



## Framing the Issue of Ukrainian and Middle Eastern Refugees and Asylum Seekers in the Tweets of French Press

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This study analyses the media coverage of the issues of Ukrainian and Middle Eastern migrants and asylum seekers in the French written press by examining the quantitative characteristics of important media content and forms. To achieve this, it uses the content analysis method on a random sample that includes all the materials published in the tweets of the official Twitter accounts of four different French newspapers, presenting their political ideologies (with Le Monde being centre-left, Le Figaro centre-right, Libération leftist, and La Croix Catholic) and the nature of their targeted audiences over the period between 24 February 2022 and 24 August 2022, or the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian war and the displacement of Ukrainian citizens in conjunction with waves of migrants coming from hotbeds of tension in the Middle East. The sample included 306 media materials in which serious news that dealt with the migration of Ukrainians or Middle Easterners as a main topic constituted the unit of analysis. The study concludes that issues related to migration received more attention from the French press when they pertained to displaced Ukrainians than when they pertained to displaced Middle Easterners, as the entry of Ukrainians to neighbouring countries constituted a major topic that received the highest percentage of published media materials. This is evident in the press of both the centre-right and the left, as it was fixated on the nationalities of migrants, the transmission of reports and official government data.

In addition, study findings show that the conflict as a tool for media framework was the dominating feature relative to other forms of framing, as it remained constant in the French press's dealing with migration issues related to Ukrainian refugees, while the implied or explanatory framing was the dominant framework in the news that dealt with Middle Eastern migrants. In fact, the use of the ethical framework was at the lowest percentage during the study period. Findings also reveal that the press of the left, the centre-left and the moderate right were very similar in their outputs, despite the differences between their political ideologies, due to their use of the largest number of media framing tools, and at high rates, during the coverage of events related to the displacement of Ukrainians. In contrast, the Catholic press focused more on covering events related to those migrating from the Middle East, also using the largest number of media framing tools at rates higher than those used in the context of media coverage of Ukrainian refugees.

Even more, the findings show that the serious French press places more importance on the government's official discourse than the voices of migrants, asylum seekers and even citizens. It also invests its techniques and framing tools in presenting media material reflecting



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stereotypical perceptions and cultural paradigms (or intellectual models) that perpetuate the marginalisation of non-European immigrant minorities, and link them to the causes of societal imbalance at the expense of Eastern European migrants. Despite all of this, the media coverage of migrant issues varies greatly from one media institution to another given ideological differences, the nature of the targeted audiences and professional trends.

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