
What shapes the coverage of immigration

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Abstract

Immigration is a dramatic challenge for Europe: the press has a large influence in determining the opinion climate at this regard. This article investigates how a selection of newspapers in Belgium, Germany, the United Kingdom, and Italy covers the immigration issue from 1 January 2013 to 30 April 2014, before and after the Lampedusa shipwreck on 3 October 2013. Departing from the hypothesis that the media ownership may have a large influence on the content of the news, we investigate 12 different media companies in conjunction with other variables that may affect the coverage of the topic as well. A quantitative content analysis has been first used to derive information from a collection of 2602 articles retrieved through a set of specific keywords from different online database. Afterward, a Multiple Correspondence Analysis has been performed to explore and synthetize the collected information into a small number of ‘factors’.

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Comparative research, content analysis, framing, immigration, international journalism, media ownership

The departing questions

Immigration represents today one of the main issues of public debate in large part of the Western world, not just in Europe. It articulates sharply contrasting positions and, in many countries, it represents a major dividing topic, also sometimes addressing voters' decisions. Indeed, as illustrated by Triandafylidou and Maroukis (2012), the topics of migrant smuggling and of irregular migration greatly influence the people's perceptions and attitudes toward the immigration itself.

Due to the growing salience of the immigration issue, this article aims to discover which representations of immigration are diffused through the news media, answering in particular to a main question: how and to what extent does the news media property concentration affect the coverage of such a dramatic public interest issue? We indeed assume that news media that are part of a single media corporation may propose the same view of the immigration issue, inhibiting the circulation of voices and interpretations of the phenomenon.

A recurring approach in the studies of the coverage of immigration is what after Goffman (1974) is usually defined as 'frame analysis' (Entman, 1989, 1993; Ferree et al., 2002): what is the main symbolic and interpretative context within which immigration stories are discussed? In other words, what is the 'central organizing idea [...] for making sense of relevant events, suggesting what is at issue' (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989: 3)? Two recurring frames emerge from most of these studies: the *humanitarian frame* and the *threat frame* (Benson, 2013). The former indicates that the coverage of immigration is mostly organized around the representation of the so-called 'human interest stories': immigrants are persons with a story to be narrated being crowded with sentiments, hopes, and pains. Immigrants can be heroes but victims as well (Benson, 2013). On the contrary, the threat frame highlights the dangers that immigration implies for the regular life of the European citizens, mainly in terms of stealing jobs from natives, committing crimes, challenging the national welfare state, and so on (Figschou and Thorbjørnsrud, 2015). As to the humanitarian frame, the study by Figschou and Thorbjørnsrud stresses how this frame risks to simplify a problem which is very complicated and dramatic. This risk is particularly present in the tabloid newspapers (Figschou and Thorbjørnsrud, 2015). The humanitarian and the threat frames are the two most recurring frames when newspapers cover immigration but others are present as well: in particular, the *management frame* highlights the difficulties in dealing with the high number of arriving people stressing two different modes of reception: the ethnic model in which the national identity is associated with ancestry and nativity, and the civic model in which the 'national identity is associated with respect for laws and feeling like a national on the other' (Citrin, 2014: 22).

Diversity of actors and diversity of points of view represent another major subject for most studies on immigration (Benson and Wood, 2015; Masini et al., 2017). In particular,

scholars' attention is placed on the number of quotations of non-institutionalized actors, such as immigrants themselves, their organizations, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) compared to the attention devoted to institutionalized actors such as the government and the political parties. An article by Masini et al. (2017), deriving from our research project, shows that the diversity of viewpoints is connected to different factors and first of all to the length of the articles: longer articles have the possibility to host the opinion of more actors. At the same time, this article confirms the finding from Benson (2009): papers that are addressed to an educated audience report the point of view of a larger number of actors: 'Elite newspapers seem to cater to the "omnivorous" tastes of their target audiences with the representation of more social actors in the news, while popular outlets let a fewer categories talk' (Masini et al., 2017). Other studies as well measure diversity in terms of variety of actors and variety of points of views (van Cuilenburg, 1999; Voakes et al., 1996).

As to media property, in the last years, scholars have focused the attention on the growth of the media cross-ownership and on the effects that it has on news content (Panis et al., 2015; Santin and Rubira, 2014; Terry, 2013; Vizcarrondo, 2012). According to Lee et al. (2018), the proliferation of media cross-ownership is driven by at least two different forces: (a) the efforts to offset the weakening of financial stability and to guarantee the media businesses survival and (b) the emerging technologies, such as the Internet-based news, that blur the boundaries between the traditional newsroom and the convergence of various channels of new media. Finally, Benson et al. (2018) have measured the strength of institutional logics (stock market, privately held, civil society, public) in the United States, Sweden, and France, finding that they tend to differentiate less-commercialized media from the commercial ones, but that these dynamics play out within national contexts that display varying levels of field uniformity.

The 'canonic' text on the topic of property concentration is the book by Edwin Baker (2006) *Media Concentration and Democracy* in which the author argues that the dispersal of media ownership represents a major benefit for democratic life as it safeguards the egalitarian and pluralistic principles at the best. Baker looks essentially at the situation, the problems, and the policies in the United States. Nevertheless, the European context seems to be similar: in several of his works, Jan van Cuilenburg has demonstrated how competition between a plurality of sources increases diversity both in media content and in people attitudes (van Cuilenburg, 1998). Media property concentration risks to limit the diversity of circulating opinions undermining the richness and the openness of public debate (Doyle, 2015).

At the same time, we are well aware that, as the existing literature shows, there may be other factors that may influence the coverage of a public, relevant issues, such as immigration, and that are mixed together in the newsmaking process (Carpenter, 2010; Shoemaker and Reese, 1996). As Masini et al. have proposed, following the approach by Shoemaker and Reese, it is necessary to adopt a 'Multilevel model of influence' that considers the possibility of a plurality of factors that determine the content, and also the discursive nature, of the news.

Therefore, in this article, beyond the question of media concentration and its influence on the coverage of the news, we will consider the other following possible influencing factors:

- National belonging: Most comparative research on the media demonstrates the influence that the different national media systems exert on the content of the news. In particular, as to the immigration issue, Benson (2009, 2013), Benson and Hallin (2007), and Benson and Wood (2015) have shown that national belonging plays some role in affecting the coverage of immigration as it shapes national journalistic routines and procedures that apply to immigration as well. Many of aforementioned investigations on the coverage of immigration pointed out how it varies among countries (Aalberg and Beyer, 2015; Beyer and Matthes, 2015; Thorbjørnsrud, 2015). Beyond differences connected to rooted traditions and structures of the media system, it is possible to assume that geographical proximity to the event may also address in some specific way the coverage of this event. In this specific case, we can assume that Italian papers will cover differently from the papers of the other countries an event that takes place near the Italian coasts and that more directly involves the Italian reception structures. The influence of national belonging may be connected to the concept of ‘domestication’ (De Swert and De Smedt, 2014), that is, journalists report foreign events linking the story to the local, domestic situation and to statements by national politicians, making this more proximate to the interests of the local population. Similar interpretation has been suggested by Gleissner e de Vreese (2005) who talk of ‘domesticity’.
- News media typology: a large literature shows how the newspaper genre (and in particular, the opposition between popular and quality press) may affect the coverage of public interest issues (Altheide, 1985; Bingham and Conboy, 2015; Dahlgren and Sparks 1992). As to our topic, Figenschou and Thorbjørnsrud (2015) pointed out how tabloid papers are more inclined to simplify a very complex and even dramatic issue such as that of immigration. Nevertheless, Hallin (2015) suggests that it may be wrong to connect the investigated differences among newspaper just to the consequences of commercialization and this reinforces the necessity of a ‘multilevel reading’ stressing that the content of the news is shaped by a plurality of often contrasting factors (Benson, 2009; Masini et al., 2017; Shoemaker and Reese, 1996).
- In our study, we will investigate if there are general journalistic procedures and routines depending on the kind of newspaper (in particular, we focus on the different approaches of quality, middle-brow, and popular press) that affects the coverage of the immigration issue. Do they work beyond national borders and common ownership so that, for instance, popular press in different countries has a common attitude toward immigration?
- And finally, political alignment may represent an important variable affecting the news coverage. At this regard, many studies focus on the idea of ‘bias’ deriving from different political alignments of the newspapers (Niven, 2003). Recently several studies have been conducted to connect media coverage to the idea of political parallelism. Departing from the data of the European Election Studies, van Kempen (2007) tested the idea of political parallelism at the regard of the European Elections. Albaek and colleagues (2014) used a plurality of methods to study comparatively the level of political parallelism of the news media including content analysis. Deacon and Smith (2017), from their side, have showed how the

media coverage of immigration tends to be most evident when it gains the endorsement of mainstream political parties. In this way, the two authors explain the success of populist parties (in the United Kingdom represented by UKIP) and above all how the media coverage of immigration can foster the spread of Euroscepticism that in the United Kingdom it was essential for the victory of Leave campaign. Departing from the major distinction between center left/liberal and center right/conservative papers, we aim to investigate if major differences emerge as to the coverage of immigration.

For the purpose of this study, we have chosen to compare the coverage of immigration before and after the Lampedusa shipwreck in 3 October 2013¹ by the press in each of the following countries: Italy, Germany, Belgium (Flemish papers), and the United Kingdom. In the recent years, the Lampedusa shipwreck has represented one of the more dramatic and disturbing events featuring the trip through the Mediterranean Sea by thousands of people looking for a better life. It has been largely covered in all countries and has raised a harsh debate that has regarded the immigration issue at large.

The countries taken into account, being located in three different areas of Europe – Southern, Central and Northern – are differently affected by the phenomenon of immigration. Accordingly, the press representation of immigration should also notably differ throughout the considered countries. Moreover, these countries are featured by three different models of journalism according to the typology proposed by Hallin and Mancini (2004): Italy being part of the polarized-pluralist model, Germany and Belgium part of the democratic-corporatist model, and the United Kingdom part of the liberal one. Therefore, the representation of immigration may reveal differences pertaining to field of professional journalism too.

The corpus and methodology

This study analyses the representation of immigration in a sample of newspapers in Belgium (Flanders), Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom, between 1 January 2013 and 30 April 2014. In choosing our study corpus, we tried to be as much inclusive as possible to better represent the national media systems under investigation and to be able to give an answer to the research questions that we suggested.

Therefore, first of all, we tried to include papers being part of the same media corporation, then we considered other possible influencing factors such as the addressed readership, political alignment (where possible, we analyzed right, center, and left wing newspapers), and national/local circulation (see Table 1). Because of the differences existing among the national media systems and depending on the availability of the newspapers, we have been forced to adapt our selection criteria to contextual situations. As far as the audiences' cultural preferences are concerned, it has to be highlighted that the tabloids are not present in all the investigated countries (for instance, in Italy, popular press does not exist). Because of this, we decided to include in the sample also the so-called *middle-brow* newspapers (popular newspapers targeting middle-brow readers). The audiences of this kind of newspapers show a limited range of cultural tastes or preferences, and it usually belongs to the intermediate social classes.

Table 1. The selected newspapers by ownership, type, orientation, and circulation.

Media company	Media outlet	Type of newspapers	Political orientation	Media outlet circulation
De Persoegrep	<i>De Morgen</i>	Quality	C-Left	National
	<i>De Tijd</i>	Quality	C-Right	National
	<i>Het Laatste Nieuws</i>	Middle-brow	C-Right	National
Mediahuis	<i>De Standaard</i>	Quality	Center	National
	<i>Gazet van Antwerpen</i>	Middle-brow	Center	Local
	<i>Het Nieuwsblad</i>	Middle-brow	C-Right	National
Axel Springer	<i>Die Welt</i>	Quality	C-Right	National
	<i>Berliner Morgenpost</i>	Quality	C-Right	Local
Faz Stiftung	<i>Faz</i>	Quality	C-right	National
Dieter von Holtzbrinck Medien	<i>Tagesspiegel</i>	Quality	C-Left	Local
SWMH	<i>Süddeutsche Zeitung</i>	Quality	Center	National
	<i>Stuttgarter Nachrichten</i>	Quality	Center	Local
	<i>La repubblica</i>	Quality	C-Left	National
L'Espresso	<i>Gazzetta di Modena</i>	Middle-brow	C-Left	Local
	<i>l'Espresso</i>	Quality	C-Left	National
	<i>Il Giornale</i>	Quality	C-Right	National
Mondadori	<i>Panorama</i>	Quality	C-Right	National
	<i>Il Messaggero</i>	Middle-Brow	Center	National
Caltagirone	<i>Il Mattino</i>	Middle-Brow	Center	Local
	<i>The Times</i>	Quality	Center	National
News Corporation	<i>The Sun</i>	Tabloid	C-Right	National
	<i>Mirror</i>	Tabloid	C-Left	National
Trinity Mirror	<i>Manchester Evening News</i>	Middle-brow	C-Left	Local
	<i>Evening Standard</i>	Middle-brow	C-Right	Local
Independent Print Limited	<i>The Independent</i>	Quality	Center	National

As to ownership, we tried to include at least two papers being part of the same corporation but in the case of Italy, we decided to include two daily papers and one weekly for the Espresso group not to overestimate the importance of local press that is property of this media corporation. Consequently, we decided to include a weekly from Mondadori too to be compared with L'Espresso, a weekly being part of a different, competitor group. Moreover, the two weeklies usually report, better than the other outlets, the point of view of their media company owner.²

In the German case, we included also two papers *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (FAZ) (national, quality) (owner: FAZ-Stiftung) and *Tagesspiegel* (regional, quality) (owner: Verlagsgruppe Georg von Holtzbrinck) as important representative of quality press (FAZ) and regional press (*Tagesspiegel*) even if they are not property of

Table 2. Distribution of selected article articles by newspapers, media company ownership, and country.

Media outlet	n	%	Media company owner	n	%	Country	n	%
<i>Il Messaggero</i>	296	11.4	Caltagirone	404	15.5	Italy	856	32.9
<i>Il Mattino</i>	108	4.2						
<i>La Repubblica</i>	203	7.8	L'Espresso	313	12.0			
<i>Gazzetta di Modena</i>	94	3.6						
<i>l'Espresso</i>	16	0.6						
<i>Il Giornale</i>	123	4.7	Mondadori	139	5.3			
<i>Panorama</i>	16	0.6						
<i>De Morgen</i>	143	5.5	De Persoegrep	312	12.0	Belgium	642	24.7
<i>Het Laatste Nieuws</i>	91	3.5						
<i>De Tijd</i>	78	3.0						
<i>De Standaard</i>	180	6.9	Mediahuis	330	12.7			
<i>Gazet van Antwerpen</i>	77	3.0						
<i>Het Nieuwsblad</i>	73	2.8						
<i>Berliner Morgenpost</i>	130	5.0	Axel Springer	172	6.6	Germany	561	21.6
<i>Die Welt</i>	42	1.6						
<i>Stuttgarter Nachrichten</i>	98	3.8	SWMH	189	7.3			
<i>Süddeutsche Zeitung</i>	91	3.5						
<i>Tagesspiegel</i>	123	4.7	Dieter von Holtzbrinck Medien	123	4.7			
<i>Faz</i>	77	3.0	Faz Stiftung	77	3.0			
<i>The Times</i>	184	7.1	News Corporation	296	11.4	United Kingdom	543	20.9
<i>The Sun</i>	112	4.3						
<i>The Independent</i>	95	3.7	Independent Print Limited	176	6.8			
<i>Evening Standard</i>	81	3.1						
<i>Mirror</i>	50	1.9	Trinity Mirror	71	2.7			
<i>Manchester Evening News</i>	21	0.8						

multimedia groups. As a whole, we selected a sample of 25 news outlets, whose characteristics (name, country and company affiliation, type, political orientation and circulation) are illustrated in Tables 1 and 2.³

The final sample consists of 2602 articles (642 articles, 24.7% in Belgium; 561 articles, 21.6% in Germany; 856 articles, 32.9% in Italy; 543 articles, 20.9% in the United Kingdom).

The Italian newspapers are devoting the largest attention to the issue, even excluding the two magazines (31.3% on the total). The Italian group Caltagirone Editore, followed by the Belgian Mediahuis, the Italian L'Espresso, and the Belgian De Persoegrep stand out among the media corporations as to the number of published articles. Two Italian newspapers, *Il Messaggero* and *la Repubblica*, publish the largest number of articles followed by *The Times* and *De Standaard* (Tab. 2).

The selected articles were analyzed by coders based in each country of the study. Extensive training was provided by a master coder in every country. A common codebook

for all countries was prepared and an intercoder reliability was tested for each country on a 10 percent subsample.⁴ Almost all the variables taken into account in the codebook were categorical variables (a variable representing a set of discrete characteristics); we had not in mind an assumed pre-determined representation of immigration that should be confirmed or rejected. On the contrary, we aimed to ‘discover’ a posteriori the suggested representations through a multivariate analysis of the data. For these reasons, we choose to use a specific technique of multivariate analysis, that is, the Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA). Indeed, this kind of technique has the main goal to provide first an exploration, then a description, and finally a synthesis of the collected information without any pre-existing interpretative hypothesis; furthermore, it is well suited for simultaneously analyzing a set of categorical variables and for reducing them into a lower number of dimensions called factors. These factors can be intended as new dimensions able to suggest relevant and synthetic representations of the phenomenon under investigation.

In MCA, it is necessary to distinguish two different types of categorical variables: the *active variables*, which contribute directly to the formation of factors, and the *supplementary or illustrative variables*, which do not contribute to construct the factors but they are useful to improve their interpretation (they can be intended, in some way, as independent variables). Identifying the meaning of the factors and labeling them on the basis of the strength of association between the categories and the factors will be one of the main tasks of the researcher (on MCA, see Abdi and Valentin, 2007; Di Franco, 2016; Greenacre and Blasius, 2006).

The active categorical variables considered in the following analysis are a total of 11 variables and 51 associated categories.⁵

Findings: The emerging factors

After the extraction of the factors, we choose to take into consideration only the first three factors, which seem to be the most explanatory ones.^{6,7} Each factor, summarized in Tables 3, 5, and 7 (see the online supplement) is composed of two half-planes, conventionally called positive and negative. The test value controls the significance of the association between a single category with the factor. In case of negative half-plane, the lower values indicate a higher level of significance of category to determine the factor. While in case of positive half-plane, the higher test values are most important.

Factor 1 – Different journalistic genres: Reporting (human interest stories) versus news analysis

This factor (see the online supplement, Table 3) focuses on the differences between journalistic genres: in particular, we refer to the differences between articles describing specific events and personal stories of immigrants, mostly these are articles with a major positive tone (human interest stories), and articles commenting and analyzing the more general phenomenon of immigration (news analysis).

As already said, most of the research on the coverage of immigration highlights the frequent presence of so-called ‘human interest stories’ (Benson, 2013; Figenschou and Thorbjørnsrud, 2015): our findings show that these are stories focusing on single personal

figures of immigrants or on the immigrants as a group who, most likely, are described as being forced to leave their home land and then are facing severe difficulties during their travel to more secure and richer countries. Human interest stories stress also how frequently death stops the immigrants' way toward a better life. Factor 1 shows also that most of these immigrants come from the African continent and the stories that are narrated have a very local dimension focusing on terrible journey for reaching (as to the period of our investigation) Lampedusa, on the condition of life in detention center, on the citizens of Lampedusa helping immigrants, and so on. In other words, the 'human interest stories' are shaped to a large extent by articles painting immigrants as innocent victims entitled to rights that may secure them assistance and protection as it can be seen in the following headlines: 'Lampedusa, arrivati tre barconi. I naufraghi: Morte due persone' (Lampedusa, three boats arrived. The survivors: 'Two people died'), *Il Messaggero*, 9 August 2013; 'Centinaia di morti davanti a Lampedusa' (Hundreds of deaths in front of Lampedusa), *La Gazzetta di Modena*, 4 October 2013.

On the opposite side, news analysis is embedded both in editorials/opinions and letters to editors. They fill the editorial part of the newspapers being characterized by a general, problematic, and mostly negative approach toward immigration and its recent evolution. References to specific events and to individual immigrants are few. Articles deal also with the economic aspects of immigration framed within a global and mainly European context offering to the reader many pieces of information about historical context, structural causes, statistics, political debate, experts' considerations, and so on.

Factor 2 – Different stories: Management of local immigration policies versus immigration as an economic supra-national problem

Factor 2 (Table 5 of the online materials) refers to the content of news stories. On one side there are articles, mostly news reporting articles, that, with a neutral tone, describe what is going on at local level mostly in connection to the problem and situation of detention centers and the presence of immigrants in the country. Moreover, some articles pay particular attention to the relationship between immigration, crime, and security. At the center of these news articles, there are not personal figures of immigrants or other actors: rather they describe events (landings), problem of accommodation, arrests, repatriations, and so on. This dimension, as stated before, was already highlighted by Citrin (2014).

Opposed to these stories, there are the ones addressing a very different topic: immigration as a supra-national issue with economic implications affecting international relations. These articles stress in particular how immigration is a global problem requiring an active role by European Union. In fact, main actors in these articles are 'international politicians' (politicians and officials being part of international institutions such as those of EU) and public agencies and NGO. In these news stories, it is Europe that is at stake as to the immigration problem. These are articles that investigate the larger problem supporting data and documents. Finally, these articles focus mainly on immigrants coming from Europe (in particular, Eastern Europe) rather than on African immigrants.

Factor 3 – Different approaches to immigration: Parochialism versus cosmopolitanism

This third factor (see the online supplement Table 7) indicates the way in which the problem of immigration is approached; it stresses within which more general interpretative frame immigration is placed. We distinguish two major approaches that we define parochialist and cosmopolitan ones. The parochialist approach is very ‘nation based’. It derives mostly from statements and initiatives of national political figures (indeed these are mostly news reporting articles dealing with just one actor) addressing with a major negative tone the immigration issue that is mostly related to national problems, debates, and situations rather than to European ones. There are not stories of immigrants.

The cosmopolitan approach looks at immigration as a supra-national problem, both as a European and global problem of today societies. On the contrary of parochialism, focus is placed also on immigrants as persons, and their stories while they enter the European continent. This approach is generally positive toward immigration, mostly African immigration and not East European immigration such as in Factor 2.

Figure 1 summarizes the result of the MCA extraction.

Findings: Factors and major interpretative variables

MCA allows the graphic display of the planes constituted by the factorial axes considered two at a time. In particular, SPAD software permits to project the categories of the active and supplementary variables into these factorial planes. Estimating the positions of the dots with respect to the axes and the distances between the dots themselves, it is possible to infer the structure of the relationships between the categories of the variables, and between these and the factors.

Through the graphical representation of the categories and the factors, it is possible to clarify further the three observed representations of immigration looking at how they fit (a) with the variable media ownership, (b) with the country, (c) single media outlet, (d) political orientation of the newspaper, and (e) newspaper type. We will consider first the cross-tabulation between Factors 1 and 2 and then the cross-tabulation between Factors 1 and 3 (see Figures 3 to 8 in Appendix 1).

Figure 3 in Appendix 1 shows the cross-tabulation between Factors 1 (journalistic genre: ‘reporting human interest stories’ vs ‘news analysis’) and 2 (different stories: ‘management of local immigration policies’ vs ‘immigration as an economic supra-national problem’) as to the variables country and media company.⁸ It emerges very clearly how the Belgian and German media groups are placed at the center of the figure revealing the absence of very specific characterizations as to journalistic genre and stories: in other words, these media groups offer a vast range of both news analysis and reporting human interest stories without privileging very clearly none. At the same time, these groups appear enough close to each other revealing the presence of a common professional model following choices that are shared by the different national media groups. This sort of national homogeneity is absent among the Italian media groups with L’Espresso and Caltagirone being very focused on reporting human interest stories and management of immigration policies while Mondadori group is placed on the opposite

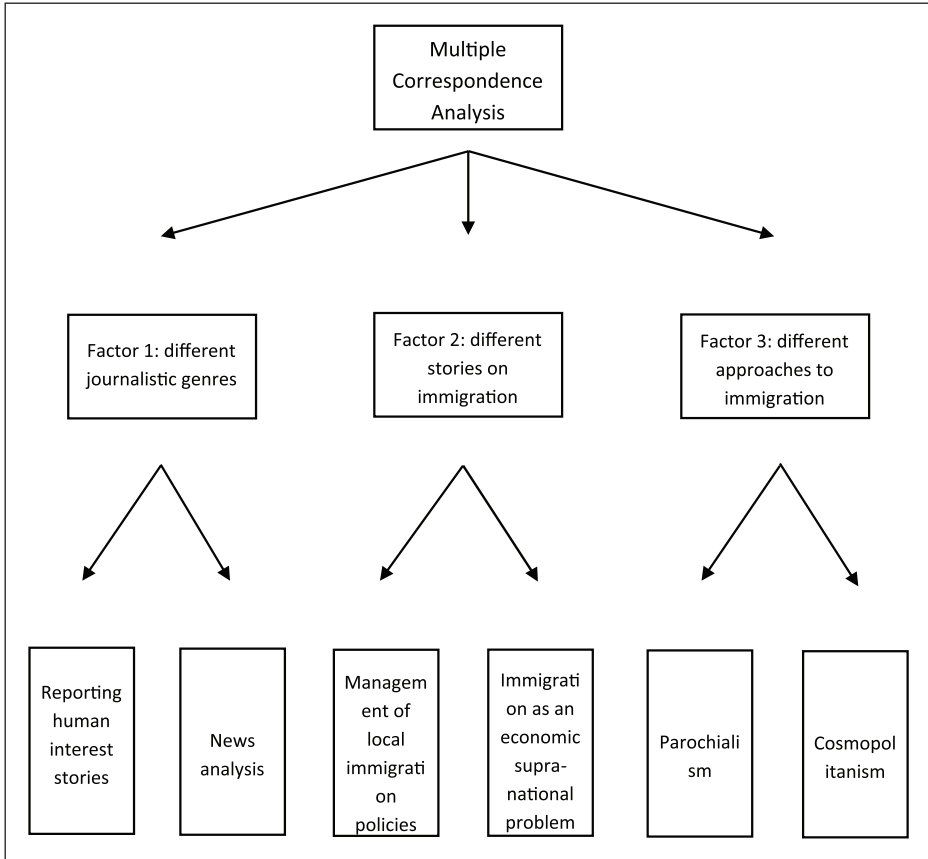


Figure 1. Factors deriving from MCA.

quarter. For L’Espresso and Caltagirone, the most compelling problem is the reception of immigrants and the compassion that their stories of sadness and poverty raise; for Mondadori, immigration is an economic supra-national problem. Independent Print and News Corporation too are close to each other privileging news analysis and immigration as an economic problem while Trinity Mirror seems to privilege human interest stories.

Figure 4 in Appendix 1 shows the cross-tabulation between Factors 1 (journalistic format: ‘reporting human interest stories’ vs ‘news analysis’) and 2 (different stories: ‘management of local immigration policies’ vs ‘immigration’) as to single media outlet. This figure is mostly focused on the ‘group homogeneity’ showing how the news outlets of each single group are placed: the Italian L’Espresso and Repubblica (part of the media conglomerate L’Espresso) are placed on the same quarter and report human interest stories. The other news outlet of the same group (*La Gazzetta di Modena*) is on a different quarter: journalists of this paper seem to focus more on management of immigration policies within news analysis articles. *Panorama* and *Il Giornale*, part of the Mondadori group, are placed within the same quarter as to news analysis.

The Times and *The Sun* (both are part of News Corporation) (and the *Evening Standard* too) are placed in the same quarter: they talk of immigration as an economic supra-national problem within news analysis articles, editorials, and, even in a lower measure, letters to editors.

A different approach features two British papers belonging to the same media group: *The Manchester Evening News*, local and center left paper, and *The Mirror*, national and center left paper. These two media outlets (Figure 4 in Appendix 1) share the attention to human interest stories. Most of the Belgian and German newspapers are placed at the center of the figure revealing a quite similar attitude to immigration issues: they do not seem to foster any specific view dealing with immigration from a plurality of points of view. They can be defined, more than the other observed newspapers, 'multiperspective' (Benson, 2009). In spite of their central position, for some groups homogeneity is weak: *De Tijd* has a very different behavior from *De Morgen* and *Het Laatste Nieuws* (that are part of De Persoegrep group): not differently, *Die Welt* and *Berliner Morgenpost* (Axel Springer) are placed in different quarters as to the stories they cover.

Contrary to our hypothesis and to what emerged in previous studies (Baker, 2006; Doyle, 2015; van Cuilenburg, 1998, 1999), media ownership concentration does not seem to affect the coverage of immigration, at least not as much as other factors included in the analysis. In particular, we noticed that political alignment plays some role. Indeed, most of the newspapers that report human interest stories and talk of management of immigration policies are center left papers (as shown also in Figure 5 in Appendix 1) stressing the pain behind the personal stories of immigrants represented mainly as victims while center right newspapers seem to privilege news analysis articles discussing immigration as a supra-national problem and keeping a more 'issue solving' attitude pointing out how the problem of immigration has to be solved within a larger, supra-national level. We may notice also that reporting human interest stories and (partially) the focus on management of immigration politics appear to feature many local papers such as *Manchester Evening News*, *Berliner Morgenpost*, *Stuttgarter Nachricht*, *Gazzetta di Modena* and the aforementioned *Manchester Evening News*. Usually local papers give large space to reporting and therefore concrete problems of immigrants' reception are particularly covered. Newspaper genre too exerts some influence but this appears to be less important than political orientation.

Figure 6 in Appendix 1 shows the cross-tabulation of Factor 1 (journalistic genre: 'human interest stories' vs 'news analysis') and Factor 3 (different approaches to immigration: 'parochialism' vs 'cosmopolitanism') as to media group and country: all British outlets show a parochialist approach: this approach features in particular the News Corporation group. On the opposite side, the Italian groups (in particular, Caltagirone and L'Espresso groups) seem to cover immigration departing from what we have defined a cosmopolitan approach. These media groups aim to transform the immigration problem into a European problem.

For the papers of News Corporation and Independent Print Limited, and partially also for the Mediahuis group, immigration has an important supra-national economic dimension (Figure 3 in Appendix 1), but this is essentially interpreted through a parochialist point of view. In other words, they recognize the supra-national dimension of the issue but differently from the Italian groups, their approach tends to be very national and

economy based. The ‘economic-based’ interpretation has two different faces, as shown in the following excerpts: on one hand, the immigrants ‘are not welcome to our country’ as they produce negative effects on the national economy (e.g. ‘Europe’s struggling youth migrate north for work; Millions are moving to Germany and Britain as their domestic economies crumble’, *The Times*, 11 July 2013; ‘Annual 100,000 cap on immigration “would be harmful to economy”’, *The Times* 15 January 2014). On the other hand, the immigrants may help national economy (e.g. ‘Migrants contribute £7bn a year to UK economy; Britain benefits more than any other Western state from foreign workers, says OECD’, *The Independent*, 14 June 2013; ‘Immigrants boost the economy says NIESR’, *The Independent*, 5 November, 2013).

As to the cross-tabulation of Factor 1 ‘different journalistic genres’ with Factor 3 ‘different approaches to immigration’, most of the German and Belgian groups, with the exception of Faz, being characterized by a cosmopolitan approach, do not exhibit any specific feature being placed all together at the center of the figure. Nevertheless Figure 7 in Appendix 1, showing the cross-tabulation of Factor 1 (journalistic genre: ‘human interest stories’ vs ‘news analysis’) and Factor 3 (different approaches to immigration: ‘parochialism’ vs ‘cosmopolitanism’) as to single media outlet, points out that group homogeneity is not working: *Die Welt* and *Berliner Morgenpost*, that are part of the Axel Springer group, are placed in different quarters, such as *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *Stuttgarter Nachricht* (SWMH) are in different quarters. A certain homogeneity exists within News Corporation with both *The Sun* and *The Times* placed close to each other.

As shown in Figure 8 in Appendix 1 (cross-tabulation of Factor 1 journalistic genre: ‘human interest stories’ vs ‘news analysis’ and Factor 3 different approaches to immigration: ‘parochialism’ vs ‘cosmopolitanism’ as to political orientation and type of newspaper), parochialism seems to feature in a certain measure center right newspapers and tabloid while center left newspapers are more oriented toward cosmopolitanism.

Discussion

Our findings demonstrate that the coverage of immigration is a very complex issue affected by different and often contrasting pressures. It would be wrong to link the coverage of such a dramatic issue just to one single factor: our main findings stress that the coverage of immigration cannot be interpreted and evaluated under a single angle. Our results are therefore consistent with the findings of many studies previously quoted (Carpenter, 2010; Shoemaker and Reese, 1996).

Contrary to our expectations, mostly deriving from the work by Baker and van Cuilenburg, one of the less relevant factor affecting the news media coverage of immigration is media property: we departed from the hypothesis that being part of a group could strongly affect the coverage of a relevant public issue such as immigration. This departing hypothesis was referring to the largest problem of media concentration and the possible ‘pluralism’ deficit that media concentration could raise. Our findings demonstrate that this is not the case: indeed, newspapers belonging to the same group mostly show contrasting views in face of immigration. The attitude of each newspaper of a single group seems to depend on other factors: national belonging, specific political alignment of the paper, and newspaper genre (Figure 2).

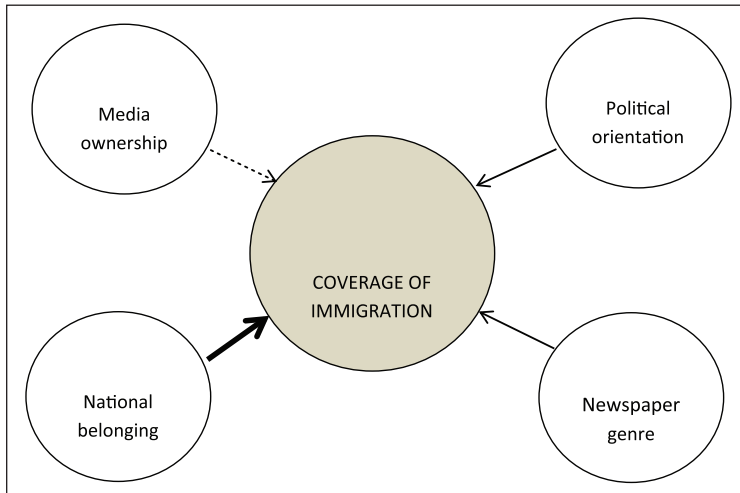


Figure 2. Influence of media ownership, national belonging, political orientation, and newspaper genre on the coverage of immigration.

The figure and the lines' thickness were built taking in to account both the number of the affecting variables' categories with significant test values and the magnitude of the same test values (see Tables 3 to 8 in the online supplement).

There is just one media group showing a certain level of homogeneity and this is the News Corporation of Rupert Murdoch. Both the investigated papers of the group have a center rightest attitude and a major popular orientation. Even if it is listed as quality paper, *The Times* since the Murdoch acquisition has undergone a process of tabloidization getting closer to *The Sun*. Homogeneity appears essentially as to the proposed frame of the stories, that is, the parochialist frame.

A certain group homogeneity exists also in the Italian group L'Espresso: two of its papers, the daily *la Repubblica* and the weekly *l'Espresso*, are always placed within the same quarter while the other daily *La Gazzetta di Modena* follows different patterns as this is a local paper. In this case, market segmentation (national vs local market) plays a major role than property concentration.

National belonging seems to be an important factor, it may be the most important, affecting the coverage of immigration. In this way, our study confirms the findings from previous studies, such as those of Benson (2009, 2013), Aalberg and Beyer (2015), and Thorbjørnsrud (2015).

In particular, our study has pointed out a precise contrast between the Italian and the British press. The former has a more cosmopolitan attitude stressing that Italy cannot be left alone facing the problem of immigration, the management of reception centers, and all the concrete and immediate problems that the flow of immigrants raises with its dramatic stories. British press does not focus on the management of concrete immigration policies and on human interest stories: departing from the statements of national politicians' British newspapers highlight the economic and employment problems that the

flow of immigrants raises. These problems have to be placed within a multinational, mostly European, context.

In this sense, domestication, as proposed by several authors (De Swert and De Smedt, 2014; Gleissner and de Vreese, 2005), represents a possible interpretative framework of our findings: both in Italy and United Kingdom, but in the other countries as well, the coverage of immigration is affected by national contingencies. Italian newspapers stress the need to place the problem of immigration within a larger European and international framework that may help Italian authorities to solve the problems deriving from the continuous flow of immigrants. British news outlets are particularly concerned with the consequences that such a large number of immigrants may produce on the level of British employment. Domestication implies that the selection of news stories and their treatment is strictly related to national contingencies and events.

Belgian and German newspapers show a very similar attitude (at least if compared with the behavior of the newspapers of the other countries) in the coverage of immigration: this may imply the existence of a shared, national model of journalism addressing the choices of newspapers in a similar way. This model seems to be inclusive of different ways to deal with the immigration problem without endorsing any specific approach to the issue. In a way, Belgian and German press appears to be more multiperspectival than the British and the Italian.

The Italian case reveals another important characterization: within certain conditions, the most general political alignment of the group may be more important than national belonging: indeed, two major Italian groups, *L'Espresso* and *Caltagirone*, seem to share similar positions while the rightist *Mondadori* shows different attitude in face of the immigration issue. The complexity, often contradictory complexity, of the factors influencing the coverage of immigration is further confirmed.

The assumed readership is another factor that may clearly affect the coverage of immigration: under this factor, we may consider both the difference between popular and quality press and the specific political alignment. Indeed, popular press shows a parochialist attitude emerging mostly from news analysis and letters to the editor that pay particular attention to the connected economic problem.

Also, the newspapers' political orientation exerts a considerable influence on the representation of immigration, confirming what already emerged by the researches carried out by Niven (2003). This result is certainly due to the 'nature' of the issue under investigation. Indeed, nowadays the phenomenon of immigration represents one of the major matter of division between the political right and the political left. As far as the genre of newspapers, we did not find, differently from the analysis of Altheide (1985), any significant relationship with the way in which immigration is represented.

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Supplemental material

Supplemental material for this article is available online.

Notes

1. We analyzed the period from 1 January 2013 to 30 April 2014.
2. In any case, it has to be considered that these weeklies publish in the entire period a very small number of articles (1.2% on total).
3. Through a Boolean string, translated in every language involved in our study, we searched in different online databases (newspapers archives, Nexus Lexus, etc.) articles about immigration, that is, articles containing at least one keyword such as ‘immigrant’, ‘clandestine’, ‘smuggler’, ‘boat’, ‘landing’, ‘irregular’, ‘expulsion’, ‘diaspora’, ‘asylum’, ‘refugee’, ‘reception centre’, and other specific words used in national journalistic jargon when referring to immigration.
4. For the variables taken into consideration, Krippendorff’s alpha scores range from 0.60 to 1 in the four countries (see Masini et al., 2017, a paper derived from the same research project and dataset).
5. In particular, the active categorical variables considered in the following analysis are (a) journalistic genre, (b) the main ‘arena’ at the center of news article, (c) main sub-issue treated in the article, (d) from which country immigrant actor comes, (e) article’s tone toward immigration: negative tone, (f) frame 1: the article starts with the story of an individual or mentions the story of individual, (g) frame 2: the article covers events/stories connected to immigration, (h) frame 3: the news focuses on the phenomenon of immigration and issues related to immigration in its larger context, (i) frame 4: the news item covers immigration as related to immigration as a European Union/global phenomenon, (j) main actor in the article, and (k) actor diversity: how many actors are present in the article. We then analyzed how a set of illustrative categorical variables position themselves with respect to the extracted factors. These variables are (a) newspaper’s country, (b) media company owner, (c) political orientation, and (d) national or local newspaper. After the extraction of the factors, we picked up just three main factors, which seem to imply different representations of immigration.
6. All the tables discussed in the following paragraphs are available in the online supplement.
7. The three factors reproduce together 13.0 percent of total inertia. This result may seem not very satisfactory. However, one has to consider that Multiple Correspondence Analysis generates a high number of factors and, consequently, an equally high dispersion of the reproduced inertia. It follows that the first factors come to be subjected to an underestimation in terms of inertia, but this does not invalidate the statistical relevance of the result (Di Franco, 2006; Le Roux et al., 2006).
8. Figures 3 to 8 in Appendix 1 are commented with reference to the explanatory categories (Tables 4, 6, and 8) that are available online.

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Appendix I

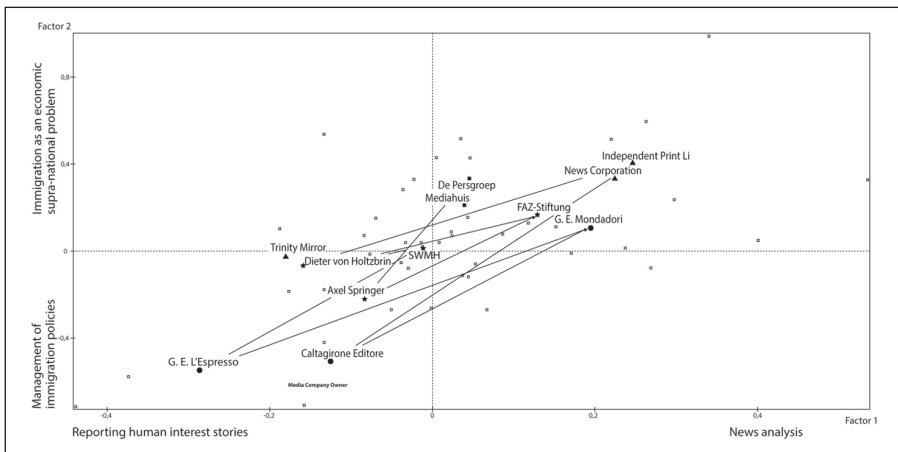


Figure 3. Factors 1 (*different journalistic genres*) and 2 (*different stories*) as to the variable country and media company.

■ denotes Belgium; • denotes Italy; ▲ denotes United Kingdom; * denotes Germany.

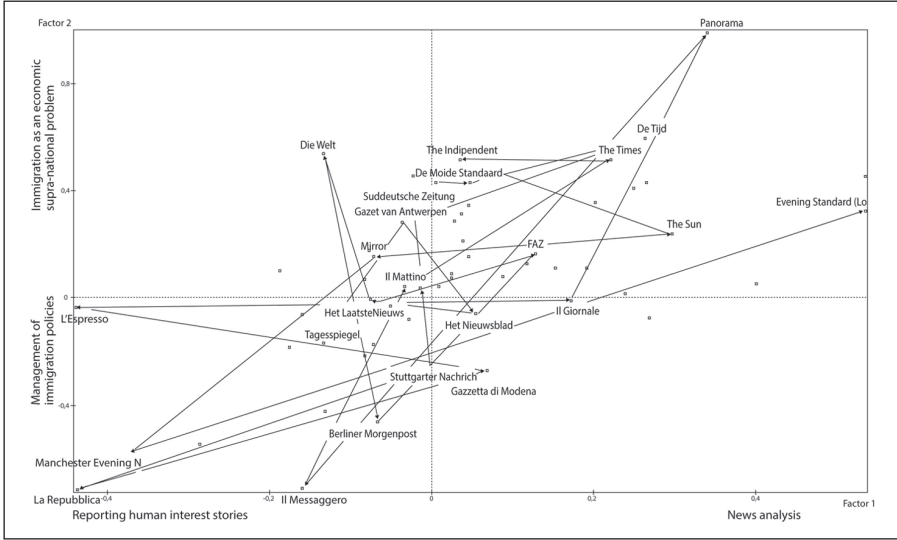


Figure 4. Factors 1 (different journalistic genres) and 2 (different stories) as to the variable media outlet.

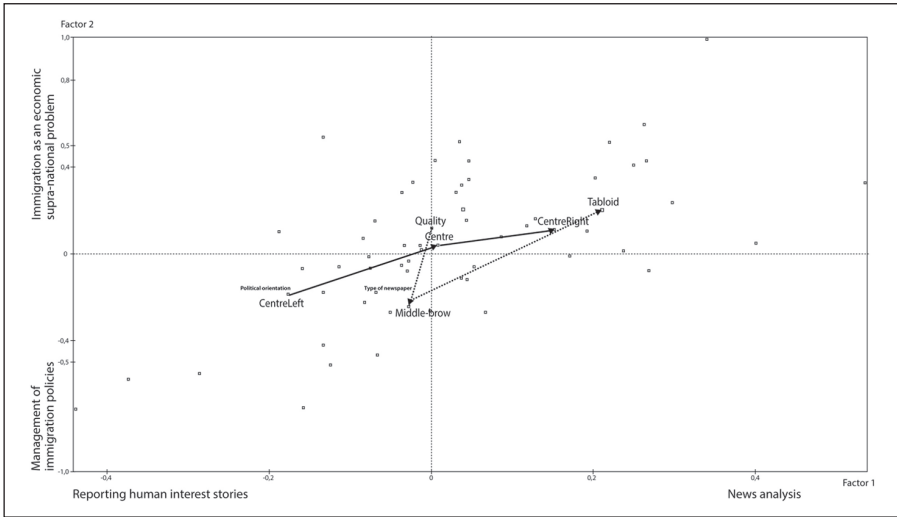


Figure 5. Factors 1 (different journalistic genres) and 2 (different stories) as to the variable political orientation and type of newspaper.

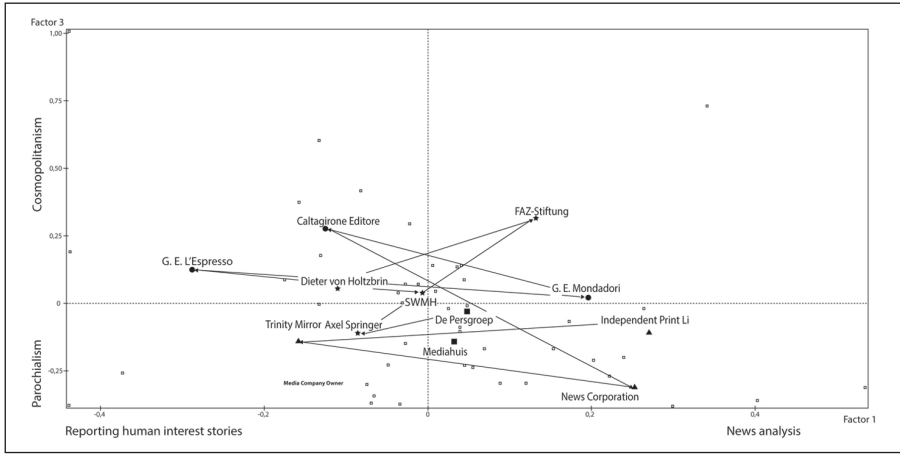


Figure 6. Factors 1 (*different journalistic genres*) and 3 (*different approaches to immigration*) as to the variable country and media company. ■ denotes Belgium; • denotes Italy; ▲ denotes United Kingdom; * denotes Germany.

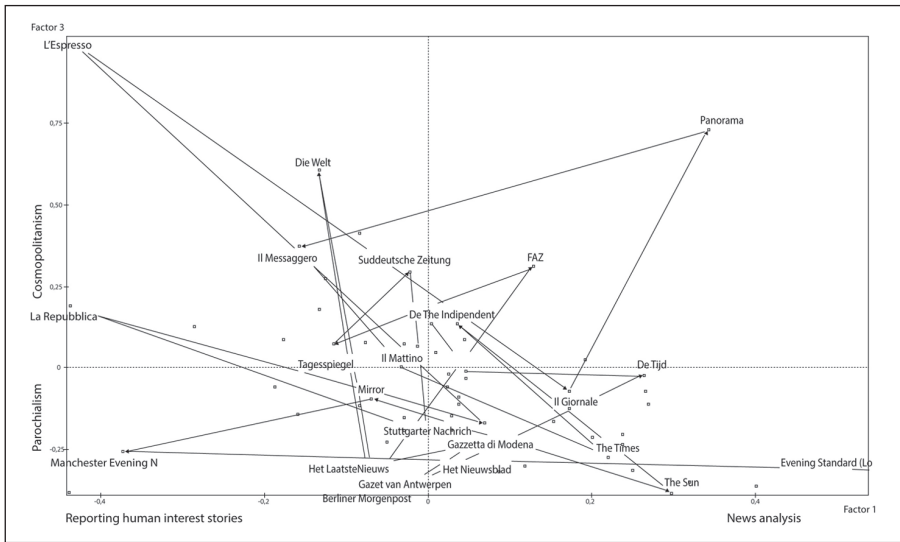


Figure 7. Factors 1 (*different journalistic genres*) and 3 (*different approaches to immigration*) as to the variable media outlet.

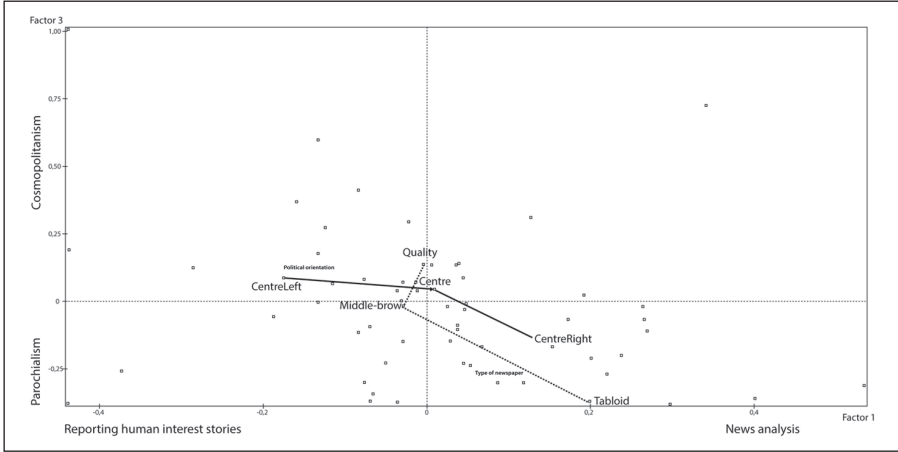


Figure 8. Factors 1 (different journalistic genres) and 3 (different approaches to immigration) as to the variable political orientation and type of newspaper.