Displaced and Invisible: Ukrainian Refugee Crisis Coverage in the US, UK, Ukrainian, and Russian Newspapers

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Abstract

The Ukrainian–Russian military conflict that began in 2014 displaced nearly two million people. This study is one of the first to compare the news media coverage of Ukrainian displaced persons in the UK, US, Ukrainian, and Russian elite press as the crisis unfolded. This analysis looks at frames, sources, and demographic characteristics used in the coverage of displaced people. The findings of this study indicate that the coverage of displaced Ukrainians varied from country to country in elite newspapers, and the descriptions did not always point to classic markers of crisis, such as emotional turmoil. English-language newspapers were more likely to focus on statistics, while Ukrainian and Russian press devoted more attention to various aspects of migrants' resettlement. The "security threat" and "crime" frames, which are often used in media coverage of refugees, were nearly non-existent in the articles about displaced Ukrainians.

The undeclared Russian–Ukrainian war is "the greatest security crisis in Europe since the Cold War" (Masters, 2020, para. 2). It began in March 2014 when the Russian military took over Crimea, Ukraine's southern peninsula, and annexed it from Ukraine (Conflict in Ukraine, 2020). A month later, Russian-backed separatists occupied parts of the Eastern Ukraine regions of Donetsk and Luhansk, which border Russia (Ukraine profile, 2019). The Ukrainian government fought back by starting a military operation in Eastern Ukraine (Ukraine profile, 2019). The most intense phase of this crisis occurred in 2014–15; however, the occasional fighting between Russian-backed separatists and the Ukrainian military still threatens the lives of residents who live next to the contact line in 2020 (Freedom House, 2018; Graham, 2020). Since the beginning of the crisis, nearly 13,000 people, including 3,300 civilians, lost their lives in Eastern Ukraine ("Death toll," 2019).

Nearly two million Ukrainians were forced to leave their homes. Most chose to start a new life in parts of Ukraine not affected by the war, while others moved abroad. According to the Ukrainian government, 1.5 million Ukrainians registered as internally displaced (Ministry of Social Politics, 2018). More than 427,200 Ukrainians sought asylum in Russia, 13,262 in Israel, 11,230 in Italy, 10,495 in Germany, and 8,380 in Spain (UNHCR, 2018). The current study examines news coverage of those who were displaced by the Ukrainian–Russian crisis. The study analyzes news articles published between 2014 and 2017 in four newspapers with national and international reach. These elite dailies have the potential to shape how millions of readers interpret the crisis. The current study employs quantitative content analysis to

identify and compare the frames in the newspapers' text. Understanding media coverage is particularly important in a crisis because audiences use the daily narrative to make meaning of the situation, assign blame, and choose sides (Perez, 2017). This is particularly important when readers do not have their own experiences with refugees (Parrott et al., 2019), and the coverage fills gaps in the audience's knowledge. The results of this study will add to the body of knowledge related to the media's coverage of conflict and crisis by illuminating patterns and themes that emerge.

Literature Review

The term "crisis" may mean different things to different people, but Fearn-Banks' (1996) classic public relations text defines a crisis as "a major occurrence with a potentially negative outcome affecting the organization, company, or industry, as well as its publics, products, services, or good name" (p. 2). One source of crisis is the deteriorating relationships between groups that have been directly at odds, such as customers, suppliers, even governments. These conflicts are prodomes or precursors of crisis (Coombs, 1999). In their study of product development, Lynch, O'Toole, and Biemans (2014) noted that a crisis can erupt when a conflict in one area threatens to consume the entire organization. According to Fearn-Banks (1996), "a crisis can be a strike, terrorism, a fire, a boycott [...] the size of the organization is irrelevant" (p. 2). Coombs (1999) expands on that idea, explaining that a crisis is "unpredictable but not unexpected" (p. 2). As a situation deteriorates from a conflict into a crisis, it typically captures intense media coverage. As the need for information becomes more critical, it also becomes more scarce. The complexities and failures during a crisis are amplified by media coverage (Veil & Husted, 2012). Crisis is not limited to organizations, as Cmeciu (2019) noted in the study of refugee portrayals in European media. The influx of refugees throughout Europe was framed as a crisis that could benefit from the input of engaged online citizens as well as European officials.

Many researchers have used framing to examine text and images. Gamson (1989, p. 157) defined "frame" as a "central organizing idea" of a news story that helps to understand the issue or event at hand or explains its meaning (Gamson & Modigliani, 1994). Frames are different from facts (De Vreese, 2005). They only capture "some aspects of a perceived reality" and give them higher prominence (Entman, 1993, p. 52) while less salient facts or characteristics are left in the background (De Vreese & Lecheler, 2012). Frames rely on the repetitions of the same or similar sets of words and symbols (Entman, Matthes, & Pellicano, 2009). They can "set a tone for an event or issue" (Tankard, 2001, p. 98), making it appear as positive, neutral, or negative.

De Vreese (2005) identified two ways of studying frames. One approach relies on studying issue-specific frames, while another uses generic frames (De Vreese, 2005). Issue-specific frames appear in coverage of specific events or subjects, and generally cannot be replicated in other studies (De Vreese, 2005). Generic frames can be used for studying media coverage of different issues and allow multicultural comparisons (De Vreese, 2005).

Framing examines several sites in communication processes, including "the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the culture" (Entman, 1993, p. 52). News reporters are guided by their own schemata as well as professional routines, norms, and organizational pressures (De Vreese, 2005; Entman, 1993; Shoemaker & Reese, 1996), which can vary from country to country. For example, US and UK media organizations have a high degree of press freedom (Freedom House, 2017a, 2017b). US and UK news media are competitive (Freedom House, 2017a, 2017b) and enjoy editorial independence.

In comparison, Ukraine is "partly free," and Russia is "not free" (Freedom House, 2017c, 2017d). Most Ukrainian media are owned by oligarchs who use the outlets to advance their political interests (Orlova & Sydorenko, 2015). As a result, instead of balanced reporting, Ukrainian national media channels do not shy away from taking sides and promoting the views of their owners (Orlova & Sydorenko, 2015). "Violence" and "threats" are some of the major issues affecting the work of Ukrainian journalists (Freedom House, 2017c). Meanwhile, all major Russian media institutions are controlled by the Kremlin

or President Vladimir Putin's loyalists (Freedom House, 2017d). Russian officials can suppress any type of speech that goes against the official narrative through the use of ambiguous laws on extremism (Freedom House, 2017d). The Russian media narrative mimics the rhetoric of the leading party and the president in particular (Freedom House, 2017d).

Such political and organizational differences can influence how journalists select and frame information, which can affect how their respective audiences interpret topics and events (De Vreese, 2005; Entman, 1993). Sometimes, journalists do not acknowledge their own biases or recognize the power of the news-making process to influence an audience's understanding. Hoxha and Hanitzsch (2018), for example, interviewed combat zone journalists and dissected their news constructing process. The researchers found that journalists often relied on their own sense of newsworthiness, which had the effect of reframing the realities of war. This power to determine whether information is discussed is key in shaping political discourse (Callaghan & Schnell, 2001).

Framing of Refugees in News Media

Several studies examined the types of frames that the media created in their reporting of refugees and other migrants. Much of this research focuses on the 2015–2016 European refugee crisis, which was primarily driven by the Syrian conflict and violence in Iraq and Afghanistan (UNHCR, n.d.). During this time more than five million refugees came to European Union in search of safety (UNHCR, n.d.). Berry et al. (2015) focused on the European refugee crisis coverage in Spanish, Italian, German, the UK, and Swedish press. They found that the reporting differed from country to country. Italian media were more likely to employ humanitarian themes than the UK, German, and Spanish media. Economic and cultural threat themes appeared more often in Italian, Spanish, and British media, but less so in German and Swedish press.

Greussing and Boomgaarden (2017) analyzed the European refugee crisis coverage in Austrian newspapers and found that three narratives "administrative aspects of coping with the arrivals," "security threat" and "economization" received the most salience (p. 1749). "Humanitarian" frames and "background information on the refugees' situation" received less attention (Greussing & Boomgaarden, 2017, p. 1749). Tkaczyk (2017) looked at the online Czech media coverage of the European refugee crisis and found that the crisis was mainly reported through the lens of governance ("burden to the state") or "security threat." At the same time, the humanitarian frame was rare.

Dimitrova, Ozdora-Aksak, and Connolly-Ahern (2018) examined the Syrian refugee crisis in the Turkish and Bulgarian press. They found that Turkish media were more likely to employ the "victim" frame than the Bulgarian media and more likely to focus on topics such as refugees' substandard living conditions, discrimination, and migrants as crime victims. At the same time, Bulgarian media were more likely to use an "administrative" frame and report on issues that dealt with the legal status of refugees and other aspects of local and national bureaucracies. Also, Bulgarian media were slightly more likely to talk about refugees as an economic, cultural, and a security "threat" than Turkish media. The study determined that this frame appeared in nearly 28% of Bulgarian and 19% of Turkish articles.

Lawlor and Tolley (2017) compared the coverage of refugees and other categories of migrants in the Canadian press. The "security" frame was the most salient in the refugee coverage, followed by ethnicity. The two leading frames in the coverage of other migrants were economy and security (Lawlor & Tolley, 2017). The study also found that the "validity" frame, which is based on "deservedness" or "refugee determination process," was more often used in the context of refugees than other migrants (p. 977).

Despite the differences in operationalizations of categories and study approaches, these studies suggest refugees are often portrayed as a security threat, a burden, and an economic challenge. In fact, a large share of media reports is focused on negative aspects of irregular migration. Chouliaraki and Zaborowski (2017) found that more than a half of stories analyzed in their study "employed one of four arguments against refugees: geopolitical (terrorism), economic (economic crisis), cultural (antipathy of Islam) or moral (deceit)" (p. 626). Refugees tended to be portrayed even more negatively than other types of

migrants (Lawlor & Tolley, 2017). At the same time, positive consequences of refugee arrivals were rarely mentioned. Chouliaraki and Zaborowski (2017) found such statements in only less than eight percent of articles. Moreover, Berry et al. (2015) found that tonality of coverage varied by country. Swedish coverage was the most positive and British the most negative (Berry et al., 2015). Similarly, Sulaiman-Hill, Thompson, Afsar, and Hodliffe (2011) found that positive tonality was more prominent in New Zealand than Australian newspapers. Negative coverage of refugees increased in Australian media after 9/11 terrorist attacks (Sulaiman-Hill et al., 2011).

Previous studies also looked at types of sources, which can frame the reporting on refugees. Media relied on various types of authorities as sources such as national and foreign politicians, immigration officers, and police (Berry et al., 2015; Chouliaraki & Zaborowski, 2017; Swert, Schacht, & Masini, 2015; Thorbjørnsrud & Ustad Figenschou, 2016; Tkaczyk, 2017). In addition to authorities, reporters also interviewed ordinary citizens, activists, and NGOs (Berry et al., 2015; Chouliaraki & Zaborowski, 2017; Swert et al., 2015). Migrants represented nine to 23% of sources (Berry et al., 2015; Swert et al., 2015; Thorbjørnsrud & Ustad Figenschou, 2016; Tkaczyk, 2017). Thorbjørnsrud and Ustad Figenschou (2016) compared the framing of articles with irregular migrants' sources to those without them. Articles that used migrants as sources were more likely to portray them as victims and less likely to frame them as a threat (Thorbjørnsrud & Ustad Figenschou, 2016). Meanwhile, articles that did not use migrants as sources were more likely to frame migrants as a problem for authorities (Thorbjørnsrud & Ustad Figenschou, 2016). Additionally, when media featured refugees in their coverage, they were more likely to mention refugees' nationality and less likely to reference their age, gender, name, and profession (Chouliaraki & Zaborowski, 2017). Male irregular migrants dominated the migrant sources, appearing in two thirds of quotes (Thorbjørnsrud & Ustad Figenschou, 2016). Also, 90% of quotes were from adults (Thorbjørnsrud & Ustad Figenschou, 2016).

Ukrainian–Russian Military Conflict and Mass Displacement

The plight of the ordinary people caught in the fight between Russia and Ukraine bears the markers of a crisis (Coombs, 1999; Fearn-Banks, 1996): a large-scale, unpredictable event that threatened the lives and livelihood of the displaced. The timeline unfolded as the first wave of refugees fled as a result of Russia's intervention in Crimea. Most of the residents who refused to stay in Russia-occupied Crimea left the peninsula between March and August 2014 (Gorbulin, Vlasyuk, Libanova & Lyashenko, 2015).

The second wave of refugees began moving after Russia-backed separatists took over parts of Donetsk and Luhansk (Donbass) provinces in April 2014 and proclaimed their independence from Ukraine. In the matter of weeks, the Ukrainian government launched anti-terrorist operation against the separatists. Mass evacuations followed. By October 2015, nearly two million people left Donetsk and Luhansk provinces and Crimea (Gorbulin et al., 2015). Most of them settled in nearby Ukrainian towns and regions, and only some moved to more distant parts of Ukraine (Gorbulin et al., 2015).

Ukrainian governmental agencies were unprepared for such massive displacement of people, and the initial aid came from ordinary citizens and volunteers (Gorbulin et al., 2015). The legislative framework that clarified registration processes and rights of displaced individuals was adopted in October 2014, almost five months after the beginning of the crisis (Gorbulin et al., 2015). According to Gorbulin et al. (2015), finding affordable housing was the biggest issue for the displaced. Only 10% of them were provided some form of housing by the Ukrainian government (Gorbulin et al., 2015). Others received government aid that only partially covered rent and necessities (Gorbulin et al., 2015).

Russia was the second most common destination for displaced Ukrainians. By March 2015, the number of Ukrainian migrants in Russia grew by one million (Mukomel, 2017). This number is two times greater than the official United Nations' statistics for Ukrainian refugees in Russia (UNHCR, 2018). The discrepancies in numbers are probably due to the fact that not all of the migrants sought official asylum in Russia.

As they had in Ukraine, the majority of the first-wave refugees settled in regions closest to their homes, near the Russian–Ukrainian border (Russian Federal Government, 2014). However, the Russian government soon intervened and imposed a ban on further resettlement of refugees in these regions as well as in Moscow and St. Petersburg (Mukomel, 2017). Instead, Ukrainian migrants were offered to move to the Far East and other more distant regions (Mukomel, 2017).

The first wave of Ukrainian refugees was wholeheartedly welcomed across the border, but enthusiasm soon waned (Mukomel, 2017). Despite powerful media propaganda efforts, ordinary Russian citizens started to complain about Ukrainian migrants taking their jobs, lowering local salaries, and overcrowding schools and universities. At the same time, Ukrainian migrants had hard time finding housing and jobs (Mukomel, 2017).

These events were recounted in the pages of media around the world. The literature suggests that audiences use the media to make sense of crises, particularly when their own knowledge is lacking (Parrott et al, 2019). Building upon previous studies on refugees (Berry et al., 2015; Bozdag, 2017; Figenschou & Thorbjornsrud, 2015; Greussing & Boomgaarden, 2017; Lawlor & Tolley, 2017), this study will focus on the frames within the electronic text. It will look at dominant themes, quotes, and refugee characteristics used by each newspaper.

Articles published in *Den,* a Ukrainian paper, *Izvestia,* which is based in Russia, *The New York Times*, which is a US paper, and *The Guardian*, which is based in the UK, will be the units of analysis. These newspapers are some of the most popular and well-respected broadsheets in the referenced countries. They are national papers, and in the cases of *The New York Times* and *The Guardian,* major global agenda-setters (Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2005; "Who owns the Guardian," 2017). These outlets represent opposing sides of the crisis (Ukraine and Russia) as well as two powerful Western military and economic powers (US and UK) that are among the top five suppliers of military aid to Ukraine (Solodkyy & Bielieskov, 2017). Finally, the US, UK, and Russia are the three countries that in 1994 gave security assurances to Ukraine and pledged to respect the country's territorial integrity in exchange for denuclearization of Ukraine in an agreement known as the Budapest Memorandum. (Goncharenko, 2014; Pifer, 2014). Russia's annexation of Crimea and aggression in Eastern Ukraine "grossly violated the commitments" under the agreement (Pifer, 2014, para. 1). This study examines issue-specific (refugee/ migrant) frames. The news organizations' country of origin is an independent variable, while frames serve as dependent variables. The latter are examined as "the outcome of the production process[es] including organizational pressures, journalistic routines, and elite discourses" (De Vreese, 2005, p. 52) of the Ukrainian, Russian, UK, and US media outlets.

In light of the previous studies, the current study will explore these research questions:

RQ1. Are there differences in the types of frames used by the Ukrainian, Russian, UK, and US newspapers in the coverage of Ukrainian displaced individuals?

RQ2. Are there differences in the types of sources used by the Ukrainian, Russian, the UK, and the US newspapers?

RQ3. What is the share of Ukrainian displaced individuals' quotes in the Ukrainian, Russian, American, and UK newspaper coverage?

RQ4. What characteristics are mentioned in the relation to Ukrainian displaced individuals in the Ukrainian, Russian, UK, and the US press?

Method

This study employed quantitative content analysis. The researchers analyzed articles from four elite daily newspapers: *The New York Times* (US), *The Guardian* (UK), *Den* (Ukraine), and *Izvestia* (Russia). *The*

New York Times (US) and *The Guardian* (UK) are privately owned and reach audiences beyond their national borders. *The New York Times* has "2.33 million paid digital-only news subscribers" with 15% of these people residing outside the US (Wang, 2018, para. 2). Unlike *The New York Times*, *The Guardian* does not protect its articles by paywall. As a result, it has a half-million regular members and subscribers, while 300,000 make contributions on irregular bases (Guardian reaches, n.d.). Overall, *The Guardian* reaches more than five-and-a-half million audience members each day across print and digital platforms (The Guardian, 2019).

Den (*The Day*) is the Ukrainian media outlet analyzed in this study. It is a privately owned daily newspaper. It has been published since 1996 in Ukrainian, Russian, and English languages with a circulation of 62,500–90,000 (Den, n.d.). The newspaper is tailored toward a more educated, "elite" audience (Dymytrova, 2010).

Izvestia is one of the oldest Russian newspaper (Amos, 2017). For decades, *Izvestia* was the Soviet government's official newspaper (Amos, 2017). After the fall of the Soviet Union, the newspaper evolved into the "democratic broadsheet" (Amos, 2017, para. 6). Currently, the newspaper follows the "pro-Kremlin editorial line" (Amos, 2017, para. 6). *Izvestia* is privately owned and has a readership of 450,000 (National Media Group, n.d.).

Sample and Procedures

The articles of interest were published between January 1, 2014 and December 31, 2017. The final sample consisted of 211 articles: 57 *Den*, 53 *Izvestia*, 40 *The Guardian*, 61 *The New York Times* articles. Such a choice of countries and media organizations enables researchers to compare a range of narratives that media used when discussing the refugee crisis in Ukraine.

The New York Times and *Izvestia* had fully functional searchable archives on their websites; *The Guardian* and *Den* provided limited access to older articles. Google search windows were embedded on websites of *The Guardian* and *The Den*. The searches allowed access to the 100 most recent articles on a subject, and many of these articles were outside of the study timeframe. To ensure the sample's consistency and comprehensiveness, the researchers first retrieved articles through Advanced Google Search, which provided access to all four media organizations' articles. This was the only way to access articles from the *Den*.

Step 1: Keyword Search via Advanced Google Search

The scholars removed the search history and cookies before each search to ensure that previous searches did not affect the subsequent queries. Additionally, the researchers logged out of their Google accounts and checked the consistency of the data on two different computers, an Apple and a PC. Both computers displayed identical data.

Two researchers fluent in Russian, Ukrainian and English examined the text for two sets of keywords: "Ukrainian refugees" and "Ukrainian displaced persons" for English-language searches and their equivalents "українські біженці" and "українські переселенці"/"украинские беженцы" and "украинские переселенцы" for Ukrainian and Russian-language searches, respectively. Articles from *The New York Times* and *The Guardian* were published in English, while stories from *Den* (day.kyiv.ua) and *Izvestia* (iz.ru) stories were in Ukrainian and Russian languages, respectively. The researchers manually checked the relevance of each article. The search produced 57 articles from *Den*, 40 from *The Guardian*, 39 from *The New York Times*, and 28 from *Izvestia*.

Step 2: Keyword Search via Newspaper Websites

The researchers searched *The New York Times* and *Izvestia* websites using the aforementioned keywords. This search revealed 22 additional articles in *The New York Times* and 148 from *Izvestia*. The researchers included all of *The New York Times* articles and every fifth *Izvestia* article (25 total) to the overall sample.

The *Izvestia* articles were organized in a chronological order, ensuring representation of each period of the Ukrainian–Russian military conflict.

A growing number of people access news articles through news aggregate websites rather than going directly to the website of the news outlet (Ulken, 2005). By using both the website search and Google news search to access the articles, the researchers ensured that a full and exhaustive sample was collected.

The researchers manually coded all 211 articles. If an article mentioned Ukrainian displaced individuals only in one paragraph, only that paragraph was coded. If an article mentioned Ukrainian displaced individuals in more than one paragraph, the researchers coded the text of the entire article.

Frames
Issue-specific framing analysis was inspired by the Berry et al. (2015), Bozdag (2017), Figenschou and Thorbjornsrud (2015), Greussing and Boomgaarden (2017), and Lawlor and Tolley (2017) studies. The researchers examined the text for the following frames: migration statistics (articles that mentioned statistics or more than 10 Ukrainian displaced individuals); settlement (which encompassed housing, education, benefits/aid, and paperwork/bureaucracy); security (whether the refugees posed security threats to their new communities or committed crimes in their new destination); economic impact (mentions of displaced individuals finding work in their new destination or opening a business); success stories (which mentioned any types of migrants' successes in the communities); humanitarian/physical and emotional suffering (which focused on physical and emotional sufferings of migrants), and migrants as economic burden. A frame was coded "yes – 1" if this frame was present and "no – 0" if it was not mentioned in texts.

Sources
The researchers used the Berry et al. (2015) categories with some changes for coding sources: displaced individuals, ordinary Ukrainian citizens living on territories controlled by Ukraine, ordinary Ukrainians living in occupied territories of Donetsk/Luhansk/Crimea regions, ordinary citizens from other countries, Ukrainian national politicians/military/local officials, separatists (Donetsk People's Republic/Luhansk People's Republic/Crimea officials and those who fight on the side of militia), foreign politicians, international organizations (United Nations, European Union, NATO, and OSCE), independent experts/think tanks/academic experts, and law/judiciary/police. Each individual/organization was only coded once per story if this article included his/her direct quote. A source was coded "yes – 1" if such source was present and "no – 0" if it was absent in texts.

Displaced Individuals' Characteristics
If a displaced person was quoted in the article, researchers coded for the individual's gender, name, occupation, Ukrainian region of origin, and whether the individual was an adult or a child. This study also examined whether the migrant's destination was Ukraine, Russia, or other country.

Two researchers proficient in Ukrainian, Russian, and English languages coded the articles. Intercoder reliability was assessed for 12% of the articles. Krippendorff's alpha values for sources and demographic characteristics of refugees ranged from .993 to 1 and for frames from .84 to 1. One framing category, major economic impact (general economic statistics, job numbers, and unemployment rate), was deleted from the analysis due to insufficient intercoder reliability (.46).

Results

RQ1 examined the differences in the types of frames used by *The Guardian*, *The New York Times*, *Den*, and *Izvestia* (see Table 1). The country's media organization was an independent variable, while each type of frame served as a dependent variable. The researchers used Chi-Square tests to identify the differences between media organizations.

The four media organizations differed significantly in how they used statistics regarding the displaced individuals (x^2[3, $N = 211$] = 10.285, $p = .016$), settlement (x^2[3, $N = 211$] = 22.393, $p < .001$), and employment (x^2[3, $N = 211$] = 12.146, $p = .007$) frames. However, four cells (50%) had expected count less than five in the employment frame.

A series of post hoc chi-square tests were performed to examine the nature of the differences between the media organizations (Wrench, Thomas-Maddox, Peck Richmond, & McCroskey, 2016). The researchers ran six pairwise comparisons (*The Guardian- The New York Times*, *The Guardian-Den*, *The Guardian-Izvestia*, *The New York Times-Den*, *The New York Times-Izvestia*, and *Den-Izvestia)*. They used the Bonferroni-adjusted procedure to correct for type 1 error. The results of post hoc pairwise comparisons were determined as statistically significant only if their *p*-value was less than .0083 (.05 *p*-value divided by six).

The Guardian (65%) and *The New York Times* (56%) articles mentioned statistics regarding the displaced more often than *Den* (35%) and *Izvestia* (43%), with the differences between *The Guardian* and *Den* x^2(1, $N = 97$) = 7.278, $p = .007$ being statistically significant.

The discussion of settlement appeared in 66% of articles in *Izvestia,* 60% of *Den* articles, 33% of stories in *The New York Times*, and 28% of *The Guardian*'s articles. The differences between *The Guardian* and *Den* x^2(1, $N = 97$) = 8.519, $p = .004$, *The Guardian* and *Izvestia* x^2(1, $N = 93$) = 12.046, $p = .001$, *The New York Times* and *Den* x^2(1, $N = 118$) = 7.518, $p = .006$, and between *The New York Times* and *Izvestia* x^2(1, $N = 114$) = 11.261, $p = .001$ were statistically significant.

Meanwhile, nearly every sixth *Den* article talked about displaced individuals finding a job or opening a business, but this topic was less prominent in *The Guardian* (eight percent), *The New York Times* (two percent), and *Izvestia* (two percent). None of the pairwise comparisons reached statistical significance.

No statistically significant differences were found in reporting the successes of displaced (x^2[3] = 5.757, $p = .124$), security threat/crime (x^2[3] = 2.206, $p = .531$), economic burden (x^2[3] = 2.995, $p = .392$), and physical (x^2[3] = 5.578, $p = .134$) and emotional suffering (x^2[3] = 3.095, $p = .377$) frames.

The success stories of migrants were rare or non-existent in the media coverage. Such stories appeared in three percent and five percent of *The Guardian* and *Den* stories respectively, while no such stories existed in *The New York Times* and *Izvestia*. The security threat/crime frame was not prominent in the coverage of Ukrainian displaced individuals. This frame appeared in one or two (two-four percent) articles of *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, and *Izvestia*. No such frames were found in *Den* content. One *Izvestia* article (two percent) talked about Ukrainian refugees being an economic burden for a receiving country, while no such articles appeared in other three media organizations. Finally, very few articles mentioned current emotional and physical suffering of Ukrainian displaced individuals. The mentions of emotional suffering of refugees constituted two-five percent of *The New York Times*, *The Guardian,* and

Table 1

Table Shows Frames used in the Coverage of Ukrainian Displaced Persons in the Four Newspapers

Media/Frame	Guardian	NYT	Den	Izvestia
Migration statistics (>10)*	65% (26)	56% (34)	35% (20)	43% (23)
Settlement (housing, aid, education, bureaucracy)***	28% (11)	33% (20)	60% (34)	66% (35)
Security (threat) for host country/region. Crime (committed by refugees)	3% (1)	2% (1)	0	4% (2)
Finding a job/opening a business in a new destination**	8% (3)	2% (1)	16% (9)	2% (1)
Success story	3% (1)	0	5% (3)	0
Physical suffering/death	5% (2)	5% (3)	0	0
Emotional suffering	3% (1)	5% (3)	2% (1)	0
Immigrants as economic burden	0	0	0	2% (1)
Total articles	100% (40)	100% (61)	100% (57)	100% (53)

Note. *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

Den stories. Also, five percent of *The Guardian* and *The New York Times* stories talked about deaths and physical suffering of the displaced, while no such articles were featured in *Den* and *Izvestia*.

To sum up, the researchers found that two types of frames (migration statistics and settlement) dominated the texts. International newspapers, *The Guardian* and *The New York Times*, had higher share of statistics frames, while national newspapers (*Den* and *Izvestia)* focused significantly more on various aspects of settlement such as housing, aid, education, and bureaucracy.

RQ2 explored whether there were differences in the types of sources used by the US, UK, Ukrainian, and Russian newspapers. To answer this question, a series of one-way ANOVA and follow-up Tukey's HSD tests were conducted to compare the sources used by the four media organizations (see Table 2). "Media organization" here served as an independent variable and "number of sources" quoted for each category as a dependent variable. Each source was coded only once. If an article mentioned two quotes from the same refugee, it was coded as one refugee source. However, if an article included quotes from three different refugees, they were coded as three refugee sources. *Izvestia* was an outlier in this sample; the Russian paper used three types of sources in their reporting: non-Ukrainian/foreign politicians (mostly Russian), experts, and separatists.

Statistically significant differences were found in how often the four media organizations interviewed Ukrainian displaced individuals ($F[3, 207] = 2.897$, $p = .036$), ordinary citizens from occupied territories ($F[3, 207] = 2.966$, $p = .033$), separatists (pro-Russian militia) ($F[3, 207] = 4.109$, $p = .007$), foreign/non-Ukrainian politicians ($F[3, 207] = 20.56$, $p < .001$), and experts/think tanks ($F[3, 207] = 10.91$, $p < .001$).

The Guardian and *Den* had the most quotes from Ukrainian displaced individuals (20–21%), while *The New York Times* (12%) used fewer such quotes. Also, *Den* and *Izvestia* did not interview any ordinary citizens from the occupied territories, while such sources constituted nearly one fifth of all *The Guardian* and *The New York Times* quotes. Post hoc Tukey's HSD test did not reveal any statistically significant differences between the media organizations in both cases. This possibly happened due to the small and uneven sample sizes across four media outlets.

The Guardian had the highest share of the separatists' quotes (nine percent), followed by *Izvestia* (four percent) and *The New York Times* (one percent), while *Den* did not feature any quotes from separatists. Post hoc Tukey's HSD test revealed that *The Guardian* ($m = 0.18$, $SD = 0.5$) had significantly more of such quotes than *The New York Times* ($m = 0.02$, $SD = 0.13$) and *Den* ($m = 0$, $SD = 0$).

Foreign, non-Ukrainian politicians were the largest *Izvestia* source (57%). With the exception of several quotes, most of these interviews were from Russian political leaders or officials. *The New York Times* featured non-Ukrainian politicians in 14% of quotes, *The Guardian* in nine percent of quotes, while *Den*

Table 2

Table Demonstrates the Percentage of Quotes for Each Newspaper Source Category

Media/#Sources	Guardian	NYT	Den	Izvestia
Ukrainian displaced individuals*	21% (16)	12% (14)	20% (21)	0
Ukrainians living in occupied regions*	22% (17)	17% (19)	0	0
Ordinary Ukrainian citizens (not displaced, not from occupied regions)	12% (9)	10% (12)	53% (56)	0
Ordinary citizens (from other countries)	9% (7)	23% (26)	1% (1)	0
Ukrainian national/local politicians, official or military	7% (5)	12% (14)	13% (14)	0
Separatists**	9% (7)	1% (1)	0	4% (4)
Foreign politicians/officials (non-Ukrainian)***	9% (7)	14% (16)	0	57% (54)
EU/UN/NATO/OSCE/	5% (4)	5% (6)	4% (4)	0
Law enforcement/Judges	0	0	0	0
Experts/Think Tanks/Academics***	5% (4)	6% (7)	9% (10)	39% (37)
Total sources	100% (76)	100% (115)	100% (106)	100% (95)

Note. Each source type was divided by the total quotes (for each media organization).

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

did not interview any foreign politicians for their stories. Post hoc Tukey's HSD test revealed that *Izvestia* (m = 1.02, SD = 1.17) had significantly more such quotes than *The Guardian* (m = 0.18, SD = 0.59), *The New York Times* (m = 0.26, SD = 0.63) and *Den* (m = 0, SD = 0).

The second most prominent *Izvestia* source was experts/think tanks/academics (39%). *Den* (nine percent) used this category less often, followed by *The New York Times* (six percent) and *The Guardian* (five percent). Post hoc Tukey's HSD test showed that *Izvestia* (m = 0.70, SD = 1.01) had significantly more of these quotes than *The Guardian* (m = 0.1, SD = 0.3), *The New York Times* (m = 0.12, SD = 0.49), and *Den* (m = 0.18, SD = 0.43).

No statistically significant differences were found in how often the four media organizations interviewed ordinary Ukrainian citizens (not displaced/not from occupied territories) (F[3, 207] = 2.519, p = .059), ordinary citizens from other countries (non-Ukrainian) (F[3, 207] = 1.147, p = .331), Ukrainian politicians/officials (F[3, 207] = 1.98, p = .118), international organizations (F[3, 207] = 1.138, p = .335), and law enforcement/judges/police.

Den relied heavily on the ordinary Ukrainian citizens, who were not displaced and not from occupied regions as sources. Fifty three percent of *Den* sources were from this category. However, it is worth noting that nearly a half of these quotes came from just one article. *The Guardian* (12%) and *The New York Times* (10%) relied less on such sources.

Nearly every fourth *The New York Times* story featured quotes of ordinary citizens from other countries (non-Ukrainian). However, it is worth noting, that the bulk of such quotes came from just one article, which was rather atypical for the media organization. Without this article, the share of such quotes was rather similar to *The Guardian* (nine percent). *Den* only quoted ordinary non-Ukrainian citizens in one article.

Den featured the highest number of Ukrainian politicians/military sources (13%), followed by *The New York Times* (12%) and *The Guardian* (seven percent).

The share of United Nations/European Union and other international organizations' sources was similar across the board among *The Guardian*, *The New York Times*, and *Den*. Such sources accounted for four to five percent of their quotes.

Finally, neither of the organizations interviewed law enforcement, judges, or police for articles about Ukrainian displaced individuals.

To sum up, the researchers found that displaced Ukrainians and other ordinary citizens constituted the majority of sources in all newspapers except for *Izvestia*. They represented 64% of *The Guardian*, 62% of *The New York Times*, 74% of *Den* sources, while no such quotes appeared in *Izvestia*. Meanwhile, the share of politicians, military, and various types of officials constituted 30% of *The Guardian*, 32% of *The New York Times*, 17% of *Den*, and 61% of *Izvestia* sources. Thus, all media except for *Izvestia* relied more heavily on various types of citizens and refugees and less on official sources.

RQ3 and RQ4 findings only include descriptive statistics. It is worth pointing out that small sample sizes (in some instances only 7–8 cases per variable) prevented researchers from using more rigorous data analysis techniques.

RQ3 examined the frequency with which displaced individuals appeared in the examined articles. The four media organizations varied in how often they quoted migrants not only in terms of the share of quotes (see Table 2), but also in regard to the number of articles mentioning them (see Table 3). This study found that nearly every fourth *Den* and fifth *The Guardian* article featured quotes of the displaced individuals, while only every tenth *The New York Times* article had such quotes. *Izvestia* did not provide any quotes of the displaced individuals.

RQ4 examined demographic characteristics of Ukrainian displaced individuals such as gender, age, names, occupation, and regions of origin/destination (see Table 4). The descriptive analysis showed *The New York Times* (64%) and *Den* (67%) relied more heavily on the quotes of female than male displaced individuals, while there was more gender parity in *The Guardian* (56% female and 44% male) quotes.

The Guardian and *The New York Times* only featured adults, while 90% of *Den* refugee quotes were from adults and 10% of children.

All three media organizations, *The Guardian*, *The New York Times*, and *Den*, that quoted refugees provided the names of the interviewees. Nearly two-thirds of *The Guardian* and *Den* articles mentioned the occupation of the quoted displaced individuals, while only 43% of *The New York Times* articles did the same.

All of *The Guardian*, 90% *Den*, and nearly 80% of *The New York Times* articles mentioned the region of origin of the quoted displaced individuals. While *Den* (86%) and *The Guardian* (75%) primarily interviewed displaced individuals who relocated to other Ukrainian regions, the share of such quotes was smaller in *The New York Times* coverage (14%). At the same time, a greater share of *The New York Times*' displaced individuals' quotes (36%) were from people who moved to Russia, while only 13% of such quotes appeared in *The Guardian*, and none in *Den* and *Izvestia*. Finally, 43% of *The New York Times* quotes were from displaced Ukrainians who settled in other countries such as Poland and the US, while *The Guardian* featured only 13% of such quotes, and *Den* had no such quotes. To sum up, *The Guardian* and *Den* were more likely to have interviewed Ukrainians who had moved to other parts of Ukraine, while *The New York Times* had a larger share of quotes from displaced individuals in Russia or other countries, but to the less extent from Ukraine.

Discussion

This study focused on the media coverage of Ukrainian displaced persons in the US, UK, Ukrainian and Russian press. It looked at dominant themes, sources, and demographic characteristics used in stories about Ukrainian migrants. Given that the majority of people living outside of Ukraine, as well as some Ukrainians, do not have firsthand experience with Ukrainian refugees, these media narratives can have an impact on how audience members interpret Ukrainian refugee issue, what they think about Ukrainian

Table 3
Table shows the Number of Articles Quoting Ukrainian Displaced Persons

Media	Guardian	NYT	Den	Izvestia
No. of articles quoting Ukrainian refugees/displaced	18% (7)	10% (6)	25% (14)	0
Total # articles	40	61	57	53

Table 4
Table shows Demographic Characteristics of Quoted Ukrainian Displaced Persons*

Media/Characteristic	Guardian	NYT	Den	Izvestia
Gender (Female)	56 % (9)	64% (9)	67% (14)	0
Gender (Male)	44% (7)	36% (5)	33% (7)	0
Adults	100% (16)	100% (14)	90% (19)	0
Children	0	0	10% (2)	0
Name	100% (16)	100% (14)	100% (21)	0
Occupation	69% (11)	43% (6)	62% (13)	0
#Region of origin (Donbas/Luhansk/Crimea)	100% (16)	79% (11)	90% (19)	0
Country of relocation (Ukraine)	75% (12)	14% (2)	86% (18)	0
Country of relocation (Russia)	13% (2)	36% (5)	0	0
Country of relocation (other)	13% (2)	43% (6)	0	0
Total refugee quotes	100% (16)	100% (14)	100% (21)	0

*The percentages represent a share of each category in the overall number of quotes.

migrants (Parrott et al., 2019) and whether they perceive the situation as a crisis. Also, in an interconnected world, where local issues now often have global implications (Janssens, Maddux, & Nguyen, 2019), the way news stories frame crises can affect other countries' response toward them (Ojala & Panttie, 2017). For example, news media can limit policy options of foreign governments or put pressure on them to intervene (Ojala & Panttie, 2017).

The results of this paper are somewhat different from the previous findings on refugees. It seems that the coverage of Ukrainian displaced persons was rather neutral across the board, while the number of negative or positive stories was rather limited. The neutral coverage could have the impact of making the displaced population's circumstances seem less dire.

Coverage in *The Guardian* and *The New York Times* was more episodic. Many of the articles mentioned the Ukrainian–Russian conflict and refugee statistics without providing additional details about the plight of the displaced. At the same time, *Den* and *Izvestia* spent significantly more time discussing various aspects of the settlement such as housing, education, issues with registration or documents, or receiving aid in a new destination. The share of such stories was nearly two times higher in the Ukrainian and Russian media than in the US and UK. This is not surprising, given that both Ukraine and Russia resettled most of the displaced Ukrainians on their territories. Thus, this frame had more relevance to the aforementioned media organizations and their respective audiences. This coverage also gave Ukrainian and Russian readers more insight into the day-to-day lives of migrants than readers of the Western newspapers.

To our surprise, the articles about displaced persons being a security threat or those that mentioned crimes committed by the refugees were nearly non-existent in the four media organizations analyzed in this study. Such articles represented less than two percent of the overall sample, and all but one of these reports described hypothetical situations or lacked corroboration. *Den* did not have any articles on the security threat or crimes committed by the displaced individuals. This finding is different from previous research on the coverage of refugees in Czech and Canadian media, where security threat frame was one of the most salient in the content (Lawlor & Tolley, 2017; Tkaczyk, 2017). The lack of reporting about a threat also suggests a lack of danger to migrants and to local residents.

This study found there was a lack of articles about the displaced persons being an economic burden to their new regions or countries. This finding also differed from previous research on refugees (Tkaczyk, 2017). Only one *Izvestia* article hinted at this as a potential issue, while this topic did not appear at all in *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, or *Den*. Thus, the relative lack of such framing might lessen the tension between refugees and locals.

The stories of physical suffering of the displaced individuals were also rare, constituting no more than five percent of *The Guardian* and *The New York Times* samples. Several of these articles mentioned the death of refugees during their attempts to escape the war region. No such articles appeared in *Den* and *Izvestia*. The emotional suffering frame appeared only in a little over two percent of the overall sample. This lack of emotional turmoil also undercut the narrative that usually accompanies stories of crisis (Cmeciu, 2017; Kim & Cameron, 2011).

The differences in the coverage of the Ukrainian displaced individuals and other refugees can be explained by several factors. Even though most Ukrainian evacuees went through traumatic experiences and had a hard time finding housing and jobs that would allow them to settle in the new destinations, most of these people relocated to similar cultural environments. They look, dress, and in many instances speak the same or similar languages. They can more easily fit in and adapt at the new destinations than refugees from other more distant countries of disparate cultures.

Secondly, unlike in the European Union during the European refugee crisis, where there was an active debate about the fate of the refugees as some politicians welcomed the newcomers and others opposed their arrival, most Ukrainian and Russian elites were consistently compassionate toward displaced Ukrainians (Mukomel, 2017). In Ukraine, many displaced individuals were perceived as victims of Russian aggression. At the same time in Russia, politicians claimed to have saved Ukrainian refugees from

the atrocities of their own army (Mukomel, 2017). It is possible that the national Russian and Ukrainian media in this study mainly reflected the agendas set by their respective political elites. Also, the level of media freedoms in the respective countries and political agendas of the analyzed newspapers might have had an impact on which issues were discussed and which were not.

In terms of sources, the findings of this study were somewhat different from the previous research on refugees. To our surprise, the largest share of sources came from ordinary citizens. More than 40% of *The Guardian* and 50%-54% of *The New York Times* and *Den* sources were from this category. The numbers for this category were much higher than those reported in the previous research on refugees (Berry et al., 2015). The only outlier was *Izvestia*, which did not use such sources. A quick analysis of other articles revealed that this trend was not unique to Ukrainian refugee coverage.

Politicians and officials represented about a third of *The Guardian* and *The New York Times* sources. *Den* had close to 20% of such sources. Meanwhile, *Izvestia* relied heavily on such sources, with more than 60% of overall quotes coming from various types of politicians, mainly Russian. Thus, aside from *Izvestia* results, the share of political quotes was slightly lower than in the previous research (Berry et al., 2015; Chouliaraki & Zaborowski, 2017; Swert et al., 2015; Thorbjørnsrud & Ustad Figenschou, 2016; Tkaczyk, 2017).

This study also found an interesting pattern in the use of Ukrainian politicians and officials as sources. Similar to previous research (Roman, Wanta & Buniak, 2017), this study showed that while US, UK, and Ukrainian media included quotes from Ukrainian politicians, such quotes did not appear at all in the Russian outlet. At the same time, separatists' (Russian-backed militia) and Russian officials' quotes were not featured in *Den*. Thus, Russian and Ukrainian media organizations continue to ignore the perspective of their military adversaries (Roman et al., 2017). This ability to shape the parameters of discussion (Callaghan & Schnell, 2001) also influence whether readers understand the depth and breadth of situations, which can impact the perception of crisis (Coombs, 1999; Fearn-Banks, 1996).

Interestingly, none of the media organizations quoted law enforcement or judiciary sources. This was another difference between the coverage of displaced Ukrainians and Middle-Eastern/African refugees (Berry et al., 2015; Chouliaraki & Zaborowski, 2017).

At the same time, the quotes of displaced Ukrainians were more prominent in *The Guardian* and *Den*, constituting nearly one fifth of the overall quotes, while they represented 12% of *The New York Times* quotes, and did not appear at all in any *Izvestia* articles. Thus, the share of Ukrainian displaced individuals' quotes in all four analyzed newspapers were generally in line with the previous research on refugees (Berry et al., 2015; Swert et al., 2015; Thorbjørnsrud & Ustad Figenschou, 2016; Tkaczyk, 2017).

Another interesting finding is that most displaced Ukrainians who were quoted were identified by name, gender, region of origin, and in many cases profession. Contrary to previous findings (Thorbjørnsrud & Ustad Figenschou, 2016), female migrants were interviewed more frequently than male migrants. Nearly two thirds of *The New York Times* and *Den* and slightly more than a half of *The Guardian* articles quoted women who had been displaced. Such overrepresentation of female sources is surprising as the researchers expected a more even distribution of quotes by gender. One possible explanation is that some males limited their contact with journalists in order to keep a low profile and avoid being drafted by the Ukrainian army to fight in Donetsk and Luhansk regions. Since the beginning of Ukrainian–Russian conflict, Ukraine reinstated conscription for 20- to 27-year-old males ("Country policy," n.d.). Also, the maximum age for reservists is 65 years ("Country policy," n.d.).

The overwhelming majority of *The Guardian* and *Den* articles quoted people who had resettled in Ukraine, while nearly 80% of *The New York Times* refugee interviewees were in Russia or other countries. This was a rather expected finding for *Den*, which is a national newspaper with a limited international reach. The differences in *The Guardian* and *The New York Times* need further investigation.

To conclude, this study offers cross-subject, cross-media, and cross-cultural comparisons of news media coverage of displaced Ukrainians in the midst of a crisis. This study found that the portrayals of Ukrainian migrants were rather neutral with very few negative references. The displaced Ukrainians were shown as active members of their respective communities, and in most instances were clearly identified

by name, gender, and profession. These very human descriptions were unlike the threatening descriptions of immigrants in other studies (Chouliaraki & Zaborowski, 2017; Greussing & Boomgaarden, 2017; Tkaczyk, 2017). In this way, and many others, the hostility that marked the international crisis did not seep into the media's coverage of migrants' as they attempted to resettle.

The current study extends framing research to the Eastern European context. Relying on empirical methods, this study demonstrated that the political environment in the country and characteristics of the media organizations determine which frames are used in the coverage of Ukrainian refugees. Also, the current research suggests that the cultural and language proximity between the migrants' countries and regions of origin and destination might have an effect on how they get framed in news and whether the situation is framed as a crisis. The articles in this study did not depict the interactions of citizens and displaced individuals as out-of-control encounters that fuel a crisis, threatening lives or livelihoods. The findings of this study can be useful for national governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that work with refugees. NGOs and national governments can promote and articulate frames with higher resonance, they can express those frames in ways consistent with the journalistic standards and get more engaged in reframing the issue (Ryan, Carrage, & Meinhofer, 2010).

Limitations and Future Research

Relatively small and uneven samples across four media organizations restricted researchers in their use of statistical tools and possibly prevented from finding more statistically significant relationships between the variables. Also, using only online versions of the print newspapers certainly limited the results of this study. Thus, future research can look at print versions of the newspapers and analyze social media sites of the respective media organizations. Also, researchers can examine other national and international media outlets with different political agendas in the US, UK, Ukraine, and Russia.

Finally, future research can examine conflict-specific frames within media coverage: assess whether there are disagreements between individuals, groups, or states and identify stakeholders of a crisis (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). Such operationalizations and measurements can better explain some of the findings of the current research and enrich the field of conflict management literature in general.

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