

# Evolution of Media Perception: The Issue of Migration

## Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine how both traditional and nontraditional media reflected the issue of migration during the European Migration Crisis from its peak in 2015 to the European Commission's declaration of its end in 2019.

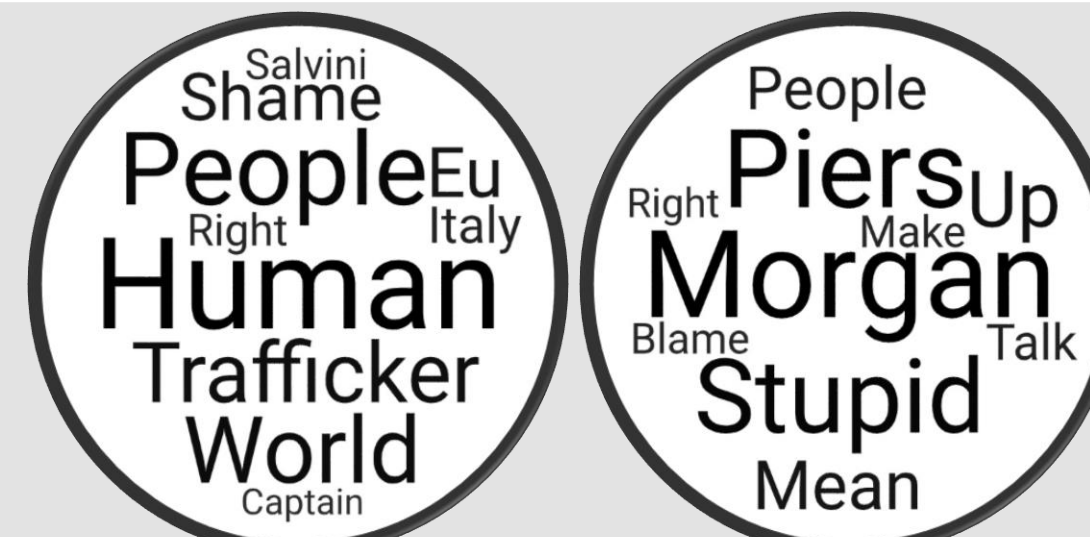
Our team chose to examine two key moments in reporting during our timeframe: the publication of the photo of Aylan Kurdi in 2015 and the arrest of Carola Rackete in 2019. We then analyzed news articles written about each event that were published by one more traditionally conservative news outlet and one more traditionally liberal new outlet each in Britain, Sweden, and Italy. We analyzed the articles, comparing the word choice, tone, and message conveyed in each, and then observed the public reaction to them on social media by performing a content analysis of the comments left under each article shared on Facebook and Twitter by the news outlet's official account.

## Methodology

- Analyzed two events:
  - 2015: Publication of photo of Aylan Kurdi
  - 2019: Arrest of Capt. Carola Rackete
- Identified two native media sources
  - Research teams identified two outlets each from Sweden, Italy, and the United Kingdom.
  - Outlets were prominent, reputable sources in each country, one right-leaning and one left-leaning
- Compared media headlines
  - Researchers identified an article from each media outlet for each event, for a total of 12 articles
  - Headlines from each article were compared and analyzed for word choice, tone, and message conveyed
- Analyzed public reactions
  - Facebook and Twitter
  - Word bubbles were used to tally the most commonly used words in social media comments in response to their respective articles
- Our overall goal was to compare bias in headlines and see how this correlated in the mood of responses through social media

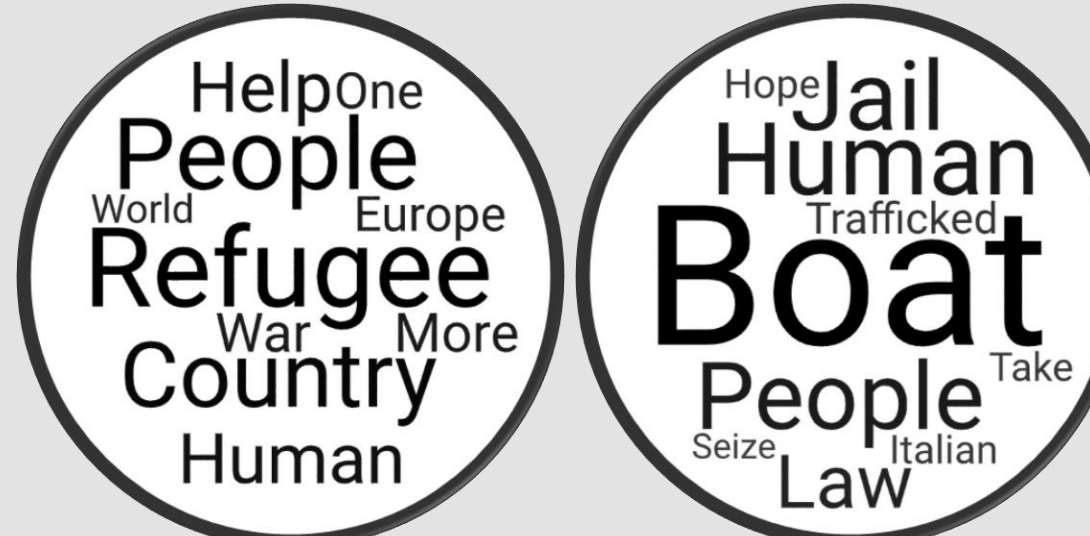
## United Kingdom

## **Guardian: Shocking images of drowned Syrian boy show tragic plight of refugees**



**Daily Mail: Don't shut your eyes to this picture because WE did this. Now we have to make it right**

**Daily Mail: Campaigners raise €1 million for migrant rescue ship captain accused of ramming police boat out of the way so she could transport 40 people to Italy as she appears in court today**



## Italy

## ***Il Manifesto: Niente asilo | No Asylum***



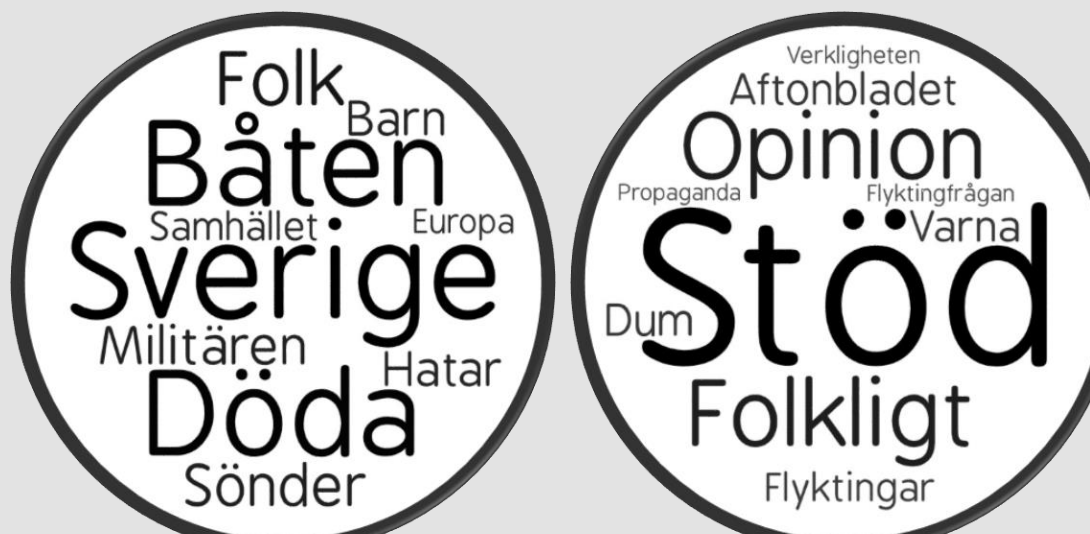
***Il Foglio: Oltre la commozione. Commenti internazionali per evitare un nuovo “caso Aylan” | Beyond the emotion, international comments to avoid another “Aylan case”***

## ***Il Foglio:* I concorsi di bellezza morale no, grazie | Moral beauty contests no, thank you**



## Sweden

## **Aftonbladet: 2015 slutade de vara människor | In 2015 they stopped being humans**



## ***Svenska Dagbladet: Folket mot opinionen | The People against the pendulum***

## **Aftonbladet: Kapten för räddningsfartyg gripen i Italien | Rescue ship Captain arrested in Italy**



***Svenska Dagbladet: Kapten riskerar fängelse - och hyllas som hjälte | Captain risks prison - praised as a hero***

## Conclusion

**Traditional:**  
**United Kingdom:** Kurdi – Both emotionally-charged titles and articles; similar positions on the issue despite ideological difference. | Rackete – Different perspectives from each source. *Daily Mail* used negatively-charged words such as “accused” and “ramming.” *Guardian* showed more sympathy for Rackete.

**Italy:** Kurdi – *Il Manifesto* focused on the more emotional aspects of the event, while *Il Foglio* asks us to look beyond the emotions. | Rackete – *Il Foglio* was more critical of Racket while *Il Manifesto* had a more emotional appeal.

**Sweden:** Kurdi – The Right empathizes more on the crimes committed and the Salvini narrative, whereas the Left has a more nuanced stance. | Rackete - The media coverage of Rackete in 2019 is, however, less extensive.

## Social:

**United Kingdom:** The verbiage of the comments for *The Guardian*, our left-leaning source, were much more people-centered, focusing heavily on words like "people," "human," and "world," while our right-leaning source, The Guardian, was more likely to see comments about legality and use heavily negatively-charged words such as "trafficked," "jail," and "stupid." Therefore, we can conclude that the left is more prone to an empathetic view.

**Italy:** The comments in 2015 are more emotional on the left; on the right side, skepticism remains. In 2019 they are polarized on two different themes: democracy and justice.

**Sweden:** Comments on social media tend to be polarizing between left and right in 2015 and 2019. The comments in the right articles call Rackete's behavior reckless and non-heroic, whereas the left is more sympathetic.

APPL 19-2015; Folletet mot opinionerna. Svenska Dagbladet.

Associazionecentrafradita, n.d., n.d.: Immigrazione: aumentano le notizie relative ai flussi migratori e calano quelle sull'accoglienza. Associazione Carta di Roma. URL: <https://www.cartadiroma.org/osservatorio-reportage-sulla-immigrazione-flussi-migratori-accolta/> (accessed 3.8.2020).

Carta di Roma, n.d., n.d.: Rapporto Carta di Roma sulla migrazione: immigrazione interna di notiziare, ma non cresce la paura. Associazione Carta di Roma. URL: <https://www.cartadiroma.org/newsletter-rapporto-carda-di-roma-sulla-migrazione-immigrazione-interna-di-notiziare-ma-non-cresce-la-paura> (accessed 3.8.2020).

L'Espresso, 2019. I concorsi per rifugiati politici. URL: <https://www.espressonline.it/news/concorsi-per-refugiati-politici-i-concorsi-di-bellezza-norale-no-grande-202006> (accessed 3.8.2020).

I doversi di indignarsi, 2015. Il manifesto. URL: <https://manifesto.ilurl.it/do-versi-di-indignarsi> (accessed 3.8.2020).

Il Manifesto, 2015. Stute de varum manifestum [WWW Document], n.d.. Aftonbladet. URL: <https://www.aftonbladet.se/Kvalitet> (accessed 3.8.2020).

Martin, G., 2019. Migrant rescue captain heads the Italian court hearing [WWW Document]. Mail Online. URL: <https://www.dailymail.com/us/news/article-7200026/Migrant-rescue-captain-heads-hearing.html>.

Morgan, G., 2019. PIERS MORGAN: We did this. Now we have to make it right [WWW Document]. Mail Online. URL: <https://www.dailymail.com/us/news/article-7200026/PIERS-MORGAN-Now-we-have-to-make-it-right-yes-but-its-a-little-bit-harder-to-fix.html>.

Oltre il confine, 2019. L'Espresso. URL: <https://www.espressonline.it/news/oltre-il-confine> (accessed 3.8.2020).

Raccontata nella notte, 2019. L'Espresso. URL: <https://www.espressonline.it/news/raccontata-nella-notte> (accessed 3.8.2020).

Raccontata nella notte, 2019. L'Espresso. URL: <https://www.espressonline.it/news/raccontata-nella-notte> (accessed 3.8.2020).

Smidt, H., 2015. Shocking images of drowned Syrian boy show tragic plight of refugees. The Guardian.

Toniolo, L., 2019. Captain who rescued 42 migrants 14 by a gain despite just threat. The Guardian.

TV4, 2019. Framtiden väntar för asylsökande i Mellanöstern. Svenska Dagbladet.