Framing Immigration in Online Media and Television News in Crisis-stricken Cyprus

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Abstract

Immigration is an issue of contestation across Europe. Since the 1990s, the retreat of multiculturalism has resulted in pressures exerted on immigrants to conform and integrate. The strengthening of anti-immigrant stances has intensified after the economic recession that has deteriorated standards of living for large populations and has increased the competition between social groups for public resources. Linguistic labels that evoke judgments have real consequences, as citizen attitudes depend on the labels attributed to immigrants in the public discourse. This study[1] employs framing analysis of online articles and television news stories about third-country immigrants that appeared in the Cypriot media in 2013, when the consequences of the financial crisis were most strongly felt by the Cypriot population. The findings reveal the explicit discursive and sourcing mechanisms by which immigration is constructed as a problem and immigrants are 'othered' in the media discourse. The study concludes with a discussion of possible remedies deemed appropriate in the context of Cyprus.

Keywords: News framing, sources, immigration, financial crisis, Cyprus

Introduction

In recent years a growth in anti-immigrant sentiment across the globe has been documented (Wilson and Hainsworth, 2012). The onset of the global financial crisis hitting hard both the US and Europe has set the immigration issue high on the political agenda, while raising more restrictive postures towards immigration (Dalton, 2011). In Europe, the economic crisis has led to a border crisis where France, Germany and most prominently the UK started to rethink the principle of freedom of movement within the European Union, although mobility comprises a cornerstone of the European idea. At a time when European governments implement neoliberal policies curtailing the welfare state and when employment opportunities become harder to find, it is no surprise that the politicisation of immigration intensifies.

At the societal level, under such economic and social insecurity, immigrants become convenient targets, as the frustration felt by native populations can lead to hostile and antagonistic attitudes as well as aggression targeted toward the most vulnerable, those less likely or unable to retaliate (Larsen, Krumov, Ommundsen and van der Veer 2009; Haslam and Holland, 2012; Philo, 2013). At the political level, immigration comprises a common field of contestation, as political actors and parties attempt to benefit from conflicting social ideas and public discourses (Finotelli and Sciortino, 2009; Magnani, 2011). The issue of migration has always been at the heart of controversy in the public sphere; yet following the ambivalence of the European Union between a security/identity approach and a multiculturalism/human rights approach (Jordan, Stråth and Triandafyllidou, 2003; Heller, 2014), two dominant and recurring discourses have prevailed: the *economisation* and the *securitisation* discourse. The former refers to the limited available economic resources and the criteria needed to distribute them. The latter conceptualises immigration as a security concern stemming from the motivation of governments to control migration flows and comfort public opinion against the fear of cultural erosion (Buonfino, 2004). Within this context, the political system attempts to capitalise the dominant discourses. In regard to the migration issue, the relation between frames and actors is dialectical, as the dominant frames operate as 'orientation maps' for the political elite upon highly contested matters, facilitating them to set goals and construct an effective positioning, and ultimately to influence legislation (Magnani, 2011).

Cyprus, having become a migration destination only at the end of the 1980s, had adopted a generalised restrictive orthodoxy on the entry, residence and labour conditions of foreigners, especially those coming from third countries. After abandoning the restrictive immigration policy followed until 1991, in an effort to meet low-skill labour shortages generated by an economic development model based on mass tourism and services (Trimikliniotis, 2013), Cyprus attracted a substantial number of migrants amounting to 5.7% of the population (Trimikliniotis and Demetriou, 2012). However, according to the Migration Policy Index,[2] Cyprus ranks second last of all 31 MIPEX countries in regard to long-term integration of foreigners, providing the least favourable conditions for foreigners to access and integrate in the labour market on a long-term basis and to have real opportunities to participate in democratic life. The current hardening of immigration control in Cyprus is closely related to the financial crisis. In March 2013 the newly elected Cypriot government agreed to an EU-IMF bail-in arrangement which involved a – later finalised – 47.5% 'haircut' of all deposits above €100,000 in the Bank of Cyprus and the shut-down of the second largest bank on the island. This 'remedy' also

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2   Source available at: [http://www.mipex.eu/cyprus]. Last accessed on 8 November 2014.

included a set of austerity measures containing cuts in civil service salaries, social benefits, allowances and pensions, privatisations, and increases in VAT, tobacco, alcohol and fuel taxes, taxes on property, and higher public health care charges. A side effect of the current economic and banking crisis has been the intensification of debates on migration and a stronger anti-migration sentiment. Indicative of this is the sustained campaign by anti-immigrant politicians, who have been targeting migrants, particularly asylum-seekers, as excessively benefiting from welfare allowances and health care services.

Against this background, the current study focuses on the coverage of third-country immigrants in the most popular Cypriot mainstream online and broadcast media in 2013, when the consequences of the financial crisis were most strongly felt by the Cypriot population. The study explores two research questions: How is immigration framed in the Cypriot online and television news media? Which sources inform the media representations about immigration and how are they related to immigration framing?

Literature Review:
Immigration and the Media

The media are important means of constructing and diffusing representations, and therefore hold a crucial role in the manner in which people perceive and understand the issue of migration (Jacomella, 2010; Triandafyllidou, 2013; Chauzy and Appave, 2014). Despite the fact that European societies are becoming increasingly multicultural and ethnically diverse as a result of immigration, media representations of immigration and immigrants tend to be negative and selective (Grobet, 2014), resulting in the 'demonisation' of migrants, which in turn tends to erode social cohesion and lead to the marginalisation, exploitation and abuse of migrants.

Before examining media framing of immigration, it is important to point out a particularly problematic element of news content, that is, the selective and minimal coverage of the issue of migration and migrants. As Jacomella (2010, p. 14) argues, 'it is key to this issue to try and zoom in on what is *lacking* in media coverage on migration'. Jacomella's point is confirmed by the 'visibility' news value or the 'invisible event' idea put forward by Hooper (2014). According to this idea, news stories that question dominant narratives and discourses about migrants are unlikely to be published, allowing governments to continue ineffective policies (Gemi, Ulasiuk and Triantafyllidou, 2013).

Public judgments of migration and migrants are greatly influenced by media frames. Frames stress certain aspects of reality and push others into the background; they have a selective function. In this way, certain attributes, judgments, and policy orientations are suggested (Lecheler and de Vreese, 2013). The framing building process is influenced by the complex and dynamic interaction among journalists, media institutions and other political and social actors. Extensive scholarly work on media coverage of migration

touches upon different problematic practices the media are prone to engage in which produce unfair coverage through stereotyped and negative frames (Mai, 2005; Cecchi, 2011).

Conversely, in order for a story to be eligible for publication it needs to conform to specific news values, such as drama deriving mainly from victimisation frames (Bennett *et al.*, 2013) or negativity, found in frames associating migrants with negative acts and criminal behaviour (Gemi, Ulasiuk and Triantafyllidou, 2013). Although the 'victim' frame is quite common, for a story to be published it should also involve a large number of people-victims otherwise its news value is diminished (Hooper, 2014). The 'criminal' frame, which is systematically reproduced by emphasis on stories involving violent and criminal behaviour (Mai, 2005) is a recurrent frame sustained in multiple ways. First, it is constructed through the racialisation of crime attributing different types of crimes to different ethnicities (Cecchi, 2011), particularly third-country nationals (Bennett *et al.*, 2013; Heller, 2014). Second, it derives from extensive misuse of terms such as 'illegal' migrant (instead of undocumented migrant or asylum seeker) (Bennett *et al.*, 2013). Augostinos and Quinn (2003) found that social attitudes are less supportive when the label attached is 'illegal immigrant' in contrast to 'asylum seeker'. Moreover, immigration news is often elite-sourced. Elites tend to construct and reproduce 'safe information and events', in other words events that coincide with the dominant moral and political values (Davies, 2008). The issue of sources on migration coverage is of outmost importance as reliance on elite sources not only distorts any notion of balanced reporting excluding the viewpoint of migrants, but also prevents the quest for truth, as reporters do not question official sources as much (Phillips, 2011).

The 'otherness' frame, which perceives immigrants as threats to the culture, language and values of the society, is also a common frame employed by the media (Lakoff and Ferguson, 2006). In this case emphasis in media discourse is drawn to ethnic and cultural characteristics, which not only are 'alien' to native populations but also disrupt the political and cultural order of the nation by threatening its 'purity' and 'authenticity' (Triandafyllidou, 2000). However, the perception of migrants as threats goes beyond the erosion of cultural purity. The 'threat' frame that perceives migrants as a risk to public health (ter Wal, 1996), or the 'enemy' frame that presents migrants as competitors taking the jobs of natives, have become dominant discourses in media content (Grobet, 2014; Staglianò, 2014).

Hooper (2014) argues that frames are further reproduced and reinforced via 'sloppy reporting', which is the result of conscious and unconscious reporting practices, based on a fixed repertoire of how the issue of migration and migrants should be covered by the media. News events are narrated in a concise, generalised, simplified and dramatised manner, while evoking stereotypes and negative frames. Ill-construed symbolic narratives

are diffused into the public debate, which become institutionalised and circulate once again. Such coverage is related to the creation of 'moral panics', imbuing hysteria and intensifying alertness on the part of natives toward the presence of migrants in their country (Spoonley and Butcher, 2009). This practice is commonly encountered at times of crisis and combines the recycling of the people's values with truth bias in an attempt to manipulate the public by offering an enlarged version of their own sentiments (Davies, 2008). As a result, ethnocentric, nationalist and xenophobic rhetoric is legitimised, and myths in regard to the number, status and economic impact of migrants are perpetuated (Grobet, 2014; Staglianó 2014), while integration policies are inevitably undermined.

The Cypriot Context

The notion of hospitality to 'guests' or 'foreigners', a traditionally major cultural value in Greek-Cypriot society, appears to be in conflict with rising xenophobic tendencies toward migrants in the Cypriot society (Demetriou, 2013). Earlier studies on attitudes of Cypriot children (Spyrou, 2004) and youths (Harakis *et al*., 2005) toward foreigners reveal the negative disposition of important segments of the young population (i.e. the perception of stereotypes and racism as justified, the connection of migrants with crime, the attitude that foreigners in Cyprus are 'too many' and that some or all should go back to their countries) (cited in Zembylas *et al*., 2010). A more recent study, focusing on perceptions, emotions and self-reported perceptions of Cypriot students aged 11–18 in 2009, manifests enduring negative attitudes toward immigrants and the tendency of students to prefer separation models of coexistence with immigrants rather than assimilation or integration – although, compared to past studies, racism against immigrants is acknowledged more broadly (Zembylas *et al*., 2010). Besides attitudes, Trimikliniotis and Demetriou (2012) document not only growing incidents of racial violence in Cyprus after 2004 but also a systematic under-valuing and trivialisation of the breadth of this phenomenon. According to Mainwaring (2008), racism within the Cypriot society is fuelled by the fear of losing economic security as well as the related perception of material scarcity and the dread of coping with the 'burden' of migrants and refugees who threaten the country's national identity – a fear exacerbated by stereotypes and myths. Among the various factors that affect attitudes toward immigration (education, economic conditions, political discourses and policy-making), media discourses and representations are of key significance.

Although scholarly work on media representations of migrants and migration in Cyprus is rather scarce, the relevant literature shows that misrepresentation of migrants is deep-rooted. A discourse analysis of press coverage about migrant workers almost 20 years ago (1996–1997) reveals how migrants were constructed as 'the problem' through the 'numbers game', that is, sensationalist and alarmist calls for the restriction of migration

based on the assumption that foreigners in Cyprus were 'too many', drawing on a nationalist discourse concerning the need to ensure the 'national survival' of a semi-occupied country by all means necessary (Trimikliniotis, 1999). Other recurring themes at the time were the scapegoating of migrants with regard to the rising crime rate, social disintegration (marriages of convenience, break-up of marriages and illegitimate children), the rise in unemployment and a connection of migrants with disease, crisis, and dirt (*ibid.*). More recent studies manifest the endurance and perpetuation of these media frames. Trimikliniotis and Demetriou (2006) document the exact same negative media depictions in the first half of the 2000s, with the addition of the concern over migrants as carriers of 'alien cultures and religions' and consequently as a threat to national culture and heritage. Nonetheless, there are two differences. First, some sympathetic reports emerged about 'illegal' immigrants and asylum seekers but only in the form of heart-breaking stories of individual migrants; when migrants were covered as a group or a section, the media accounts tended to be less sympathetic or even xenophobic. Second, following the accession of Cyprus to the European Union (EU) some media reports, sourced by international bodies or NGOs, began to focus on the ill-treatment of migrants by employers and the police (*ibid.*).

The ideological orientation of the Cypriot media and their ties with political elites (Christoforou, 2010) plus their tendency towards conflict-oriented coverage (Ersoy, 2010) has cultivated an anti-migrant sentiment within the Cypriot society. This sentiment, after the 2004 referendum, exacerbated as ideological and political polarisation increased and some politicians tried to capitalise on the anti-migrant feeling that developed in some parts of the society (Trimikliniotis and Demetriou, 2012). The incident of the 'Rainbow Festival' – an anti-racist demonstration – that took place in November 2010, which was dispersed by right-wing groups and ended up in violent conflicts and a serious injury, is indicative of how both political and media discourses legitimise racist and xenophobic narratives. The more progressive political entities tried to keep their distance from 'the two extremes' as the counter-march against the 'Rainbow Festival' was largely supported by conservative media and politicians. As a result, the mainstream media were visibly accommodating nationalistic and xenophobic ideas, and the anti-immigrant and racist discourse was 'legitimised', 'normalised', and presented as a valid political argument (Trimikliniotis and Demetriou, 2012).

Research Method

Sampling

As the present study was carried out within a research project targeting specifically third-country immigration, the sampling method was designed to match this objective. In

consequence, mainstream media articles and newscasts were selected if they referred to: (a) immigration or immigration policy in general; (b) third-country nationals (TCNs), regardless of their country of residence (in Cyprus or other EU country); and (c) racism against immigrants in general or TCNs in particular. News content that referred explicitly to asylum seekers or 'illegal' immigrants was excluded but news and opinion articles appearing in established online newspapers and news portals were sampled along with the evening newscasts of television stations. The sample was drawn from six Greek-speaking national newspapers,[3] four news portals[4] and seven national television channels.[5]

Regarding the online press news content, the sample was selected using a combination of purposive sampling and random stratified sampling. Because not all online news media provided a functioning search engine so that reliable term-based searches could be performed, we first identified the dates in which there was extended coverage of immigration in the year 2013, by searching the content of two online newspapers (*Kathimerini* and *Politis*) with the most effective search engines. The terms used were: immigration, third-country nationals, foreigner[6] (and its derivatives). After scanning the results, additional searches were conducted using the names of the countries from which the bulk of TCNs in Cyprus originate (Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Somalia), together with the acronym 'KISA', a non-governmental organisation in Cyprus which is particularly active in defending the rights of immigrants and often features in the media. The search results were subsequently studied (reading through the title, the story lead and, when necessary, the news story) to decide whether the item met the aforementioned content criteria. After identifying the news articles that matched the criteria, we compiled a list of all dates on which immigration-related news stories appeared. Next, these dates were sorted according to weekdays, which allowed us to create two constructed weeks with third country immigration-related news for each outlet. According to Riffe, Lacy and Fico (2005), this method permits the generalisation of findings to the news content

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3   These newspapers are: Alitheia, Phileleftheros, Xaravghi, Machi, Politis, Kathimerini.

4   The news portals (www.sigmalive.com; www.newsit.com.cy; www.livenews.com.cy; www.24h.com.cy) were selected according to four criteria: (a) inclusion in the list of the 200 most popular news websites in Cyprus, according to Alexa; (b) availability of archived content; (c) originality of news content (aggregators simply reproducing news articles from other outlets were excluded); and (d) news content related to broadly defined sociopolitical issues (e.g. websites with exclusively showbiz content were excluded).

5   The seven TV channels were: CYBC1 (public broadcaster), ANT1, MEGA, SIGMA, PLUS TV, CAPITAL, and EXTRA. CYBC2 was not selected because its news content is drawn from CYBC1, which is the news-oriented channel of the public broadcaster.

6   The term 'foreigner' ('*allodapos*') is a very common term referring to immigrants in the Cypriot public discourse.

of the whole year. This technique was applied to all news outlets that provided a term-based search service. To identify relevant content in the news outlets that provided only a date-based (not content-based) search, we examined the editions of the dates identified as having immigration-related content from the previous search. Once more, two constructed weeks were compiled for each outlet. The final sample of online news articles counts 140 items: 84 articles from online newspapers (14 articles from six newspapers) and 56 articles from online portals (14 articles from four online portals).

Moving on to television news sampling, the random stratified sampling approach was also applied as follows: starting from the list of dates with extended coverage of immigration, we examined the newscasts that were broadcast by the selected news stations. In total, 1,050 newscasts were examined, resulting in 162 immigration-related news items that matched the study's criteria.

Analysis

Framing

The study employed framing analysis following Entman's definition[7] of what framing is and how it works. Additionally, the research is premised on van Gorp's (2010) approach, which proposes a constructionist technique to framing following an inductive framing analysis in order to construct the frame matrix. During the inductive phase, two researchers working independently using the constant comparative method studied about one-third of the selected news articles and newscasts to reconstruct the frame packages. The process of open coding included two main tasks: the identification of framing devices (the manifest elements that indicate the existence of a frame, for instance, themes, actors, catchphrases, visual images and so on), and the identification of reasoning devices (i.e. problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and treatment recommendation).

Following van Gorp (2010), the reconstruction of the frame packages was developed on the premise of culturally embedded frames that could resonate with common cultural themes (e.g. the victim, the enemy) instead of issue-specific and general frames (such as the conflict frame). Moreover, for precision and comparison purposes, we developed the notion of the 'subframe' to distinguish between the various shades of immigrants' roles within each frame. This process allows for more accurate results and also for the comparison between different media texts. The final step of the inductive phase was the construction of the frame matrix, which was considered complete when no new frames

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7   'To frame is to *select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation* for the item described' (Entman, 1993, p. 52, emphasis in the original).

and subframes emerged in the content analysed.[8] The second part of the study involved a quantitative content analysis based on the frame matrix. At this stage, each subframe was coded when revealed present in the news content studied. Furthermore, because news texts often include more than one frame (and certainly multiple subframes), a mechanism was needed to account for frame salience and discern the main interpretative scheme in each news text. Thus, the notion of the dominant subframe was introduced. To code for the dominant subframe, a number of criteria were applied: the extent of the subframe in the text in terms of number of frame devices and/or word count; the main problem definition as stated or implied in the text; and the general sense or impression the reader forms after exposure to the text. Also, in order to minimise potential differentiation in the coding of subframes, a codebook was created so that researchers would follow a consistent approach when coding. The third and final stage of the study involved the final coding of the news texts based on the coding instructions.

Sources

The role of sources in journalism is pivotal, as they shape the volume and the perspective of produced news (Manning, 2001). A key factor in the selection of sources by journalists is the extent to which different actors, people and information are considered as credible (Gans, 1979); 'source reliability', however, is inextricably associated with the conventional logic of news production (Powers and Fico, 1994; Reich, 2009). A basic principle of the dominant professional culture is the selection of topics that can be covered quickly and easily, and that are 'safe'. The latter refers to the tendency of journalists to adhere to the 'official line' in the presentation of events, voiced by the so-called 'elite sources', which protects them from entering into a clash with powerful institutions and individuals (Davies, 2008).

In the present study, sourcing practices were studied quantitatively, recording the five major sources for each news item. Two types of sources were identified: the original sources (the sources used to produce the news article, for example, ministries, politicians) and the secondary sources (other news media from which stories are reproduced, edited or unedited). Sources were recorded only when they were explicitly named, either directly quoted or mentioned by the reporter. The same method was applied to television news; here, besides secondary sources, we recorded original sources that either appeared on camera (talking heads) or were cited by the reporter.

To study sourcing practices we used a typology of sources constructed in a previous analysis of news practices [Authors], which is based on the categorisation of sources as

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8   The frame matrix was based on a previous analysis of media framing of immigration in the Greek media, following the same methodology [Authors].

'elite' and 'non-elite' (cf. Atton and Wickenden, 2005), informed by Hall, Critcher. Jefferson, Clarke and Roberts' (1978) theory of the primary definition, namely the privileged access of powerful actors to mainstream media and the subsequent marginalisation of resource-poor social groups and their interests (for a complete list of categories, see Appendix).

Findings

The Frame Matrix about Immigration

The inductive framing analysis designated three main frames in the news content analysed: [1] The Victim frame; [2] The Threat frame; and [3] The Active Agent frame (table 1). The first frame (Victim) is based on the archetypical role of the innocent victim (cf. van Gorp, 2005), and comprises of six different subframes: [1.1] the human smuggling or trafficking victim; [1.2] the economic migrant, victim of global inequality in wealth distribution, together with the refugee, the victim of persecution and oppression in the country of origin; [1.3] the sweatshop worker, victim of employment practices with no respect for labour rights; [1.4] the 'othered', victim of racism or xenophobia; [1.5] the political puppet or scapegoat, victim of manipulation from political parties in order to gain political leverage; and [1.6] the helpless, victim of (non-racist) violence. The victim frame derives from humanitarian concerns and sympathy emotions towards immigrants, whose life conditions are beyond their control. In that regard, policy recommendations connected to this frame target either the causes of the problem (e.g. poverty in developing countries) or the alleviation of people in need (e.g. integration and anti-discrimination policies).

The second frame (Threat) is also commonly encountered in the relevant literature connoting stereotyped notions of the various threats that come along with the presence of migrants (van Gorp, 2005). It includes six subframes: [2.1] the criminal, a threat to the safety and well-being of native society or the illegal intruder, a threat to national security and public order; [2.2] the alien/other, a threat to one's own ethnic, religious and cultural values and identity; [2.3] the economic competitor, an economic threat for natives, a competitor in terms of employment; [2.4] the intruder/social burden, the 'unwelcome guest' who is a burden for the country's social welfare system; [2.5] the civic/political threat, a threat deriving either from immigrants' political rights or their emergence as political subjects making claims to rights; and [2.6] the public health threat, the carrier of infectious diseases threatening local populations. In these approaches, the problem lies with the immigrants themselves; the solutions that are brought forth reflect the primacy of a 'law and order' approach and are oriented towards more border security, more policing and repression, and stricter asylum policies. As van Gorp (2005) remarks, both these frames (the Victim and the Threat) reflect cultural motives used quite often in media discourse.

Table 1: Frame Matrix about Immigration (abbreviated)

Main Frame	Type of Immigrant (Subframe)	Role of Immigrant	Problem Definition	Problem Source	Responsibility	Policy Solution
[1] Victim	[1.1] Human Smuggling or Trafficking Victim	Victim of human smugglers	Exploitation of people, coerced to forced labour, begging and prostitution	Human smugglers/traffickers and absence of mechanisms to combat them	1) National and international mechanisms for combating crime 2) Cypriots who do not care or even participate in exploitation	Combating human smuggling and trafficking
	[1.2] Economic Migrant / Refugee	Victim of global inequality; Victim of persecution and conflict	1) People from poor countries who seek work in advanced economies on a quest for a better life 2) People are forced to leave their homes and seek asylum abroad	1) Poverty and global wealth inequality 2) Capitalism and globalisation 3) National, racial and religious conflicts and wars; authoritarian regimes	1) The advanced capitalist countries stripping countries of migrant origin of their wealth, forcing them to flee 2) Developed states that do not eliminate conflicts causing migration	1) Wealth redistribution 2) Restraining multinational corporations' parasitic operation 3) Western initiatives to eliminate conflicts in countries of origin
	[1.3] Sweatshop Worker	Disenfranchised worker, victim of employers	Illegal employment of immigrants in low-paid and dangerous jobs, with no benefits	1) Employers exploit undocumented immigrants to maximise their profit 2) Ineffectiveness of authorities	1) The Cypriot authorities responsible for regulating employment 2) Cypriot employers	1) Legalisation of undocumented immigrants 2) Combating 'illegal employment'
	[1.4] The 'Othered'	Victim of racism or xenophobia	1) Discrimination and racism against immigrants in terms of ethnicity, religion or race; 2) State repression and violence 3) Policies that prohibit integration (residence permits and naturalisation)	1) Racist and xenophobic ideas 2) Absence of integration policies	1) State (authorities, police, education) 2) Racist parties/organisations	1) Policies for integration of immigrants in society 2) Policies for combating xenophobia and racism
	[1.5] Political Puppet or Scapegoat	Victim of manipulation for political ends	Political parties use immigrants to obtain political gains, either by defending (e.g. left parties) or prosecuting them (e.g. far right)	Manipulation by political parties	Political Parties, Government	Putting an end to manipulation of immigrants by political parties
	[1.6] The Helpless	Victim of (non-racist) violence	Immigrants fall victim of violence, murder, kidnapping and other criminal acts	Immigrants are a vulnerable group and should be protected	The state that does not protect this vulnerable social group	1) Institutional protection of immigrants 2) Tackling crime

Main Frame	Type of Immigrant (Subframe)	Role of Immigrant	Problem Definition	Problem Source	Responsibility	Policy Solution
	[2.1] The Criminal or the Illegal	The lawbreaker who constitutes a threat for the safety of Cypriots The intruder, the undocumented immigrant	1) Crime is increased as a result of the increase of immigrants 2) Immigrants exploit laws of Western countries to enter their territory / violate laws 3) Large numbers of immigrants enter illegally, becoming a threat for public order	1) Inadequate police patrolling / unguarded borders 2) The immigrants themselves who have criminal records or come from savage and uncivilised countries 3) Immigrants who enter Europe fraudulently / do not respect laws 4) Lax deportation policy	1) The authorities do not fight crime and illegal entry of immigrants 2) The immigrants themselves who intrude and commit crimes	1) More policing and repression of immigration-related crime 2) Fortification of borders 3) Stricter policies for granting residence permits to immigrants 4) Deportation of all illegal / law-breaking immigrants
	[2.2] The Alien/Other	A threat for the ethnic, religious and cultural cohesion	Immigrants with different ethnic, religious and cultural traditions, spoil the ethnic and religious purity of society	1) Inadequate border controls 2) Lax deportation policy	1) The authorities who do not prevent illegal entry of immigrants 2) The immigrants who carry values incompatible with the Cypriot culture	1) Deportation of all immigrants 2) Policies to reduce the number of immigrants
	[2.3] Economic Competitor	An economic threat for native workers	Immigrants take jobs away from Cypriots and lower the wages, making the bad economic situation of Cypriots worse	1) Inadequate border controls 2) Lax deportation policy	1) The authorities who do not prevent illegal entry of immigrants 2) The immigrants invading the country 3) The immigrants who are 'cheap labour'	1) Legalisation of all 'useful' immigrants, deportation of the rest 2) More jobs for Cypriots
[2] Threat	[2.4] The Intruder/ Social Burden	The 'unwelcome guest' who is a burden for the country's social welfare system	Immigrants who leave their countries, come uninvited use up welfare resources	1) Inadequate border controls 2) Timid immigration policy 3) Immigrant benefits / free health care	1) The authorities who do not take measures to combat illegal immigration 2) The Europeans who are not helping us 3) The immigrants who invade the country 4) Policies for immigrant benefits	2) Legalisation of all 'useful' immigrants, deportation of the rest 2) Tightening of policy regarding immigrant benefits 3) Burden-sharing policies in EU countries
	[2.5] The Civic/Political Threat	A civic or political threat for Cypriot citizens	1) Immigrants granted civil and political rights and vote against the interests of Cypriot people 2) Immigrants engage in political acts and demands without any right to do so	1) Immigrants' political rights 2) Political parties who let them speak up and become visible 3) The immigrants themselves who come from authoritarian regimes and do not know what democracy is	1) Political actors who seek to grant immigrants political rights 2) The left which enables immigrants to make political demands 3) The authorities who do not crack down immigrant protests	1) Abolish or make more stringent laws about access to citizenship and voting rights 2) Repression and punishment of immigrant protests as criminal acts
	[2.6] The Public Health Threat	The carrier of infectious diseases	Immigrants carry diseases that threaten public health	Immigrants come from countries with many diseases that they carry due to lack of health controls	1) Immigrants who 'carry diseases' 2) The authorities that do not impose strict health controls	Health control of immigrants

Main Frame	Type of Immigrant (Subframe)	Role of Immigrant	Problem Definition	Problem Source	Responsibility	Policy Solution
[3] Active Agent	[3.1] The 'Useful' Worker	Low-wage worker who does the jobs Cypriots won't do and contributes to the competitiveness	How to create a low-wage workforce to boost economic development, cracking down on unreported employment	Unreported employment and tax evasion	1) The Cypriot state and authorities 2) Cypriot employers	Creating just and lawful employment for immigrants so that tax evasion is avoided
	[3.2] The Proletarian Worker	Low-wage worker who is part of the labour movement and worker struggles	How to integrate immigrants in the struggles of the labour movement	Weak integration of immigrants in society and in the struggles of the labour movement	Borne by the working class that goes against immigrants, seeing them as competitors, instead of uniting forces against capitalist exploitation	Legalisation of immigrants
	[3.3] Active Political Subject	People who fight for their rights	Immigrants are denied civil and political rights	Absence of policies for granting of civil and political rights, xenophobia	1) The state which fails to create integration policies 2) Society itself which does not accept immigrants	Institutional and legal changes for granting of civic and political rights
	[3.4] Quality Workforce	Employees with qualifications equal to or better than those of the domestic workforce	'Brain drain': The domestic economy is unable to absorb specialised scientists, who migrate in search of work	1) Lack of modernisation of the economy 2) The myth that immigrants are uneducated	Borne by the state that offers no incentives to highly trained personnel to remain in the country	1) Development and modernisation of the economy 2) Incentives for young scientists to remain in the country
	[3.5] Wealthy Investor	Affluent third-country citizens who bring their wealth to Cyprus and strengthen the economy	Impediments to migration in Cyprus for third-country nationals	State policies on immigration	Borne by the state that does not care to simplify procedures for investors	Favourable provisions for wealthy investors from third countries
	[3.6] Equal Society Member ('one of us')	Integrated (or able to integrate), valuable and committed members of society	Immigrants are denied access to citizenship and opportunities to integrate; they are forced to ghettoization	Absence of policies for integration	1) The state which fails to create integration policies 2) Society itself which does not accept immigrants	Institutional and legal changes for granting of civic and political rights and integration policies

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The third frame (Active Agent), contrary to the positive but passive representation of immigrants reflected in the Victim frame, signifies a mostly positive and active representation of immigrants. Six subframes were identified in the texts: [3.1] The useful worker, which refers to the low-skilled and low-paid worker, whose presence is deemed important for economic development and increased competitiveness. It should be noted that, although this subframe bears a positive representation compared to the Threat frame, it reduces the role of migrants to that of workers, denying them labour, social and political rights. In the second subframe, the proletarian worker [3.2], immigrants are perceived as workers exploited by the capitalist order, who should be integrated in the native labour movement and contribute to the struggle against plutocracy. The third subframe [3.3] is the active political subject and it refers to immigrants as political subjects who fight for their rights (e.g. hunger strikers). The fourth subframe [3.4] refers to immigrants as a quality workforce – as employees with training and qualifications equal to, or even better than, those of the domestic workforce. The fifth subframe [3.5] is the wealthy investor and refers to affluent third-country citizens who bring their wealth to Cyprus and strengthen the economy. Lastly, the sixth subframe [3.6] refers to immigrants as equal members of society ('one of us'). Here, immigrants are portrayed as valuable social subjects who are integrated (or can be integrated) and honour the Cypriot identity. The problems identified in these subframes are rather inconsistent and so are the solutions suggested. However, if put together, a third frame is constructed, which perceives immigrants as active agents, as people who hold rights, possess skills, and in some cases material wealth. In that sense, this frame differs from both the Victim and Threat frame, and connotes positive representations of immigrants as people who control their fate and whose rights should be acknowledged.

Media Framing of Immigration

Online Mainstream Media

In online mainstream media, the most often used dominant frame is the Threat frame, appearing in 45% of the news articles. The Victim frame follows with a presence in 42% of the articles, whereas the Active Agent frame features as dominant in only 11% of the cases (table 2).

The analysis of the articles in terms of subframes allows us to grasp the precise representations of immigrants in the Cypriot news. As seen in table 3, the framing of immigrants as Victims is constructed mainly through stories about racism against immigrants (27% of total articles). Within the Threat frame, two subframes stand out: the depiction of immigrants as criminals (24%) and as intruders or social burden (12%). In stories portraying immigrants mainly as Active Agents, the most commonly used frames are the equal society member (4%) and the wealthy investor (3%).

Table 2: Dominant Frames about Immigrants in Print and Online News Articles

Dominant Frames		
	n	**%**
VICTIM frame	59	42%
THREAT frame	63	45%
ACTIVE AGENT frame	15	11%
Unclear	3	2%
Total	**140**	**100%**

Table 3: Dominant Subframes about Immigrants in Online News Articles

Dominant Subframes			
	n	**% within frame**	**% of total articles**
[1.1] Human Smuggling or Trafficking Victim	3	5%	-
[1.2] Economic Migrant or Refugee	6	10%	4%
[1.3] Sweatshop Worker	7	12%	5%
[1.4] The 'Othered'	38	64%	27%
[1.5] Political Puppet or Scapegoat	1	-	-
[1.6] The Helpless	4	7%	3%
VICTIM frame total	**59**	**100%**	**42%**
[2.1] The Criminal or the Illegal	33	52%	24%
[2.2] The Alien/ Other	5	8%	4%
[2.3] Economic Competitor	6	10%	4%
[2.4] The Intruder/ Social burden	17	27%	12%
[2.5] The Civic/Political Threat	0	-	-
[2.6] The Public Health Threat	2	-	-
THREAT frame total	**63**	**100%**	**45%**
[3.1] The 'Useful' Worker	1	7%	-
[3.2] The Proletarian Worker	0	-	-
[3.3] Active Political Subject	3	20%	-
[3.4] Quality Workforce	1	7%	-
[3.5] Wealthy Investor	4	27%	3%
[3.6] Equal Society Member	6	40%	4%
ACTIVE AGENT frame total	**15**	**100%**	**11%**
Unclear	**2**		**-**
Total	**140**		**100%**
*Note: percentages lower than 3% are omitted from the table (marked with '-')			

Television News

In television news, the Threat frame is even more prominent compared to online media, present in 51% of the news stories. The Victim frame appears in 31% of the stories, and the Active Agent frame is the dominant frame in 13% of news stories (table 4).

Table 4: Dominant Frames about Immigrants in Television News

Dominant Frames		
	n	%
VICTIM frame	51	31%
THREAT frame	82	51%
ACTIVE AGENT frame	21	13%
Unclear	8	5%
Total	162	100%

The Victim frame in television news consists mainly of crime news stories, in which immigrants are represented as victims of violence, without any racist connotations (14%). The most prevalent representation falls within the Threat frame and is related to the image of the criminal or the illegal (42%). Within the Active Agent frame, most news stories feature immigrants as wealthy investors (9%) (table 5).

The Role of Sources

The majority of sources used by journalists in immigration-related news articles are official sources (72%) – mostly mainstream media, politicians, the police and public institutions (table 6). Ordinary sources are used only in 32% of the articles, and these consist mostly of non-governmental organisations.

In television news, most sources are again elite sources (68%): mainly the police, politicians, and public institutions (table 7). Ordinary sources account for 20% of the stories.

To investigate the role of sources in the frames adopted in online and television news stories, we calculated the correlations (*Pearson r*) between the source and subframe categories appearing most frequently (in more than 4% of the cases) in the news items. Regarding online media, three source categories are weakly (between .20 and .29) or moderately (between .30 and .39) correlated with certain subframes. The use of politicians as sources is positively correlated with the subframe of immigrants as 'others'. Police is correlated with the representations of immigrants as victims of violence and as

Table 5: Dominant Subframes about Immigrants in Television News

Dominant Subframes			
	n	% within frame	% of total articles
[1.1] Human Smuggling or Trafficking Victim	2	4%	-
[1.2] Economic Migrant or Refugee	11	22%	7%
[1.3] Sweatshop Worker	1	-	-
[1.4] The 'Othered'	14	27%	9%
[1.5] Political Puppet or Scapegoat	1	-	-
[1.6] The Helpless	22	43%	14%
VICTIM frame total	**51**	**100%**	**31%**
[2.1] The Criminal or the Illegal	68	83%	42%
[2.2] The Alien/ Other	2	-	-
[2.3] Economic Competitor	8	10%	5%
[2.4] The Intruder/ Social burden	3	4%	-
[2.5] The Civic/Political Threat	0	-	-
[2.6] The Public Health Threat	1	-	-
THREAT frame total	**82**	**100%**	**51%**
[3.1] The 'Useful' Worker	0	-	-
[3.2] The Proletarian Worker	1	5%	-
[3.3] Active Political Subject	3	14%	-
[3.4] Quality Workforce	0	-	-
[3.5] Wealthy Investor	15	71%	9%
[3.6] Equal Society Member	2	10%	-
ACTIVE AGENT frame total	**21**	**100%**	**13%**
Unclear	**8**		**5%**
Total	**162**		**100%**
*Note: percentages lower than 3% are omitted from the table (marked with '-')			

criminals or illegals. This means that the more the 'police' is used as a source in immigrant-related stories, the more frequent are the representations of immigrants as criminals – and vice versa. The substantial positive role of NGOs as sources is confirmed by this analysis, as the presence of NGOs as sources is correlated to the frequency of references to the status of immigrants as economic migrants and to racism against them. At the same time, the less NGOs are used as sources in a news story, the more the issues of immigrant criminality or illegality appear in the news.

Table 6: Sources in Print and Online Immigrant-related News

News Articles' Sources		
	n	% of total sources
Official (elite) Sources		
Politicians	34	15%
Public Institutions	16	7%
Police	31	14%
Military	1	-
Intellectuals	1	-
Private Institutions	1	-
International Institutions	8	4%
Experts	15	7%
Mainstream Media	45	20%
Union Leaders	1	-
Church/Religion	3	-
Personalities	2	-
Total of Elite Sources	**101**	**72%**
Ordinary Sources		
Interest Communities	1	-
Voluntary Organisations (e.g. NGOs)	21	9%
Eyewitnesses / Sources of Information	14	6%
Immigrants	14	6%
Friends/ Relatives / Neighbours	5	-
Ordinary Citizens	1	-
Prisoners	1	-
Victims	2	-
Ideological Communities	1	-
Alternative Media	2	-
Total of Ordinary Sources	**32**	**23%**
No source mentioned	**7**	**3%**
TOTAL	**227**	**100%**
*Note: percentages lower than 3% are omitted from the table (marked with '-')		

Table 7: Sources in Television Immigrant-related News

TV News Sources		
	n	% of total sources
Official (elite) Sources		
Politicians	37	18%
Public Institutions	21	10%
Police	60	29%
Experts	4	-
Mainstream Media	1	-
Union Leaders	11	5%
Church/Religion	5	-
Personalities	2	-
Total of Elite Sources	**141**	**68%**
Ordinary Sources		
Interest Communities	5	-
Geographic-ethnic Communities	1	-
Protesters	3	-
Voluntary Organisations	1	-
Eyewitnesses / Sources of Information	10	5%
Immigrants	3	-
Friends/ Relatives / Neighbours	3	-
Ordinary Citizens	7	3%
Accused/ Awaiting trial	7	3%
Victims	1	-
Total of Ordinary Sources	**41**	**20%**
No source mentioned	**26**	**13%**
TOTAL	**208**	**100%**

*Note: percentages lower than 3% are omitted from the table (marked with '-')

In television news, the appearance of politicians is correlated with the discussion about wealthy investors, whereas there is a negative correlation with the subframe of immigrants as helpless victims of violence. The police is negatively correlated with the subframe of immigrants as victims of racism and as wealthy investors; again, there is a strong correlation of police sources with representations of immigrant criminality. Union leaders play a negative role, as they are correlated strongly with the appearance of frames portraying immigrants as competitors in the workplace. They are, however, negatively correlated with immigrant criminality.

Table 8: Correlations between Frames and Sources in Online Media

Pearson r correlations							
	[1.2] Economic Migrant/ Refugee	[1.3] Sweatshop Worker	[1.4] The 'Othered'	[1.6] The Helpless	[2.1] The Criminal/ the Illegal	[2.2] The Alien/ Other	[2.4] The Intruder/ Social Burden
Politicians	-.042	-.022	.012	-.103	-.181*	**.221**	.184*
Public Institutions	-.105	.030	-.023	-.021	-.109	.040	.015
Police	.036	.052	-.132	**.356**	**.355**	-.171*	-.197*
Experts	-.101	.115	.139	-.101	.008	-.111	-.035
Mainstream Media	-.030	.025	.051	.026	-.020	-.115	.052
Voluntary Organisations	**.249**	-.007	**.244**	-.123	**-.247**	-.134	-.138
Eyewitnesses / Sources of Information	-.097	-.032	.060	.080	-.087	-.025	-.152
Immigrants	.080	-.032	.161	-.009	-.087	-.107	-.025

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 9: Correlations between Frames and Sources in Television News

Pearson r correlations						
	[1.2] Economic Migrant/ Refugee	[1.4] The 'Othered'	[1.6] The Helpless	[2.1] The Criminal/ the Illegal	[2.3] Economic Competitor	[3.5] Wealthy Investor
Politicians	-.164*	.031	**-.210**	-.187*	.105	**.362**
Public Institutions	-.114	.106	.115	-.142	.054	.057
Police	-.132	**-.275**	.055	**.457**	-.090	**-.254**
Union Leaders	-.080	.101	-.123	**-.254**	**.543**	-.089
Eyewitnesses / Sources of Information	.019	.190*	.018	.067	-.066	-.085

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

In what follows, we provide a qualitative analysis of the main frames and subframes and discuss how they are connected to the financial crisis being experienced by Cypriot society, concluding with some recommendations for media policies that may improve immigration-related coverage in the Cypriot context.

Discussion:
Framing of Immigration in the Context of the Financial Crisis

In order to interpret this study's findings in a historical perspective, a connection to previous studies on the coverage of migration is required. Bearing in mind that a direct and accurate comparison between methodologically dissimilar studies is not possible, we can at least make some assumptions about how the media-migration relationship in the Cypriot context has developed over time. Evidently, several negative frames of migration have remained in place: in fact, it is rather sad to record the same patterns over and over again, namely the emphasis on migrant criminality and the negative economic and social consequences of migration, as well as the lack of reference to the contribution of migrants in Cypriot society. What has perhaps toned down is the overtly nationalistic discourse in relation to migrants and the stress of their 'alien' culture and religion – possibly because these aspects are being overshadowed by economy-related frames as we discuss below. A positive indication is connected to the reporting of racism as the tendency of the media to thematise racist violence, noted earlier by Trimikliniotis and Demetriou (2006), seems to be on the rise in online media (but not in television news). Yet, it is uncertain whether the frequent reporting of migrants as victims of racism can contribute to more self-reflexive attitudes of native populations regarding their own practices and experience. The study of Zembylas, Michaelidou and Afantintou-Lambrianou (2010) reveals a paradoxical fact: Cypriot students tend to acknowledge the existence of racism in Cypriot society, but at the same time they deny that there is discrimination against immigrants. More research is needed to investigate the impact of such reporting on public views, namely, whether it contributes to an understanding of how racism is entangled with discrimination in everyday life, instead of conceiving it as an abstract phenomenon disassociated from specific practices.

Turning to the question of how the framing of immigration is affected by the financial crisis, studies on other countries have shown that framing immigrants as a threat has intensified since the economic recession has deteriorated the standard of living for large numbers of citizens and has increased the competition between social groups for public resources (Cecchi, 2011; Schmuck and Matthes, 2014).

In Cyprus, the deposit 'haircut' imposed by the Eurogroup in March 2013, together with subsequent austerity measures agreed by the new government, generated 'a new migration state of exception' (Trimikliniotis, 2013, p. 459), a hardening of immigration

policy, with measures such as the use of coupons instead of cash payment benefits to immigrants and the overt recommendation by the government to employers to hire Cypriots rather than foreigners. As Cyprus faces the mandate to curtail public expenses and shrink the size of the welfare state, the frame of immigrants as 'intruders or social burden' becomes prominent; in the sample analysed in this study, this subframe was the third most frequent subframe in online media, portraying immigrants as a problem for the host country, as a burden that the state, and hence its citizens, cannot bear. The construction of the 'social burden' is based, first, on an emphasis on the magnitude of the 'problem', with the use of numerical or statistical evidence ('millions of immigrants', 'more than doubled') and metaphors ('the wave of immigration', 'suffocation of the infrastructures', 'burden'). Second, news articles about official immigration policies, sourced by government actors, stress emphatically the strain put on the welfare state by immigrants. To give some examples, the Minister of Interior is quoted as saying 'the small and weak Cyprus cannot bear more [immigrants]' and 'with the economic crisis plaguing the country, it is impossible to accept more immigrants', whereas government officials refer to 'excessive benefits granted to aliens', reassuring the public that the official policy will be amended so that the injustice done to rightful beneficiaries (Cypriots) will be corrected. Similarly, an article about the demands of doctors employed in public hospitals describes the free (but mandatory) treatment of third-country nationals for contagious diseases as a 'nightmare' ('*vrachnas*') for the public health system, which has to be 'dealt with drastically', as TCNs 'are daily flooding public hospitals'.[9]

Besides constructing immigrants as persons who drain public resources that would otherwise be granted to natives, the justification used in this discourse is strictly instrumental, assessing the health and the life of immigrants solely in economic terms rather than in terms of rights or humanistic values. This fact can be interpreted as a facet of a broader effect of the financial crisis – and neoliberalism in general – on public discourse, namely, a push to subject the entire social life to the economic logic of the market and a strategic-calculative reasoning. The corollary is a public sphere being dominated by technocratic arguments, justified by an imperative for economic or practical efficiency, signifying the de-politicisation of the social through its economisation (Adaman and Madra, 2014). The instrumentalisation of public discourse can also explain the fact that important issues and frames about immigrants are almost entirely overlooked in the media-produced public sphere, that is to say the frame of the

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9   Again, this is a reflection of the official government policy, as 'one of the first items of the agenda of the austerity legislation by the right-wing Government of Nicos Anastasiades, elected in February 2013, was to effectively end free health care and allowances for asylum seekers, third world country and EU nationals, as well as Turkish-Cypriots' (Trimikliniotis, 2013, p. 446).

'sweatshop worker' and the discussion about labour rights of immigrants in Cyprus. Instead, what is presented quite prominently, especially in television news, is the frame of the 'wealthy investor', which refers to governmental policies for establishing favourable provisions for affluent third-country citizens in terms of residence and work permits as well as citizenship rights, in order to bring their wealth to Cyprus and strengthen the economy. The strongly economic logic is evident yet again in these news stories and articles, legitimising immigration when it is associated with wealth and economic power, principally in times of financial crisis, but denying the same rights to underprivileged immigrants. Thus, the media discourse reproduces and legitimises the official immigration policy of Cyprus, which is based on the distinction between two diverse classes of migrants: elite migrants, whose presence should be stable and permanent so that they can increase the competitiveness of the economy, and subaltern migrants, who are supposedly temporary and cover the need for low-skilled jobs in terms of short-term and precarious employment (Trimikliniotis, 2013).

The association between the construction of immigrants as committers of crimes or lawbreakers simply by their being 'illegal' is long established in the literature on media coverage of immigration. Hall, Critcher, Jefferson, Clarke and Roberts (1978) documented how the media contributed to the rise of 'moral panics' in 1970s Britain. By constructing scapegoats or 'folk-devils' associated with black immigrant settlers, they in fact created diversionary mechanisms for the deeper problems of British society. In the same vein, Cecchi (2011) argues that in Italy 'immigrants [...] work very nicely as "scapegoats" who help to hide the injustices produced by the new economic system and by the political elite's lack of capacity for action' (p. 41), as the criminalisation of immigration in most-watched Italian media 'is accompanied by a deafening silence when it comes to the serious problems relating to both the economic and the political spheres' (*ibid*.). In the absence of longitudinal data, it is hard to document a respective phenomenon in Cyprus, namely, the increase of immigration-related crime coverage since the financial crisis compared to previous years. Yet, this study has revealed that a significant volume of established media attention is directed toward news stories concerning immigrant criminality. These stories have every typical feature of the 'crime story': the sources are almost exclusively police or public officials, the crime is presented in a detailed and dramatic fashion, the coverage is episodic instead of thematic, and the framing follows the logic of a 'law and order' mandate. The practice of mentioning immigrants' nationality in crime-related stories, which, according to this study's findings, is quite frequent in the Cypriot media, is related to the racialisation of criminality (Cecchi, 2011), namely, the association of specific nationalities to certain categories of crimes. The high volume of such stories can accentuate public perceptions about immigrants being responsible for the rise of criminality and direct attributions of responsibility to immigrants themselves, as if they

had an 'inherent propensity' for criminality. Moreover, other stories within this category depict immigrants as lawbreakers: the unlawful acts reported refer to cases of police arrests of 'illegal' immigrants, of illegal employment or even cases of domestic workers accused of 'abandoning their employers'.

A positive aspect in media coverage of immigration emerging from this study is the prominence, in online media, of news related to racism or xenophobia, state repression and violence against immigrants, and the violation of their rights (the 'othered'). Among the issues reported in the respective articles are cases of abuse by the police (detention, torture, deprivation of medical treatment), prolonged detention, non-implementation of decisions to release immigrants detained to be deported, violation of the right of access to justice, as well as racist violence and the broader social exclusion of immigrants in the Cypriot society. These articles adopt mostly a humanitarian approach and articulate a rights-based discourse, while criticising the official immigration policy in Cyprus. As shown by the qualitative analysis and confirmed by the statistical data, the prominence of this discourse is largely a result of the communication strategies of pro-immigrant non-governmental organisations which are the main sources of these news items. Yet, there are apparent limitations that consist generally in two interrelated journalistic practices: First, many articles referring to violation of immigrants' rights by the authorities were covered episodically, devoid of any background or connection either to previous similar cases or to routine procedures practiced by authorities (police, courts, immigration services). Thus, these cases were covered as single events, isolated from the broader socioeconomic conditions in which immigrants live in Cyprus and, ultimately, as exceptions to the rule. In some cases (e.g. police blackmail and exploitation of immigrants), the offenders were presented as the 'bad apples' which were finally punished, instead of addressing the systematic mistreatment of immigrants by state mechanisms. Second, and most important, the stories simply reproduced NGO press releases, without questioning or even simply seeking answers from the respective authorities regarding the grievances against them. When single events are presented as if they were unconnected to the official immigration policy, pressure cannot be exerted upon officials to reassess problematic aspects of this policy, nor is a critical discussion introduced in the public sphere so that demands for change can be voiced. Lastly, a word of caution is warranted regarding news related to racism against immigrants. On the one hand, there is no doubt that these stories have a positive effect as they raise the issue of violence against immigrants by bringing to the fore the respective events; on the other hand, they can also result in the victimisation of immigrants, and their depiction as helpless and easy targets of violence and abuse. In times of financial crisis and the disintegration of the welfare state structures, which leaves wide populations in increasing financial hardship, combined with the rise of extreme right-wing parties with a xenophobic agenda, the frustration and uncertainty experienced by native

populations can be easily directed toward immigrants, especially if the latter are portrayed as the most vulnerable and the least likely to retaliate (Larsen *et al.*, 2009; Haslam and Holland, 2012).

Concluding Remarks

The consistency of the empirical findings regarding the established media coverage of immigration over time and across countries paints a rather gloomy picture vis-à-vis the prospects for a profound change toward a fairer representation of immigrants in media discourses – although outstanding examples do exist and exceptional immigration coverage can be found in most countries. What is equally important, besides ascertaining the various pathologies, is to uncover the causes that lead to this type of immigration coverage. To a large extent the causes are associated with journalistic routines and values, deeply embedded in the mainstream mode of news-making such as the lack of specialised knowledge on migrant issues, organisational constrains (limited time for information collection), the prevalence of negativity and over-simplification of complex issues as news values and so on. As regards immigration in particular, cross-cultural studies (e.g. Gemi, Ulasiuk and Triantafyllidou, 2013) point to additional factors, such as the inherently resource-weak position of immigrants in terms of influencing the processes of news-making and counteracting the ability of elite actors to shape the agenda and the framing of immigration issues.

Although the current study did not investigate the reasons behind the problematic coverage of immigration in the Cypriot media, it revealed, among other practices, the tendency of journalists to avoid confronting the authorities regarding immigration policy, even when ample evidence about systematic ill-treatment of immigrants was provided. This resulted in the creation of two separate monologues (one produced by the official authorities and the other by NGOs focused on immigrant rights), rendering any meaningful critical discussion of immigration policy highly unlikely. This practice can be rooted to several possible causes: lack of interest on the part of journalists to fulfil their watchdog role regarding immigration issues, a tendency to conform with the official xenophobic rhetoric and appease the (perceived) alarmed public opinion, and the structural characteristics of the Cypriot media system, which resembles the Polarised Pluralism model (Hallin and Mancini, 2004), especially in terms of political parallelism, namely, the close ties of media companies with political parties [Authors], combined with a lack of investigative journalism, dependence on official sources, and a dearth of independent journalistic work (Sophocleous, 2008).

Taking these facts into account, it is our contention that what is urgently needed in the Cypriot media is the diversification of journalistic personnel within the Cypriot media organisations, because migrant journalists in the Cypriot media are currently non-

existent. Internal pluralism in the media is considered a factor contributing to social and political diversity in media content, that is, the representation of different cultural groups in the media as well as divergent opinions and viewpoints (McQuail, 1992; Doyle, 2002). Taking into account that previous approaches have proved insufficient, such a measure is considered imperative. For instance, although the Journalistic Code of Ethics includes general provisions against discrimination of any kind in the media content, complaints about the violation of the Code in relation to migrants are often filed to the Cyprus Media Complaints Commission (which functions as a Press Council in Cyprus). As Trimikliniotis and Demetriou (2012) note, the attempt made by the Anti-Discrimination Body (Ombudsman) in Cyprus to issue a binding Code of Conduct for the media on how to avoid racist and xenophobic stereotyping was met with fierce resistance from journalists, who perceived it as a restriction of press freedom.[10] The inclusion of journalists with immigrant background in the media, though not a panacea, can remedy some inadequacies in the news-making process and perhaps increase the volume of coverage of immigration issues by making the investigation of such disputes easier, instil new perspectives on migrant concerns in the heart of the news-making process (the newsroom), provide native journalists with first-hand knowledge and contacts on migrant-related subjects, as well as reduce the reluctance or inability on the part of immigrants themselves to provide information by eroding language and culture barriers and increasing trust (Gemi, Ulasiuk and Triantafyllidou, 2013). The recent case of three migrants to whom a residence permit was granted after sustained media coverage in Norway (Ihlen and Thorbjørnsrud, 2014) proves that positive coverage with the use of strong frames can be valuable and effective, and it confirms the dynamics of frame production, their effects and power. As the current financial crisis can only deepen social inequalities and consequently exacerbate xenophobic tendencies, the thorny relation between media and immigration, especially in regard to its causes and possible remedies, should be prioritised in the research agenda.

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10   The code was finally issued and adopted by the Anti-Discrimination Body in 2010, but as a non-binding set of guidelines instead. Available in Greek at: [http://www.no-discrimination.ombudsman. gov.cy/sites/default/files/kateythintiries_arhes_MME_kata_ratsismoy_xenofovias_diakriseon.pdf], accessed on 13 March 2015.

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Appendix

SOURCES CATEGORIES

Elite	Non-elite	
1 Politicians	1 Interest Communities	
2 Public Institutions	2 Geographic-Ethnic Communities	
3 Police	3 Protesters	
4 Military	4 Workers	
5 Intellectuals	5 Voluntary Organisations	
6 Private Institutions	6 Eyewitnesses	
7 International Institutions	7 Immigrants	
8 Experts	8 Prisoners	
9 Mainstream Media		9a Friends-Relatives-Neighbours
10 Church-Religion		9b Ordinary Citizens
11 Unions' Leaders		9c Accused-Awaiting Trial
12 Personalities	9 Ordinary people	9d Public Opinion
		9e Voters
		9f Victims
		9g Audience
		9h Petitioners
	10 Ideological Communities	
	11 Alternative Media	
	12 Grassroots Reporters	