migration phenomenon, will have to be corrected.



Conclusion

In this research we focused on analysing media content to identify how migrants are represented in the media as a social group. The entire research is based on the idea that media representations primarily construct reality and affect how people judge and give meaning to social phenomena. The migration phenomenon is undoubtedly an important topic on the agenda of the media in Croatia, which also makes it a major social issue because the media are key actors in the area of constructing, perpetuating and conveying meaning. In that sense, the media have a central role in creating and guiding public discussions as well as informing the general population.

This research, using quantitative and qualitative content analysis, aimed to determine how migrants and refugees were represented in Croatian national, regional and local media in the period between 2018 and 2019. The results show that reports about these groups generally had the underlying element of security (34% of all media articles) and politics (30% of articles), followed by international relations (15%), migrant routes (7%) and integrations (7%). Other themes, such as the media, social networks, justice system and humanitarian activities were each represented by no more 2.5%. Generally speaking, in this period, reporting was characterised by two parallel processes: on the one hand, there was pronounced securitization of themes concerning migrations and asylum with respect to the European and national policies highlighting border and territory protection as a priority; and, on the other hand, humani(tari)sation of those refugees included in resettlement programs and later in integration policies. Nevertheless, securitization of one (dominant) part and humani(tari)sation of the other (resettlement policies) reflect political hegemony, so we can say that the media, instead of questioning the actions of political actors on behalf of the public, actually (co)create and perpetuate a hegemonic discourse uncritically. As we tried to show in the discussion, the greatest burden of these discursive practices, involving not only media representations, but also actual measures on the borders, eventually falls on asylum seekers. In this classification, they are in between (bad) migrants and (good) refugees, although it is uncertain to what extent the humanising integration-related strategies affect this situation, considering that the construction of these meanings takes place within a broader securitization context. Separating the so-called securitization and humanising discourse, which is accompanied by the distinction between migrants and refugees, must be subjected to critical thinking and rearticulation in an effort to represent 'migrants' primarily as 'people'. This is a prerequisite for any kind of acceptance and consequently for successful integration.

This research is specific based on its sample, which consisted of local and regional media the reach of covered places where refugees were accommodated or places from where accommodation of persons under international protection was planned and arranged (Zagreb, Velika Gorica, Zaprešić, Karlovac, Duga Resa, Zadar, Sisak, Slavonski Brod, Varaždin and Požega). In that sense, one of the starting points of the research was that local media reports would involve topics covering events of relevance for the local community. However, it turned out that there was very little reporting about this phenomenon by the local media, which is why it is necessary to strengthen their capacities because they have potential to make a contribution to integration processes at a local level.

The analysis of media representations has shed a light on media practices problematic for the public and for public interest, which, unfortunately, is nothing new: reporting on this topic is sensationalist and includes dramatization, patheticness and emotional manipulation of the audience, with the intention to rouse strong positive or negative feelings, with the central characteristic of reporting on this issue being the conflict format, in which conflict is presented as the fundamental social relation between different actors, opening up space for controversial actors to attract different audiences (regardless of potentially damaging consequences for the society in general). Frequent reports typically belong to the dominant media formats: criminal activities and crime pages, narrativized personalized tragedies and topics suited for ideological and identity-based political battles. Besides that, there is also a noticeable continuous gender stereotypization based on the conservative idea of gender. One can also notice the phenomenon of homogenised and duplicate/recycled media content, which is not created by original journalistic research as part of editorial work, but rather implies uninventive, and often even literal taking, copying and citing of texts written by other authors. This issue, along with the question of ethics, must also be examined in the context of journalists' precarious work conditions and extensive changes in technology use. Additionally, this topic is frequently reported in a simplified manner, non-critically, and reports are often made based on insufficiently verified information, sometimes even demonstrating a lack of knowledge of the subject-matter reported. This can be seen, for example, in improper use of terminology (asylum seeker, refugee, asylee, migrant, person under international protection, etc.).

Media reporting on migrations as a social phenomenon usually exhibits the incident-focused reporting style (focusing on accidents, police actions, political controversies); however, in the rare reports that deal with normalization of everyday life in the context of refugee

resettlement and their integration into the Croatian society, there are noticeably elements of propaganda reporting which reflects the intentions of the authorities. If we add to that the fact that the dominant sources visible in the media are precisely those from the official policy domain, the Ministry of the Interior in particular, one can safely conclude that most of the media reporting included in this analysis is in synergy with the discourse of political power holders and that the role of the government, politics and the media is crucial in the legitimization and (re)structuring of political, economic and social constellations.

References

- Ajduković, Dean; Čorkalo Biruški, Dinka; Gregurović, Margareta; Matić Bojić, Jelena and Župarić-Iljić, Drago (2019) *Izazovi integracije izbjeglica u hrvatsko društvo: stavovi građana i pripremljenost lokalnih zajednica [Challenges of integrating refugees into Croatian society: attitudes of citizens and the readiness of local communities]*. Zagreb: Government of the Republic of Croatia, Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities.
- Augoustinos, Martha and Quinn, Cheryl (2003). Social categorization and attitudinal evaluations: Illegal immigrants, refugees, or asylum seekers?, *New Review of Social Psychology*, 2 (1): 29–37.
- Babić, Tihana and Kunić, Tamara (2018). European refugee crisis 2015: press coverage on website *dnevno.hr*. In: Verhoeven, Piet; Jugo, Damir; Jakopović, Hrvoje and Ciboci, Lana (Ed.). *Communication Management Forum 2017. Living in Crisis Mode: Time to Reconsider Definition, Meaning and Practice? Proceedings*. Zagreb: Edward Bernays University College, 265–283.
- Bagarić, Željka and Mandić, Antonija (2019). Istina, mediji i žilet-žica: migranti u hrvatskom medijskom krajoliku, *In medias res* 8 (15): 2423–2443.
- Banjeglav, Tamara (2022). ‘We Were Refugees Ourselves!’ Discursive Framing of the ‘Refugee Crisis’ in Croatia and Collective Memories of the 1990s War. *Contemporary Southeastern Europe*, 9(1): 11–32. doi: 10.25364/02.9:2022.1.2
- Baričević, Vedrana and Koska, Viktor (2017). *Stavovi i percepcije domaće javnosti o nacionalnim manjinama, izbjeglicama i migrantima*. Zagreb: Centre for Peace Studies.
- Benčić, Sandra; Bužinkić, Emina; Miletić, Goran; Parić, Andrijana and Župarić-Iljić, Drago (2005). *Azil u Hrvatskoj – Analiza rezultata istraživanja*. Zagreb: Centre for Peace Studies.
- Berbić Kolar, Emina and Gligorić, Igor Marko (2017). The discursive construction of the migrant identity in Croatia. In: *Science and society. Language and linguistics, health policy and services*. Sofija: SGEM, 323–338.
- Berry, Mike; Garcia-Blanco, Inaki and Moore, Kerry (2015). *Press Coverage of the Refugee and Migrant Crisis in the EU: A Content Analysis of Five European Countries*, Report prepared for the UNHCR (December 2015). <http://www.unhcr.org/56bb369c9.html>.
- Bezić, Maja and Petrović, Ivana (2019). Diskursne strategije u medijskom prikazu migranata, *Zbornik radova Filozofskog fakulteta u Splitu*, 12: 81–97.
- Bilić, Paško; Furman, Ivo and Yildirim, Savas (2018). The Refugee Crisis in the Croatian Digital News: Towards a Computational Political Economy of Communication, *Political Economy of*

- Communication* 6 (1): 59–82.
- Borčić, Nikolina and Glavač, Sara (2021). 'The media presentation of the migration crisis: An analysis of the discourse on the Croatian women politicians', *Northern Lights*, 19, 79–100.
- Bossio, Diana and Bebawi, Saba (2016). Mapping the emergence of social media in everyday journalistic practices. *Media International Australia*, 161(1): 147–158.
- Bryman, Alan (2012). *Social Research Methods*, 4th Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Car, Viktorija; Čančar, Emil and Bovan, Kosta (2019). The 2015 and 2016 Migration Crisis in Europe: How Croatian Daily Newspapers Represented and Portrayed Refugees and Migrants, *Teorija in praksa*, 56 (2): 681–699.
- Čepo, Dario; Čehulić, Mateja and Zrinščak, Siniša (2020). What a Difference Does Time Make? Framing Media Discourse on Refugees and Migrants in Croatia in Two Periods, *Hrvatska i komparativna javna uprava*, 20 (3): 469–496.
- City of Zagreb (2022). *Action Plan of the City of Zagreb for the Integration of Applicants for International Protection and Persons Granted International Protection for 2022*. Zagreb City Assembly, 27 January 2022 [http://web.zagreb.hr/sjednice/2021/sjednice_skupstine_2021.nsf/o/C12586DF03A998EC12587C00048F0A9/\\$FILE/O2%20Prijedlog%20akcijskog%20plana.pdf](http://web.zagreb.hr/sjednice/2021/sjednice_skupstine_2021.nsf/o/C12586DF03A998EC12587C00048F0A9/$FILE/O2%20Prijedlog%20akcijskog%20plana.pdf)
- Consterdine, Erica (2018). *State-of-the-art report on public attitudes, political discourses and media coverage on the arrival of refugees*, CEASEVAL Research on the Common European Asylum System, Nr. 02. http://ceaseval.eu/publications/02_Consterdine_State-of-the-art_report_on_public_attitudes.pdf.
- Crawley, Heaven and Skleparis, Dimitris (2018). Refugees, migrants, neither, both: categorical fetishism and the politics of bounding in Europe's 'migration crisis', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 44:1, 48–64, 10.1080/1369183X.2017.1348224
- Croatian Legal Centre (2019). *Croatian Asylum System in 2018, September 2019*, Zagreb: Croatian Legal Centre (11 November 2019). <http://www.hpc.hr/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Hrvatski-sustav-azila-u-2019.pdf>
- Croatian Parliament (2013). *Migration Policy of the Republic of Croatia for the Period 2013–2015*, Official Gazette 27/2013. https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2013_03_27_456.html
- Curran, James; Fenton, Natalie; Freedman, Des (2012). *Freedman Misunderstanding the Internet*. Oxfordshire: Routledge.
- Cvrtila, Vlatko; Slijepčević, Marija and Levak, Tomislav (2019).

- Migration, the Perception of Security Risks and Media Interpretation Frameworks in Croatia and Hungary, *Studia Polensia*, 8 (1): 7–30.
- De Coninck, David (2020). Migrant categorizations and European public opinion: diverging attitudes towards immigrants and refugees, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 46:9, 1667–1686.
- De Genova, Nicholas; Fontanari, Elena; Picozza, Fiorenza; Soto Bermant, Laia; Spathoupoulou, Aila; Stierl, Maurice; Tazzioli, Martina; van Baar, Huub and Yildiz, Can (2016). 'Migrant Crisis'/'Refugee Crisis'. Near Futures On line. Europe at Crossroads. Managed Inhospitability. In: De Genova, Nicholas and Tazzioli, Martina (Ed.). *Europe/Crisis. New Keywords of 'the Crisis' in and of 'Europe'*, 1: 15–21. http://nearfuturesonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/New-Keywords-Collective_11.pdf
- Dobrić Basanež, Katja and Ostojić, Paulina (2021). Migration Discourse in Croatian News Media. *Medijska istraživanja*, 27 (1), 5–27. <https://doi.org/10.22572/mi.27.1.1>
- Esipova, Neli; Ray, Julie; Pugliese, Anita (2020). World Grows Less Accepting of Migrants. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/320678/world-grows-less-accepting-migrants.aspx>
- Esses, Victoria M.; Medianu, Stelian and Lawson, Andrea S. (2013). Uncertainty, threat, and the role of the media in promoting the dehumanization of immigrants and refugees, *Journal of Social Issues*, 69 (3): 518–536.
- Esterajher, Josip (2015). Iskustva zbrinjavanja prognanika i izbjeglica i suvremena izbjegličko-migrantska kriza u Hrvatskoj, *Političke analize*, 6 (23): 15–22.
- European Commission (2018). *Special Eurobarometer 469. Integration of immigrants in the European Union*. Eurobarometer surveys. European Commission. <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2169>
- Freedman, Jane (2007). *Gendering the International Asylum and Refugee Debate*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Georgiou, Myria and Zaborowski, Rafal (2017). *Media coverage of the 'refugee crisis': A cross-European perspective*, Council of Europe report DG1(2017)03. <https://rm.coe.int/1680706b00>.
- Giljević, Teo and Lalić Novak, Goranka (2018). Coordination Instruments in Croatian Integration Policy: Classification, Evaluation, and Proposals for Improvements, *Hrvatska i komparativna javna uprava*, 18 (3): 373–396.
- Goldberger, Goran (2004). Portrayal of Immigrants in Newsmagazines, *Migracijske i etničke teme*, 20 (1): 7–27.
- Government of the Republic of Croatia (2017). *Action Plan for*

- Integration of Persons Granted International Protection for the Period 2017 to 2019* Government of the Republic of Croatia – Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities, Zagreb: May 2017. <https://pravamanjina.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/dokumenti/AKCIJSKI%20PLAN%20ZA%20INTEGRACIJU%202017-2019.pdf>
- Goździak, Elżbieta and Péter, Márton (2018). 'Where the Wild Things Are': Fear of Islam and the Anti-Refugee Rhetoric in Hungary and in Poland. *Central and Eastern European Migration Review*, 7(125): 125–151. 10.17467/ceemr.2018.04
- Gradečak, Tanja; Milić, Goran and Župarić-Iljić, Drago (2021). From 'Migrant Waves' to 'Refugee Flows': A Case Study on Imposing and Shaping Conceptual Metaphors in Croatian Expert and Public Discourse. In: Brdar, Mario; Milić, Goran; Vidaković Erdeljić, Dubravka and Brdar-Szabó, Rita (Ed.). *Figurative Thought and Language in the Human Universe*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, p. 47–72.
- Hall, Stuart (2006). Kodiranje/Dekodiranje, in D. Duda (Ed.) *Politika teorije. Zbornik rasprava iz kulturalnih studija*. Zagreb: Disput. P. 127–139.
- Hameršak, Marijana and Pleše, Iva (2017). Zarobljeni u kretanju: o hrvatskoj dionici balkanskog koridora. In: Bužinkić, Emina and Hameršak, Marijana (Ed.). *Kamp, koridor, granica: studije izbjeglištva u suvremenom hrvatskom kontekstu*. Zagreb: Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research, Centre for Peace Studies and Faculty of Political Science – CEDIM, 9–39.
- Havelka, Natalija; Poljak, Nikoleta and Šehić-Relić, Lejla (2018). *City Audit Integration Report for Osijek* – Integration of Third-Country Nationals in Osijek, Centre for Peace, Nonviolence and Human Rights – Osijek.
- Hoffmann, Dražen (2015). *Overview Report on Monitoring Hate, Discriminatory and Stereotyping Speech in the Media in the Republic of Croatia for the Period from October 2015 to December 2015*. GONG Croatia, 31 December 2015 https://www.gong.hr/media/uploads/20151230_kvant_izvjestaj_o_pracanju.pdf
- Hrnjić Kuduzović, Zarfa (2017). Uloga elitnih izvora u izvještavanju o migrantskoj krizi u dnevnim novinama Oslobođenje, Jutarnji list i Politika. In: Car, Viktorija and Matović, Marijana (Ed.). *Mediji, novinarstvo i ljudska prava*. Zagreb: Faculty of Political Science, Hanns-Seidel Stiftung, 57–72. https://www.integra-eu.net/images/City_Report/Audit_Do%20Aoeport_Osijek_CR.pdf
- Hubbard, Phil (2005). Accommodating Otherness: anti-asylum centre protest and the maintenance of white privilege. *Transactions of the*

- Institute of British Geographers*, 30 (1): 52–65.
- IOM – International Organization for Migration (2019). *World Migration Report 2020*. Geneva: IOM UN Migration. https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/wmr_2020.pdf.
- Jelínková, Marie (2019). A Refugee Crisis Without Refugees: Policy and media discourse on refugees in the Czech Republic and its implications, *Central European Journal of Public Policy*, 13(1): 33–45.
- Jurišić, Jelena; Vesnić Alujević, Lucia and Bonacci, Duje (2017). Stvaranje agendi: slučaj izbjegličke krize u hrvatskim medijima. In: Car, Viktorija and Matović, Marijana (Ed.). *Mediji, novinarstvo i ljudska prava*. Zagreb: Faculty of Political Science, Hanns-Seidel Stiftung, 39–58.
- Kadić Meskić, Neja (2020). Islamophobia in Croatia: National Report 2019. In: Bayraklı, Enes and Hafez, Farid. *European Islamophobia Report 2019*. Istanbul: SETA, 183–206.
- Kalebić Maglica, Barbara; Švegar, Domagoj and Jovković, Mario (2018). Odnos osobina ličnosti, efekta okvira i stavova prema migrantima, *Društvena istraživanja*, 27 (3): 495–517.
- Korkut, Umut; Terlizzi, Andrea and Gyollai, Daniel (2020). Migration controls in Italy and Hungary from conditionalized to domesticized humanitarianism at the EU borders, *Journal of Language and Politics*, 19(3): 391–412.
- Kržalić, Armin and Kobajica, Sandra (2021). Migranti u javnom diskursu medija u Bosni i Hercegovini. *Policija i sigurnost*, 30 (2): 233–244. <https://hrcak.srce.hr/258205>
- Krzyżanowski, Michał; Triandafyllidou, Anna and Wodak, Ruth (2018). The Mediatization and the Politicization of the 'Refugee Crisis' in Europe, *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, 16 (1–2): 1–14.
- Lalić Novak, Goranka (2016). *Azil: pravni i institucionalni aspekti*. Zagreb: Faculty of Law of the University of Zagreb.
- Lalić, Sara (2016). Uloga medija u oblikovanju javnog mnijenja prema izbjeglicama i tzv. izbjegličkoj krizi, <http://www.dostajemrnje.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Uloga-medijau-oblikovanju-javnog-mnijenja-prema-izbjeglicama.pdf>
- MoI (2019). 7th group of Syrian refugees arriving from Turkey. Ministry of the Interior. 21 August 2019. <https://mup.gov.hr/vijesti-8/dolazak-sedme-skupine-sirijskih-izbjeglica-iz-turske/284674>
- MoI (2022a). Statistics – 2020 Ministry of the Interior. <https://mup.gov.hr/gradjani-281562/moji-dokumenti-281563/stranci-333/statistika-169019/169019>
- MoI (2022b). Statistical indicators of persons granted international

- protection in the Republic of Croatia as of 31 December 2021. Ministry of the Interior. https://mup.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/statistika/2021/Medjunarodna_zastita/Statisticki-pokazatelji-trazitelja-medjunarodne-zastite-do-31-1.-2021.pdf
- Morokvašić, Mirjana (2014). Gendering Migration. *Migracijske i etničke teme*, 30 (3), 355–378. <https://doi.org/10.11567/met.30.3.4>
- Mrakovčić, Marko and Gregurović, Margareta (2020). Neprijatelj pred vratima? Ili kako studenti prava iz četiriju najvećih hrvatskih gradova doživljavaju azilante i migrante s Bliskog istoka. *Sociologija i prostor*, 58 (3 (218): 291–328. <https://doi.org/10.5673/sip.58.3.4>
- Office of the Ombudswoman (2014). *Content Analysis: Writing about Migrants, Asylum Seekers and Asylees on Web Portals in 2013*. Office of the Ombudswoman, August 2014. http://ombudsman.hr/images/Analiza_izvjestavanja_UPP.pdf
- OHRNM (2018). *Framework for the integration of persons who have been granted international protection at the local level*. Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Republic of Croatia. <https://www.irh.hr/hijerarhijski-prikaz/izvjestaji/50-okvir-za-integraciju-osoba-kojima-je-odobrena-medunarodna-zastita/file>
- Peran, Suzana and Raguž, Anđelka (2019). Prikaz kretanja izbjeglica preko teritorija Republike Hrvatske u dnevnom tisku (Večernji list, Jutarnji list, 24 sata), *Nova prisutnost*, 17 (1): 29–45.
- Pintarić, Ljiljana (2019). Medijski prikaz migranata: percepcija zdravstvene prijetnje. In Piližota, Vesna; Bestvina Bukvić, Ivana; Brekalo, Miljenko; Đukić, Marina; Engstler, Martin; Kühnle, Boris Alexander; Ljubić, Lucija; Michel, Burkard; Pavić, Željko; Petranová, Dana; Rinsdorf, Lars; Solík, Martin; Višňovský, Ján and Žužul, Ivana (Ed.). *Zbornik radova 3. međunarodnog interdisciplinarnog znanstvenog skupa Mediji i medijska kultura – europski realiteti*. Osijek: Academy of Arts and Culture of the Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek, 195–206.
- Popović, Helena (2015). Commercialization and Privatization of Media in Southeast Europe: A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing? *The Political Economy of Communication*, 3(1): 25–38.
- Popović, Helena and Rodik, Petra (2021). Novinarstvo i politika: novinari o komunikacijskim praksama s političkim akterima. *CM-Communication and Media*, XVI: 27–52.
- Robertson, Shanthi (2019). Status-making: Rethinking migrant categorization. *Journal of Sociology*, 55(2), 219–233.
- Šarić, Ljiljana (2019). Visual Presentation of Refugees During the 'Refugee Crisis' of 2015–2016 on the Online Portal of the Croatian Public Broadcaster, *International Journal of Communication*, 13:

- 991–1015.
- Šelo Šabić, Senada (2017). The Impact of the Refugee Crisis in the Balkans: A Drift Towards Security, *Journal of Regional Security*, 12 (1): 51–75, 10.11643/issn.2217-995X171SP80.
- Sharif, Hind (2019). Communicating effectively on migration: recommendations and policy options. RESOMA – Research Social Platform on Migration and Asylum. Policy Option Brief (December 2019). <https://www.migpolgroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/POB-Public-Opinion-Hind-Sharif.pdf>
- Škiljan, Dubravko (2000). *Javni jezik*. Zagreb: Antibarbarus.
- Slijepčević, Marija and Fligić, Sanja (2018). Analiza medijskog praćenja izbjegličke krize u Hrvatskoj i interpretacijski okviri (framing), *Suvremene teme*, 9 (1): 31–48.
- Soko, Martina and Majstorović, Dunja (2019). Children Refugees in Croatian Daily Newspapers: Dominant on Photographs, Neglected in Texts. In Popović, Stjepka; Crous, Gemma; Tarsish, Noam; Van Erwegen, Lucienne and Lorenz, Friederike (Ed.). *Proceedings of the Conference Child Maltreatment & Well-Being: Contemporary Issues, Research & Practice*. Rijeka: University of Rijeka, 64–72.
- Solano, Giacomo and Huddleston, Thomas (2020). Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) – Croatia 2019. Brussels: Migration Policy Group. <https://www.mipex.eu/croatia>
- Stephan, Walter G.; Ybarra, Oscar and Bachman, Guy (1999). Prejudice toward immigrants. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 29 (11): 2221–2237.
- Stević, Anja and Car, Viktorija (2017). Vizualno portretiranje izbjeglica i migranata – ikonske fotografije. In: Car, Viktorija and Matović, Marijana (Ed.). *Mediji, novinarstvo i ljudska prava*. Zagreb: Faculty of Political Science, Hanns-Seidel Stiftung, 19–38.
- Stojić Mitrović, Marta (2020). Izbeglice (Refugees), azilanti (Asylum Seekers) and ilegalni migranti (Illegal Migrants) in Administrative and Public Discourse in Serbia: An Overview of Concepts in a Diachronic Perspective. *Narodna umjetnost*, 57 (2), 147–167. <https://doi.org/10.15176/vol57no208>
- Takahashi, Marta; Skoko, Franjo and Pavić, Davor (2018). Uloga digitalnih medija i uspon populizma u kontekstu aktualne izbjegličke krize, *Communication Management Review*, 3 (2): 96–110.
- Triandafyllidou, Anna (2018). A 'Refugee Crisis' Unfolding: 'Real' Events and Their Interpretation in Media and Political Debates, *Journal of Immigrant and Refugee Studies*, 16(1–2): 198–216, 10.1080/15562948.2017.1309089.
- UNHCR (2021). *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2020*. UNHCR – The UN Refugee Agency. <https://www.unhcr.org/60b638e37/>

- unhcr-global-trends-2020.
- UNHCR and IOM (2018). *Reporting on Migration and Refugees: Guidelines for Journalists*. UNHCR – The UN Refugee Agency and IOM – International Organization for Migration. <https://bih.iom.int/sites/default/files/Reporting%20on%20Refugees%20BHS%20print.pdf>.
- Vezovnik, Andreja and Šarić, Ljiljana (2020). Subjectless images: visualization of migrants in Croatian and Slovenian public broadcasters' online news, *Social Semiotics*, 30(2): 168–190, 10.1080/10350330.2018.1541117.
- Vollmer, Bastian and Karakayali, Serhat (2018). The Volatility of the Discourse on Refugees in Germany, *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, 16 (1–2): 118–139.
- Vuletić, Vladimir and Filipović, Božidar (2019). Politički i medijski (od)govori na 'migrantsku krizu' u Srbiji. *Forum za sigurnosne studije*, 3 (3), 116–137. <https://hrcak.srce.hr/236100>
- Wien, Charlotte and Elmelund-Præstekær, Christian (2009). An Anatomy of Media Hypes: Developing a Model for the Dynamics and Structure of Intense Media Coverage of Single Issues, *European Journal of Communication*, 24(2): 183–201.
- Zapata-Barrero, Ricard; Caponio, Tiziana and Scholten, Peter (2017). Theorizing the 'local turn' in a multi-level governance framework of analysis: A case study in immigrant policies. *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 83(2), 241–246.
- Zekić Eberhard, Nefreteta and Levak, Tomislav (2016). The Phenomenon of Rising Nationalism and Xenophobia in Hungary in the Context of the 2015/2016 Refugee Crisis and its Reflection in Croatian Media. In: Stojanovski, Strashko; Ananiev, Jovan; Misheva, Kristina and Ampovska, Marija (Ed.). *Third International Scientific Conference 'Social Change in the Global World' Proceedings*. Shtip: Goce Delchev University in Shtip, Faculty of Law, Center for Legal and Political Research, 967–987.
- Zetter, Roger (2007). More Labels, Fewer Refugees: Remaking the Refugee Label in an Era of Globalization. *Journal of Refugee Studies* 20 (2): 172–192.
- Župarić-Iljić, Drago (2013). Percepcija tražitelja azila u javnosti i medijski prikazi problematike azila u Hrvatskoj. In: Župarić-Iljić, Drago (Ed.). *Prvih deset godina razvoja sustava azila u Hrvatskoj (s osvrtom na sustave azila u regiji)*. Zagreb: Institute for Migrations and Ethnic Studies, Centre for Peace Studies, Human Rights House, 201–220.
- Župarić-Iljić, Drago (2020). Model i iskustva prihvata i integracije izbjeglica putem programa preseljenja u europskom i hrvatskom kontekstu. In: Vučinić, Lana and Radić, Anna-Maria (Ed.).

- Integracijske politike i prakse u europskom i hrvatskom kontekstu: Vodič dobre prakse*. Zagreb: Croatian Red Cross, 99–130.
- Župarić-Iljić, Drago and Valenta, Marko (2019). 'Refugee Crisis' in the Southeastern European Countries: The Rise and Fall of the Balkan Corridor. In: Menjívar, Cecilia; Ruiz, Marie and Ness, Immanuel (Ed.). *The Oxford Handbook of Migration Crises*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 367–388.

Acronyms and abbreviations

AMIF – Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund
 ARD – *Arbeitsgemeinschaft der öffentlich-rechtlichen Rundfunkanstalten der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, German public news service
 AYS – Are You Syrious?
 BBC – British Broadcasting Corporation
 BVMN – Border Violence Monitoring Network
 CEAS – Common European Asylum System
 CEDIM – Center for the Study of Ethnicity, Citizenship and Migration
 CJA – Croatian Journalists' Association
 CMRS – Croatian Mountain Rescue Service
 CNN – Cable News Network
 CPS – Centre for Peace Studies
 EU – European Union
 HDZ – Croatian Democratic Union
 HINA – Croatian News Agency
 HIV – human immunodeficiency virus
 HNS – Croatian People's Party – liberal democrats
 HRT – Croatian Radiotelevision
 HRW – Human Rights Watch
 HSP – Croatian Party of Rights
 IOM – International Organization for Migration
 IPA – EU Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
 JRS – Jesuit Refugee Service
 MIPEX – Migrant Integration Policy Index
 MoI – Ministry of the Interior
 OHRRNM – Government Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Republic of Croatia
 RESOMA – Research Social Platform on Migration and Asylum
 SAO – State Attorney's Office
 SDP – Social Democratic Party
 SRF – *Schweizer Radio und Fernsehen*, Swiss public television
 UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
 UNICEF – United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
 USA – United States of America
 USC – Una-Sana Canton of Bosnia and Herzegovina
 ZET – Zagreb Electric Tram

About the authors

Helena Popović is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Sociology of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb. She studied sociology, social anthropology and communication studies. Her scientific interests include the sociology of culture, sociology of media and communication and qualitative research methods. Helena has published about 30 scientific and professional papers in those fields. She has participated in a number of domestic and international projects and studies on the topic of media policies, Croatian media system, media representations, journalism, civil society and alternative culture. She has also given presentations at about 30 domestic and international scientific and professional conferences.

Kruno Kardov is an Associate Professor at the Department of Sociology of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb. Social movements are the area of his scientific interest. Kruno has conducted a number of studies on the issues of war victims, sociology of politics and security and post-war reconstruction of communities. He discussed these topics in his two books and many scientific papers.

Drago Župarić-Iljić is an Associate Professor at the Department of Sociology of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb. His scientific interests include migration and refugee studies, sociology of ethnic relations and sociodemographics. He has published about 30 scientific papers and two monographs on migrations, refugeehood, integration, ethnicity and citizenship. He has participated in several domestic and international studies, three of which concerned the evaluation of integration policies and practices for migrants and refugees.

