

Jan Fredrik Hovden*

From Wanderers to Strangers. The shifting space of Scandinavian immigration debate 1970–2016

<https://doi.org/10.1515/commun-2019-0199>

Abstract: The media coverage of immigration serves as an important test for modern democracies' ability to handle difficult public issues. Systematic and comparative studies over longer time periods are, however, still rare. This is deeply unfortunate as the nature of both immigration and the press systems vary considerably not only across nations but also over time. This article charts the immigration debate in seven Scandinavian newspapers from the birth of modern immigration in the early seventies to the present-day situation. While supporting claims about a general historical shift towards a more problematizing and cultural discourse in Scandinavia, the analysis also identifies major differences in how countries, publications, and genres have handled this complex issue, which brings out fundamental dilemmas for both modern welfare states and journalists. Using the method of multiple correspondence analysis and subsequent cluster analysis, the article also demonstrates how historical press coverage can be fruitfully studied using Geometric Data Analysis as an alternative to frequentist methods.

Keywords: immigration, newspaper coverage, Scandinavia, correspondence analysis, content analysis

1 Introduction

Press coverage of the immigration issue has become a significant concern among European media scholars, not least following the arrival of a million refugees and migrants to the EU in 2015 following the Syria crisis (e. g., Chouliaraki, Georgiou, and Zaborowski, 2017). Similar surges in scholarly interest followed the Balkan war (e. g., Grundmann, Smith, and Wright, 2000) and the 9/11 attacks (e. g., Poole, 2002). In addition to probably having genuine effects on the public perception and political handling of the issue (Eberl et al., 2018), with enormous per-

*Corresponding author: Jan Fredrik Hovden, Department of Information Science and Media Studies, University of Bergen, Norway, E-Mail: Jan.Hovden@uib.no.

sonal consequences for millions of people in challenging situations, the media coverage of immigration also serves as an essential test for modern democracies' ability to handle difficult public issues (Gripsrud, 2019).

While there has been much research on the press coverage of the immigration issue in Europe in the last two decades, systematic and comparative studies over more extended periods are scarce (for an exception, see Benson, 2013). However, the immigration issue is not only debated quite differently in different countries but has also shifted a lot over time due to varying national and historical contexts (e. g., the waning of the Cold War, new wars, refugee crises, 'terrorist' attacks). Changes are not only in the nature of immigration itself (which groups, how many, for what reasons) but also in the societies which receive them, not least in their political systems (where the rise of right-wing populist parties in the last decades is one crucial phenomenon related to the immigration issue) and their media systems (e. g., the changes brought forth by the internet and further digitalization, and changes in traditional newspaper and broadcasting markets).

This article presents a case study of the press coverage of the immigration issue in seven Scandinavian newspapers over almost fifty years, from the late birth of modern immigration to the most recent refugee crisis (1970–2016). The data come from the SCANPUB project, which in addition to press coverage also studies televised debates and documentaries, film and literature, comedy, and discussions on social media, in order to facilitate a broad historical study of the debate of the immigration issue (Gripsrud, 2019). Where general historical trends for Scandinavia have been discussed in earlier work (Hovden and Mjelde, 2019b), this article takes a very different methodological approach, demonstrating how historical patterns of media content, and differences between national press and publications can be fruitfully analyzed using geometrical data analysis.

The article provides a short context for the immigration debate in Scandinavia before moving on to a description of the method, data, and analytical approach. Given the absence of systematic and comparative studies for the period, the first aim is to describe the main differences in the press articles dealing with the immigration issue. For this, a statistical model – in the form of a discursive space containing articles based on framing, themes, and voices – is constructed using multiple correspondence analysis. Two main axes of difference are found: Welfare state integration versus cultural integration, and immigrants as heroes and contributors versus immigrants as threats. Using cluster analysis, six main types of stories on immigration are identified and used to track the historical movement of nations, newspapers, and genres: What kind of coverage do they lean towards, and how has this changed? Is there a shared movement, do they converge or become increasingly different? Do newspapers mostly follow a national agenda, or do format, genre, and political stance matter more? Overall,

the results generally support earlier accounts of the immigration debate in Scandinavia as having become more politically salient, controversial, and more concerned with the culture and religion of immigrants but with significant differences between countries, newspapers, and genres. Underlying these questions are more fundamental ones, including changes in the relationship between the press and politics, the historical reasons for the different immigration policies and arguments used, and the role of the media in co-producing not only “pictures in our heads” (Lippmann, 1922) of immigrants but also the very thoughts and language we use when debating the issue and the changing limits for what can be said (Bourdieu, 1991; Hallin, 1989).

Immigration and discourse in Scandinavia

To understand the major themes and shifts in the immigration debate in Scandinavia after 1970, one needs to be aware of some crucial similarities between Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. First, modern immigration happened relatively late (in a European context) and has taken a relatively similar historical course. Until the early seventies, non-Western immigration to Scandinavia was relatively restricted (this is somewhat less true for Sweden, which, because of its preserved industry following its neutral role in the war, had already imported many workers in the 50s and 60s), and except for some UN refugees, most were migrant workers. Because their residence was not dependent on welfare and also seen as temporary, political concern was not about their potential as a burden for society, but on their situation as workers, including the problems of housing conditions, harsh working conditions, and their lack of workers’ rights. As these problems accentuated with increasing immigration and the European economic recession, all three countries halted immigration in the period 1972–75. Initially seen as a temporary solution as the welfare state adjusted and formed its policies and regulation of migration, the stop became semi-permanent and marked the birth of modern immigration policy in Scandinavia (Brochmann and Hagelund, 2012). From the 1980s and 90s, immigration regulation and debate was dominated by the entrance of an increasing number of refugees, which in the 1980s increasingly came not as quota refugees but asylum seekers, requiring a vast administrative and social apparatus for handling applications, finding housing, and integrating them into the welfare system, education, and work. In the later decades, new groups of immigrants have entered the focus of public debate, including second-generation immigrants, immigrants seeking reconciliation with their families, and an increasing number of immigrant workers (in particular after the eastward extension of EU borders in 2004).

Second, when the immigrants first arrived in Scandinavia, they all came to relatively similar societies. The three countries have a mostly shared linguistic, cultural, and political history. Following half a millennium of political alliances (all three countries 1397–1523, Norway-Denmark 1380–1814, Norway-Sweden 1814–1905), the countries all developed a unitary constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary system of government, with relatively large party pluralism and a system favoring consensus politics through a representative distribution of power (Heidar, Berntzen, and Bakke, 2013). The countries have also developed very similar media systems, including a history of influential public service broadcasters, a large and diverse newspaper press with historical roots in the party system, and a high level of newspaper readership (Hallin and Mancini, 2004; Nord, 2008). Importantly, the immigrants who arrived in the seventies came to healthy, more or less fully realized welfare states, at the height of favorable economic conjectures.

The Nordic welfare state, historically based on various compromises between classes and between industry, the civil society, and the state (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967), combines universalist and generous welfare whereby financing largely depends on high work participation, egalitarian wage structures, a willingness to pay substantial taxes, and, not least, a high level of trust in the core institutions. Modern immigration – in particular, asylum seekers and refugees – challenges these foundations in fundamental ways. Immigrants' rights – both civic and social – are grounded both in the modern rule of law (which allows no distinctions based on race and ethnicity) and residence-based inclusion principles of the welfare state. Good welfare states, however, cannot tolerate that considerable proportions of its members fall out and fail to take part, first, because welfare in these countries is very costly to the state, and second, because it potentially undermines the legitimacy of the welfare state (Hagelund, 2003). This dilemma is one fundamental reason why immigration continues to be a heated political issue in Scandinavian countries and why some themes – like welfare costs and integration – are constant and shared concerns. At the same time, there are significant differences in the countries' immigration policies. Sweden has generally been the most open to immigration and the least demanding of the immigrants for access to welfare services, following an ideology of *demos* which focuses on immigrants' *democratic* rights. Denmark has pursued a more *ethnos*-based approach: Immigrants should adapt to *Danish* values and culture. Norway is somewhere in the middle. These differences appear to have become more pronounced after the turn of the millennium (Brochmann and Hagelund, 2012).

There exist little systematic, comparative, and longitudinal studies of the press coverage of immigration for the whole of Scandinavia. What we have – aside from studies more restricted in scope – are historical studies of the immigration

debate in single Scandinavian nations (e. g., Eide and Simonsen, 2007; Gripsrud, 2018; Hagelund, 2003; Horsti, 2008; Madsen, 2000; Strömbäck, Andersson, and Nedlund, 2017; Yilmaz, 2016) and some comparative studies for shorter periods or specific themes (e. g., Figenschou and Thorbjørnsrud, 2015; Kunelius, Eide, and Hahn, 2007). These studies suggest national differences in debate quite analogous to those as noted for policies – more polarised and problem-oriented in Denmark than in Sweden, although the difference in this regard appears to have lessened in recent years (Eide and Nikunen, 2016). Generally, immigration coverage in the Scandinavian press has become increasingly concerned with problematic issues, more politicalized, and more focused on the religion and culture of immigrants (Hovden and Mjelde, 2019b). While Scandinavia in this way appears to share common characteristics of press coverage as found in other European countries (Benson, 2013; Chouliaraki et al., 2017; Eberl et al., 2018), studies of the Syrian crisis have shown that Scandinavian press provided a less threat-based focus on immigration and more focus on the immigrants' situation (Hovden, Mjelde and Gripsrud, 2018). In the European context, it is also relevant to note that Scandinavians have a high level of acceptance of immigrants (Pew, 2019). Together, these specifics of the Scandinavian situation make it a compelling case for how the press has handled the thorny issue of modern immigration from its birth to the present.

2 The data

The data comprise almost fifty years (1970–2016) of Scandinavian press articles on the immigration debate in seven newspapers. prioritizing the most read and agenda-setting newspapers, the largest broadsheet and tabloid in each country was chosen. A third Danish newspaper – *Politiken* – was added to provide a more comparable national sample in regard to the newspapers' political leanings (Table 1).

For any researcher who is concerned with making systematic and reproducible inferences from texts (Krippendorff, 2018), the historical study of the immigration debate is a difficult subject. First, the themes have changed immensely (e. g., from being concerned with working and living conditions of “guest workers” in the 1970s to the more culturalized debates on the “problems of Islam” in the last decades). Second, the increasing multi-ethnic nature of Scandinavian societies also means that earlier references to particular ethnic groups are now often replaced with general, bureaucratic, or cultural categories (e. g., “immigrant population”, “asylum seekers”, “Muslims”). Moreover, words have changed their

associations and meaning (e.g., “asylum seekers” in the 70s equaled political refugees from behind the Iron Curtain). And besides genuine changes in the nature of immigration, a fundamental problem is that the immigration debate is a profoundly *impure* discourse. It engages with, often implicitly, a wide range of neighboring discourses and themes: racism, foreign aid, workers’ rights, national cultures and identity, nationalism, changing neighborhoods, changing social and cultural patterns, moral values, crime, poverty, religion, populism, the treatment of indigenous groups, the future of the welfare state – the list goes on and on. Determining the boundaries of the immigration debate is thus an immensely difficult task.

To these more general methodological problems (where we have not even talked about the challenges of studying three different nations), we must add the incomplete state of newspapers’ digital archives. For a consistent methodology, the research assistants read the full newspapers – in whatever available form (physical, digital, microfilm) – when selecting relevant articles while following broad guidelines. Mechanic approaches to the problem of selecting relevant texts – e.g., using the presence of specific words – on a complex issue like immigration appeared to require a great sacrifice of validity for a dubious amount of reliability.

Table 1: Selected characteristics of the seven newspapers in the final sample.

	Country	Format	Political affiliation	Ownership (main)	Est.	N
Jyllandsposten	Denmark	Broadsheet	Liberal conservative	Jyllands-Postens Fond	1871	818
Ekstra Bladet	Denmark	Tabloid	Trad. center-left	Politiken Fonden	1904	589
Politiken	Denmark	Broadsheet	Socialist liberal	Politiken Fonden	1884	77 ¹
Aftenposten	Norway	Broadsheet	Liberal conservative	Schibsted	1860	667

¹ The small number of articles in *Politiken* was due to it being sampled only every fifth year, starting in 1970, whereas the other newspapers were sampled every year. This means that its inclusion has a negligible impact on the construction of the statistical space of articles (MCA) and the clusters, which reflects the original choice of two newspapers for each country. The profile of *Politiken* in this space, however, is not affected by this, although somewhat more uncertain given the small number of articles.

	Country	Format	Political affiliation	Ownership (main)	Est.	N
VG	Norway	Tabloid	Trad. center-left	Schibsted	1945	667
Dagens Nyheter	Sweden	Broadsheet	Liberal	Bonnier AB	1864	864
Aftonbladet	Sweden	Tabloid	Social democrat	Schibsted	1830	715

To create a representative sample of articles from each year, constructed-week sampling was used, starting with the first Monday of the year and selecting every subsequent 15th day, excluding Sundays; in total, four constructed weeks, equalling 24 days per year. This way, the articles were systematically spread over weekdays and months in 6768 issues. The articles relevant to the immigration issue were sampled in two stages. The *first stage* used an inclusive strategy as we wanted to be open to the possibility that the immigration debate could turn up at unexpected times, in unexpected places and unexpected ways. This meant relatively few restrictions, two being that it should address immigration in Europe and exclude stories about immigration before 1945, resulting in the collection of over 29,000 texts. These texts were then re-read for a *secondary sampling* using much more detailed and restrictive guidelines (focusing on articles in which the immigration debate was more central, excluding many stories where immigrants were represented but not debated, e. g., in most, but not all, sports articles, and also dropping articles below 200 words and letters to the editor below 50 words), reducing the relevant articles to one-third of the former sample, of which every second was coded (N=4406). The final codebook included over 80 variables, whereby many categories were based on impressions from initial readings of the collected texts.

Analytic approach

This article uses a GDA (Geometric Data Analysis) approach to the study of the corpus of articles on immigration. Known in France as ‘Analyse des Données’, it offers a distinct mathematical and philosophical approach to data analysis. It was initiated by Jean-Paul Benzécri in the sixties and is related to Fisher and Guttman’s work on optimal scaling in the forties and Burt’s work on factor analysis in the fifties. It differs from the more common variable-oriented approaches, for instance, regression analysis, by 1) being based on *geometric modeling of matrices*, defining two simultaneous clouds of points (the *cloud of individuals*, in our case the articles, and the *cloud of categories*, the variables characterizing the individuals), 2) being formally based on the mathematical theory of *linear algebra*, where the search for *eigenvectors* – the “directions” in the above spaces

explaining most of the variance in the tables – are central, and finally, 3) *a spirit of inductive philosophy* whereby the model should follow the data, not the other way round, that is, geometric modeling has priority before probabilistic modeling (Benzécri, 1973). Some significant consequences of this approach are that individuals are never ‘lost’ (as happens when, e. g., survey data is transformed into measures of common variance in traditional factor analysis) and that sample size matters much less than the structure of the data investigated.

There are three main paradigms of GDA: *correspondence analysis* (using X^2 -metric) of two-way frequency contingency tables, *principal component analysis* for matrices combining individuals and numerical variables, and *multiple correspondence analysis* (MCA). The latter, used in this article, is a generalization of the first method to include multivariate tables. MCA is a method that has become popularized outside of France mainly through the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1984). He argued for the main strength of the GDA approach being its fundamental relational character and criticized methods like regression, which with its focus on “effects” of single variables “tends to dissimulate the complete system of relations that make up the true principle of the force and form specific to the effects recorded in such and such particular correlation” (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 103).

While the use of MCA to study differences between texts is not new – it was, in fact, a central purpose of this method as developed by Benzécri and as developed further by others (e. g., Lebart and Salem, 1994) before the rise of more popular computational methods of text analysis used today –, it is still a relatively little-used approach outside of France. In our case, the analysis was not done of the full texts but using sixty-eight manually coded characteristics. MCA allows us to analyze the articles as individual texts with a *profile* based on these characteristics, which define the texts as similar or different (by the logic of family resemblance) to other texts, and investigate, with very few assumptions, how these differences are related to other differences (e. g., period and newspapers). Used in this way, MCA alleviates some (if far from all) of Kracauer’s classic main objections to Berellson’s use of quantitative content analysis, namely the ignoring of interrelations inside the text in favor of simple counts of isolated characteristics (Kracauer, 1952). While there is little doubt that corpus-based and automated data-mining approaches to the study of media messages (e. g., topic modeling), which have increased enormously in popularity (Eberl et al., 2018), can be excellent for quickly identifying patterns based on word concurrence, there are good reasons to be cautious about their ability to provide relevant and valid inferences given the noted complexity of the immigration issue, not least in a historical and comparative case like ours.

We will first go through the statistical construction of the space of immigration articles, with a focus on the main differences between them, before moving

on to the investigation of how these differences are structured by time, country, newspaper, and genre.

The space of Scandinavian immigration press articles 1970–2016

The analysis as follows was based on three variable groups in the codebook, emphasizing the interconnection of subjects, voices, and framing: Fifteen variables ($K=30$) for *subjects* (welfare programs; Education; Work; Integration policy; Family and social customs; Religion; National security; Crime; National and social economy; Arrival and return of legal immigrants; Illegal immigration and human trafficking; Multiculturalism; Culture, arts and entertainment; Immigration debate; Civil and political rights), seven variables ($K=14$) for *quoted sources* (Ordinary immigrants; Ordinary non-immigrants; Politicians; Civil servants; Experts; Non-governmental organizations; Journalists, commentators), and twelve variables ($K=24$) on *framing of immigrants* (Victim: Humanitarian, War, Racism and discrimination, Other; Hero: Diversity, Integration, Good worker, Other; Threat: Public order, Fiscal, Social cohesion, Other). All variables were dummies, registering the presence or absence of a characteristic, and the same text could have several subjects, sources, and frames.²

These 34 variables, with 68 *active* categories, were used to construct a *space of immigration articles* (Figure 1) using multiple correspondence analysis ($N=3327$). Because the volume of immigrant-related articles in the corpus increases significantly throughout the period and also differs between the countries (Sweden, in particular, has many articles), the analysis was statistically weighted by country and year (by five-year periods) to reflect the countries and periods more equally. Letters to the editor were included as illustrative points.³ Table 2 shows the variance explained by the first four axes.

² A methodological report is available online (Hovden and Mjelde, 2019b), including a more detailed discussion of the criteria for the selection of the articles and reliability tests for the main variables used in the analysis. Coder agreement of themes was higher for the more concrete (e. g., crime) than the more general (e. g., integration) themes, which was relatively high for the type of source but weaker for frames.

³ While they are an essential part of the immigration debate in the newspaper, their short length means that they typically have much fewer themes and voices than the other articles. By setting them as passive, the statistical space more accurately reflects the prominent parts of immigration coverage and the newspapers' editorial profiles.

Table 2: The explained variances of axes 1–4 and the contribution of the variable groups.

	Axis 1	Axis 2	Axis 3	Axis 4
Variance of axes (eigenvalues)	0.079	0.064	0.056	0.046
Explained variance (%)	7.9%	6.4%	5.6%	4.6%
Benzécri's modified explained variance (%)	48.9%	23.3%	14.4%	5.4%
Cumulated modified explained variance (%)	48.9%	72.2%	86.6%	92.1%
Framing	34.2%	27.9%	40.0%	41.8%
Themes	61.4%	66.3%	41.2%	47.4%
Voices	34.2%	5.8%	18.8%	10.5%

While the first axis sums up half of the variance in the table, it is analytically not very interesting. It does separate Norwegian articles from the other two countries – their lesser focus on the integration of immigrants is one reason –, however, the axis chiefly separates articles with few versus many themes, reflecting article length. Axis four and later axes are statistically unstable.⁴ For these reasons, our analysis will focus on axis 2 and 3. For more details on the statistical construction, see the appendix.

The second axis (the vertical dimension in Figure 1), and the first of analytical importance, suggests a principal divide between two bodies of discourse, one more common before the turn of the millennium, the other after. The older type focuses on themes like civil rights, social welfare and discussions about legal immigration and integration policies, and oscillates between two types of framing, one focusing on the immigrants as victims of war and humanitarian catastrophes, the other on the fiscal strain on the resources of the welfare state. It is contrasted by the newer body of discourse, focusing on themes like racism, multiculturalism, religion, oscillating between immigrants as a threat to public order and as bringing positive diversity and suffering from racism and discrimination.

The third axis (the horizontal dimension) likewise opposes older and newer bodies of discourse, but differs from the former axis by more clearly differentiating between more positive and threat-oriented frames, whereby the former articles more often depict immigrants as good workers, being well-integrated and bringing positive diversity, as focusing on their role in working and cultural life, and often feature the voices of the immigrants themselves. This is opposed to

⁴ This means that there is no statistical ground for interpreting them rather than the following axes. Closer reading also shows that they are variants of axes 1–3, often emphasizing the difference of a single category from the rest, thus not offering much to the general description of differences.

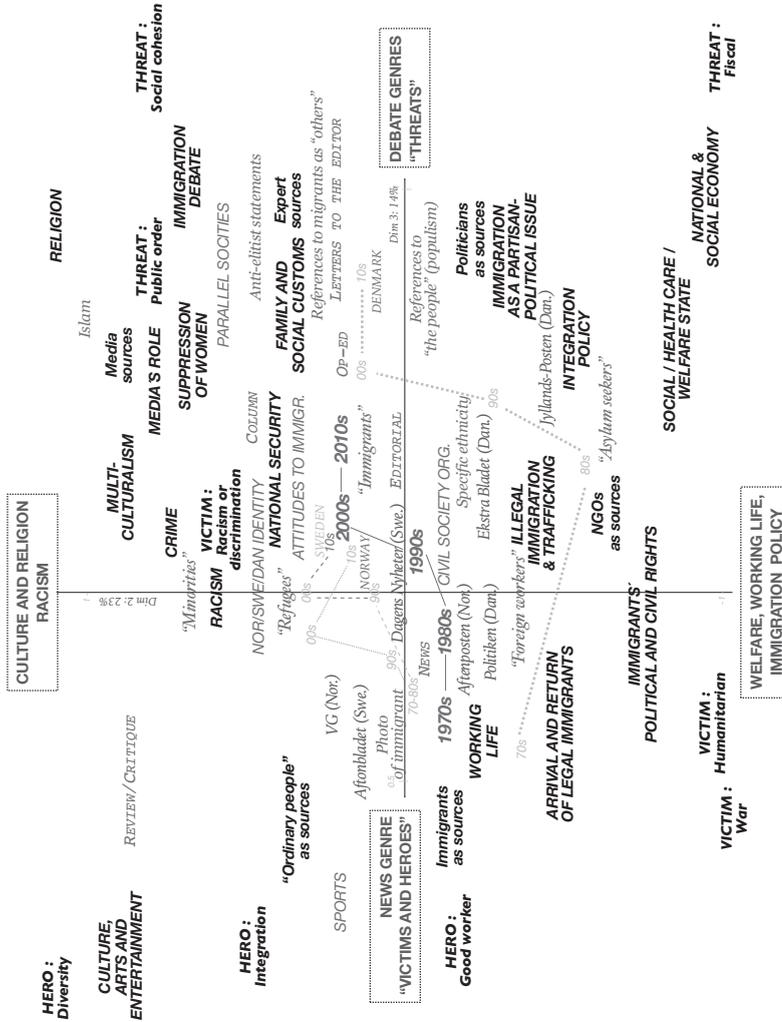


Figure 1: The Scandinavian space of newspaper articles on the immigration issue. MCA, axis 2–3.

Notes: Contributing categories in black. Grey categories are passive variables, added to provide richness and depth to the model. Font size varies to aid the readability of the map and does not reflect the size of categories. Small distances between categories can generally be interpreted as indicative of relatively high correlation. However, this might not always be the case for all pairs given that the plane shows only a proportion of the total variance.⁵

⁵ For more information on the interpretation of factor planes in MCA, see Le Roux and Rouanet (2010).

a discourse on immigrants as a problem for social cohesion and public order, often combined with an emphasis on their religion and cultural customs, and as a strain on the resources of the welfare state, often involving the voice of politicians. The immigration debate as a theme in itself is also more common in the latter type of discourse.

At its most fundamental, the differences between the articles appear as a combination of two differentiating principles, the first one being *time*, which opposes older articles (lower left) from the newer (upper right), which suggests it is meaningful to think of Scandinavian press discourse on immigration as having a shared historical direction. Second, *the nation*, where the Danish articles (lower right) are opposed to the Swedish and Norwegian articles (upper left). This supports a familiar tale of the more positive, multicultural Swedish debate and more problematizing, integration-focused Danish debate, with Norwegian immigration debate as an intermediate case closer to the Swedish one (Brochmann and Hagelund, 2012). The map suggests some quite clear historical shifts in the debate on immigration in the corpus of Scandinavian newspaper texts. First, it supports the idea of a general shift from a more worker-focused narrative in the 70s and 80s to a more cultural discourse during the 90s and 2000s (e.g., Yilmaz, 2016) and also a more reflective discourse, in which the immigration debate itself is more often the theme. At the same time, the analysis suggests that this movement in the immigration debate has been much more dramatic in the Danish press. Finally, the coverage increasingly concerns the framing of immigrants as a problem for society. As we shall come back to, this too appears to be a much stronger trend in the Danish press than in the other two countries.⁶ Overall, these results are much in line with earlier studies of what other researchers have suggested are the primary shifts in the overall Scandinavian debate (e.g., Brochmann and Hagelund, 2010; Brochmann and Hagelund, 2012; Eide and Nikunen, 2016; Hovden and Mjelde, 2019b).

⁶ To study how well the model describes the three countries, a class-based correspondence analysis (CSA) was used. CSA allows for investigating the relations of the principal axes of subclouds to the global axes of an MCA (Le Roux and Rouanet, 2010). Axis 1 and axis 2 are more or less the same in the three countries (with correlations between partial axes and global axes varying between .79 and .94 for the first and .69 and .87 for the second), suggesting a generally shared historic movement towards a culturalized discourse. Axis 3, in contrast, describes Denmark (and its historical movement) quite well (.77) but not so well Norway (.12) and Sweden (.13). Where the proportion of articles in Denmark with a threat frame has risen sharply (from 37% to 69% from the 1980s to the 2010s), these changes in Norway (12% to 19%) and Sweden (19% to 25%) are much more subtle, suggesting that the culturalization of the debate has not been linked in the same degree to immigrants as a problem in these countries (see also Hovden and Mjelde, 2019a).

3 A typology of press stories

To get a clearer idea of what kind of stories about immigration is at play in this discursive space, hierarchical agglomerative clustering was performed on the stories based on their position on the axes from the former MCA analysis. Looking for stories similar in themes, frames, and sources, a statistically acceptable solution with six clusters was found⁷, shown in Table 3, together with dominant frames, subclusters, and exemplary headlines. Figure 4 shows the spread of the articles in this statistical space, together with concentration ellipses for the clusters.

Table 3: Six clusters of immigration stories, with dominant frames, subclusters, and exemplary headlines.

Main clusters	Dominant frames	Subclusters	Exemplary headlines
Racism, discrimination, and neglect (32 %)	(Mixed)	Expert views Who is a racist? Suffering immigrants Politicians and parties Vox populi	“Refugee almost starved to death” (AP 1981) “Mahvesh is breaking down” (VG 1985) “Receives death threats – makes newspaper” (AP 97) “Racism or humor?” (AP 2012) “Political Party Racist?” (VG 2015) “The only ones with a heart?” (VG 2015)
Troublesome culture, troublesome religion (11 %)	Threat (public order, social cohesion)	Culture and religion as a threat to social cohesion Metadebate	“Perpetrators are often immigrants” (DN 1989) “Happy boys – veiled girls” (VG 2010) “The people do not like it” (EB 2010) “Too few see the warning signs” (AP 2014) “Institutional care should not be religiously segregated” (AB 2008)

⁷ Three, seven, or nine clusters were determined as the statistically most acceptable: Variance within/between, Callinski-Harabasz (Pseudo F), and Davies-Bouldin’s index for cluster solutions after consolidation: Three clusters: 49/7 %, 228.4, 2.7. Seven clusters: 40/18 %, 213.2, 2.0. Nine clusters: 33/22 %, 207.7, 1.9. The seven-cluster solution was chosen after inspection, but two categories, both concerning crime, were later merged, giving six clusters as the final solution.

The limits of the welfare state (8%)	Threat (jobs, fiscal)		“150,000 immigrant workers in Denmark in the coming decade” (EB 1970) “Obligatory visa effectively reduce immigration” (JP 1992) “Ghetto-Denmark” (EB 2000) “Asylum seekers lodgings cost 122 mill. every month” (VG 2004) “Failed integration” (VG 2012)
Crime and terror (18%)	Threat (public order)	Terrorists and murderers Crimes against women	“Expel him!” (EB 1992) “Jailed after 15 violent crimes” (AB 1987) “Angry refugee forced SAS-airplane to land” (JP 1987) “Pakistani Murderer appeal to the court” (AP 1978) “Sex crime. Society has failed the women” (DN 2016)
Humanitarian victims (18%)	Victim (humanitarian and war)	Humanitarian victims Political asylum seekers	“Vietnam-refugees are not wanted” (PO 1975) “Let my family come!” (AP 1980) “Their fate will be decided today” (PO 1985) “The long wait” (AP 1985) “Protest storm against expelling order” (VG 1988)
Heroes (12%)	Hero (diversity, good worker)	Everyday heroes Culture heroes	“He escaped life on the streets” (VG May 1997) “The Hot Cuban in Umeå” (DN Dec 1999) “Peaceful Ghetto life at Tolga” (AP Sep 2006) “Karzan Kader lives the dream” (DN Nov 2012)

Notes: Dominant frames have a statistically significant placement in the cluster. *Subclusters* are selected from nine- and twelve-cluster solutions. *Headlines* are taken from the top 20 paragonic articles (placing closest to the center of the cluster).

The immigration stories divide into six rough clusters, the first being **1) Racism, discrimination, and neglect** (32%), which is not only the largest but also the most complex. First, it mixes stories about concrete racism – both organized (e. g., Nazis) and non-organized – towards immigrants with debates about the nature of

racism and discrimination, which not only include arguments about people and policies being racist but also by people denying such accusations and arguing against “naive” attitudes and policies. A large number of these stories concern the attitudes of immigrant critics and radical right parties. Second, it includes stories about immigrants (usually refugees) who are neglected and suffering where the government or “we” should – or at least could – help (e.g., a reportage on an Iranian woman refused asylum in Norway in 1985, ill and unhappy in Istanbul). Some stories imply institutional and cultural racism (Barker, 1981), for instance, in arguments of systematic marginalization of immigrant youths in schools, and others document suffering without any precise framing or perpetrators. A second major grouping consists of three clusters which emphasize different ways in which immigrants either are outright threats or at least bring trouble as ‘others’ – to the state, to the public, to each other: In **2) Troublesome culture, troublesome religion** (11%), such themes are usually framed as a threat to social cohesion and immigrants’ integration but in some cases also in a more neutral light. Related concerns are found in **3) The limits of the welfare state** (8%), usually negatively framed and concerned with lack of integration into working life and its consequences for a strained welfare state. The final types of such stories, **4) Crime and terror** (18%), mix stories of major and minor crimes, ranging from acts of terrorism and murders to lesser demeanors. One important sub-cluster here involves various crimes towards women, often immigrant women by male immigrants. In **5) Humanitarian victims** (18%), the focus is usually on refugees fleeing war and persecution, varying from simple reports on the numbers to more general debates on the principles for their admittance, and more case-specific stories of suffering refugees and their families in various stages of transmission and troubles. In the last group, **6) Heroes** (12%), immigrants are shown bringing cultural diversity, being well-integrated, good workers, and so forth. Immigrants are overrepresented as quoted sources in these two latter types of stories, and ordinary citizens under-represented.

The cluster analysis suggests that while the coverage of the immigration issue in the press, as many have noted before, is mostly about problems and conflicts (Eberl et al., 2018), the stories emphasizing immigrants as threats are outnumbered by those throwing light on their plights and troubles. Figure 2 shows the positions of the clusters in the statistical space.

If we look at the distribution of the six types of stories by country and year (Figure 3), there are some marked differences. The Danish newspapers have markedly less focus on racism and discrimination and stories in which immigrants are heroes and contributors and a larger share of problem-oriented stories about immigrants’ culture and religion or as a criminal threat, in particular, in the later decades, some very probably related to the years of debates and religiously

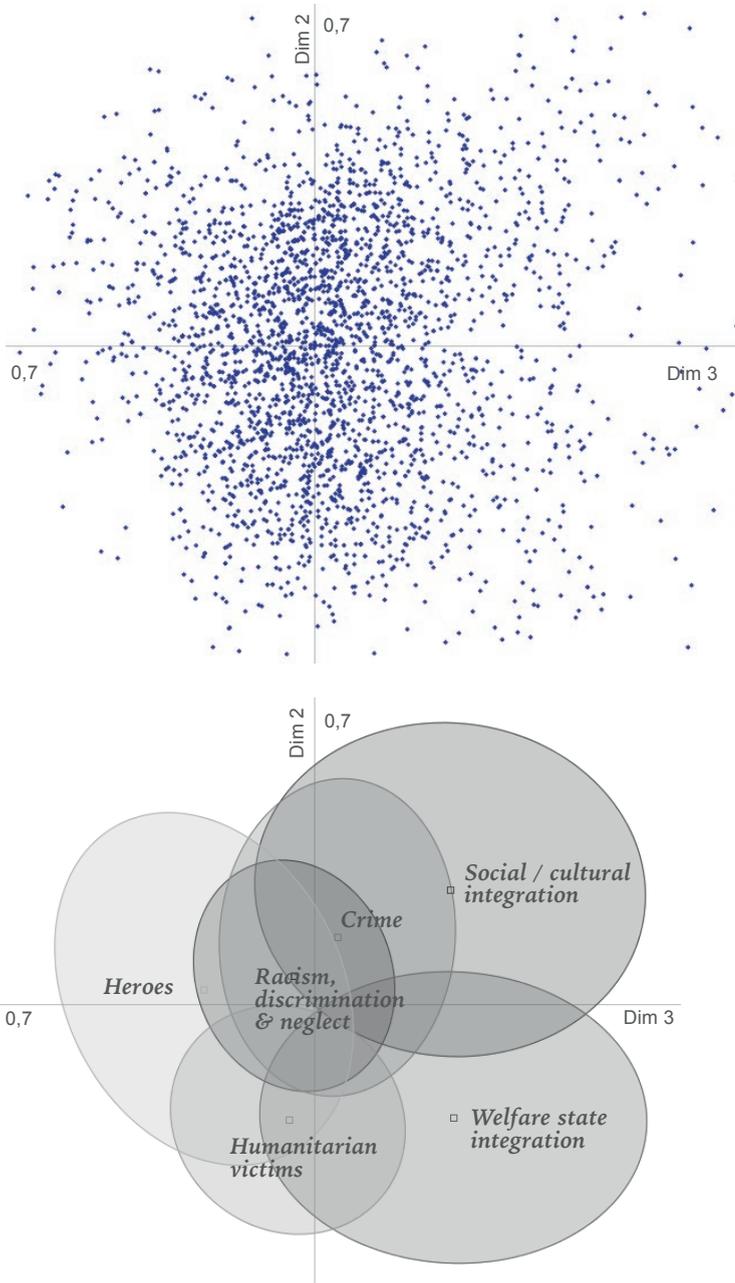


Figure 2: Cloud of individual articles and concentration ellipses for clusters. MCA, axis 2–3.

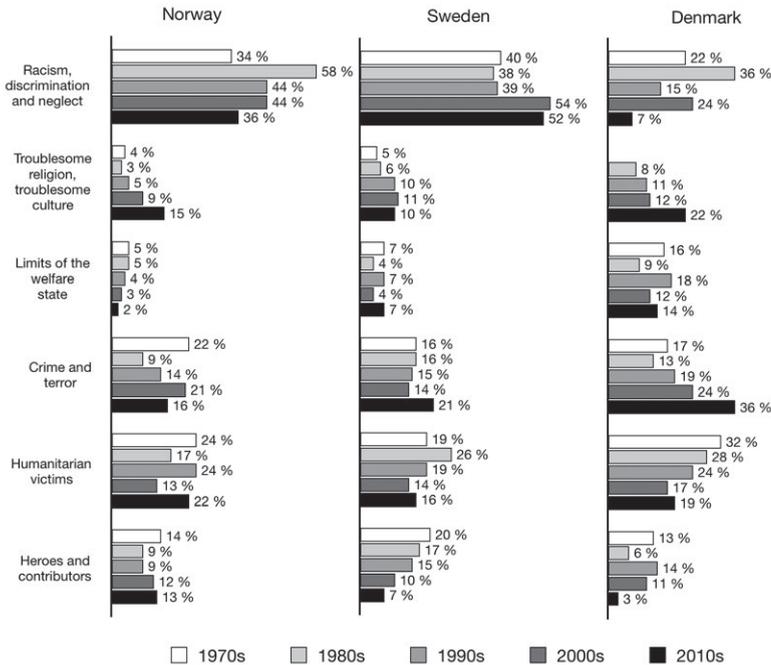


Figure 3: Distribution of the six stories over time, by country. Percentages by decade.

Note: Margins, following logistic regression with year and publication as predictors separately for each country.

motivated attacks following the publication of caricatures of Mohammed in Jyllandsposten in 2005. Also prominent is the Danish newspapers' consistent focus on the problems of integration into the welfare state, which suggests the importance of this issue in Danish political debates in the whole period (Brochmann and Hagelund, 2012). In this overarching perspective of the debate in the press – of the issues and frames in play and who does the talking, the Swedish and Norwegian press appear much more similar, although the Swedish press appears to write more about racism and related issues in the later decades. There are also important nuances inside the clusters, for instance, immigrants' crimes against women are a much more common theme in the Swedish press than in the other countries.⁸ Controlled percentages (margins) of the clusters for decade, newspaper, genre, and country are given in Figure 6.

⁸ In the 2010s, 14% of all stories in the Swedish press appeared in the subcluster “Crimes against women” – in contrast to 4% in Norway and 6% in Denmark.

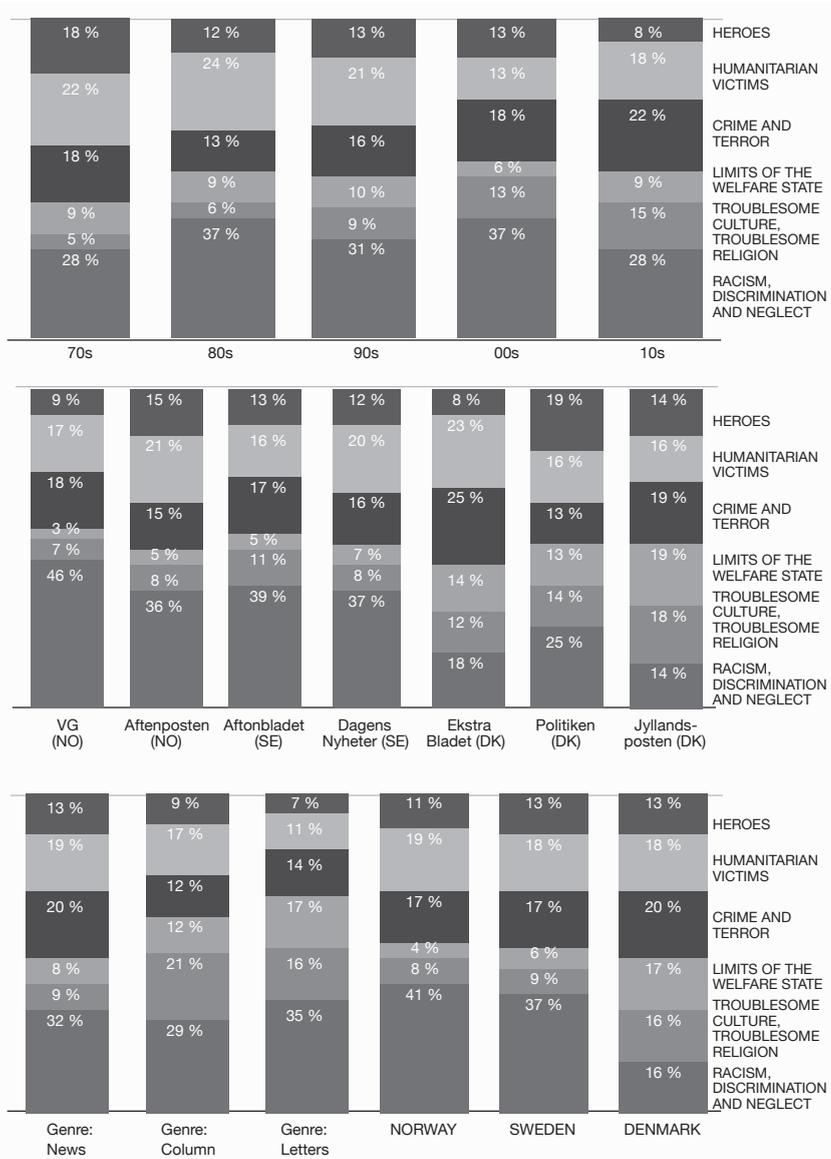


Figure 4: Distribution of clusters by year, newspaper, genre, and country. Percentages (margins controlled for by country and year).⁹

⁹ For genres, the regression analysis included letters to the editor, and the genre was added as a predictor. For more details, see Hovden and Mjelde, 2019a.

Newspapers and genres

What about the individual newspapers in this picture? As noted, the sample includes the largest broadsheet and tabloid in each country. Following expectations that the newspapers' market base and traditional audiences would affect their priorities and style, some of the tabloids' characteristics suggested a preoccupation with moral disorder, the threats to, and joys of, everyday life, and often applying classical narrative dramaturgy (Eide, 2007). In recent studies, tabloid newspapers are found to provide more negative views on immigration (Eberl et al., 2018). Furthermore, one would expect traditional party affiliations to influence the coverage (Masini et al., 2017), even if perhaps this is less the case in the later period as the Scandinavian press in the sixties and seventies mostly detached themselves from the political parties (Eide, 2007).

Tracing the movements of these newspapers in the space of articles (Figure 5) suggests that the national context is of prime importance for determining which kind of immigrant stories appear in the press. A compelling case for this is the socialist-leaning newspaper *Politiken*, which follows a similar historical trajectory to that of the other two, liberal and conservative, Danish newspapers. Format and political leanings, however, do matter. *Politiken* is less threat-oriented than the latter two Danish newspapers (Figure 4, see also Madsen, 2000). The three tabloids (*VG*, *Aftonbladet*, *Ekstra Bladet*) also voice immigrants as heroes and victims more often than the broadsheets do, and more often use ordinary people and immigrants as sources (Hovden and Mjelde, 2019a). In this way, different types of newspapers contribute with different perspectives on immigration, suggesting the importance of a pluralized press for the quality of the public debate on the issue.¹⁰

Differences between the newspapers are most apparent in the debate genres and the framing of the issue. Much of the transformation towards a more culturalist and problematizing debate in the Scandinavian press appears linked to the *movement from news to views* in the coverage. While only one in ten of the articles related to the immigration debate in the 70s and 80s were in the debate genre, this proportion increases gradually to one in three articles in the 2010s. This clearly demonstrates the generally rising importance of immigration as an issue for public and (in particular) political debate in Scandinavia in the period, especially in Denmark. Similar conclusions can be drawn from studies of party politics and election studies (e. g., Green-Pedersen and Krogstrup, 2008) and the rising salience of the immigration issue as both something on people's minds

¹⁰ More detailed statistics for the individual newspapers are provided in the online appendix.

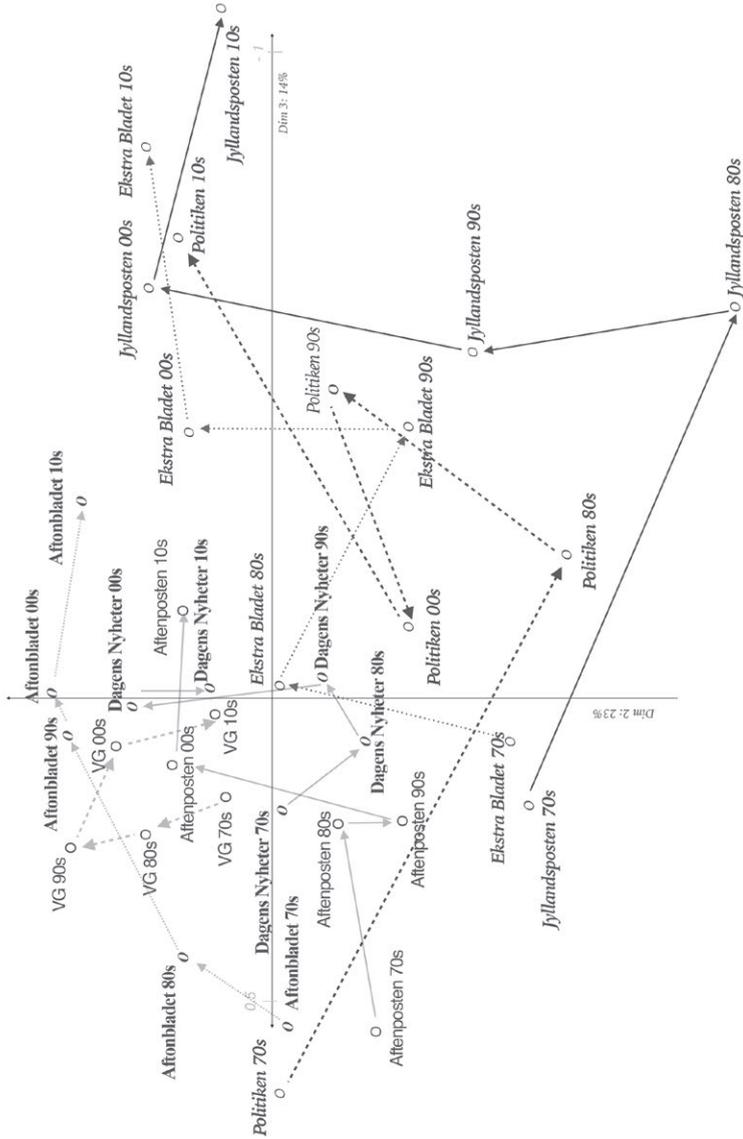


Figure 5: Movements in the MCA space of articles, by newspaper and year. Axis 2–3.

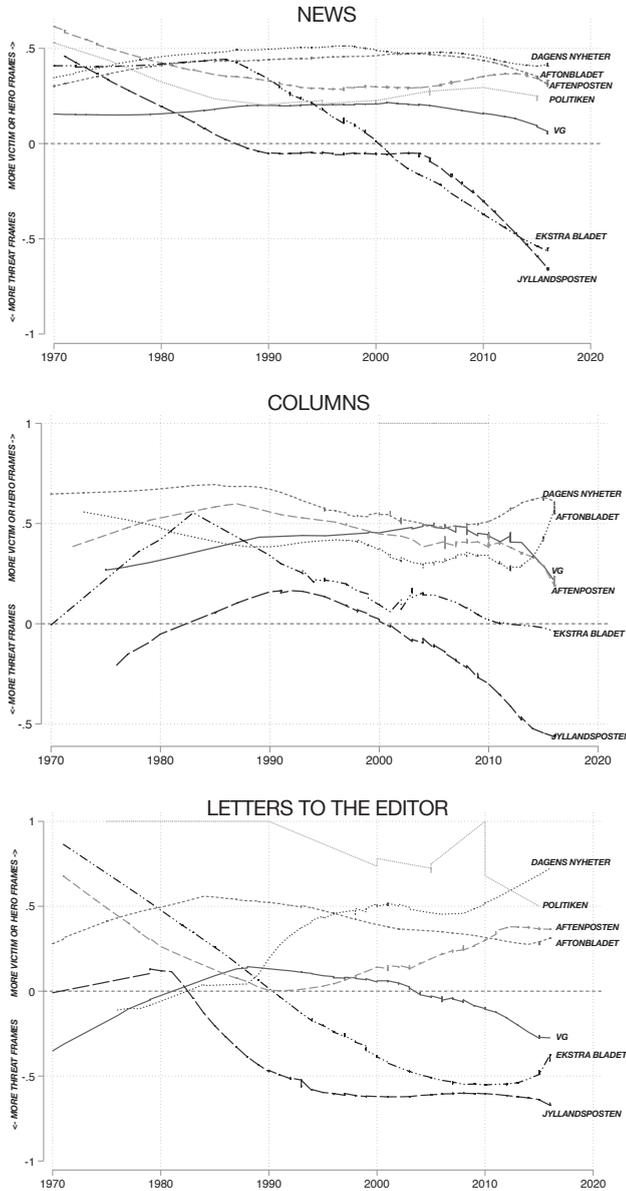


Figure 6: Victim and hero frames versus threat frames over time by genre and newspaper. *Notes:* Articles were coded for the presence of hero or victim frame (= 1), threat frame (= -1), lack of frame, or a mix of positive or negative frames (= 0). Lowess smoothing of trends (.5). Due to a small number of articles, trends for Politiken were not calculable for columns. N=2698 (News), 629 (Columns), and 1079 (Letters).

(agenda-setting) and as shaping the considerations people make (priming) when judging policies and politicians (c.f. Scheufele and Tewksbury, 2007).

Framing (here inspired by Benson, 2013) in columns and letters to the editors fluctuate more over time than regular news stories do (Figure 6), and the latter is less likely to frame immigrants as cultural or financial threats (Figure 4) yet more likely to write about crimes.

The debate of the immigrant issue in the press generally leans towards sympathetic framings. Swedish newspapers are more likely to frame the issue in this way, Norwegian newspapers somewhat less. Danish newspapers are much more polarized, Ekstra Bladet and especially Jyllandsposten having a much stronger focus on the problematic sides of immigration than Politiken, especially after 2000. While tabloids in Sweden and Norway publish more problematizing columns and letters to the editor than broadsheets, this difference is most marked in the case of the vox populi, suggesting the continuing importance of this genre in bringing a broader range of views to the readers.

4 Conclusions

The immigration debate in the Scandinavian press since the birth of modern immigration in the early seventies has become an increasingly salient public issue. In the press material, this can most clearly be seen in the politicization of the issue and its increasingly prominent place in newspapers' debate columns (Hovden and Mjelde, 2019b). When exploring this issue further using the methodology of GDA, which provides us with a very flexible way to study the differences between nations, newspapers, and genres over time in a space of individual articles, we do find that while *what* the press talks about (themes, agents) generally follows national agendas, *how* it talks about these issues (framing) varies more with genres and newspapers, emphasizing the continuing importance of a differentiated press for the coverage of the complex issue of immigration.

We also find evidence of a historical shift in the Scandinavian press discourse on immigration from the more sympathetic, worker-oriented debate in the seventies towards the more problematizing, cultural-focused, reflexive debate after the millennium, which is mostly a shared evolution in the Scandinavian press. To what degree this parallelism can be explained by the shared political and cultural histories, media systems, immigration patterns, specific events, or the diffusion across borders of political solutions or argument – by the press, by the politicians, by intellectuals or the public –, is an immensely tricky question for immigration historians to untangle. This analysis, however, shows the impor-

tance of long-time studies to understand the nature of immigration discourse in a broader political and societal context, and the continuing importance of newspaper formats and leanings for the coverage of this complex issue.

While the three countries appear relatively similar in their press coverage of immigration in the seventies, our analysis – focusing on themes, agents, and broad frames – suggests they have become more different over time, most visibly in the Danish press' increasing emphasis of the problems of cultural integration and immigrants as a burden on the welfare state, and the decreasing focus on their suffering and troubles as victims of war, discrimination, and racism. The latter issues have been more prominent in the Norwegian and Swedish press from the nineties and onwards, in Sweden increasingly so. While the shift in Denmark has been attributed to an increasingly threat-based view of Islam in the nineties and later following international and national events, the analysis suggests that the differences between the Danish press and the other Scandinavian countries on this issue were already present at the start of modern mass immigration to these countries, and that the issue was polarized much earlier in Denmark. This suggests a need for explanations informed not only by an understanding of media characteristics and changes in the media systems (Denmark has changed most rapidly from a pluralist towards a liberal model, c.f. Nord, 2008) but also of the shifting nature of immigration, political situations, and welfare policies in the countries (Hagelund, 2003) and longer cultural shifts (Gripsrud, 2019).

Acknowledgements: The author would like to thank the good colleagues in the Scanpub project, first and foremost the project leader Jostein Gripsrud and Anniken Hagelund for their helpful comments to the article, and postdoc Hilmar Mjelde for having been an integral partner in the work on the quantitative content analysis, including the development of the codebook, supervising the coding, and analyzing the material in other articles from the project.

Funding: The author gratefully acknowledges financial support from the Norwegian Research Council (FRIHUMSAM ToppForsk Grant number 250598).

References

- Barker, M. J. (1981). *The new racism: Conservatives and the ideology of the tribe*. Toronto: Junction Books.
- Benson, R. (2013). *Shaping immigration news: A French-American comparison*. New York: CUP.
- Benzécri, J.-P. (1973). *L'analyse des données I–II* [Data Analysis I–II]. Paris: Dunod.

- Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A social critique of the judgment of taste*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Bourdieu, P. (1991). On symbolic power. In *Language and Symbolic Power*. London: Polity Press.
- Brochmann, G., & Hagelund, A. (2010). *Velferdens grenser* [The limits of welfare]. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Brochmann, G., & Hagelund, A. (2012). *Immigration policy and the Scandinavian welfare state 1945–2010*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Chouliaraki, L., Georgiou, M., & Zaborowski, R. (2017). *The European “migration crisis” and the media*. London: LSE.
- Eberl, J.-M., Meltzer, C. E., Heidenreich, T., Herrero, B., Theorin, N., Lind, F., ..., Strömbäck, J. (2018). The European media discourse on immigration and its effects: A literature review. *Annals of the International Communication Association*, 42(3), 207–223.
- Eide, M. (2007). Encircling the power of journalism. *Nordicom Review*, 28, 21–29.
- Eide, E., & Nikunen, K. (2016). Introduction. In E. Eide, & K. Nikunen (Eds.), *Media in motion* (pp. 1–18). London: Routledge.
- Eide, E., & Simonsen, A. H. (2007). *Mistenkelige utlendinger* [Suspicious foreigners]. Oslo: Cappelen Damm.
- Figenschou, T. U., & Thorbjørnsrud, K. (2015). Faces of an invisible population. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 59(7), 783–801.
- Green-Pedersen, C., & Krogstrup, J. (2008). Immigration as a political issue in Denmark and Sweden. *European Journal of Political Research*, 47(5), 610–634.
- Gripsrud, J. (2018). *Norsk hamskifte?* [A sea-change in the Norwegian immigration debate?] Bergen: Vigmostad & Bjørke.
- Gripsrud, J. (2019). SCANPUB: Nations, nationalisms, nation-states and public spheres. *Javnost – The Public*, 1–20.
- Grundmann, R., Smith, D., & Wright, S. (2000). National elites and transnational discourses in the Balkan War. *European Journal of Communication*, 15(3), 299–320.
- Hagelund, A. (2003). *The importance of being decent: Political discourse on immigration in Norway 1970–2002*. Oslo: Unipax.
- Hallin, D. C. (1989). *The uncensored war: The media and Vietnam*. London: UCP.
- Hallin, D. C., & Mancini, P. (2004). *Comparing media systems. Three models of media and politics*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Heidar, K., Berntzen, E., & Bakke, E. (2013). *Politikk i Europa* [Politics in Europe]. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Horsti, K. (2008). Overview of Nordic media research on immigration and ethnic relations. *Nordicom Review*, 29(2), 275–293.
- Hovden, J. F., & Mjelde, H. (2019a). Increasingly controversial, cultural, and political: The immigration debate in Scandinavian newspapers 1970–2016. *Javnost*, 26(2), 138–157.
- Hovden, J. F., & Mjelde, H. (2019b). Immigration debate in Scandinavian newspapers 1970–2016. Methodology, codebook and selected tables. Bergen: SCANPUB.
- Hovden, J. F., Mjelde, H., & Gripsrud, J. (2018). The Syrian refugee crisis in Scandinavian newspapers. *Communications*, 43(3), 325–356.
- Kracauer, S. (1952). The challenge of qualitative content analysis. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 631–642.
- Krippendorff, K. (2018). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology*. London: Sage.
- Kunelius, R., Eide, E., & Hahn, O. (2007). *Reading the Mohammed Cartoons Controversy*. Freiburg: Projekt Verlag.

- Lebart, L., & Salem, A. (1994). *Statistique textuelle* [Textual statistics]. Paris: Dunod.
- Le Roux, B., & Rouanet, H. (2010). *Multiple correspondence analysis*. London: Sage.
- Lippmann, W. (1922). *Public opinion*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company.
- Lipset, S. M., & Rokkan, S. (1967). *Party systems and voter alignments: Cross-national perspectives* (vol. 7). Free press.
- Madsen, J. G. (2000). *Mediernes konstruktion af flygtninge- og indvandrerspørgsmålet* [The mediated construction of the immigration question]. Aarhus: Aarhus Universitetsforlag.
- Masini, A., Van Aelst, P., Zerback, T., Reinemann, C., Mancini, P., Mazzoni, M., ..., Coen, S. (2017). Measuring and explaining the diversity of voices and viewpoints in the news. *Journalism Studies*, 1–20.
- Nord, L. (2008). Comparing Nordic media systems: North between West and East? *European Journal of Communication*, 1, 15.
- Pew (2019). *Eastern and Western Europeans differ on importance of religion, views of minorities, and key social issues*.
- Poole, E. (2002). *Reporting Islam: Media representations of British Muslims*: IB Tauris.
- Scheufele, D. A., & Tewksbury, D. (2007). Framing, agenda setting, and priming: The evolution of three media effects models. *Journal of Communication*, 57(1), 9–20.
- Strömbäck, J., Andersson, F., & Nedlund, E. (2017). *Invandring i medierna: Hur rapporterade svenska tidningar 2010–2015?* [Immigration in the news]. Stockholm: Delegationen för migrationsstudier.
- Yilmaz, F. (2016). *How the workers became Muslims*. Michigan: University of Michigan Press.

APPENDIX

Table A1: Variables and categories contributing above-average to axis 1–3. Absolute contributions and coordinates.

DIMENSION 1 (+)	Ctr	Coord	DIMENSION 2 (+)	Ctr	Coord	DIMENSION 3 (+)	Ctr	Coord
Multiculturalism: Yes	9.7	1.52	Racism: Yes	9.1	1.01	THREAT – Social cohesion: Yes	10.1	1.83
HERO – Integration: Yes	9.6	1.72	VICTIM: Racism and discrim.: Yes	6.4	0.82	Immigration debate: Yes	7.5	1.51
HERO – Good worker: Yes	7.1	1.36	Crime: Yes	5.1	0.64	THREAT – Fiscal: Yes	6.7	1.59
Education: Yes	6.1	1.23	Legal immigration: No	4.1	0.41	Politician (voice): Yes	5.6	0.69
Attitudes: Yes	5.6	1.42	Religion: Yes	3.7	0.92	Welfare: Yes	4.7	0.75
HERO – Diversity: Yes	5.3	1.99	VICTIM – Humanitarian: No	1.7	0.23	Economy: Yes	4.5	0.96
Work: Yes	4.8	0.81	Integration: No	1.4	0.22	THREAT – Public order: Yes	4.4	0.77
Integration: Yes	3.9	0.62				Integration: Yes	3.1	0.46
Culture: Yes	2.9	1.13	DIMENSION 2 (-)	Ctr	Coord	Religion: Yes	3.1	0.74
Immigration debate: Yes	2.7	1.08	VICTIM – Humanitarian: Yes	6.3	-0.85	Media (voice): Yes	3.1	0.88
Family and customs: Yes	2.4	0.71	Legal immigration: Yes	5.9	-0.59	Family and customs: Yes	1.9	0.53
THREAT – Social cohesion: Yes	2.4	1.09	Welfare: Yes	5.7	-0.93	National security: Yes	1.6	0.56
VICTIM: Racism and discrim.: Yes	2.1	0.50	Economy: Yes	5.0	-1.14			
Racism: Yes	1.7	0.47	THREAT – Fiscal: Yes	3.4	-1.27	DIMENSION 3 (-)		

DIMENSION 1 (+)	Ctr	Coord	DIMENSION 2 (+)	Ctr	Coord	DIMENSION 3 (+)	Ctr	Coord
Religion: Yes	1.5	0.63	Work: Yes	3.3	-0.63	HERO – Good worker: Yes	8.3	-1.22
			Integration: Yes	3.3	-0.53	Immigrant (voice): Yes	4.8	-0.66
DIMENSION 1 (-)	Ctr	Coord	Civil rights: Yes	3.0	-0.69	Culture: Yes	3.7	-1.05
Crime: Yes	2.7	-0.50	Racism: No	2.5	-0.28	HERO – Integration: Yes	3.0	-0.79
Civil society (voice): Yes	2.0	-0.46	Crime: No	2.3	-0.28	Work: Yes	2.5	-0.48
Integration: No	1.6	-0.26	VICTIM: Racism and discrim.: No	2.0	-0.25	HERO – Diversity: Yes	2.2	-1.06
VICTIM – Humanitarian: Yes	1.6	-0.46	Education: Yes	1.9	-0.63	Politician (voice): No	1.6	-0.20
Illegal immigration: Yes	1.5	-0.77	VICTIM – War: Yes	1.9	-0.88			
Legal immigration: Yes	1.4	-0.31	HERO – Good worker: Yes	1.7	-0.61			
THREAT – Public order: Yes	1.3	-0.51	NGO (voice): Yes	1.5	-0.57			