

# Narratives of Crisis vs. Narratives of Solidarity

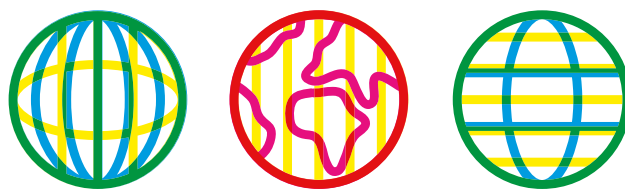
Analyzing Discursive Shifts in Austrian Media  
Coverage of Refugee Movements from  
Middle Eastern Countries (2015) and Ukraine  
(2022) from an Interdisciplinary Perspective

Birgit Bahtić-Kunrath and Carolin Gebauer  
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opportunities

for a fair narrative on migration



# opportunities

for a fair narrative on migration

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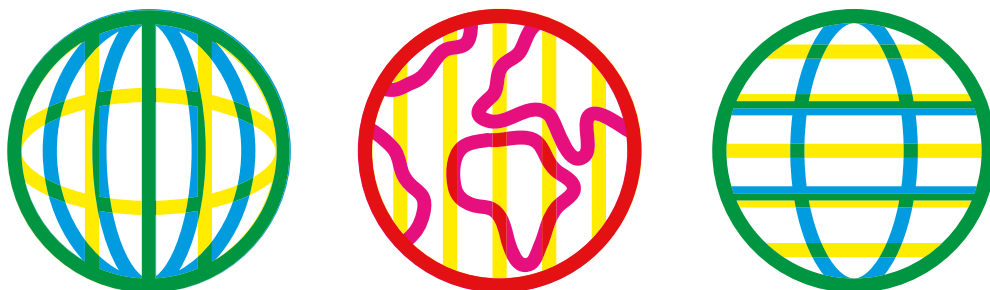
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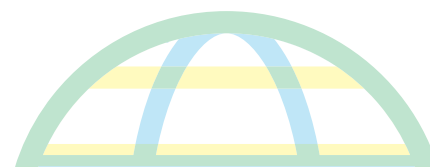
# Narratives of Crisis vs. Narratives of Solidarity

Analyzing Discursive Shifts in Austrian Media Coverage of Refugee Movements from Middle Eastern Countries (2015) and Ukraine (2022) from an Interdisciplinary Perspective

Work Package 5 – Deliverable 5.5, Part 2

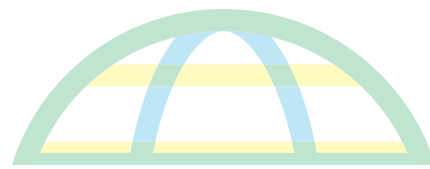
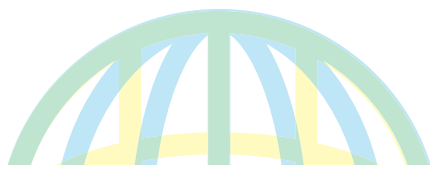
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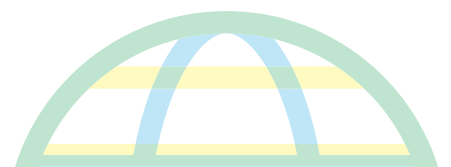
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# Abstract

When unprecedentedly large numbers of refugees from Middle Eastern countries fled to Europe in the years 2015 and 2016, the media depicted these events as a moment of crisis that put European cohesion to the test. Ever since the beginning of the so-called refugee crisis, framing migration as a problem that requires solving had been a common practice in European media. Yet media coverage of migration drastically changed in February 2022: After Russia had invaded Ukraine, causing millions of Ukrainians to flee their home country, the persistent crisis narrative eventually made way for a narrative of solidarity. This working paper traces the reasons and outcomes of this discursive shift by examining, from the perspective of interdisciplinary narrative research, how migration was framed and presented in journalistic interviews published in Austrian newspapers, including tabloids and broadsheets, in September 2015 and March 2022. The paper's combination of methods from the social sciences and the humanities offers an analysis of not only the migration frames and the speakers' positioning that become manifest in the interview sample (qualitative content analysis), but also the narrative strategies and stylistic devices that are used in the migration narratives emerging from these texts (discourse analysis and narrative analysis). The particular utility of this innovative interdisciplinary multi-method approach, the paper argues, is a comprehensive discussion of migration narrative in media that also addresses frequent shortcomings of disciplinary analysis.



# 1. Introduction

The notion of “crisis” has predominated in representations of migration in European media since the years of 2015 and 2016, when unprecedentedly large numbers of refugees from Afghanistan, Syria, and Lebanon moved toward European countries – events which have come to be known as the “European refugee crisis.” According to Dina Matar (2017, n. pag.), the constant perpetuation of the master narrative of crisis has moved those who are most affected by migration, flight, and forced displacement to the margins of public debates on the phenomenon:

What is worrying are the ways in which mainstream media coverage of the refugees or migrants in Europe [...] have tended to repeat stereotypes and frames that construct the refugees as a collective “other” that is different from “us,” and as a humanitarian or security problem, and in the process silencing, dehumanizing and marginalizing those represented and talked about.

The problematic crisis narrative, which Matar had still criticized in 2017, suddenly changed at the beginning of 2022. After Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24, European media saw a new rapid surge in the coverage of the topic of migration. This time, however, the dominant narrative had completely changed: Refugees were no longer depicted as “a humanitarian or security problem,” but they were instead considered as victims of Russia’s aggressive war, who were in dire need of help and protection. From one day to the next, the narrative of crisis had turned into a new narrative of solidarity.

Tracing this discursive shift in the coverage of refugee movements in Austrian media, this working paper pursues two main objectives. We first seek to systematically analyze how this drastic change in public debates on migration manifested itself in Austrian newspapers. To do so, we will analyze, by integrating methods from the social sciences and the humanities, the migration narratives that were brought forth by Austrian newspapers during two periods in time, one comprising about one month in the middle of the European “refugee crisis” (i.e., September 2015) and the other one comprising the first month immediately following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine (i.e., March 2022). Although our case study concentrates on a very limited time frame, Austrian newspapers were full of reports on migration; it is therefore beyond the remit of this paper to provide a comprehensive analysis of all newspapers and all types of newspaper genres. Rather, our analysis intends to concentrate on a limited number of four newspapers – in particular, two tabloids (*Heute* and *Neue Kronen Zeitung*) and two broadsheets (*Der Standard* and *Die Presse*) – and within this scope on one specific genre: the journalistic interview.

A second major aim of this study is to make a substantial contribution to the field of interdisciplinary narrative research. Our analysis of the interview corpus is informed not only by a qualitative content analysis examining how the topic of migration was framed in the two periods under investigation, but also by a blend of discourse analysis and narrative analysis exploring linguistic peculiarities as well as conspicuous narrative strategies and devices that feature in these texts. The benefit of our innovative interdisciplinary multi-method approach, we will argue, is a thorough discussion of the representation of migration in Austrian newspapers, which is capable of identifying some of the blind spots that, of necessity, occur in any form of disciplinary analysis. As our paper will demonstrate, narratological close readings and qualitative content analysis can be used as complementary tools to gain a more comprehensive overview of textual, linguistic, and narrative features in journalistic practices of framing migration.



## 2. Migration Narratives and Journalistic Interviews: Some Preliminary Thoughts

Migration narratives come in various forms, ranging from (auto-)biographies and memoirs of migrants and refugees themselves to political statements and slogans to metaphors frequently used in media coverage of flight and mobility. In a recent survey article on migration narratives in public discourse, Carolin Gebauer and Roy Sommer (2023) distinguish two main types of migration narrative: stories of migration and narratives on migration. Stories of migration, they argue, are life stories which depict migration from an emic (i.e., insider) perspective, putting emphasis on the lived experience of those affected by migration and mobility; they typically take the shape of memoirs, (auto-)biographies, or various forms of conversational storytelling. Narratives on migration, on the other hand, present the phenomenon from an etic (i.e., outside) perspective, establishing discourse frames that foreground the various dimensions of migration (e.g., humanitarian, legal, political, economic, ecological, or ideological). The authors also identify a hybrid form – “vicarious storytelling” – which combines both types of migration narrative by using a story of migration in order to support a narrative on migration. Such an act of telling a story on behalf of someone else seeks to introduce the voice of migrants into public debates for purposes such as migrant advocacy, the call for humanitarian action, or the demand of social change for a more inclusive society.

This paper focuses on migration narratives that can be found in Austrian journalistic interviews. Journalistic interviews are conversations on a strict question-answer basis between journalist and interviewee. While the latter's share of the conversation is clearly dominant, the interviewer basically confines their contribution to asking questions; yet these questions are characteristically targeted toward evoking a specific response on the part of the interlocutor (Friedrich and Schwinges 2016, 11; Haller 2013, ch. 2).

According to Kerstin Liesem (2015, 105), the interview belongs to those text types in journalism which are high in narrativity – i.e., journalistic texts which seek to tell a specific story.<sup>1</sup> In interviews, such stories mainly revolve around the interviewees, with the journalists aiming to offer readers a clearer idea of the interlocutors' personalities as well as their opinions, values, and world views (121). Interviews are consequently either highly subjective or at least subjectively colored, reflecting as they do the personal views of the interviewees (107). However, one has to keep in mind that interviewees often cannot speak freely, but are instead subject to numerous constraints (e.g., if they are not allowed to divulge classified material, pass on insider information, etc.). This effect of subjectivity is intensified by the writing style typical of the genre: In contrast to other journalistic genres such as reports, commentaries, or reviews, interviews are closer to spoken language, given that journalists try to render the interviewees' individual registers as authentically as possible (122).

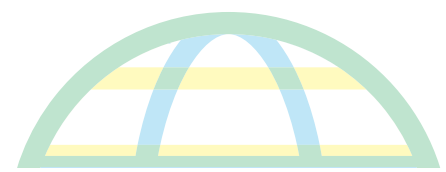
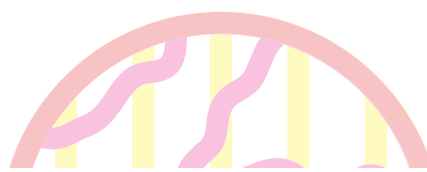
Journalism studies distinguishes different types of interviews on the basis of different criteria such as discourse contexts, purposes and objectives, as well as formal and structural features. In this paper, we will focus on the first two criteria since we are interested primarily in the occasions on which, and the reasons why, interviewees talk about migration in Austrian media. While we will also focus on formal features when discussing narrative representations of migration in public discourse (see section 4.3), we will largely neglect any criteria pertaining to the form and structure of interviews. Our interest in formal and structural aspects is directed mainly at individual narratives that emerge from interviews.



With respect to the communicative contexts of interviews, one can distinguish between interviews that focus on subject matters and those where the focus is (rather) on individuals. The former type is usually conducted with politicians, experts, and stakeholders who are asked to discuss and evaluate specific events and developments (107) or eye-witnesses who are invited to share their perspective on events and situations they have experienced (108). The latter type focuses on individuals with a strong public presence – e.g., celebrities – who are interviewed either to inform the readership about their lifestyles as well as their attitudes and opinions or to present these persons in a different light (109). Journalism studies, moreover, identifies different objectives that interviews can pursue: Informative interviews generally seek to provide information about a specific event. In contrast to these comparatively neutral interviews, controversial or vindictory interviews aim at learning why specific decisions have been made or why specific courses of action have been undertaken (Friedrich and Schwinges 2016, 17–18).

As concerns more particularly media coverage of migration, the journalistic interview presents an interesting case. Owing to its generic features, the interview is able to accommodate all types of migration narratives distinguished by Gebauer and Sommer – i.e., narratives on and stories of migration, as well as hybrid forms of vicarious narrative. Thanks to its high degree of subjectivity, the interview as a genre is furthermore particularly suited to stage multiperspectivity – one can assume that the more interviews with individuals a newspaper publishes on a certain topic, the more differentiated its depiction of this topic will be (under the caveat, of course, that a given newspaper decides to provide a platform to a diverse and heterogeneous group of interviewees) – and to create a forum that gives a voice to marginalized groups who usually tend to be silenced in public debates on the topic. All these distinctive features make the interview stand out from other types of newspaper articles (e.g., reports, reportages, or features).

Our analysis of the interview sample selected for this case study will address questions on which groups of people were interviewed in Austrian newspapers and what views on migration the different publication organs sought to promote by asking these interviewees about their opinions. Before we can examine how migration is framed in Austrian newspaper interviews, and by whom (section 4), however, it is first necessary to provide a concise overview of discourse frames that are traditionally used in representations of migration in today's media (section 3). Since these frames occur in all types of news media, including print media (i.e., newspapers and news magazines), broadcast media (i.e., radio and television), and the internet (i.e., online news and newspapers, as well as news websites), we will keep this discussion general instead of narrowing it down to the genre of the journalistic interview.





### 3. Framing Migration in Mass Media

The way we talk about migration determines how we perceive and experience the phenomenon. Drawing on Erving Goffman's (1986, 21) understanding of frames as "schemata of interpretation" that influence how we make sense of and come to terms with events and phenomena, Doris Bachmann-Medick and Jens Kugele (2018, 3) argue that "contemporary frames and framings of discourses on migration" not only "constitute methodologically and epistemologically self-reflexive approaches to the complex field of migration, but they are also effective in shaping the field of socio-political experience and behavior that directly impacts the lives of migrants."<sup>2</sup> Media coverage plays a crucial role in such processes of framing, for it is especially the mass and mainstream media that bring forth numerous migration narratives (Maneri 2023). Together, these narratives exert a major influence on public opinion on and attitudes toward migration: If the arrival of refugees in Europe is repeatedly presented as an extreme economic burden on the countries of arrival, for instance, this framing easily encourages the public to think of migrants as a threat to their own social status, which, in turn, makes discussions about integration a much greater challenge than in cases in which migration is – right from the outset – framed as an opportunity to form a more inclusive and diverse society.<sup>3</sup> As this example suggests, it is typically narratives on migration that have a bearing on how we think, feel, and talk about migration and related topics such as integration, inclusion, and diversity. One reason for this is that stories of migration are most often neglected in public debates (Chouliraki and Zaborowski 2017, 620–622; Gebauer and Sommer 2023; Meyer and Peintinger 2013).

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Although mass media present migration mainly from an *etic* (i.e., outside) perspective, media coverage of the phenomenon is never neutral or objective. According to Marlou Schrover and Willem Schinkel (2013, 1126), discourses on migration issues typically concentrate on what is problematic: For example, "[the] conservative and right-wing press emphasize the problems that immigrants are seen to create (in housing, schooling, unemployment, crime)," thus framing migration as a demographic, educational, social, and security issue, "whereas the more liberal press (also) focuses on the problems that immigrants have (as a result of poverty, discrimination)," thus foregrounding a humanitarian frame (1126; see also Heidenreich et al. 2019; Gottlob and Boomgaarden 2020). The complexity of the narrative dynamics of migration in the public sphere allows narratives and counter-narratives to co-exist (Sommer 2023), with the result that we encounter narratives focusing on humanitarian values and responsibilities on the one hand and narratives discussing (mostly negative) consequences of migration for national security, the European economy, and local labor markets on the other (Ceccorullie and Lucarelli 2017, 87–92).

In our frame analysis presented in the next section of this paper, we will resort to two main types of framing that have been distinguished in previous work on representations of migration in the media: broad and issue-specific framing (Helbling 2014, 22–23; see also Maneri 2023, 12–13).<sup>4</sup> While the former focuses primarily on the overall context of migration discourses, dealing with abstract notions such as positivity and negativity, the latter rather thematizes clearly defined issues and concerns related to the topic. As a recent study of media effects further shows, negative framing seems to dominate over positive framing in representations of migration in European public discourse (Eberl et al.'s 2018).

In addition to the usage of framing types, a frame analysis of discourses on migration should pay attention to historical and political developments, given that these can, with the benefit of hindsight, be considered key events or turning points. Crises and unique incidents tend especially to interrupt journalistic routines, offering opportunities to see and interpret complex situations, circumstances, and constellations in a new way, which, in turn, may lead to the creation of new frames (Greussing and Boomgaarden 2017, 1750; see also Jalušić and Bajt 2020; Heidenreich et al. 2019). As Andrea Lawlor



and Erin Tolley (2017, 759) demonstrate in their case study on Canadian media coverage of migration, volatile “event-driven coverage” has a crucial bearing on news media framing. Research on representations of migration in European media confirm that the authors’ observation is not restricted to a Canadian context. In 2015, for example, Austrian media saw a significant shift in the presentation of migration, as the framing of a welcome culture, which had dominated the media until then, made way for an increasing expression of anti-immigration sentiments. The longer the “refugee crisis” lasted, the more skeptical public debates on migration became and eventually “verg[ed] on open hostility” (Trauner and Turton 2017, 37; see also Greussing and Boomgaarden 2017; Jalušić and Bajt 2020; Maneri 2023).

Prior research on migration frames furthermore suggests that mass media tend to use different frames, varying according to refugees’ origin, ethnicity, religion, and legal status (see, e.g., Lawlor and Tolley 2017). According to a literature review of European media discourse on immigration published in 2018, intra-European migrants appear less frequently in media accounts than migrants from outside Europe despite the fact that the former constitute the larger group of migrants within Europe (Eberl et al. 2018). And if intra-European migrants are mentioned in the media, they are often less negatively depicted than migrants from the Middle East: In their study on language use in discursive representations of migration in European media, Sebastian Galyga and his colleagues (2019) demonstrate that, even though practices of “othering” are manifest in depictions of migrant groups from both the Middle East and Eastern Europe, “the tendency toward othering is weaker in the case of Eastern European migrants” (33). This also goes some way to explaining why local populations in Europe generally show more positive attitudes towards newcomers from European countries than from non-European countries (De Coninck 2020, 1680).

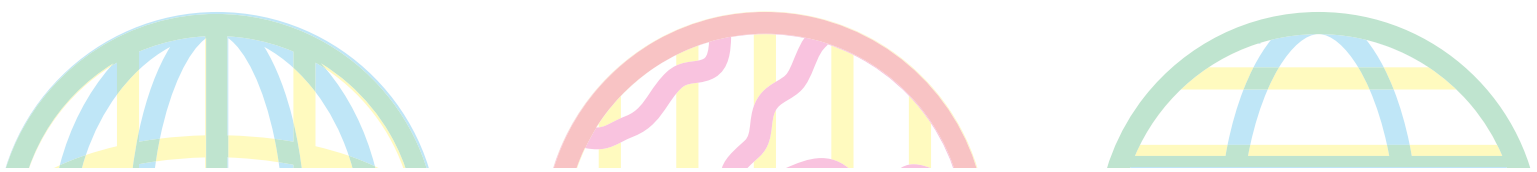
In the study at hand, we will investigate which narratives on migration and stories of migration are presented in journalistic interviews published in selected Austrian newspapers in September 2015 and March 2022. Based on our discussion of the narrative affordances of journalistic interviews in section 2 and previous research on the usage of migration frames in news media presented in this section, our analysis of the interview sample will test the following three hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 1:* Judging from the fact that journalistic interviews can stage various communicative contexts and pursue various objectives, one can expect our corpus to provide an inclusive forum which not only serves to spread narratives on migration, but which also facilitates practices of sharing stories of migration, thus giving migrants a voice in public debates on migration and integration.

*Hypothesis 2:* Given that journalistic interviews display a high degree of subjectivity, we expect our text sample to create horizontal multiperspectivity<sup>5</sup> in that it addresses questions of migration and integration from various perspectives, including those of politicians, experts and stakeholders, as well as migrants themselves.

*Hypothesis 3:* With recourse to insights from prior frame analyses suggesting that key events can serve as turning points that change public attitudes on migration, one can expect a discursive shift between the periods of investigation (i.e. September 2015 and March 2022). More specifically, we assume that the interviews in 2015 bring forth narratives on migration that contribute to the overall crisis narrative by exhibiting mainly negative attitudes toward migration on the part of interviewees who are not migrants themselves, whereas we expect the narratives produced by interviews in 2022 to be much more welcoming in that they offer a perspective on migration which emphasizes understanding and empathy for, as well as solidarity with, refugees. We further hold that a possible reason for this shift will be the different groups of migrants that came to Europe at the two periods investigated: i.e., male refugees from the Middle East in 2015 and primarily female Ukrainian refugees and their children in 2022.

Our argument unfolds in four steps. After first providing information on the newspapers we chose, as well as on the methods we used in our case study (section 4.1), we will proceed to conduct a qualitative content analysis of the journalistic interviews selected for the two periods of investigation (section 4.2). We will then combine our frame analysis with a discourse analysis and narrative analysis (section 4.3) before finally discussing the findings and insights of our multi-method approach (section 4.4).



## 4. Migration Frames in Journalistic Interviews: A Survey of Four Austrian Newspapers

### 4.1 Text Corpus and Methodology

Austria's media landscape is small and highly concentrated, with only a few media corporations dominating a market which comprises no more than 16 daily newspapers.<sup>6</sup> By far the most widely read newspaper is the tabloid *Neue Kronen Zeitung*, commanding a market share of 23.3%. It is followed by the tabloid *Heute*, which covers chiefly the eastern parts of Austria, as well as *Die Kleine Zeitung*, a middle-market paper that focuses primarily on the nation's South (both newspapers have a market share of 9.3%). Among the broadsheets, *Der Standard* reaches 7.2% of Austria's readers, followed by *Die Presse*, which addresses 3.8% of the reading population (Plasser and Pallaver 2017, 318; updated numbers: Media Analyse 2021). Different newspapers on the Austrian market are highly interconnected, given that *Der Standard* and the quality paper *Salzburger Nachrichten*, which has a reach of 3.1% (Media Analyse 2021), represent the only daily newspapers which are not run by one of the large news corporations (see Kontrast 2018).

Within these restricted confines of the Austrian newspaper market, we set out to devise a case study which foregrounds the difference between Austrian newspapers and their heterogeneous approaches to negotiating issues and concerns related to the topic of migration. We selected four newspapers for our analysis: two broadsheets – *Der Standard* and *Die Presse* – and two tabloids – *Die Neue Kronen Zeitung* and *Heute*. All four titles operate with relative independence from one another: *Der Standard* is an outlet of an independent publishing house; *Die Presse* belongs to the Styria Media Group; *Neue Kronen Zeitung* is run by the Funke Media Group; and *Heute* is incorporated by Tamedia (Kontrast 2018). Besides, the selected newspapers have the largest reach among tabloids and broadsheets and represent opposing poles of the political spectrum: While *Neue Kronen Zeitung* and *Die Presse* represents mainly conservative or right-wing views, *Der Standard* is rather oriented toward liberal or leftist positions. *Heute* presents some kind of a middle ground, as it displays a strong tendency toward predominantly right-wing views on questions of migration and integration, yet adopts left-wing positions with regard to other topics.

For each newspaper, we selected the interviews via the Austrian Press Agency's database APA DeFacto Campus, which provides access to a full-text compilation of all articles published in Austria's newspapers, with the oldest publications dating back to 1990.<sup>7</sup> To compile our corpus of interviews, we searched for the two keywords "*Flüchtling*" (English: "refugee") and "*Vertrieben*" (English: "displaced person"), treating both terms as synonyms. The search results stem from two periods of time – August 27 to September 30, 2015 and February 24 to March 31, 2022. For each timeframe we chose as the starting point a key event that had a major impact on public debates on migration and set a subsequent period of roughly one month: August 27, 2015 and February 24, 2022.

On August 27, 2015, a truck was found in Parndorf, Burgenland, near Austria's border with Hungary, with 71 dead refugees inside. Unfolding against a backdrop of rising pressure from Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, this incident, which severely shocked the population, marked the beginning of a series of events which brought about a shift in the nation's handling of the so-called refugee crisis: When on September 4, 2015 hundreds of stranded refugees started to walk from Budapest toward Austria,



then-Chancellor Werner Faymann decided to open the borders and support the transfer of refugees to Germany. September 2015 saw further dramatic moments that had a strong influence on national migration debates, such as an incident in which hundreds of refugees crossed Austria's southern border with Slovenia on September 19 by forcing aside a largely outnumbered police force. As the corresponding images were shown in Austrian media, they shook the nation, generating a strong sense that the state was losing control.<sup>8</sup> A similar shock passed through the nation – as it did throughout Europe – when Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24, 2022.<sup>9</sup> Since that day, the war has caused more than 22 million Ukrainians to leave their homes. As of June 2023, about 90,000 of these refugees have arrived in Austria.<sup>10</sup>

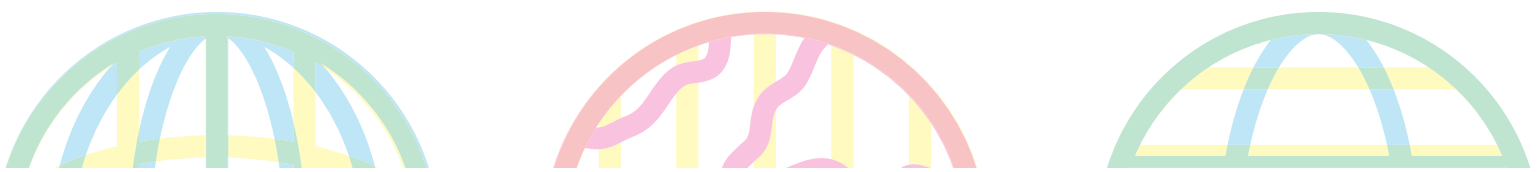
The text corpus which we reviewed and analyzed in our case study consisted of 91 interviews in total, which were indexed under either or both of the search terms in APA DeFacto Campus. Table 1 shows the distribution of these interviews across the different newspapers; the figures reveal that the total number of the interviews conducted in 2022 (20 interviews) is considerably lower than that of the interviews published in 2015 (71 interviews). This suggests that, even though millions of Ukrainians fled their homeland (with tens of thousands arriving in Austria) at the beginning of Russia's invasion in 2022, this refugee movement seemed to gain less media attention than the refugee movements of September 2015.

	2015	2022	Total
<i>Der Standard</i>	31	6	37
<i>Die Presse</i>	19	6	25
<i>Neue Kronen Zeitung</i>	16	6	22
<i>Heute</i>	5	2	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>91</b>

Table 1: Number of interviews in the selected newspapers

To analyze our text corpus, we chose an interdisciplinary approach combining two different methods from the social sciences and the humanities: qualitative content analysis as well as discourse analysis and narrative analysis. We first carried out a frame analysis with the help of the software MAXQDA. In doing so, we followed a deductive-inductive approach (see section 4.2): Proceeding from previous discussions of migration frames in the field of migration studies (issue-specific framing), we established a set of analytical categories which we adjusted to our object of study where necessary. In addition to this, we identified interviewees' attitudes toward migration that are expressed in their answers (broad framing). We distinguished three dominant stances in this context – pro-migration, middle-ground (i.e., neutral), and anti-migration – and matched these to our set of frames. Finally, we established the category “Who speaks?” to systematically describe the communicative situation in each interview. Based on the status of the individual interviewees, we distinguished between interviews with politicians, experts and stakeholders, as well as eye-witnesses, with the latter category relating to migrants as well as people working with migrants. The category “expert/stakeholder” qualifies as the largest category, given that it comprises not only scholars and scientists, but also artists as well as economists and business owners.

In a second step, we re-read all interviews with a particular focus on the narrative devices and strategies that were used to shape the different migration frames (see section 4.3). For this purpose, we also adopted deductive and inductive procedures: We first approached the interviews with a view toward the question of whether they constitute narratives on migration, stories of migration, or hybrid forms of vicarious storytelling, and subsequently paid attention to linguistic particularities as well as specific rhetorical devices and narrative techniques that caught our attention.<sup>11</sup> The questions we asked during our analysis included: Which linguistic devices and narrative strategies are primarily used in these



interviews? Do certain metaphors or images recur in several interviews? Do some interviews fall outside the grid in deploying linguistic strategies and narrative techniques that differ from the rest of the corpus? In combining a comprehensive qualitative content analysis with narratological close readings of the texts in question, our methodology allows us not only to offer a broad view of our case study, but also to hone in on concrete examples in order to provide a more detailed analysis.

## 4.2 Qualitative Content Analysis of the Interviews: Whose Views on Migration are Featured in Austrian Newspapers – and How?

### 4.2.1 Who speaks? An Analysis of the Speech Situation

Our 91 sample interviews show quite an equal distribution of speakers with respect to their professional background: 41 interviewed politicians stand against 42 interviewed experts and stakeholders.<sup>12</sup> These speakers, however, are not distributed equally among the different newspapers. As Table 2 illustrates, *Heute* contains only seven interviews in total, all of which conducted with politicians, whereas *Der Standard* displays a preference for interview partners who are experts and stakeholders. The other two newspapers – *Die Presse* and *Neue Kronen Zeitung* – reveal a balanced approach toward the selection of interview partners in the periods under investigation.<sup>13</sup>

Drawing on the typology of journalistic interviews introduced in section 2, we furthermore observed that the interviews conducted with politicians qualify mainly as interviews with a focus on individuals which display a rather controversial or vindictory mood. This becomes especially obvious in the 2015 samples of the tabloids *Neue Kronen Zeitung* and *Heute*: Given that two federal states in Austria – Vienna and Upper Austria – were to hold elections in September, these newspapers were keen on interviewing members of different parties, interrogating them about their respective election campaigns. As a consequence, migration only features as one of many other controversial topics that engaged the public at the time. While the two broadsheets also contain interviews with local and national politicians, they moreover reveal a high interest in foreign politics. *Der Standard* published interviews with the Prime Minister of Sweden (Bildt 2015), the Hungarian and the Italian Ministers for Foreign Affairs (Szijjártó 2015; Gentiloni 2015), the Italian Minister of Finance (Padoa-Schioppa 2015), as well as the Hungarian and the US Ambassadors (Perényi 2015; Wesner 2015). *Die Presse*, in turn, held interviews with Sweden's and Latvia's Ministers for Foreign Affairs (Wallström 2015; Rinkēvičs 2015) as well as the Prime Ministers of North Macedonia and Hungary (Gruevski 2015; Orbán 2015). It is remarkable, however, that despite the large number of interviews conducted with politicians in 2015, there is little overlap between the four newspapers with regard to the chosen interview partners.<sup>14</sup>

The interviews with experts and stakeholders, on the other hand, can be described as interviews focusing predominantly on the subject matter for informative or evaluative purposes. The broadsheets in particular interviewed a very heterogeneous group, ranging from scientists and scholars, including sociologists, political scientists, economists, philosophers, and historians, to representatives of the European Union or the United Nations as well as lawyers and government officials. It is striking that eye-witnesses – i.e., refugees themselves or people close to them – were interviewed in only eight cases out of 91; half of these eight interviews were conducted in 2015 and the other half in 2022, and interestingly enough, they were published either in the conservative tabloid *Neue Kronen Zeitung* or in the left-wing broadsheet *Der Standard*. Equally astonishing is the observation that only one of these eight interviews actually represents a proper story of migration focusing on the individual experience of (Ukrainian) refugees (Münzer 2022); the rest of the interviews tend to prioritize the subject matter or the experiences of the volunteer helpers instead (e.g., Ertl 2015; Gruber 2015). More on this later.





	Expert/ Stakeholder	Politician	Eye-witness
<i>Der Standard</i>	22	13	3
<i>Die Presse</i>	13	12	0
<i>Neue Kronen Zeitung</i>	7	9	5
<i>Heute</i>	0	7	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>8</b>

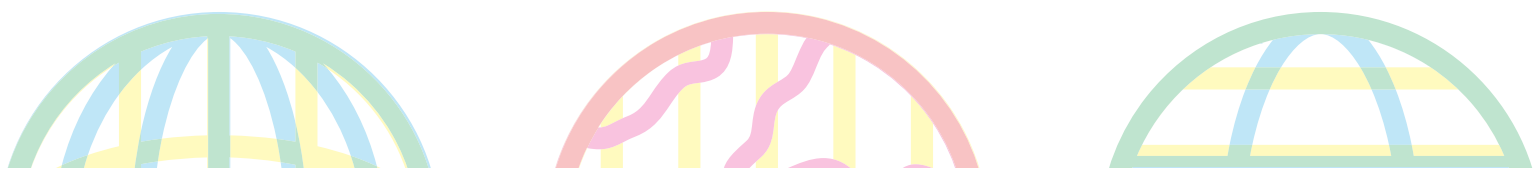
Table 2: Distribution of interview partners across the selected newspapers

As regards the positioning of the persons interviewed,<sup>15</sup> we found that speakers with a positive attitude toward refugees are more strongly represented than speakers with a negative or a neutral stance, and interestingly enough, this even holds for the conservative/right-wing newspapers in our sample (see Table 3). Another noteworthy observation (which is not shown in the table below) is that there is not one speaker among the 20 interview partners in 2022 who displays an explicit bias against refugees. More generally, we observed that politicians seem to be more skeptical than experts and stakeholders. Much the same applies to eye-witnesses: Of the 20 interviews that suggest an anti-migration stance, 17 were conducted with politicians, whereas the other three were held with experts and stakeholders. Apart from these exceptions, however, experts and stakeholders generally adopt a neutral or even a positive stance (with expert interviews making up 17 of the 30 interviews displaying a neutral position and 22 of the 42 interviews featuring a positive stance).

	Pro-migration	Middle ground (neutral)	Anti-migration
<i>Der Standard</i>	19	12	6
<i>Die Presse</i>	9	9	7
<i>Neue Kronen Zeitung</i>	12	7	5
<i>Heute</i>	3	2	2
<b>Total<sup>16</sup></b>	<b>43</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>20</b>

Table 3: Positioning of the interview partners

The categories that serve to describe the interviewees' positioning – pro-migration, anti-migration, and neutral positions – require further explanation. For, contrary to our initial expectations, the positionings that suggest a pro-migration stance do not qualify as statements that speak in favor of receiving large numbers of refugees or open border policies. Rather, they represent standpoints that wish to deal positively and constructively with the situation, as they underline the nation's obligation to help (e.g., Bures 2015; Eberle 2015), express a willingness to take up the challenge of welcoming large numbers of refugees (e.g., Barlai 2015; Kaiser 2022), or try to find some advantage in the increasing numbers of new arrivals (e.g., Entholzer 2015a; Knaus 2022). Anti-migration positionings, on the other hand, often exhibit a firm reluctance toward refugees and a deep aversion to refugee-friendly policies such as the opening of borders or the long-term supply of integration assistance. These views often align with a sense of fear that Austrian society is overrun with the large numbers of refugees or that most refugees left their home not for reasons of persecution or violence, but rather for economic reasons (e.g., Haimbuchner 2015; Kurz 2015a, 2015 b).<sup>17</sup> Neutral positions are mostly pragmatic assessments of the situation, for example when the interviewees discuss logistical needs or try to explain the current sense of crisis by setting the rapidly increasing number of refugee arrivals in Austria in the larger context of political and historical developments (e.g., O'Brien 2015; Schinas 2022; Schrover 2015).



The overall balance of the different positionings of all interview partners came as a surprise, especially with regard to the right-wing newspapers, which we had expected to spread more skeptical views. These findings might be largely due to the time periods we chose for our analysis: In September 2015, the so-called refugee crisis had just started to unfold in Austria, and in the aftermath of the Parndorf catastrophe, even *Neue Kronen Zeitung*, which is usually known for anti-migration positions, supported the new 'welcome culture' initiated by this frightful event. Yet, the sympathetic atmosphere soon started to change again as large numbers of asylum seekers continued entering Austria, more especially after the event of the violent border crossings later that month (see Ultsch et al. 2017).

As for 2022, the lack of negative attitudes toward refugees among the interview partners was to be expected. After Russia invaded Ukraine in late February of that year, a wave of solidarity with Ukrainian refugees ran through Europe which was no less strongly felt in Austria.<sup>18</sup> As with many other European countries, the Austrian public seemed to be much more open toward refugees from Ukraine than it had been toward refugees from Syria back in 2015. This difference could be explained with the overall absence of a sense of 'refugee crisis' in February and March 2022, as well as the different group profile of refugees regarding their gender and origin (see section 4.3).

#### 4.2.2 What Do They speak of? An Analysis of Migration Frames

For our frame analysis of the interviews, we drew on prior work in the field of migration studies, which helped us identify the most relevant frames deployed in public discourse on migration. An issue which is frequently discussed in mass media is the question of whether refugees ought to be considered "legitimate," and hence "deserving," or not (De Coninck 2020). According to Marta Szczepanik (2016), mass media tend to answer this question with reference to a publicly "imagined 'refugee ideal'" (28) that is based on a "universal set of normative characteristics (such as poverty, passivity or helplessness, [and] gender-related behaviour patterns)" (32). Her discussion of what she designates "a normative 'refugee archetype'" (24) helps us see that the debate surrounding the problematic concept of refugees' 'deservingness' in European public discourse is characterized by a strong gender bias. Women refugees – and especially displaced children, for that matter – are typically depicted as vulnerable, passive victims, who are in urgent need of help and protection, whereas male migrants are "repeatedly portrayed as [a] dangerous, barbaric collective" (24), who mainly seek to abuse social welfare systems (26).<sup>19</sup> *Deservingness*, with a particular emphasis on *gender* as sub-frame, consequently constitutes the first frame that we included in our analysis.

Another frame which is employed with marked frequency in public discourse on migration resorts to the concept of 'othering,' as well as a strongly mediated polarization of the divide between 'us' and 'them.'<sup>20</sup> European media coverage of migration movements tends to portray refugees from non-European countries as potentially endangering Western values and the European way of life, thus contributing to Eurocentric conceptualizations of displaced groups as the foreign 'other.'<sup>21</sup> We therefore introduced the notion of *othering* as the second migration frame relevant to our analysis, which can be further divided into the sub-frames *country or region of origin* (including aspects of cultural difference), *ethnicity*, and *religious affiliation*. During our empirical analysis, we moreover found that *racism* and *xenophobia* are relevant sub-frames as well, albeit mostly in contexts in which these phenomena are criticized by interviewees.

In public discourses on migration, frames of 'othering' are often closely connected to the frame of *national security*. Mass media in particular reveal a strong tendency to establish a linkage between migrants and security threats, thus fostering public perceptions of migration as a potential danger to public order and stability (see, e.g., Bruno 2022, 286–289; Jalušić and Bajt 2020, 519; Martikainen and Sakki 2021). *Terrorism* plays a particular role in this connection (Galantino 2022), often going hand in hand with reports on other forms of *crime and violence* (Greussing and Boomgaarden 2017, 1751), which is why we classified both notions as sub-frames of 'security.' Furthermore, when studying our



interview sample, we noted that questions of security are often negotiated in the context of accounts of irregular border crossings; we accordingly added the sub-frame of *irregularity* to capture this notion of refugeedom.

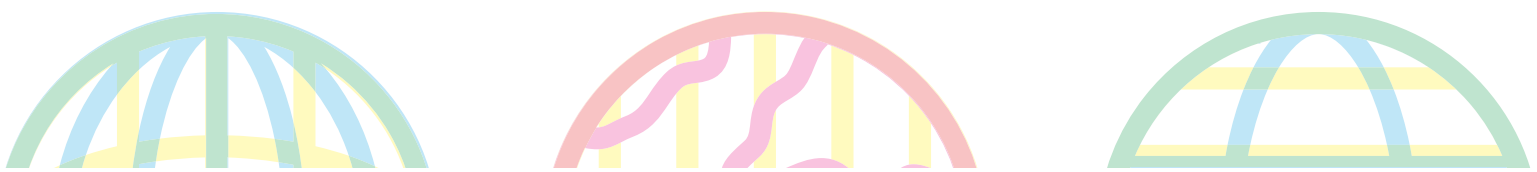
A further frame which foregrounds societal risks of receiving migrants and refugees is of an economic nature. Mass media typically resort to an economic framing of migration by discussing aspects such as the financial repercussions a state provided for building up shelters for asylum seekers, the competition between migrants and the local population on the labor market, as well as refugees' alleged abuse of welfare services (Eberl et al. 2018, 213–214). We subsumed all these aspects under the frame *economy*.

Although the frames that have been introduced so far are all mainly negatively connoted, there are also quite a few narratives on migration that refrain from depicting migrants, refugees, and displaced groups in a negative light. News media accordingly also discuss the notion of a moral obligation to help, for example by giving a platform to a committed civil society or by emphasizing the broad willingness among national populations to support migrants and refugees (Greussing and Boomgaarden 2017, 1756; Heidenreich et al. 2017, 177–178). We summarized such narratives under the frame of *humanitarianism*. It must not be overlooked, however, that humanitarian media coverage can also contribute to victimizing refugees, since narratives of migration easily tend to focus primarily on migrants' need of assistance, depicting them as desperate and suffering (Greussing and Boomgaarden 2017, 1750). To capture this phenomenon, we introduced the additional frame of *victimization* to our frame analysis.

The last migration frame that we derived from previous research on media representations of migration is *affectedness*. Foregrounding the lived experience of migration, flight, and forced displacement, this frame serves to introduce migrants' perspective in public discourses on migration and integration. Yet, most of these accounts qualify as instances of what Gebauer and Sommer (2023) have identified as "vicarious storytelling" (see also section 2), considering that migrants, and especially refugees, are rarely accorded an authentic voice in public debates on the topic, but depend largely on eye-witnesses close to them (e.g., social workers and activists) to tell their stories on their behalf (Gebauer and Sommer 2023, 9). Media studies scholars even speak of a "systematic silencing" of migrants in this respect (Kluknavská et al. 2019, 244).<sup>22</sup> We call the sub-frames that serve to describe the different degrees of 'affectedness' on the part of the storyteller *vicarious voice* and *refugees' voice* to distinguish between cases in which migrants' stories are told on their behalf by someone else and cases in which migrants relate their stories themselves, respectively.

During our analysis it became clear that these frames, which we derived from research literature, were not fully suited to grasp all the issues and concerns raised in our text corpus. We therefore identified two additional frames that caught our attention while examining the interviews: political and pragmatic frames. *Political frames*, on the one hand, address questions such as Austria's cooperation with other Member States of the European Union during the refugee "crisis" as well as domestic political debates about how best to handle the situation (e.g., Entholzer 2015b; Häupl 2015; Knaus 2022). *Pragmatic frames*, on the other hand, mainly occur in interviews with experts and stakeholders who raise issues such as logistical challenges concerning the lack of an infrastructure for large numbers of new arrivals and the urgent need of efficient strategies for a long-lasting integration (e.g., Stelzer 2022; Takács 2022b). Table 4 on the next page lists all the frames we applied in our qualitative content analysis in alphabetical order.

In our frame analysis we paid particular attention to the two criteria of *frequency* (i.e., the question of how often frames occur in the text corpus) as well as the *correspondence between frame usage and the speakers' positioning*.<sup>23</sup> With regard to the criterion of frequency, we noticed that the political frame appears most often, closely followed by the frame 'humanitarianism.' Together, these frames comprise more than one third of all frames employed in the interviews under investigation. The security frame takes third place, with more than every tenth interview raising corresponding issues. This latter is closely followed by the pragmatic and economic frames as well as the frames 'othering,' 'victimization,' and





‘deservingness,’ all of which appear with similar frequency (i.e., in about ten percent of all interviews). As far as the various sub-frames are concerned, it turned out that only two sub-frames – i.e., ‘origin and ethnicity’ as well as ‘racism/xenophobia’ (both sub-frames of ‘security’) – occur almost as often as the main frames, whereas ‘crime and violence’ as well as ‘irregularity’ (both sub-frames of ‘security’), ‘religious affiliation’ (sub-frame of ‘othering’), and ‘gender’ (sub-frame of ‘deservingness’) each appears in fewer than ten instances across the interviews under investigation. The sub-frame ‘terrorism’ occurs only once throughout the entire sample.

Main Frame	Sub-Frame 1	Sub-Frame 2	Sub-Frame 3
affectedness	<i>refugee’s voice</i>	<i>vicarious voice</i>	
deservingness	<i>gender</i>		
economy			
humanitarianism			
othering	<i>origin and ethnicity</i>	<i>religious affiliation</i>	<i>racism/xenophobia</i>
political			
pragmatic			
security	<i>terrorism</i>	<i>crime and violence</i>	<i>irregularity</i>
victimization			

Table 4: Migration frames applied in the qualitative content analysis

With reference to frequency, a particular case is the frame ‘affectedness.’ Although the (‘emic’) perspective of refugees was of central interest to our analysis, we were surprised to see that the lived experience of being a refugee only plays a marginal role compared to all the other frames, which depict the phenomenon mainly from an ‘etic’ (i.e., outside) point of view. What is more, the sub-frame ‘vicarious voice’ appears more frequently than that of ‘refugee’s voice’ – an observation which underlines the fact that, even in cases in which the media include first-hand perspectives, they rather rely on the statements of social workers, representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or activists, rather than on those of refugees and migrants themselves. As our frame analysis has shown, however, even such vicarious voices are quite faint in Austrian public discourse, given that the frame of ‘vicarious voice’ appears on fewer than ten occasions in the entire sample (see also section 4.2.1).

Turning to the question of how the speakers’ frame usage and their positioning correspond, we can establish that, in principle, every frame can potentially be used to support any kind of attitude toward migration, be it positive, negative, or neutral.<sup>24</sup> In reality, however, public discourse tends to pair certain frames with certain attitudes. Judging by the sample interviews we investigated in our case study, the correspondence of migration frames with the speakers’ positioning differs widely between 2015 and 2022, as illustrated by the bar charts in Figures 1 and 2 below.<sup>25</sup>

As for 2015, we can observe that the migration frames chosen by the interview partners served to depict more negative attitudes than positive or neutral positions, although the gap between both positionings is small (see Figure 1). Among the interviews which reveal a positive attitude toward migration, the humanitarian frame is most dominant, whereas themes of security dominate in interviews that feature an anti-migration perspective. Middle-ground or neutral positions draw primarily on political frames. The frame of ‘othering’ mainly appears in a negative context, as was expected; nonetheless, there are also



a few instances in which the frame serves to convey positive connotations. The frame is thus not only used to discriminate against foreign people and cultures (e.g., Sarrazin 2015), but some interviewees voice criticism against practices of racism and xenophobia (e.g., Bauböck 2022; Kraft 2022). Political frames occur slightly more frequently in interviews presenting a negative attitude toward migration than in interviews featuring positive positioning: Political arguments typically tend to criticize the European Union or Eastern European countries regarding the handling of the refugee “crisis” (e.g., Barlai 2015; Rinkēvičs 2015), yet they can also serve to call for solidarity among European countries or to emphasize a state’s legal responsibilities (e.g., Schieder 2015; Vassilakou 2015b). When it comes to the economic consequences of migration, positions are relatively balanced: While some interview partners fear the costs that refugees generate for host societies (e.g., Darabos 2015; Padoan 2015), others also see the potential which migration implies for economic growth (e.g., Entholzer 2015a; Wallström 2015). The frame ‘affectedness’ exclusively corresponds with speakers who show a positive attitude toward migration; but, as we have already mentioned above, it occurs only marginally in our interview samples. In 2015, the frame is employed exclusively in interviews with social workers who lend their voice to refugees (i.e., sub-frame ‘vicarious voice’; see, e.g., Ertl 2015; Gruber 2015; Harant 2015), whereas refugees themselves were not interviewed. Finally, the frame ‘deservingness’ mainly appears in a negative context, e.g., when refugees are accused of merely searching for a better life in Europe (e.g., Gentiloni 2015; Kurz 2015). The sub-frame ‘gender’ turns out to play a less important role than expected. But in those cases in which it appears, it is indeed used to fuel stereotypical ideas of suppressed women as ‘good’ refugees (e.g., Kurz 2015) and men as ‘bad’ refugees (e.g., Strache 2015).

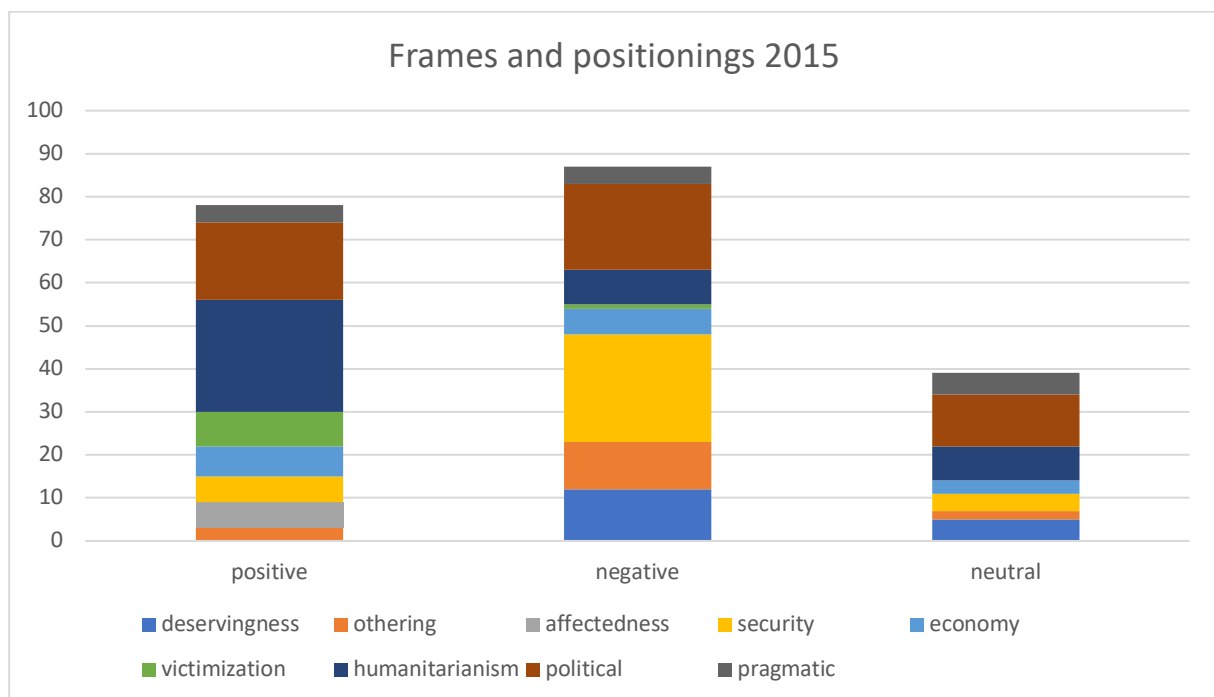


Figure 1: Frames and positionings in 2015

The bar chart in Figure 2 corroborates our observation that the majority of migration frames which interviewees draw on in 2022 clearly corresponds with positive attitudes toward migration (see section 4.2.2, especially Table 3). The security frame, which is mainly negatively connoted in the interviews from 2015, appears only marginally, and then exclusively in combination with a neutral stance in the interview sample of 2022; instead, humanitarian themes, which feature a positive perspective on migration, dominate in these texts (e.g., Edtstadler 2022; Schinas 2022). The political frame, which is one of the

most relevant frames in 2015, hardly plays a role in 2022, while the frame 'affectedness' has a stronger presence than in 2015, even though it still remains scarce (e.g., Münzer 2022; Jamalzadeh and Hepp 2022; Melzer 2022). The economic frame has a clearer positive connotation than in 2015. What is interesting in this respect is the narrative that Ukrainian arrivals will benefit Austria's 'empty' labor market (e.g., Knaus 2022; Poppmeier 2022). It is key to keep in mind, however, that our analysis for the period in 2022 only focused on a fairly small text corpus of 20 interviews, which limits the scope of these results compared to our review of 71 interviews for the period of 2015. An equally large text corpus for 2022 might have offered a different picture.

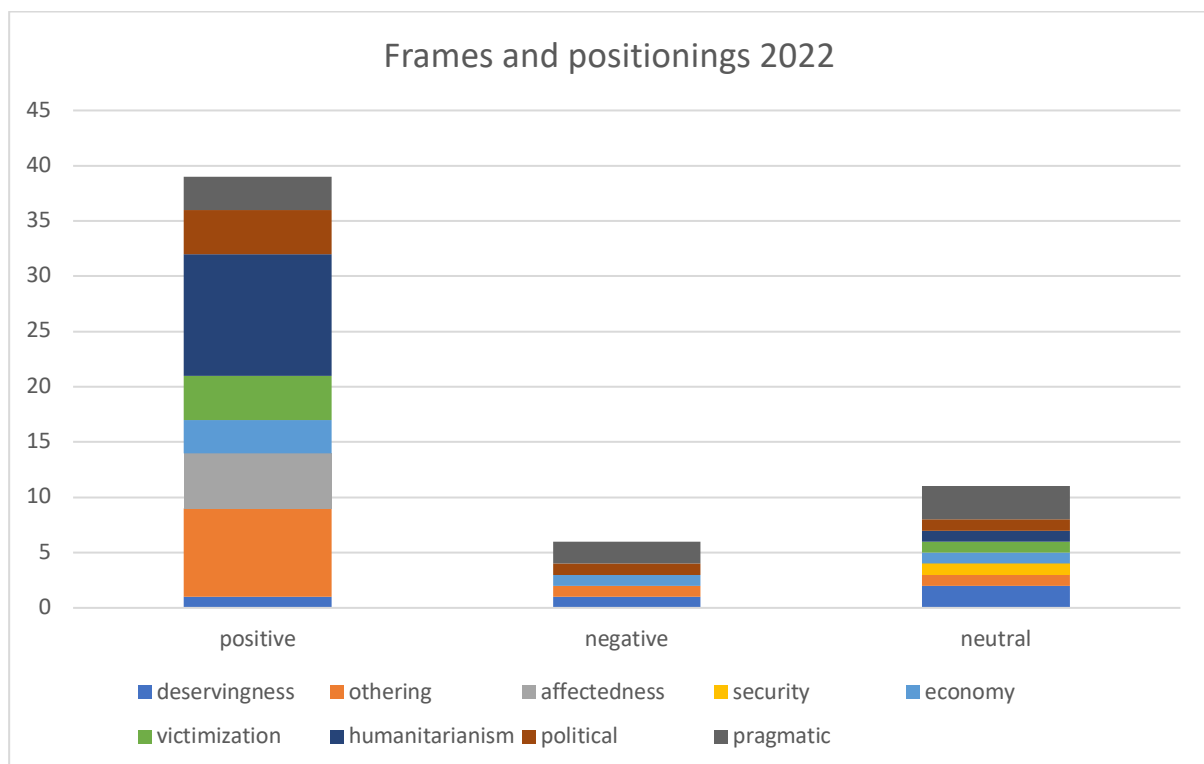


Figure 2: Frames and positionings in 2022

### 4.3 Narrative Analysis of the Interviews: How Are Migration, Flight, and Mobility Represented?

#### 4.3.1 Narratives on Migration in 2015: Framing Refugee Movements as a Moment of Crisis

In this section of the paper, we will hone in on specific example interviews to discuss conspicuous linguistic features and narrative devices that caught our attention while examining the texts. A strategy that we found most interesting in this connection is the use of metaphors. Drawing on Ansgar Nünning's (2009) understanding of metaphors as "mini-narrations," we conceive of this specific type of trope as an effective narrative device that provides micro-frames of migration by evoking associations of transnational mobility with either positive or negative connotations. Recent studies on European media coverage of migration suggest that 'natural event' or 'natural disaster' metaphors, and in this context especially metaphors of water and inundation, are a popular means among journalists, media reporters,



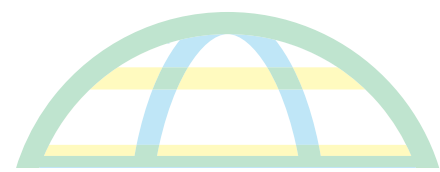
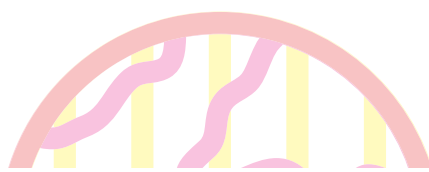
and politicians to refer to large-scale migration and refugee movements.<sup>26</sup> Our interview sample for 2015 is no exception in this regard: A simple keyword search in MAXQDA revealed that the term *refugee flow* (“Flüchtlingsstrom”) occurs 21 times, followed by the term *refugee wave* (“Flüchtlingswelle”), which delivered ten hits (see Table 5).<sup>27</sup> Only two interviews deploy the metaphor *storm of refugees* (“Flüchtlingssturm”), which belongs to the same source domain.<sup>28</sup> Bo Petersson and Lena Kainz (2017, 54) argue that such practices of metaphorically framing migration as natural disasters are problematic for two reasons: First, they tend to objectify and sometimes even dehumanize refugees and asylum seekers. Second, they work toward shaping public understanding of these groups in negative ways, as “the connotations of natural catastrophes they convey are likely to divert readers’ attention from the perilous journeys undertaking by refugees on their way to Europe,” which, in turn, “contribute[s] to Othering and the ‘us-vs-them’ thinking so commonly found in media debates” (54).

	<b>refugee flow</b> <i>source domain:</i> <i>‘natural disaster’</i>	<b>refugee wave</b> <i>source domain:</i> <i>‘natural disaster’</i>	<b>Crisis</b> <i>source domain:</i> <i>‘crisis’</i>	<b>catastrophe</b> <i>source domain:</i> <i>‘crisis’</i>
<i>Der Standard</i>	8	2	19	1
<i>Die Presse</i>	6	7	20	1
<i>Neue Kronen Zeitung</i>	7	1	3	5
<i>Heute</i>	0	0	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>7</b>

Table 5: Most important migration metaphors used in the interview sample of 2015

In our corpus, this effect becomes most evident in the interview with Othmar Commenda (2015) in *Der Standard*, which deals with the question of refugees’ mobility after they have arrived in Austria. Both journalist and interviewee talk about the “transportation of refugees” (“Flüchtlingstransport”) in this context – that is, they use another metaphor which “degrade[s] humans to objects” by presenting refugees as commodities that can be transported, processed, and redistributed (Petersson and Kainz 2017, 52). This metaphorical framing may not necessarily strike readers as unusual, though, as it has already been naturalized in German and Austrian media discourse on refugees and asylum seekers.<sup>29</sup> Yet Commenda carries the image to extremes when combining it with further water metaphors: Speculating about the possibility of a new “rush” (“Ansturm”) of refugees, he explains that the military will have to provide sufficient transporters to ensure that there is a “permanent flow” (“permanenter Fluss”) to the train stations, so that a “drain” (“Abfließen”) in the direction of the refugees’ desired destinations can be guaranteed. Although Commenda actually takes a neutral stance toward refugees – after all, he helps them during their journey – his word choice suggests otherwise: His objectifying language usage, which can be characterized as security technical jargon, depicts the high numbers of refugees arriving in Europe and Austria as a problem which urgently needs to be tackled by EU leaders.

In addition to metaphors which refrain from portraying migrants as human beings, our text corpus features even more metaphors that present migration as a crisis or humanitarian catastrophe (see Table 5).<sup>30</sup> According to a keyword search in MAXQDA, the metaphors *refugee crisis* (“Flüchtlingskrise”) and *asylum crisis* (“Asylkrise”) occur 43 times, whereas the notion of *catastrophe* is mentioned at least 7 times.<sup>31</sup> Other metaphors that present similar ideas are *refugee misery* (“Flüchtlingsmisere”) with 2 hits and *refugee tragedy* (“Flüchtlingstragödie”) with 3 hits of which 2 refer to the Parndorf catastrophe at the end of August (see section 4.1).<sup>32</sup> According to Nünning (2012), metaphors “not only serve to structure how we understand cultural transformations” (62), but in their function as mini-narrations, they also “provide ideologically charged plots and explanations of cultural and historical changes” (63). Framing the migration movements toward Europe in 2015 as a crisis thus represents a specific way of worldmaking: it depicts the current situation as a problem that requires a solution.



But how exactly can the problem be solved? As our frame analysis in section 4.2.2 has demonstrated, the majority of interviews in 2015 draw on political, humanitarian, security, and economic frames, as well as the frame of 'deservingness,' to address this question. The topics and themes of migration that most frequently occur in connection with these frames include European cohesion, national security, integration, as well as gender and cultural differences. In discussing these topics separately in our analysis, we do not wish to imply that the examples we use to illustrate our arguments for each topic focus exclusively on this selected theme. In fact, most interviews broach more than one aspect of migration, combining several of the topics which we will here identify to reflect upon the situation in Austria at the time.

Many interviews draw on a political framing, as they depict the current moment of crisis as a crucial test for the European Union, with the large number of refugees arriving in Europe eliciting severe disputes between the European Member States. In his interview with *Neue Kronen Zeitung*, Josef Pühringer (2015a), governor of Upper Austria, describes the situation current then as a "chaos of asylum" ("Asyl-Chaos") and demands that all European Member States attend to their duty of solidarity by collaborating in the attempt to find a solution to the problem. It is not acceptable, he argues, that there are only a few countries that receive large numbers of refugees, which causes them both logistic and financial problems.

While accounts like Pühringer's frame the high numbers of refugee arrivals in Europe as a political crisis that can only be solved with financial sanctions for those countries that refuse to cooperate, other voices put emphasis on the idea of European integration. Michael Landau, president of the Austrian Caritas Association, for example, argues that "we need more Europe when it comes to the issue of refugees" (Landau 2015; our translation), and Bishop Benno Elbs strongly agrees with this diagnosis, warning that if "we fail to agree on a common approach, this would mean nothing other than a capitulation of the idea of Europe" (Elbs 2015; our translation). Former German Minister for Europe Michael Roth, who was interviewed in *Die Presse*, similarly criticizes the lack of a shared understanding among European Member States: He doubts that the debates of renationalization that one is currently experiencing in many places will be productive and calls instead for more "European answers" to many issues and concerns (Roth 2015; our translation). All three interview partners thus invoke Europe as a synecdoche for central European values, thus stressing the importance of the Union's cohesion in this time of crisis.

Closely connected to the question of European cohesion, which is typically foregrounded in political framings, is the frame of national security. Finding fault with European migration law and the lack of border control at external Schengen borders, Heinz-Christian Strache, then-chairman of the rightwing-populist Freedom Party of Austria, insists on stricter measures such as the construction of fences to secure Austria's national borders. To justify his demand, he uses a simile which compares Austria to civilians' domestic sphere: Fences are necessary because "we would not unhinge the windows and doors of our private houses, either" (Strache 2019, n. pag.). Interview partners from the group of experts and stakeholders, by contrast, clearly reject such propositions. Closed borders, they warn, would by no means solve the problem, but would make refugee routes even more perilous for people on the move (Commenda 2015; Pinter 2015).

Diametrically opposed to the call for border control (security frame) is the humanitarian narrative which displays a much more welcoming attitude toward refugees and asylum seekers. Experts and stakeholders observe a strong willingness to help refugees in civil society, but they miss a similar sense of solidarity among politicians (Landau 2015). While this may be true for some interviewees,<sup>33</sup> our corpus also contains interviews with politicians who stress how important it is to support asylum seekers in Austria (Kurz 2015a) as well as refugees who are still on the move (Mikl-Leitner 2015). Minister of the Interior Johanna Mikl-Leitner (2015, n. pag.), for example, argues that "we need to create safe routes into Europe, so that human traffickers do not stand any chance of bargain." According to representatives of UNHCR and Caritas Austria, this aim could be achieved by investing more money in humanitarian aid to ameliorate the situation and living conditions in the countries of origins, which represent the actual



core of the problem, rather than spending large sums to secure European borders (Landau 2015; O'Brien 2015).

In addition to these appeals for solidarity with and support for migrants, the humanitarian framing of migration also includes the aspect of integration. In his interview with *Neue Kronen Zeitung*, Bishop Elbs urges the nation to “build bridges” to help refugees become integrated in Austrian society. Integration, in his view, not only entails providing refugees with “a roof over their heads,” but it also means that they can find “a shelter for their souls” (Elbs 2015). While the bishop approaches the question of integration from a Christian perspective – he even quotes a passage from the Bible to support his points – stakeholders like Landau stress secular and pragmatic aspects of the subject. Responding to feelings of fear and anxiety toward refugees among large parts of the Austrian society, he stresses that the country needs what he calls “double integration” (“doppelte Integration”) – that is, an integration of people who are coming to Austria and who need to adapt to democratic values and the idea of gender equality, and on the other an integration of members of Austrian society who are afraid of the foreigners who are coming to their country (Landau 2015).

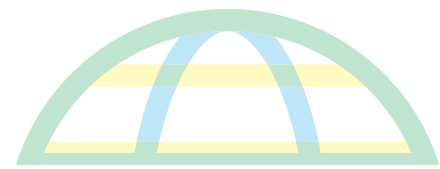
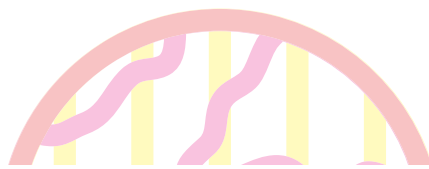
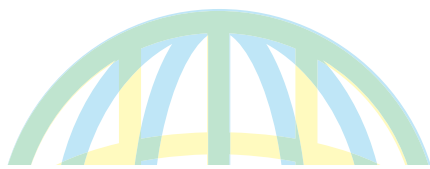
Landau's argument shines a light on two further important themes that are frequently addressed in the interviews of 2015, namely notions of gender and othering. Interviewees repeatedly mention (if in some cases only *en passant*) that it is mainly men (and few or no women or children) that comprise the groups of refugees currently arriving in Austria (Schrover 2015; Rendi-Wagner 2015), and that the majority of these men are of Muslim faith (Elbs 2015; Quent 2015; Orbán 2015). Two examples that deserve special scrutiny in this context are the interviews which Sebastian Kurz, then-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Integration and Europe, gave in *Neue Kronen Zeitung* and *Die Presse*. In his interview with the former newspaper, Kurz shares his thoughts largely on how the European Union should have best handled the current “refugee crisis” (Kurz 2015b, n. pag.). When the interviewer points out to him that Europe's current open border policy has led to public concerns over national security, the loss of prosperity, and the potential failure to integrate on the part refugees, Kurz takes a clear stance:

We have to uphold our values. Those who want to stay also have to follow the rules of our communal life. These fundamental values are constitutionality or the equality between men and women. This has to be clearly communicated to the people who have come to us from other cultural areas. And this is something we will demand.<sup>34</sup> (Kurz 2015b, n. pag.; our translation)

This admittedly firm tone, which is even commented upon by the interviewer – “You are being quite harsh right now.” (“Sie gehen es aber recht scharf an.”) – stands in stark contrast to his interview with *Die Presse*. Even though he also addresses cultural differences in this text, his words seem more carefully chosen: “We have to be aware of the fact that many of these people come from regions which have a completely different cultural background than ours. We have to communicate our values right from the start.”<sup>35</sup> (Kurz 2015a, n. pag.; our translation) In his conversation with *Die Presse*, Kurz refrains from using the “us vs. them”-rhetoric that he applies in *Neue Kronen Zeitung*, instead stressing the importance of effective integration measures, ranging from accommodation and language courses to the inclusion of refugees in the national labor market. The two examples thus present two contrasting narratives on migration, with one displaying a negative view on cultural difference, whereas the other seeks to establish a ‘welcome culture.’

#### 4.3.2 Narratives on Migration in 2022: Conveying a New Feeling of Solidarity

Media coverage of the refugee movements in 2022 deviates strongly from the narratives on migration discussed in the previous section. This already becomes apparent when considering the use of metaphors. Unlike the interview sample for 2015, which is full of migration metaphors, the interviews we examined for 2022 reveal very few instances of such metaphorical framing. Our search in MAXQDA for the source domain of ‘natural disaster’ only yielded three results – two for “refugee wave” (“Flüchtlingswelle”) and one for “inflow of refugees” (“Flüchtlingszustrom”) – while the search for the





source domain ‘crisis’ led to six results (see Table 6).<sup>36</sup> There are two plausible explanations for these results: First, the low number of hits for ‘natural disaster’ metaphors could be linked to the fact that the most dominant frame that we identified for narratives on migration in the 2022 interview sample is the humanitarian one, which tends to avoid dehumanizing and objectifying depictions of migrants and refugees (see Figure 3). Second, in this year, the metaphor of crisis is used primarily to refer to the situation in Ukraine, more specifically the war, which leads to forced displacement as one of its major consequences. When interviewees talk about the large number of refugees that are coming from Ukraine – which exceeds by far the figures of 2015 – they accordingly seem to prefer the term *challenge* over that of *crisis* (Knaus 2022). However, we must again keep in mind that the interview sample is comparatively small, which may diminish the overall validity of this observation.

	refugee (in)flow source domain: ‘natural disaster’	refugee wave source domain: ‘natural disaster’	crisis source domain: ‘crisis’	catastrophe source domain: ‘crisis’
<i>Der Standard</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Die Presse</i>	0	1	5	0
<i>Neue Kronen Zeitung</i>	1	1	1	0
<i>Heute</i>	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>

Table 6: Migration metaphors used in the interview sample of 2022

The fact that migration and flight are framed very differently in 2022 can also be seen in the topics that interviewees typically address. These are by far less heterogeneous than in 2015 and consist mainly of solidarity toward the Ukrainian people, as well as a comparison with 2015. With respect to the first topic, one can notice that the interview partners’ solidarity for Ukrainian refugees seems to know “no limits” (Edtstadler 2022, n. pag.): Politicians, experts, and stakeholders all keep affirming that Austria (and the European Union) “will help every person who is fleeing from the war in Ukraine” (Edtstadler 2022, n. pag.; our translation) and reject any discussions about possible quota distributions that were highly debated in 2015 (Bauböck 2022; Knaus 2022; Takács 2022b). Instead, what seems to matter in 2022 is to react immediately and to provide help for refugees as quickly as possible (Takács 2022b). Although everyone acknowledges the difficulty of this task, most voices seem to agree that Austria and Europe will master the challenge with joint forces (Knaus 2022; Schinas 2022). The reasons for their conviction are twofold: First, “all European countries show great empathy [toward Ukrainian refugees]” (“die Empathie in allen europäischen Ländern ist groß”; Knaus 2022, n. pag.); and, second, Europe has already learned from the situation in 2015 how to deal with large refugee movements (Takács 2022b). In contrast to the many interviewees of 2015 who routinely see the “refugee crisis” as a threat to European integrity, the majority of interview partners in 2022 express their confidence in the European Union and the cohesion of the Member States. In his interview with *Die Presse*, migration expert Gerald Knaus thus argues that Putin hopes that the large refugee movements from Ukraine will split and weaken Europe, concluding that this project has not yet succeeded (Knaus 2022).

All these observations certainly raise the question of what has changed between 2015 and 2022: Why do the media respond so differently to refugee movements in 2022 than they did seven years earlier? From the many comparisons between both years that can be found in the interview corpus, we can infer that the same question must also have occupied many of the interviewees of 2022 (see, e.g., Bauböck 2022; Knaus 2022; Kraft 2022; Takács 2022b). While most interviews only imply that gender and ethnicity play a central role in this context, there are at least two experts who explicitly mention these factors: As migration researcher Rainer Bauböck (2022) reminds us in *Die Presse*, in 2015, politicians usually depicted Muslim refugees from Syria as unwelcome migrants who should rather stay in neighboring countries like Turkey, Jordan, or Libya. Historian Claudia Kraft (2022, n. pag.), in *Der*

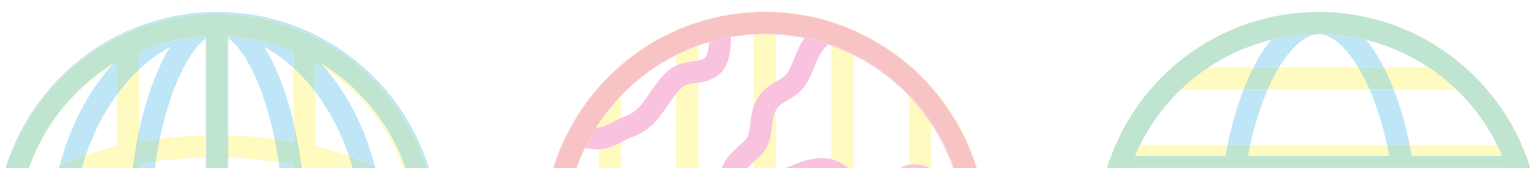
*Standard*, similarly recalls the feeling of “fear of the ‘unknown refugee’” that prevailed in the media seven years earlier: Back in 2015, she argues, it was predominantly “young men with allegedly dubious intentions” (“junge Männer mit angeblich zweifelhaften Absichten”) who were on the move. Today, it is rather women, children, and the elderly who are fleeing from the war in Ukraine. Seen from this angle, the interviews of 2022 also serve a meta-purpose in that they support our findings that the interviews in 2015 frequently use the concept of ‘othering’ to depict refugees from the Middle East in a negative light, which is not the case for media coverage of Ukrainian refugees in 2022. The different attitudes towards European and non-European migrants highlighted by Kraft furthermore suggest a clear gender bias which is paired with stereotypical opinions about deservingness: male refugees from Eastern countries are typically presented as ‘bad’ migrants whose allegedly dubious intentions disqualify them from any entitlement to aid, whereas female Ukrainian refugees are usually considered to be ‘good’ and vulnerable migrants who deserve unconditional support and assistance.

#### 4.3.3 *Stories of Migration and Hybrid Forms: Feeling Empathy for Whom?*

As our analysis in section 4.2.1 has shown, the interview sample contains only eight interviews with eye-witnesses, one half of which was conducted in 2015 and the other half in 2022.<sup>37</sup> The eye-witnesses that were interviewed include refugees (Münzer 2022) and helpers (Eberle 2015; Ertl 2015; Gruber 2015; Harant 2015), but also a representative of UNHCR who visited the Polish-Austrian border in 2022 (Melzer 2022), a Ukrainian artist who speaks about the current situation in her home country (Kuzmych 2022), and author Elyas Jamalzadeh, who wrote a memoir about his life as a refugee (Jamalzadeh and Hepp 2022). Since we cannot analyze all of these interviews in detail, we will confine our discussion to the interviews with refugees and helpers.

The interviews with helpers in 2015 were exclusively published in *Neue Kronen Zeitung*. The interview partners report their experiences as helpers in refugee camps or at train stations, and their accounts are very emotional. One interviewee, for example, tells of a refugee who was so exhausted from the flight that she was no longer able to breast-feed her child (Ertl 2015). Even when relating the incident in retrospect, the helper is very moved by this recollection, which is reflected in her language usage: instead of referring to the woman as “a mother,” she uses the German familiar form “Mama.” Another interviewee recalls a scenario in which refugees arrived at a refugee accommodation in Linz and remembers that “a two-year-old was so exhausted that he fell asleep while standing up and then fell over” (Gruber 2015, n. pag.; our translation). In his account, he comments further on the physical state of the refugees, informing the interviewee that the majority is “exhausted and famished,” while some also “have blisters and bloody feet” which need to be treated. The interview takes an interesting turn, however, when the interviewer asks the helper how he copes with this situation. From this point, the conversation moves away from the plight of the refugees and centers largely on the stress and emotional drain that the interviewee has to endure. In our text corpus, the interviews with eye-witnesses who are helpers thus invite readers to perspective taking, yet this act of adopting the perspective of another is directed more toward the helpers than the refugees.<sup>38</sup>

This is certainly different in the only interview with refugees included in our sample for 2022 (Münzer 2022). Indeed, this text differs from the other interviews not only because it qualifies as a proper story of migration that relates the experiences of Ljudmila and Ana, two Ukrainians who fled from Kiev to Vienna, but it also displays an unusual form: Although published as an interview, the text resembles more a narrative account than a conversation between interviewer and interviewees, for the text lacks any questions by the interviewer and only occasionally includes literal quotes by Ljudmila and Ana (as well as a quote by the head of Caritas Austria); the rest of the text is a recount of how mother and daughter managed to escape the Ukrainian capital under bomb attack by getting on the last trains to Austria. Except for those parts in which Ljudmila and Ana tell of their experiences themselves (in the form of direct quotes), the narrative is written in the present tense. The effect of this is the creation of narrative immediacy, which encourages readers not only to project themselves right onto the narrative





scene, but also to put themselves in the refugees' shoes.<sup>39</sup> We imagine ourselves hurrying with Ljudmila and Ana through the streets of Kiev to the train station, or sitting next to them in the bright room of the Caritas accommodation, swiping "sadly" and "pensively" through the pictures of "happy faces" and "the horrors of the war" on their mobile phones. Unlike the interviews with the refugee workers from 2015, this emotional story of migration from 2022 facilitates a form of perspective taking that is directed toward the refugees and thus potentially evokes empathy for their fate within readers.

#### 4.4 Discussion of the Results of the Qualitative and Narrative Analyses

Returning to the hypotheses formulated at the end of section 3, one can conclude that these assumptions proved only partly true for the interview sample under investigation. Surprisingly, our analysis has shown that, even though the genre of the journalistic interview would very well lend itself to accommodating stories of migration as well as hybrid forms of vicarious narrative (hypothesis 1), there are very few interviews in our corpus that actually present migration from an emic or rather inside perspective. This observation substantiates the claim that migrant voices are largely underrepresented in public discourse and once more stresses the urgent need for new discourse rules for a fairer debate on migration (Gebauer and Sommer 2023).

With respect to the production and reception contexts of the newspapers under investigation, we noticed that the broadsheets – *Die Presse* and *Der Standard* – seek to create multiperspectivity and multiscalarity in interviewing various experts and stakeholders ranging from migration scholars to representatives of NGOs, from historians to philosophers, and from politicians to activists.<sup>40</sup> Against our expectations, however, these newspapers do not work toward horizontal multiperspectivity (hypothesis 2), but they rather stage vertical multiperspectivity: i.e., they reproduce a wide range of opinions among the groups of politicians as well as experts and stakeholders, yet they fail to sufficiently include the perspective of migrants and refugees. Tabloids, on the other hand, present narrower views on the topic, as is illustrated, for example, by the fact that *Neue Kronen Zeitung* features a larger number of interviews that were conducted with representatives of the Church or the Caritas organization.

Our analysis has further shown that interview partners tailor their responses according to the intended readership of the different newspapers. This becomes most apparent in the 2015 interviews with Sebastian Kurz, who clearly chooses to express different attitudes to *Neue Kronen Zeitung* and *Die Presse*. In the tabloid he takes a stance which is much more reluctant toward refugees than in the broadsheet, where he paints a more balanced and profound picture by negotiating options of how to create a welcome culture for asylum seekers. While the positions of the different newspapers certainly had a bearing on Kurz's word choice in both interviews (*Neue Kronen Zeitung* is famous for spreading more drastic views than *Die Presse*), one can assume that the timing of the interviews may also have had an impact on it: the interview in *Die Presse* was conducted shortly after the Parndorf incident, whereas the interview in *Neue Kronen Zeitung* was published later that month. Both interviews thus perfectly illustrate the ways in which production and reception contexts may influence migration coverage in the media.

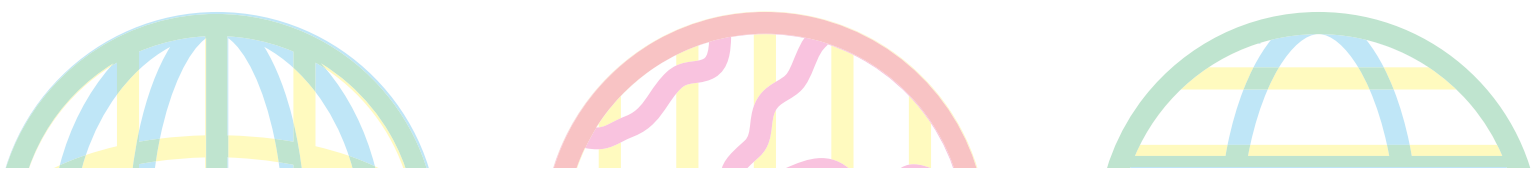
As to our third and final hypothesis, the results of our analysis have corroborated all our assumptions about a discursive shift taking place between the two timeframes under investigation. Our interview sample suggests that the outbreak of Russia's aggressive war against Ukraine in February 2022 indeed led to more compassionate responses in media coverage of migration than in 2015, with a large number of interview partners expressing empathy for the refugees in their predicament. In the interview sample for 2015, we can observe that negative narratives on migration have a stronger presence than positive ones, even though the shocking event of the Parndorf catastrophe in September 2015 caused many interviewees to also take humanitarian questions into consideration. Generally, one can say that the longer the refugee "crisis" endured, the more often migration and asylum were framed as "security"



problems. While still in the earliest stages of the “crisis,” interviews focused primarily on topics related to aspects of labor and social policy topics, later texts rather dealt with issues and concerns relating to national security as well as to the institutional regulation of migration. Our interview sample, moreover, serves to corroborate findings from previous research on European media coverage of migration in that they suggest that Austria’s newspapers followed the overall tendency in European media in not according migrants a voice of their own.

The interviews from 2022, by contrast, exhibit a preponderance of positive attitudes toward migration, and these attitudes are not confined to the use of specific frames, but correspond with all migration frames we applied in our analysis. As our discussion in section 4.3.2 demonstrates, this difference between 2015 and 2022 may be due primarily to gender and questions of ‘deservingness.’ In 2015, about 73 percent of the refugees applying for asylum in Austria were male (Bundesministerium für Inneres 2015, 4); the majority of this group were of Muslim background. In 2022, the ratio is reversed for Ukrainian refugees: By the end of the year, the most new arrivals from Ukraine were women of working age (about 70%), while the rest were mostly children or elderly people of all sexes (Salzburger Nachrichten 2022). Besides, the Ukrainians arriving in Austria were often perceived as members of the in-group, i.e., as people who share Austrian and European values. It is possible that these statistics rendered the refugee movements of 2022 less threatening for the population, which, of course, also influenced the ways in which the media responded to current events.

In addition to the three hypotheses which we formulated at the beginning of our analysis, our case study offers further interesting results concerning the use of stylistic strategies and narrative devices in journalistic interviews. We observed that the interviews conducted in 2015 feature many migration metaphors that tend to dehumanize or at least objectify migrants (e.g., through natural disaster metaphors) or depict the current situation as a moment of crisis. These metaphors are much less frequently used in 2022, which suggests that in this period public debates on migration have resorted to more measured and respectful discourses. This impression is reinforced by the fact that the interview sample of 2022 also features stories of migration, albeit only in low numbers. However, these findings must not be overgeneralized, considering that the 2022 corpus comprises exclusively interviews that were published shortly after the beginning of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. An analysis of later interviews may have led to a different picture.



## 5. Conclusion

The experimental multi-method approach to analyzing representations of migration in Austrian media which we have presented in this paper has shown that an interdisciplinary collaboration among the social sciences and the humanities can lead to new insights that are of central relevance for both the field of migration studies and the field of narrative research. By combining the methods of a qualitative content analysis which focuses chiefly on the usage of frames in media coverage of migration (an approach adopted from the social sciences) with a discourse analysis which is mainly interested in the usage of narrative strategies and stylistic devices (an approach established in the humanities), our paper has revealed both the strengths and any shortcomings of research on migration which is conducted in both disciplines.

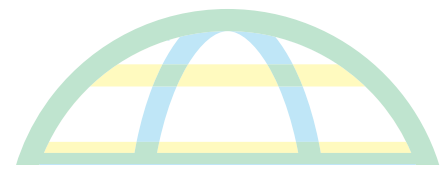
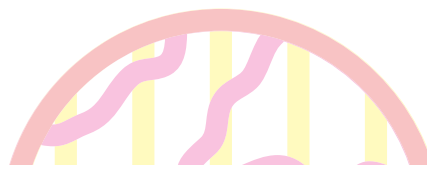
The social science approach has enabled us to gain a broader overview of our interview sample, offering us a concrete idea about the status and positioning of interview partners as well as the occurrence of migration frames that were used in journalistic interviews published in four different newspapers during two different time frames. A discourse analysis of the very same text corpus would certainly have failed to provide such detailed numbers, presenting instead a much more intuitively based picture. Yet, if used in isolation, qualitative content analyses tend to overlook textual, linguistic, and narrative details, thus creating serious blind spots which can only be detected through narrative analysis. More specifically, our narratological close readings of selected interviews equipped us with an enhanced faculty to hone in on individual texts and thereby to show that both sets of interviews from 2015 and 2022 not only present different migration narratives, but that they also make use of diverging tropes and narrative strategies, which additionally influence the ways in which readers perceive and think about the views of migration that are presented in the media. Interdisciplinary narrative research is still in its infancy, but we nevertheless hope that our analysis of migration narratives in Austrian journalistic interviews has succeeded in highlighting some of the benefits of taking up the endeavor of testing new methods that may pave the way for more productive collaborations between the social sciences and the humanities.



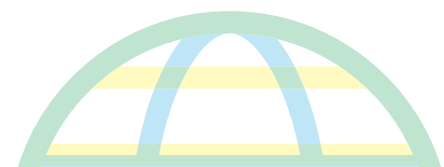
## 6. References

### 6.1 Interviews

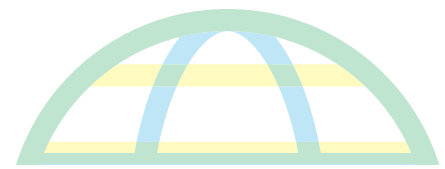
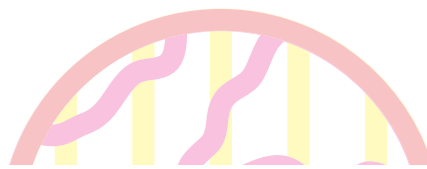
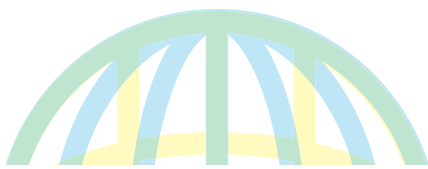
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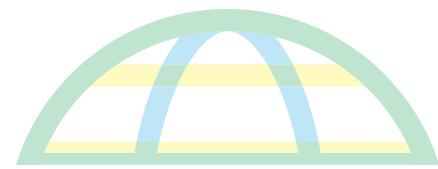
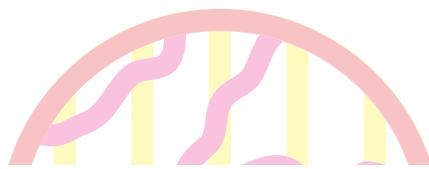
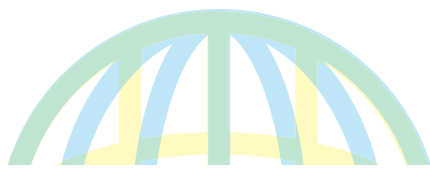
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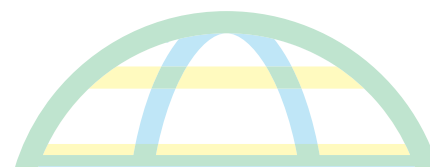


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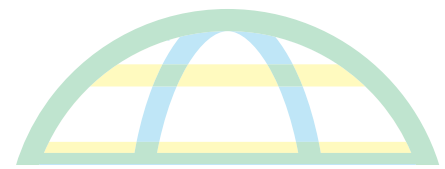
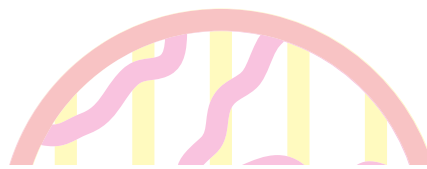
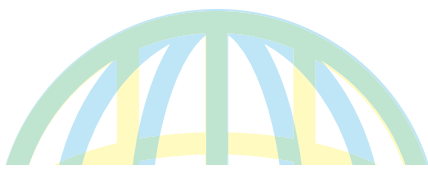




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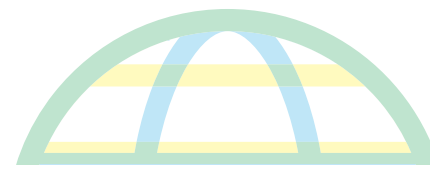
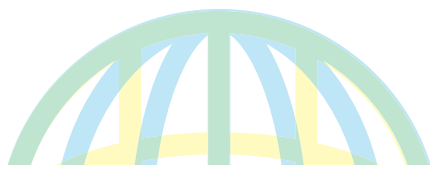
## 7. Appendix

The table below lists all interviews that were included in the text corpus.

#	Newspaper	Date	Interviewee(s)	Profession	Status (politician, expert/stakeholder, eye-witness)	Frame (pro-migration, neutral, anti-migration)
1	<i>Der Standard</i>	August 28, 2015	Karl Schmideder	Chair of Sektion IV in the Ministry of Defense	expert	neutral
2	<i>Der Standard</i>	August 29, 2015	Johanna Mikl-Leitner; Ilija Trojanow	Minister for Interior; author	politician; stakeholder	anti-migration; pro-migration
3	<i>Der Standard</i>	August 29, 2015	Johannes Hahn	EU-Commissioner for Regional Politics	politician (ÖVP)	neutral
4	<i>Der Standard</i>	August 31, 2015	Karl Schlögl	former Minister for Interior	politician (SPÖ)	neutral
5	<i>Der Standard</i>	September 3, 2015	Michael Häupl	Mayor of Vienna	politician (SPÖ)	neutral
6	<i>Der Standard</i>	September 7, 2015	Péter Szijjártó	Hungarian Foreign Minister	politician	anti-migration
7	<i>Der Standard</i>	September 8, 2015	Maria Vassilakou	Vice Mayor of Vienna	politician	pro-migration
8	<i>Der Standard</i>	September 10, 2015	Marlou Schrover	Historian and Migration expert	expert	neutral
9	<i>Der Standard</i>	September 11, 2015	Reinhold Entholzer	Chairman Upper Austria	politician (SPÖ)	pro-migration
10	<i>Der Standard</i>	September 11, 2015	Norbert Darabos	Councilman Burgenland for Social Issues	politician (SPÖ)	neutral
11	<i>Der Standard</i>	September 12, 2015	Karl Aiginger	Chair of WIFO	expert	neutral
12	<i>Der Standard</i>	September 14, 2015	Othmar Commenda	Head of Military Council	expert	neutral
13	<i>Der Standard</i>	September 14, 2015	Pier Carlo Padoan	Minister for Financial Affairs, Italy	politician	neutral
14	<i>Der Standard</i>	September 16, 2015	Christoph Pinter	Head of Vinnese UNHCR Office	expert	pro-migration
15	<i>Der Standard</i>	September 16, 2015	Joahannes Wancata	psychiatrist	expert	pro-migration
16	<i>Der Standard</i>	September 16, 2015	Matthias Quent	sociologist	expert	pro-migration
17	<i>Der Standard</i>	September 19, 2015	Paolo Gentiloni	Italian Foreign Minister	politician	pro-migration
18	<i>Der Standard</i>	September 19, 2015	Aurelia Frick	Member of Lichtenstein government	politician	pro-migration
19	<i>Der Standard</i>	September 19, 2015	Ferdinand Fellmann	philosopher	expert	anti-migration
20	<i>Der Standard</i>	September 19, 2015	August Gächter	sociologist	expert	neutral
21	<i>Der Standard</i>	September 19, 2015	Ernst Molden	musician	stakeholder	pro-migration
22	<i>Der Standard</i>	September 19, 2015	Yana Milev	sociologist	expert	pro-migration
23	<i>Der Standard</i>	September 21, 2015	János Perényi	Hungarian Ambassador in Austria	expert	anti-migration
24	<i>Der Standard</i>	September 22, 2015	Carl Bildt	former Swedish and international politician	expert	pro-migration

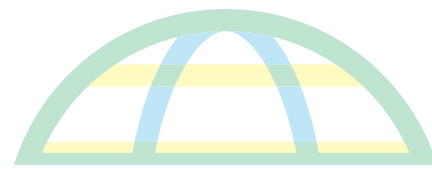
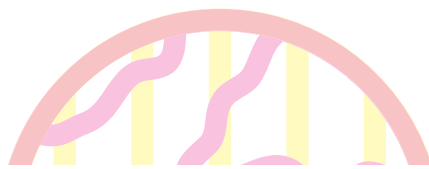
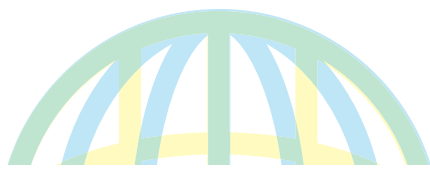


25	<i>Der Standard</i>	September 23, 2015	Manfred Haimbuchner	Chair of FPÖ in Upper Austria	politician	anti-migration
26	<i>Der Standard</i>	September 24, 2015	Alexa Wesner	US Ambassador in Austria	expert	pro-migration
27	<i>Der Standard</i>	September 25, 2015	Yasar Aydin	migration expert	expert	pro-migration
28	<i>Der Standard</i>	September 25, 2015	Heinz-Christian Strache	Chair of FPÖ in Upper Austria	politician	anti-migration
29	<i>Der Standard</i>	September 29, 2015	Laurenz Ennser-Jedemastik	political scientist	expert	neutral
30	<i>Der Standard</i>	September 29, 2015	Bernadette Segöl	European Trade Union Association	politician	neutral
31	<i>Der Standard</i>	September 29, 2015	Rainer Forst	political theorist	expert	pro-migration
32	<i>Der Standard</i>	February 28, 2022	Chris Melzer	speaker of UNHCR	eye-witness	pro-migration
33	<i>Der Standard</i>	March 5, 2022	Dariia Kuzmych	Ukrainian artist	eye-witness	pro-migration
34	<i>Der Standard</i>	March 5, 2022	Vedran Kurtović	psychologist	expert	pro-migration
35	<i>Der Standard</i>	March 12, 2022	Elyas Jamalzadeh	Afghan refugee	eye-witness	pro-migration
36	<i>Der Standard</i>	March 19, 2022	Ai Weiwei	Chinese artist	stakeholder	pro-migration
37	<i>Der Standard</i>	March 30, 2022	Claudia Kraft	historian and migration expert	expert	neutral
38	<i>Heute</i>	September 16, 2015	Manfred Haimbuchner	Chairman Upper Austria	politician (FPÖ)	anti-migration
39	<i>Heute</i>	September 18, 2015	Michael Häupl	Mayor of Vienna	politician	pro-migration
40	<i>Heute</i>	September 21, 2015	Reinhold Entholzner	Chairman Upper Austria	politician (SPÖ)	neutral
41	<i>Heute</i>	September 23, 2015	Alois Stöger	Minister for Health	politician (SPÖ)	anti-migration
42	<i>Heute</i>	September 23, 2015	Josef Pühringer	Governor Upper Austria	politician (ÖVP)	anti-migration
43	<i>Heute</i>	March 2, 2022	Ulli Sima	Councilwoman Vienna	politician (SPÖ)	pro-migration
44	<i>Heute</i>	March 11, 2022	Karoline Edtstadler	Minister for European Affairs and Constitutional Laws	politician (ÖVP)	pro-migration
45	<i>Neue Kronen Zeitung</i>	August 29, 2015	Wolfgang Brandstätter	Minister of Judiciary	politician (ÖVP)	anti-migration
46	<i>Neue Kronen Zeitung</i>	August 29, 2015	Johanna Mikl-Leiter	Minister for Interior Affairs	politician (ÖVP)	neutral
47	<i>Neue Kronen Zeitung</i>	August 29, 2015	Colonel G. Tatzgern	Austrian Police Force	expert	anti-migration
48	<i>Neue Kronen Zeitung</i>	September 3, 2015	Heinz-Christian Strache	Chairman FPÖ	politician (ÖVP)	anti-migration
49	<i>Neue Kronen Zeitung</i>	September 5, 2015	Birgit Ertl	volunteer refugee helper	eye-witness	pro-migration
50	<i>Neue Kronen Zeitung</i>	September 6, 2015	Bishop Benno Elbs	clergyman	stakeholder	pro-migration
51	<i>Neue Kronen Zeitung</i>	September 6, 2015	Maria Vassilakou	Vice Mayor of Vienna	politician (Green Party)	pro-migration
52	<i>Neue Kronen Zeitung</i>	September 6, 2015	Werner Faymann	Chancellor of Austria	politician	pro-migration
53	<i>Neue Kronen Zeitung</i>	September 7, 2015	Melanie Barlai	Hungarian scientist	expert	neutral
54	<i>Neue Kronen Zeitung</i>	September 12, 2015	Veronica Kaup-Hasler	artist	stakeholder	pro-migration
55	<i>Neue Kronen Zeitung</i>	September 15, 2015	Dietmar Schennach	Refugee Coordinator in Tyrol	expert	neutral
56	<i>Neue Kronen Zeitung</i>	September 17, 2015	Doraja Eberle	humanitarian helper in Salzburg	eye-witness	pro-migration
57	<i>Neue Kronen Zeitung</i>	September 18, 2015	Michael Gruber	humanitarian helper in Upper Austria	eye-witness	pro-migration



58	<i>Neue Kronen Zeitung</i>	September 19, 2015	Sepp Schellhorn	NEOS-politician and businessman		pro-migration
59	<i>Neue Kronen Zeitung</i>	September 20, 2015	Josef Pühringer	Governor Upper Austria	politician (ÖVP)	anti-migration
60	<i>Neue Kronen Zeitung</i>	September 20, 2015	Pamela Rendi-Wagner	Head of Public Health	expert	neutral
61	<i>Neue Kronen Zeitung</i>	September 23, 2015	Sebastian Kurz	Minster for Foreign and Integration Affairs	politician	anti-migration
62	<i>Neue Kronen Zeitung</i>	September 27, 2015	Wolfgang Harant	Caritas Upper Austria	eye-witness	neutral
63	<i>Neue Kronen Zeitung</i>	February 28, 2022	Ljudmila and Ana	Ukrainian refugees (mother and daughter)	eye-witness	pro-migration
64	<i>Neue Kronen Zeitung</i>	March 5, 2022	Margaritis Schinas	EU Commissioner für Migration	politician	neutral
65	<i>Neue Kronen Zeitung</i>	March 11, 2022	Thomas Stelzer	Governor Upper Austria	politician (ÖVP)	neutral
66	<i>Neue Kronen Zeitung</i>	March 15, 2022	Michael Takács	major refugee coordinator since March 2022	expert	neutral
67	<i>Die Presse</i>	August 29, 2015	Nikola Gruevski	Macedonian Prime Minister	politician	anti-migration
68	<i>Die Presse</i>	August 31, 2015	Margot Wallström	Swedish Foreign Minister	politician	pro-migration
69	<i>Die Presse</i>	September 1, 2015	Wolfgang Wosolsobe	Chair EU Military Council	expert	neutral
70	<i>Die Presse</i>	September 1, 2015	Thilo Sarrazin	author and politician	stakeholder	anti-migration
71	<i>Die Presse</i>	September 1, 2015	Egdars Rinkēvičs	Latvian Foreign Minister	politician	anti-migration
72	<i>Die Presse</i>	September 2, 2015	Michael Landau	Chair of Caritas Austria	expert	pro-migration
73	<i>Die Presse</i>	September 3, 2015	Stephen O'Brien	UN Emergency Coordinator	expert	neutral
74	<i>Die Presse</i>	September 5, 2015	Sebastian Kurz	Foreign and Integration Minister	politician	neutral
75	<i>Die Presse</i>	September 5, 2015	Doris Bures	President of the Nationalrat	politician	pro-migration
76	<i>Die Presse</i>	September 5, 2015	Wolfgang Lutz	Head of the Institute for Demography Austria	expert	neutral
77	<i>Die Presse</i>	September 7, 2015	Naguib Sawiris	Egyptian businessman	stakeholder	neutral
78	<i>Die Presse</i>	September 9, 2015	Michael Roth	Minster of State for Europe	politician	neutral
79	<i>Die Presse</i>	September 17, 2015	Viktor Orbán	Hungarian Prime Minister	politician	anti-migration
80	<i>Die Presse</i>	September 21, 2015	Christoph Grabenwarter	President of Austrian Jurist Association	expert	neutral
81	<i>Die Presse</i>	September 21, 2015	Madeleine Alizadeh	fashion blogger	stakeholder	pro-migration
82	<i>Die Presse</i>	September 25, 2015	Reinhold Mitterlehner	Chair of ÖVP	politician	anti-migration
83	<i>Die Presse</i>	September 28, 2015	Hamed Abdel-Samad	Islam researcher	expert	anti-migration
84	<i>Die Presse</i>	September 28, 2015	Andreas Schieder	Head of SPÖ Club in Nationalrat	politician	pro-migration
85	<i>Die Presse</i>	September 29, 2015	Hans Niessl	Governor of Burgenland	politician (SPÖ)	anti-migration
86	<i>Die Presse</i>	March 16, 2022	Michael Takács	Refugee Coordinator	expert	neutral
87	<i>Die Presse</i>	March 18, 2022	Gerald Knaus	migration expert	expert	pro-migration

88	<i>Die Presse</i>	March 23, 2022	Peter Kaiser	Governor for Carinthia	politician (SPÖ)	pro-migration
89	<i>Die Presse</i>	March 23, 2022	Heinrich Himmer	Director of Education Vienna	politician (SPÖ)	neutral
90	<i>Die Presse</i>	March 25, 2022	Fritz Poppmeier	Head of SPAR, businessman	stakeholder	pro-migration
91	<i>Die Presse</i>	March 26, 2022	Rainer Bauböck	migration researcher and expert	expert	pro-migration



# Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Liesem (2015) distinguishes three kinds of journalistic representation: text types which foreground facts such as bulletins (54) and newspaper reports (70), text types which stress opinions such as commentaries (123, 129) or reviews (139) – which, however, more often than not also contain reporting elements – and text types which tell a story such as magazine reports (66), reportages (79), features (88), portraits (97), and interviews (109).

<sup>2</sup> Since the definition of frames used in this paper originates from communication studies, it deviates from cognitive narratology's idea of a frame as being "the cognitive model that is selected and used (and sometimes discarded) in the process of reading a narrative text" (Jahn 1997, 442; see also Herman 2002, Ch. 9).

<sup>3</sup> For a detailed discussion on discursive framing as a determining factor in the formation of public opinion on and attitudes toward migration, see De Coninck et al. 2021; Eberl et al. 2018; Heidenreich et al. 2019; Gottlob and Boomgaarden 2020. A survey of further studies on the topic can be found in Lecheler et al. 2019, 695.

<sup>4</sup> Note that Helbling (2014, 22–23) actually speaks of "generic" and "issue-specific frames." To avoid any confusion with terminology from literary studies, where the adjective *generic* can also relate to a specific literary or narrative genre, we will here refer to Helbling's dichotomy by the terms *broad* and *issue-specific frames*.

<sup>5</sup> According to Roy Sommer (2020, 44), one can distinguish two forms of multiperspectivity in the context of migration discourse, namely horizontal and vertical multiperspectivity: "Horizontal multiperspectivity occurs when an issue is represented from different angles, allowing for debate – e.g., in policy narratives, scientific research, or media reports – or when a wide range of migrant experiences (countries of origin, age, gender, status) are represented in migration discourses. Vertical multiperspectivity occurs when different kinds of perspective (e.g., life stories and official narratives) are represented together."

<sup>6</sup> This is a very small number compared to other European countries: Germany, for instance, had 330 daily newspapers in 2019 (see <https://www.tatsachen-ueber-deutschland.de/en/media-and-communication/news-papers-and-magazines>, accessed January 3, 2023), although we need to keep in mind that Germany is about ten times bigger than Austria with regard to its population. Yet, even countries with a comparable size to Austria exhibit a media landscape which is much more differentiated: Sweden, by way of example, had 138 daily newspapers in 2020 (see <https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/1015871/umfrage/anzahl-der-tageszeitungen-in-schweden/>, accessed January 25, 2023), while Switzerland had 251 daily newspapers in 2022 (see <https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/430419/umfrage/anzahl-der-zeitungstitel-in-der-schweiz/>, accessed January 25, 2023). Austria's media market can thus be described as unique in Western Europe.

<sup>7</sup> See <https://aomlibrary.apa.at> (accessed January 23, 2023).

<sup>8</sup> In their book *Flucht* ([*Flight*] 2017), Christian Ultsch, Thomas Prior, and Rainer Nowak, three journalists of the conservative broadsheet *Die Presse*, provide a detailed account of these and other events related to the "refugee crisis" in Austria in 2015/2016.

<sup>9</sup> See <https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/1293861/umfrage/anzahl-der-kriegsfluechtlinge-aus-der-ukraine-nach-aufnahmeland/> (accessed on July 8, 2023)

<sup>10</sup> See <https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/1356654/umfrage/anzahl-ukrainischer-fluechtlinge-in-den-eu-staaten/> (accessed on June 19, 2023).

<sup>11</sup> For a comprehensive discussion of the ways in which both intuitive and abstract, systematic knowledge influences narrative theory, see Sommer 2017.

<sup>12</sup> The 91 interviews feature 93 speakers, 22 of whom are female and 71 male. The ratio between female and male speakers for the individual newspapers is as follows: *Der Standard* – 8:31; *Die Presse* – 3:22; *Neue Kronen Zeitung* – 9:13; *Heute* 2:5.

<sup>13</sup> A detailed list of all interviews, specifying the newspaper and the date of publication, as well as the name, profession, status, and positioning of the individual interview partners is provided in the Appendix.





<sup>14</sup> We specifically found five instances of overlap: Sebastian Kurz, then-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Integration and Europe, was interviewed by *Die Presse* and *Neue Kronen Zeitung* (Kurz 2015a; 2015b, respectively); Reinhold Entholzer, then-Chairman of Upper Austria was consulted by *Heute* and *Der Standard* (Entholzer 2015b; 2015a, respectively); Josef Pühringer, then-Governor of Upper Austria, was interrogated by *Neue Kronen Zeitung* and *Heute* (Pühringer 2015b; 2015a, respectively); and Maria Vassilakou, then-vice mayor of Vienna, was questioned in *Neue Kronen Zeitung* and *Der Standard* (Vassilakou 2015b; 2015a, respectively). In addition to these politicians, who were all interviewed in 2015, Michael Takács, Refugee Coordinator for Austria, is featured twice as expert interview partner: he was invited to have a conversation with *Die Presse* and *Neue Kronen Zeitung* in 2022 (Takács 2022b; 2022a, respectively).

<sup>15</sup> In narrative theory, the concept of *positioning* refers to the ways in which speakers (or storytellers) position themselves *vis-à-vis* social, cultural, ideological, political, ethical, or normative discourses revolving around the subject matter of their narrative accounts. For a survey of the most influential approaches to positioning in narrative studies, see Deppermann 2015.

<sup>16</sup> Please note that the total number of speakers (93) deviates from the number of interviews (91) in our sample. This is due to the fact that two interviews were a double interview (Mikl-Leitner and Trojanow 2015; Münzer 2022).

<sup>17</sup> Representative examples in this connection are interviews in *Die Presse* that feature politicians who explicitly show their anti-immigration attitudes, such as Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán (2015), then-Minister for Integration Sebastian Kurz (Kurz 2015a), or Thilo Sarrazin (2015), former member of the Social Democratic Party of Germany and author of the infamous book *Deutschland schafft sich ab* (English: *Germany Abolishes Itself*), promoting anti-immigration ideas.

<sup>18</sup> The European Union publicly announced on its official website that it “will provide support to those seeking shelter” from the war, that it “will help those looking for a safe way home,” and that it “will continue to offer strong political, financial and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine” ([https://eu-solidarity-ukraine.ec.europa.eu/index\\_en](https://eu-solidarity-ukraine.ec.europa.eu/index_en), accessed January 6, 2023). Furthermore, the movement of #StandWithUkraine united from all around the world people who expressed their solidarity with Ukrainians by organizing peace protests or by sharing information on how civilians can help those who have been displaced due to the war (<https://standwithukraine.live/>, accessed January 6, 2023).

<sup>19</sup> Drawing on Szcepanik’s findings, Rozane de Cock et al. (2018, 306) argue that repeated exposure to such stereotypical media coverage largely contributes to public opinions of refugees – a phenomenon they refer to as “media effects”: “A ‘good refugee’ is thus female, poor, helpless, and from a specific country. Prominence in newspapers and media texts is an indicator of who deserves protection and who does not, a classification that clearly is in direct conflict with the definition of a refugee as stated in the Geneva Convention. ‘Bad refugees’ are depicted as people who intend to abuse the social welfare system of welcoming European countries, and who lack all the attributes of good refugees.” (306)

<sup>20</sup> The concept of ‘othering’ originates from postcolonial theory, where it is often used to describe the ways in which Western colonizing countries have been imagining the foreign places, people, and cultures of (formerly) colonized countries since the beginning of European imperialism (Said 1994 [1978]).

<sup>21</sup> See, e.g., Arcimaviciene and Hamza Baglama 2018; Bruno 2022, 282; Martikainen and Sakki 2021; Müller 2018; and Schröter 2023, 28–29.

<sup>22</sup> For further discussion on the media practice of systematically silencing migrants, see also Chouliaraki and Zaborowski 2017; De Cock et al. 2018; Lecheler et al. 2019; and Galyga et al. 2019.

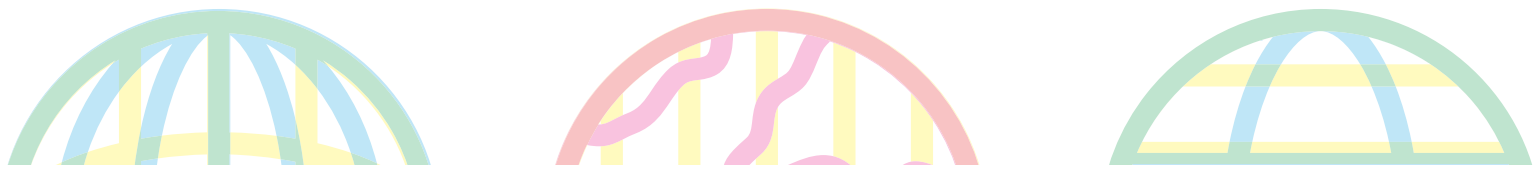
<sup>23</sup> In cases where the same frame recurs several times in one interview, corresponding with the same positioning, we only counted this frame once.

<sup>24</sup> For a discussion of current trends in attitudes on migration in the European public, see Goubin et al. 2022.

<sup>25</sup> Note that, in both diagrams, all sub-frames are subsumed under their respective main frame (e.g., ‘crime and violence,’ ‘terrorism,’ and ‘irregularity’ are included in ‘security,’ whereas ‘gender’ is included in ‘deservingness,’ etc.).

<sup>26</sup> See, e.g., Arcimaviciene and Hamza Baglama 2017; Charteris-Black 2006, 570–575; Fischer 2020; Jimenez et al. 2021; Pettersson and Kainz 2017, 53–55; Porto 2022; and Schröter 2023, 46–50.

<sup>27</sup> The counted hits include the questions asked by journalists as well as the replies by interviewees. The distribution of both metaphors among the question-answer divide is relatively balanced with ratios of 10:11 for *refugee flow* and 6:4 for *refugee wave*, respectively.





<sup>28</sup> These numbers correspond with the findings of a corpus linguistic analysis of media coverage of migration in Austrian broadsheets published between 2015 and 2017 which worked with a significantly larger data set (Schröter 2023, 47–49).

<sup>29</sup> According to Petersson and Kainz (2017, 41), “[t]he naturalization of metaphors generally denotes the process in which a metaphor has taken root in public discourse and tends to be resilient and resistant to change. When a metaphor has reached that stage, it is used without even being thought of as a metaphor. It has become naturalized and has turned into common sense.”

<sup>30</sup> For a detailed discussion of the metaphorology of crisis, see Nünning (2009).

<sup>31</sup> Interestingly enough, journalists refer to the notion of crisis more frequently than interviewees (quota: 28:15), whereas the ratio is more balanced for catastrophe (2:5).

<sup>32</sup> In this regard, too, our findings match the results of previous studies on representations of migration in Austrian newspapers (Schröter 2023, 50–51; see also endnote 28)

<sup>33</sup> Strache (2005), for instance, claims that he would not accommodate any foreign refugee in his private home. Yet this admittedly is the most drastic statement that we found in the 2015 text corpus. Other interviews rather focus on questions of border control (Gruevski 2015) or the options of a temporary asylum (Pühringer 2015a).

<sup>34</sup> “Wir müssen unsere Werte hochhalten. Wer bleiben will, muss die Regeln unseres Zusammenlebens einhalten. Diese Grundwerte sind Rechtsstaatlichkeit oder Gleichstellung von Mann und Frau. Das ist den Menschen aus anderen Kulturkreisen, die zu uns gekommen sind, deutlich zu vermitteln. Das werden wir auch einfordern.” (Kurz 2015b)

<sup>35</sup> “Wir müssen uns bewusst sein, dass viele dieser Menschen aus einer Region kommen, in der es eine ganz andere kulturelle Prägung gibt als bei uns. Wir müssen unsere Grundwerte von Anfang an vermitteln.” (Kurz 2015a)

<sup>36</sup> More specifically, the metaphor ‘migration as natural disaster’ occurs twice in the interviewers’ questions and only once in an interviewee’s answer, whereas the ‘crisis’ metaphor is used only once by an interviewer and twice by interviewees.

<sup>37</sup> It is key to note, however, that these figures do not include instances of hybrid cases, where the interviewer does not qualify as an eye-witness. Examples include – but are not limited to – a blogger who speaks up for refugees (Alizadeh 2015), a psychiatrist who talks about refugee trauma (Wancata 2015), or a sociologist who has visited refugee camps and detention centers (Milev 2015).

<sup>38</sup> Cognitive approaches to narrative distinguish two types of perspective taking: “the ‘imagine-self’ perspective and the ‘imagine-other’ perspective” (Nünning 2014, 182). The former tends to induce egocentric behavior (237) by inviting us to imagine how we would think and feel if we were in the other’s place (182). The latter, on the other hand, can bring about altruistic and selfless behavior (237), given that it entails the act of imagining how another person is thinking and feeling (182).

<sup>39</sup> For a detailed discussion of the immersive function of present-tense narration, see Gebauer (2021, Ch. 5.3).

<sup>40</sup> For a discussion of the nexus between multiperspectivity and multiscalarity, see Adinolfi and Caracciolo 2023.



An abstract graphic design featuring a white background with several overlapping geometric elements. On the left and right sides, there are stylized globes or spheres composed of intersecting green, blue, and yellow lines. In the center, there are vertical yellow bars and a red circular outline. A pink, wavy, ribbon-like shape winds through the lower half of the image, passing behind the red circle and the central text. The overall composition is modern and colorful.

# opportunities

for a fair narrative on migration