



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Title: A longitudinal analysis of media framing surrounding economic migration, from the 2016 EU Referendum through to COVID-19.

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Abstract

This dissertation aims to provide a longitudinal study of British newspaper press coverage surrounding economic migration from the EU Referendum through to COVID-19. I hope to explore the frames used to portray economic migrants and whether any changes in anti and pro-migration trends occurred over a selection of time frames from the period running up to the 23rd June 2016 vote, to a 'normal' time period in April 2020 and through to the outbreak of COVID-19 to analyse long term changes. Taking into consideration the high visibility of immigration in mainstream media during the Brexit campaign coupled with the salience attached to it as an issue influencing the result (Vasilopoulou, 2016) this renders it an important topic to research. This dissertation will further aim to contribute to the research gap surrounding changes in framing of economic migration from Brexit to COVID-19.

Key words

Brexit, migration, agenda setting framing, media, newspaper media, free movement.

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1. Introduction

Immigration has frequently been used by governments as a “lightning rod” of public discontent (Sapper, 2016). Migrants have been used to justify a range of campaigns from harsh clampdowns on “welfare tourists” blamed for putting pressure on public services to promises to create “British jobs for British workers” (Brown, 2007 cited in Morrison, 2019) and recently, attempts to steer public resentment towards “invading migrants” and away from the economic insecurity in the nation (Jones, 2020). Whilst a substantial body of research exists on the framing of coverage surrounding the EU Referendum and into the framing of migration during this period and in the years following, little insight exists into the framing specifically of economic migrants during this period, and even less on their framing over time since. This is particularly important as a large proportion of economic migrants are from the Eastern European bloc and during the referendum campaign period, these migrants saw a drastic spike in hate crimes and prejudice on a backdrop of representation of stealing jobs from deserving, indigenous British workers and putting a strain on public services (Rzepnikowska, 2019). Even further, little insight exists on the changes in framing of migration throughout Brexit, the post-Brexit period and through to the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This dissertation serves as a longitudinal study of patterns and changes in newspaper media framing of economic migration across different political contexts. Three different time frames have been selected. The first snapshot of the week running up to the EU Referendum vote was selected to represent the context of Brexit. A period at the outbreak of COVID-19 when news broke of planes full of Eastern European workers being flown in to fill workforce shortages was selected to represent the context of COVID-19, displaying well its interlinked nature with free movement. Although during COVID-19 free movement was a topic of high discussion for health concern reasons, workforce composition changes due to Brexit effects and a sudden migration ban

highlighted the migration labour shortage during this period, making it an interesting timeframe for research. A middle-ground ‘normal’ snapshot directly in the middle of the two periods was also selected, representing a relatively ordinary political context for comparison. Newspapers across a representation of political alignments and EU Referendum stances were selected: *The Guardian*, *The Times*, *The Daily Mail* and *The Sun*. This allows for analysis across newspapers with varying political representation and readerships, ultimately reaching and playing a hand in shaping the opinions of varying demographics of the electorate.

2. Literature Review

2.1 An Overview

The literature review will be structured in three parts: as this dissertation is studying the time frames surrounding the events of the EU Referendum, COVID-19 and a relatively more ‘normal’ post-Brexit middle-ground period, the first part will lay the foundations of the events. The first section will give an overview of the events and political significance of the EU Referendum, focusing on the free movement allowed by EU membership. This gives the foundations for later discussion surrounding dominating narratives regarding economic migration. Later, an overview of the ‘normal’ post-Referendum period will be laid out to establish the change in framing of migration. In the same section the events of COVID-19 will be introduced, with a focus on migration throughout.

The second part will introduce the power of the media, focusing on the concepts of agenda-setting and framing to lay theoretical foundations that this dissertation will draw on. Firstly agenda-setting will be discussed. Next, the concept of media framing will be laid out with key definitions, characteristics and effects.

The third and final section will then tie these foundations together, exploring literature surrounding the framing capacities from the Referendum to COVID-19. The literature surrounding the framing

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of migration during this time frame will be explored and previous research into framing specifically of economic migration introduced, allowing for the identification of the research gap.

2.2 Contextual Overview: EU Referendum to Covid-19

2.2.1 EU Referendum

On June 23rd 2016 the British electorate voted on Britain's membership in the European Union. With a national turnout of 72 percent, the EU referendum, interchangeably referred to as 'Brexit', garnered the highest turnout for any national vote since the 1992 General Election and the largest mandate in British history (Reland, 2019). The result was a 51.9 percent vote in favour of "Leave". This was not the first time the public was asked to vote on the UK's relationship with Europe; in 1975, an earlier generation of the electorate was asked to vote on the United Kingdom's relationship with the European Community (Parker, 2017). Whilst the public voted to stay in the European Community and support in favour of remaining appeared widespread, Butler and Kitziinger (2016, p280) pointed out that whilst the vote was unambiguous "it was also unenthusiastic. Support for membership was wide but it did not run deep". Over a decade later, Britain was famously labelled by Stephen George (1994) as the "awkward partner" in its relations with the European Community and Europe became a toxic subject within British politics, causing major tensions not only between political parties but also "deep divisions within parties" (Bogdanor, V. 2016 lecture)

It is widely accepted that a driving force of Brexit was Eurosceptic sentiments long prevalent amongst the British public (Vasilopoulou, S. 2016). Under Tony Blair, the Labour party were enthusiastic supporters of the free movement allowed by European Union membership (Daddow, 2013). However, following the 2004 'big-bang' enlargement of the European Union whereby 10 new nations were granted membership, including 7 from the Eastern Bloc, the enthusiastic support began to fade. Numbers of people migrating to Britain, particularly from newly joined Eastern

European nations, exceeded any estimates (Dustmann et al, 2013). Many of the Labour party's own members began to critique Blair and brand the decision a 'policy failure' (Watt and Wintour, 2015). Parker (2017) contends that this 'failure' paved the way for symbiotic anti-European Union and anti-immigration discourse. With already existing turmoil amongst the Conservative party surrounding Euroscepticism and tensions growing within the Labour party, the UK Independence Party (UKIP), a radical right-wing "challenger party" promoting national conservatism and rejection of multiculturalism, began to gain substantial popular support as they advocated to stop EU migration to the UK (O'Reilly, 2019).

On the backdrop of these pressures, Prime Minister David Cameron announced a referendum on UK membership of the European Union would be held on 23rd June 2016. Throughout the campaign the issue of EU free movement reigned large and for many, was the central issue with one in three respondents stating immigration was their biggest cause for concern (IPSOS Mori, 2016). The Leave campaign's infamous, highly effective slogan of Britain's need to 'take back control' was perceived as the biggest issue in regard to free movement amongst the electorate, with immigration widely recognised as a pillar of the Leave vote (Clarke, Goodwin and Whiteley, 2017). The subsequent victory of the Leave campaign and the extensive involvement of the news media in campaigning efforts draws attention to the role of the media in shaping public opinion. One of the ways the media can achieve this is through agenda setting and framing efforts. The next section will discuss the post-Brexit period and COVID-19 to give an overview of the further time frames selected. Following this, the power of the media will be discussed.

2.2.2 Post-Brexit and COVID-19

Following the Referendum, EU migrants living in Britain faced uncertainty surrounding their status. From 2019, EU nationals residing in Britain were urged to sign up to the newly developed EU Settlement Scheme to maintain their rights to services such as future rentals, social

services, healthcare and rights to work. The application process was promised to be smooth, simple and transparent. However, almost expectedly, this was not the case. Many failed to obtain the status despite providing the necessary information (Elfving and Marcinkowska, 2021) and some being rejected the status despite eligibility (Taylor, 2021). Vulnerable migrants were particularly affected, with language barriers to application and as the scheme is solely online, issues of digital exclusion (Elfving and Marcinkowska, 2021).

Alongside the turmoil of Brexit and issues surrounding the settlement scheme, many turned to naturalisation to gain British citizenship (Dathan, 2021) a process which in itself has barriers to access through a cost of roughly £1500 (GOV, 2021). A survey found that in 2021, 1 in 10 EU citizens considered leaving the country despite on average having lived there for 19 years, with 30% of respondents not believing their rights would be upheld, 25% believing they weren't being treated equally and others sensing "a general change in attitude towards European citizens" (Scotto di Santolo, 2021). In 2017, around half a million EU nationals were employed specifically in low wage occupations such as warehousing, food picking and cleaning (Sumption and Reino, 2018). By the third quarter of 2020, it's approximated the UK workforce was made up of 364,000 less EU nationals than a year prior (UK Office for National Statistics, 2020). With uncertainty and feelings of not belonging, many migrants chose to leave Britain in what was termed a 'Brexit exodus' (Scotto di Santalo, 2021). This 'exodus' along with a general Brexit hostility towards migrants led to a change in the composition of the British workforce.

The COVID-19 pandemic hit in early 2020, and global panic emerged as nations struggled to contain the virus. Social and public health concerns dominated nations, who began shutting borders and restricting movement not only out of state but within-state too, with national and local lockdowns. Amongst this turmoil, Britain was facing another panic: dealing with a need to turn to domestically produced food farmed, picked and distributed within Britain, with domestic farmers

hailed key workers (Lancet, 2020). This increase in demand for low-skilled labour was contradicted by the recently changed composition of the post-Brexit workforce and COVID-19 travel restrictions stopping the previously Eastern European seasonal workers from travelling to Britain. A ‘Pick for Britain’ scheme was launched, promoted by British royalty Prince Charles, urging the British public to aid in national efforts in picking farmed produce (Adkins, 2020). The scheme fell at the first hurdle and was labelled a “flop” (Scully, 2021). It aimed to fill a shortage of 80,000 workers; whilst numbers vary, one source states only between 5,500 and 7,000 British workers took on the job with many leaving due to the intensity (Armstrong and Lines, 2020). This isn’t solely to put blame on lack of volunteering from the British public: flaws on the recruitment side simply favoured “skilled” (Dixon quoted in O’Carroll, 2020) and “driven” Eastern European workers who previously carried out 99% of the picking (Scully, 2021). Planes full of Eastern European migrants were flown across Europe, in the middle of a global pandemic, in order to satisfy the unfilled workforce quota despite findings that international mobility contributed to increased coronavirus spread (Wells et al, 2020). The news of this hit media and public attention in mid-April 2020, when the first reports of planes landing on April 16th emerged. Similar issues are continuing to prevail throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Reports as recently as August 2021 claim shortages of roughly 100,000 HGV drivers, an occupation previously dominated by migrant workers, are resulting in supply chain disruptions (Duell, 2021). Companies with the likes of Tesco, Iceland, McDonalds and Nandos are facing product shortages and store closures as a result (Wearden, 2021. The Financial Times, 2021). This, along with the recognised contribution of migrant workers within the NHS and other areas to fighting the COVID-19 pandemic, demonstrates the value of migrant workers in the UK, rendering it important to analyse their framing in the media.

Migrants disproportionately felt the effects of the pandemic. The NHS ‘Hostile Environment Measures’ serve as a major barrier to healthcare access, with 30% of migrants whom are in the UK lawfully or have a visa stating they would be too fearful of accessing healthcare if they got sick

during the pandemic (Gardner, 2021). Migrant workers are also disproportionately employed on temporary contracts, flexible contracts (or zero-hour) or through employment agencies (MacKenzie and Ford, 2009 cited in French, 2018), with some employers undercutting the National Minimum Wage when employing migrant workers (French, 2018). Many flexible contracts were not covered by the governments furlough scheme meaning the migrant population disproportionately suffered from job and financial uncertainty during the pandemic. It's argued during the course of the pandemic, social cohesion heightened with more "pro-social behaviour" within communities, built on mutual support and beyond the idea of "us" and "them" (Abrams et al, 2020). The portrayal and framing of migration during this period is therefore interesting to research, to question whether hostility and anti-migration sentiments continued into this timeframe of increased social cohesion and struggles surrounding low-wage labour gaps.

With the significance of migration and economic migration from the 2016 Referendum through to COVID-19 established, the next section will introduce the theoretical concepts of agenda-setting and framing central to this research.

2.3 Agenda-setting and Framing

2.3.1 Power of the media

The news media plays a significant role in modern society. In an ever-globalised world, news media outlets expose individuals to new perspectives, viewpoints and information outside of their direct scope (Moy, Tewksbury and Rinke, 2016). News media holds the capacity to set an agenda for the public's attention, focusing on a particular set of issues around which the public will debate and discuss, and opinions will form (McCombs, 2002). Liberal theorists have argued that a key requirement of freedom of expression as a democratic right is the existence of an independent, unconstrained press (Mueller, 2014). As eloquently once put by Thomas Jefferson "an educated citizenry is a vital requisite for our survival as free people" (cited in Wagoner, J. 2004). As further

put forward by Leka and Kosumi (2018), the media facilitates an informed public which in turn, forms a vital pillar of democracy. TV media operates on a broadcasting regulation duty to report news with impartiality; newspapers, however, have long been noted to not follow similar standards, and have typically adopted ideological slants (Smith, 2017). Brexit was hailed a key example of the news media adopting a stance on a political debate.

As the power of the media substantially came into the spotlight during the EU Referendum period, it is useful to firstly introduce the theoretical contexts of the concept of agenda setting and framing to set a theoretical groundwork.

2.3.2 Theoretical backgrounds

The concept of agenda-setting is often traced back to communication scholars McCombs and Shaw (1972) who were interested in the role the press plays in society. Political scientists Cobb and Elder (1971) who focused on investigating the policy agenda, are also highlighted as important figures in the development of the concept. Dearing and Rogers (1996) argue that the process of agenda setting is best understood as the interrelationship and interaction between three types of processes: the media agenda, the public agenda and the policy agenda. They also argue more specifically that the media agenda can influence the public agenda and the public agenda in turn, to an extent, the policy agenda.

Every social system faces challenges and problems. Therefore, in order to prioritise these problems and evaluate their importance, social systems must have an agenda for the benefit of its communities and societies (Dearing and Rogers, 1996). At its core, agenda-setting refers to the media's ability to signal to the general public what issues are important to think about (Moy, Tewksbury and Rinke, 2016). As succinctly put by Cohen (1963, pg16) the media "may not be successful in telling us what to think, but it's successful in telling people what to think *about*".

Agenda setting provides the public with the cognitive framework to evaluate policies, governments and political figures (Iyengar and Kinder, 1987) and offers explanations regarding why policy actions address certain issues and not others and why only some information is available to the public (Dearing and Rogers, 1996). Cobb and Elder (1973) argue that, inherently, 'issues' are at least two sided and therefore involve conflict. As a result, by focusing attention on some issues whilst choosing to omit others, agenda-setting at its heart is a political process. It is argued that whilst agenda-setting can tell the audience what to think about, media framing can go on to tell audiences *how* to think about it.

McCombs, Shaw and Weaver (1997) suggest that the concept of media framing serves as an extension of agenda setting. Whilst the concept of framing has roots in a range of interdisciplinary subjects, its essence lies in the theory of communication and encompasses how issues are presented and received. Sheufele and Tewksbury (2007) put forward that in a media frame a communicator, such as the news media, utilises frames to make issues more receivable to an audience through making the topic less complex or appealing to the underlying values and experiences of recipients. A key definition of framing in the political communication field to acknowledge is that of Entman (1993, p52) who states that 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”

Frames work through saliency and select a specific view on the reality of an issue, while omitting other issues and alternatives. By highlighting certain bits of information about the issue at hand, those aspects of the issue are elevated in salience, in turn making it more noticeable and perceptible to the audience. As argued by Fiske and Taylor (1991), heightened salience often translates to a

higher probability audiences will process and discern the meaning of the information and store it in their memory. It is often achieved by methods of repetition, valence framing, images and symbols, choice of words and labelling (Entman, 1993). A commonly cited example of the power of frames is the experiment of Kahneman and Tversky (1989). In the study, when presented with a disease-prevention programme framed in terms of lives *saved*, subjects were more likely to favour it to the same programme framed in terms of lives *lost*. Through selective description and omission, the frames were able to exert their influence over what the subjects noticed, understood and their problem evaluation. This vividly highlights Entman's argument that "*the social world... is a kaleidoscope of potential realities, any of which can be readily evoked by altering the ways in which observations are framed and categorised*" (1993, p232).

As further proposed by Entman (1993, p43), media framing can contribute to the portrayal of a dominant problem definition at the cost of disregarding other perspectives. Whilst framing cannot tell people what to think on a particular issue, through patterns of targeted emphasis and exclusion of information it can structure how they evaluate certain issues, which can become problematic (Dearing and Rogers, 1996). Consequently, a political issue, dependant on how it is framed, can be understood by audiences differently. This poses a key problem to democracy. As Kahneman and Tversky (1989) argue, the general public on average isn't well-informed on socio-political issues. As a result, framing of socio-political issues exerts a large influence on their response to media communications. Entman (1993) draws on Zaller's (1992) work, who states that framing is utilised as a key power by political elites within democratic processes, lending these elites the power to determine what "public opinion" is. Resultingly, if those with the power to alter frames are able to alter "true" public opinion, they question whether a real public opinion exists at all and how truly democratic figures can respond to these opinions, when they are so vulnerable to "framing effects".

Framing has the capacity to influence public policy or sway public opinion on issues of importance. Butler (2009, 2016 edition), referring specifically to Guantanamo Bay and the ongoing war in Iraq, argues that to justify war and the outrages committed during its course, democracies utilise framing of the 'Other', often specifically Muslims, as primitive and almost 'less than' human than those part of the audience. The rise of a focus on the "undeserving poor" pushed by Margaret Thatcher and continuously used in recent times is a justification for substantial welfare cuts (Tihelkova, 2015). A commonly referred to example of a strong frame, is the Eurosceptic slogan of "Let's take back control" perpetuated by the LEAVE.EU campaign during the EU Referendum. These events will be explored in depth in the next section, along with the more recent events of COVID-19 and a relatively 'normal' middle ground period.

2.4. Framing the EU Referendum, Covid-19 and in-between

2.4.1 Framing of migration during the Referendum

Whilst the concept of framing tends to be discussed and applied to various political contexts, Hobolt (2009, p3) points out that referendums, Brexit being a prime example, "present a unique set of circumstances". He further points out that whilst standard elections give the electorate a choice between parties or politicians, referendums allow voters to make their personal views clear on specific issues, such as EU relations, potentially leading to a decision, such as whether to 'Leave' or 'Remain', in a process of direct democracy.

The news media played an important part in providing the public with relevant information towards making a decision regarding the Referendum. Communication scholars argue that mainstream media not only played a part in attempts to mould public opinion but also distorting the truth (Deacon et al, 2016. Wright et al, 2016). As Moore and Ramsay (2017, p171) point out, despite expectations of objectivity, a large proportion of mainstream media that could take a stance on the Brexit matter "did so, often uncompromisingly". Seaton (2016) points out that coverage was biased

towards 'Leave'. Early research by Levy et al (2018, p4) on newspaper coverage of the referendum found that 41% of publications sampled favoured 'Leave' whilst only 27% favoured 'Remain'. Further research found that when factoring in the audience reach of these newspapers, the trend is further magnified to 48% and 22% respectively (Levy et al, 2018), with pro-Leave newspapers being considerably more vocal in the week running up to the vote than pro-Remain papers, who were 30% less tenacious (Firmstone, 2017). This is important as some argue biased news providers are harmful to democracy (Entmann, 1989. McChesney, 2004). They propose that through omission and presentation bias newspaper media are able to reduce and manipulate the information available to the electorate, which should be free from bias to enable the public to form their own opinions.

As the Leave.EU campaign progressed, issues of immigration became the most concerning to the public. In 2011, the IPSOS Mori index showcased public sensitisation to migration issues with respondents rating migration the second most important issue facing the country. Fast forward 5 years to August 2016, 2 months after the referendum vote, and IPSOS Mori (2016) now found that immigration climbed to the top spot of concern for voters, ranking as the most important. At the same time, the popular press mirrored these worries through dehumanising language and imagery, in a bid to appeal to common us-vs-them narratives whereby 'us' refers to the indigenous, civilised people who are threatened by the invasive, savage 'them', the migrants coming into Britain (Agopcsa, 2017. Van Dijk, 1997, pp61–62).

The infamous and dehumanising 'Breaking Point' poster showcased by Nigel Farage a week prior to the referendum explicitly suggested that Britain was no longer content or accepting of EU immigration, needing to 'take back control' of its sovereign borders (Favell and Barbulescu, 2018). This 'breaking point' mentality can also be seen in the careless conceptual conflation of discourse surrounding migration: the conflation of immigrants, ethnic minorities and refugees in the press (Blinder and Allen, 2016) and intra-EU migration with immigration in general to exemplify some.

By casting a net of one homogenous entity, media and political claims makers “deny difference where it exists” and paint all non-British born individuals migrating into the country as one anonymous, incoming mass (Morrison, 2019). This strips these groups of their individual agency and identity (Morrison, 2019), dehumanises them (Esses et al, 2013) and as reported by Lumsden et al (2019) can contribute to increased hate crimes towards immigrants.

Framing during the referendum therefore saw a conflict constructed between a threatened “us” by a threatening, mass invading “them” (Van Dijk, 1997). Galasinska and Radziwnowiczowna (2021) argue that EU migrants were often referred to as ‘criminals’ posing a ‘threat’ to British sovereignty. Morrison (2019) further proposes dominant frames of ‘invaders’ and/or ‘exploiters’. Common discourse also centred around numbers of immigrants and repeatedly included terms such as ‘influx’, ‘swarm’ and ‘uncontrolled’, drawing on a long-standing tradition of villainization of migrants and foreigners (Looney, 2017).

2.4.2 Framing of migration post-Brexit and during COVID-19

Shortly following Brexit, previously dominantly anti-migrant framing saw a ‘discursive aftershock’ (Morrison, 2019. pg596). Morrison proposes this was an example of agenda-setting working in ‘reverse’, with two narrative strands emerging: a counter narrative referring to the end of free movement as an ‘economic disaster’ and emphasis on the effects of Brexit from *their* perspective, focusing on the uncertainty felt by many migrants who feared expulsion from a country they deem home. A frame of migrants as “assets” was noted (Sheffield, 2016 in Morrison, 2019). However, Morrison goes on to argue that 5 months following the vote these pro-migrant frames saw a discursive shift back towards anti-migrant, pre-Brexit stances, of ‘invaders’ and ‘exploiters’ (Morrison, 2019). Boyle (2021) further notes that coverage of immigration pre-COVID-19 was characterised by a lack of empathy and a sense of aggression, creating a “divisive enmity”. This

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reinforces Morrison's argument that whilst a discursive aftershock occurred shortly after Brexit as the country grappled with its decision, anti-immigration discourse returned not long after.

Boyle (2021) also argues that a frame of migrants as 'criminals' was found, with tactful mention of the police leading to an association between illegality and migration. He further proposes migrants to be commonly presented as threats to national security under a "public order" frame and again drawing on the perceived threat of numbers, migrants as an uncontrollable "mass" entering the country. A survey found that the average public guess regarding the total migrant population with Britain sat at 24%, well above the actual figure at the time of 14% (IPSOS MORI, 2018). This demonstrates the correlation between media rhetoric and its influence on public perception.

Boyle (2021) argues that when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, public opinion regarding migration changed. He argues that Britain showed "uncharacteristic" levels of support and appreciation, with the contributions of migrant workers during the crisis, particularly in the NHS, highlighted.

However, it's clear the situation was more complex. Whilst it's noted that more pro-migrant focuses on migration as 'assets' were seen, many underlying, hostile anti-migrant discursive tropes remained (Boyle, 2021). This renders it interesting to research specifically surrounding economic migration, and whether hostility or social cohesion dominated discussion surrounding seasonal workers being flown in to fill labour gaps during COVID.

Whilst a lot of research has focused on immigration as a whole, it is important to investigate how coverage surrounding economic migration specifically has changed, given the change in discourse patterns surrounding immigration and the increasingly celebrated contribution of migrant workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. The interwoven nature of the events of Brexit with free movement and economic migration and the events of COVID-19 and its impacts on economic migration

serves as an important case study of the power of the media during key political and social events, and media framing of certain demographics of the population across changing contexts.

2.4.3 Expected frame content

This section will give a short overview of the expected frame content based off previous research on EU referendums and attitudes towards the EU and immigration discussed. This follows Hertog and Mcleod's (2001) advice to model framing analysis on previous research in order to achieve a more focused structure.

This dissertation will categorise frames into 3 groups: anti-migration, pro-migration and neutral stances. In the period running up to Brexit, previous research into coverage suggests a number of representations, from imagined threats of public disorder and criminality (Radziwnowiczowna and Galasinska, 2021) to economic concerns surrounding pressures on jobs, the welfare state and public services (Balch and Balbanova, 2016). Research by Van Horne (2018) found frequent discourse surrounding immigration as a social burden, an economic burden and numbers of migrants in the country. Drawing on the framing of migration discussed previously, frames of 'criminals', 'invaders' and 'exploiters' were also common during the Brexit period (Morrison, 2019). Frames as such would fall into the anti-migration category. A 'discursive aftershock' occurred in the post-Brexit period whereby more pro-migration frames were prevalent, focusing on migrants as economic 'assets' and humanising migrants through publications from their perspective, frames which would fall under the pro-migration category. After 5 months anti-migrant framing returned, signifying the constant change and fluctuation in framing of migration. This makes it interesting to investigate trends across different political contexts over time.

Less research exists into framing of migration during the COVID-19 pandemic. As noted by Boyle (2021) anti-migrant discourse dominated prior to COVID-19, followed by a slight turn to pro-

migration rhetoric of ‘assets’ amidst an ongoing anti-migrant hostility. This provides a rough framework of what may be expected.

2.5 The research gap

After consideration of the literature, some research gaps become apparent within existing scholarly work. Within the context of framing of the EU Referendum, substantial research exists into migration. However, less research exists into the framing of economic migration, and even less so focusing on its change over time through changing political contexts. Morrison’s (2019) work previously introduced, establishes that dominant frames surrounding economic migration have seen discursive changes shortly post-Brexit. This emphasizes the need to analyse the possibility of long-term changes, over further time frames and contexts.

I will aim to contribute to this field of research by conducting an analysis of four national daily newspapers over a snapshot of three timeframes. The research questions this dissertation aims to answer are:

- What frames of economic migration can be seen in media coverage during the EU Referendum period?
- What frames of economic migration can be seen in a different political context of the COVID-19 pandemic?
- What changes and trends surrounding framing of economic migration can be seen over time, when considering these different political contexts?

3. Research Design and Methods

3.1. Overview

I will utilise a content analysis approach in my dissertation. At a basic level, Berger (1991) states that content analysis is utilised as a research method to assess the content of medium such as newspapers, magazines, films and books. Wimmen and Dommick (cited in Hansen and Machin, 2018) further describe content analysis as a technique for the system classification and description of communication content in line with predetermined categories. Content analysis allows for the assignment of numerical values to classify and reflect the news mediums' choice of words, metaphors or other methods within a chosen sample (Riffe et al, 2006) and the method has seen recent resurgence as a prominent component of framing research (Hansen and Machin, 2018. Tankard, 2001). It allows for the generation of systemic (Holsti, 1969), reliable and replicable (Krippendorff, 2013) observations in an unobtrusive manner. This will allow me to observe the wording, repetition and tone used by the media when referring to economic migration, and the scope of these over different time frames.

3.2. Methods

The following section will discuss the methods used to explore how the papers in my sample covered economic migration in the different contexts, both in terms of the scale of coverage (agenda-setting and salience) and the tone of coverage (framing).

To analyse how economic migration was framed in the media, a sample of four national newspapers was selected: *The Guardian*, *The Times*, *The Sun* and *The Daily Mail*. As mentioned previously, newspaper media showed a strong political bias during the EU Referendum period. Given the newspapers ability for agenda-setting and framing, a political bias will potentially influence public

opinion. These specific newspapers were also chosen due to their differing readerships, ultimately affecting public opinion across a wide spectrum of the electorate.

Table 1. Newspapers by type, monthly circulation, online views, political alignment and EU membership stance.

Newspaper	Format (<i>MagForum, 2017</i>)	Avg. monthly circulation, June 2016 (<i>Ponsford, 2016</i>)	Avg. daily online views, June 2016 (<i>Ponsford, 2016</i>)	Political alignment (<i>Smith, 2017</i>)	Stance on EU membership (<i>Firmstone, 2017. Ridley, 2016</i>)
The Guardian	Broadsheet	171,723	10,304,181	Fairly left	Remain
The Times	Quality compact	449,151	-	Centre/fairly right	Remain
The Sun	Tabloid	1,755,331	2,730,920	Fairly right	Leave
The Daily Mail	Middle market tabloid	1,548,349	15,053,614	Very right	Leave

It is useful to establish background information of the selected newspapers. Table 1 above presents the newspaper format (*MagForum, 2017*), average monthly circulation and daily online views in June 2016 (*Ponsford, 2016*), the perceived political alignment (*Smith, 2017*) and the newspapers stance on EU membership (*Firmstone, 2017. Ridley, 2016*). The newspapers selection was driven by need for representation of political alignment, seen in the table. It is interesting to note that The Times is a commonly perceived to be centre/fairly right wing leaning however during the EU Referendum, took a Remain stance. The table also provides a breakdown of the format: broadsheet, tabloid or mid-market. Broadsheet newspapers, such as The Guardian, are known for providing more serious, in-depth news. On the other hand, tabloids, such as The Sun, are characterised by more common gossip columns and frequent use of images, in a “something for everyone” approach (*Hughes, 2021*). Mid-Market newspapers sit in-between these two formats (such as The Daily

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Mail). This means they appeal to different readerships and segments of the population; Chan and Goldthorpe (2007) found a strong relationship between social status and newspaper type readership, with tabloid newspapers on average more commonly read by working class citizens and broadsheets more commonly by middle class readers (Nadkarni, 2011). With political and EU alignment representation being the driver for newspaper selection to represent the spectrum of opinion, newspaper format and popularity (avg. monthly circulation in table) was also considered. This is important as it will allow for analysis of any changes in framing of economic migration across newspapers of different stances, and whether these changes differed depending on the stance of the paper. Whilst the circulation and online view numbers differ, representation of political and EU membership alignment was a more important factor. All newspapers will be accessed through their online versions.

To elicit the trends in media coverage of economic migration across the selected newspapers, three snapshot time frames were selected. The data was sourced and downloaded using the Lexis Library database of all British news and online print publications, which provided access to a large amount of data. Following a significant amount of time spent to narrow down time potential time spans to allow for the most substantial data collection, the following periods and time spans were chosen to represent the contextual events discussed:

- 1) 19th June to 23rd June 2016 inclusive (the 5 days leading up to the vote)
- 2) 6th May 2018 to 19th May 2019 inclusive (14 days)
- 3) 15th April 2020 to 28th April 2020 inclusive (14 days following news breaking of planes of Eastern European workers flying to UK)

The first snapshot period corresponds to the 5 days leading up to the Referendum vote on 23rd June 2016. The second snapshot period was chosen to represent a 'normal' period: directly 12 months in

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between the Brexit and COVID timeframe. Whilst it is a post-Brexit period still dealing with referendum effects, it serves as a good ‘middle-ground’ period, with a political event breakdown naming the key events to occur in May 2018 as the 3rd May local elections and the 19th May Royal wedding (LBC, 2018). With train disruptions on 20th May also making it onto the list, it is perhaps safe to assume a reasonably ‘calm’ political atmosphere. The last timeframe was selected to represent the COVID-19 events, only a few months after the emergence of the virus when nations grappled with its effects. The specific period of 15th-28th April 2020 was chosen as this corresponds to the 14 days following news breaking of planes full of Eastern European workers being flown into the UK to fill workforce shortages amongst coronavirus panic. This is a particularly useful period as it encompasses not only the context of the pandemic, but also the interwoven nature of its events with free movement. Consideration was given towards bringing the first snapshot period to fall in line with the 14-day span of the other two, however given an initial database search for a period of 14 days, a total of 2474 articles were published across the four newspapers during this period, with 1015 on immigration. This was deemed too extensive given the scope of this dissertation. After further searches, it was decided a 5-day span generated a large enough, but more manageable, number of relevant articles for this research. This difference in time spans will be considered throughout the analysis, with results provided in relative percentages rather than total numbers to enable for cross comparison.

For the Brexit timeframe, relevant Referendum articles were sourced through a keyword term search of “*EU Referendum*”, “*Brexit*” and “*Referendum*”. For the ‘normal’ timeframe, all articles were searched to account for a normal context. For the COVID-19 timeframe, articles were narrowed down by keyword term search of “*COVID-19*”, “*COVID*”, “*coronavirus*” and “*pandemic*” to account for the COVID context. These were all then further narrowed down to the relevant timelines.

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Secondly, to narrow down to articles regarding immigration in each context and time frame, a keyword term search of “*immigration*”, “*migrant*”, “*migration*”, and relevant variations (see appendix), was conducted. At this stage, articles were manually filtered through to remove those irrelevant to immigration or duplicates. This couldn’t be done at the previous stage due to the sheer number of articles which emerged and the lack of feasibility due to being a sole researcher. Whilst not an extensive list, topics removed included articles referring to impacts of immigration law changes on Britons adopting foreign children, reference to migration matters and laws in other countries such as “Italy facing new elections after coalition talks collapse” in *The Times* (2018), immigration issues faced by Britons who had emigrated elsewhere, such as Spain or France, or mention of immigration and the EU as separate events. Final numbers of articles relevant to immigration for each newspaper and time frame were noted.

Lastly, to narrow down to articles specifically regarding economic migration in line with the focus of this dissertation, the datasets were further filtered with a key word search of “*economy*”, “*seasonal workers*”, “*fruit pickers*”, “*lorry drivers*”, “*HGV drivers*”, “*Eastern European*” and relevant variations (full list in Appendix). Less informal search terms of “*seasonal workers*”, “*fruit pickers*” and “*lorry drivers*” were selected to make sure all relevant articles were found, accounting for the potential of more colloquial language in some newspaper articles, and sourced.

For the purpose of framing analysis, given the large number of articles that emerged and the scale of researching 4 newspapers over 3 time periods, a sample of these articles was selected. After noting how many articles appeared for each column type per newspaper, it was deemed the sample would be narrowed down by only analysing articles from the “Politics” and “News” or “UK News” sections. This not only accounts for the limitations of being a sole researcher but allows for framing analysis outside of opinion pieces and editorials.

After filtering through my collected data sample, I reviewed the datasets on economic migration to identify the range of discursive positions and frames within the datasets. Frames found through the literature review were noted and kept in mind as a guideline, whilst a read-through was conducted of all sampled articles to identify emergence of any further frames. A spreadsheet codebook was created, noting each mention of migration, free movement and relevant economic migration search terms. Frames were noted once even if they appeared in an article on numerous occasions. Each frame that occurred in an article was also recorded, meaning one article could have a number of distinct frames, allowing for the coexistence of numerous frames within an article. The analysis will look at the changes of attitudes towards economic migration over different political contexts, and will focus on anti-migration, pro-migration and neutral stances. Anti-migration stances were determined if frames such as ‘numbers’, ‘economic cost’ and ‘social burden’ dominated the article. For pro-migration stances, reoccurring frames noted were ‘economic assets’, ‘necessary’ and ‘humanised’. The full list of frames can be found in the appendix and will be discussed next.

The following findings section will discuss how the four newspapers in my sample covered economic migration throughout different political contexts from Brexit to COVID-19, looking firstly at the scale of coverage, *agenda setting*, and then the *framing* of coverage.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Agenda Setting

As previously introduced, McCombs, Shaw and Weaver (1997) suggest that media framing serves as an extension of agenda setting. Therefore, it is useful to first analyse the agenda setting of newspaper coverage of economic migration throughout the varying contexts. Firstly, articles for each relevant context were filtered with immigration key term searches (breakdown of all terms in appendix), alongside any relevant substitutes eg migrant / migrants. Results were manually filtered to remove duplicates or irrelevant articles. Total numbers of articles on immigration per newspaper

and time period were noted and can be seen in the table below. To establish the agenda-setting and salience, the newspapers in this sample currently include all relevant columns such as politics, news, business, environment, society, with only ones deemed irrelevant such as Australian News or US News removed as they referred to foreign immigration matters.

Table 2. Newspaper coverage of immigration and proportion of it as economic migration, by newspaper and time period.

Newspaper	Brexit period (19/06/2016-23/06/2016)			Normal period (06/05/2018-19/05/2018)			Covid period (15/04/2020-28/04/2020)		
	<i>Total on I</i>	<i>EM</i>	<i>% on EM</i>	<i>Total on I</i>	<i>EM</i>	<i>% on EM</i>	<i>Total on I</i>	<i>EM</i>	<i>% on EM</i>
<i>The Guardian</i>	123	99	80%	71	37	52.1%	27	16	59.2%
<i>The Times</i>	55	39	70.9%	51	21	41.1%	15	7	46.7%
<i>The Sun</i>	53	37	69.8%	27	2	7%	8	4	50%
<i>The Daily Mail</i>	40	28	70%	35	14	40%	8	5	62.5%
Total	271	203	74.9%	184	74	40.2%	58	32	55.2%

*The sample size for the Sun during the normal period is relatively small, with only 2 results. This could be due to the search terms potentially not catching all relevant articles. However, given the scope of this dissertation this still allowed for good analysis.

The above table shows a breakdown of total articles on immigration per newspaper and period, and how many of these focused specifically on economic migration. To filter for articles on economic migration, search terms of (in appendix) were filtered for, also accounting for relevant substitutes. As shown in the table, the Brexit period had a total of 271 articles on immigration across the four newspapers, 203 of which were on economic migration (74.9%). In the normal period, a drop can be seen with 40.2% of articles on immigration focusing on economic migration. Whilst total numbers cannot be compared due to the differing length of time frames, 184 articles were released on immigration and 74 on economic migration in 14 days in the 2018 normal context, whereas a total of 271 on immigration and 203 on economic migration were released in just 5 days in the run up to Brexit. During the COVID period, whilst there is substantially less articles on both

immigration and economic migration than in the 2018 normal period, an increase can be seen in the percentage of these focusing on economic migration, with 55.2%. This suggests economic migration was a more common topic of immigration conversation during COVID than in the Normal period, although still not as large as the 74.9% of the Brexit period.

Alongside the number of articles released surrounding economic migration, it is useful to also explore the number of words per article and headline as measurements of salience attached to the issue (McCombs, 2014). As later framing research draws on a sub-sample from just the Politics and News sections, analysis to explore the number of words per article and headline was also conducted from this sub-sample as it makes the data more manageable given restrictions of being a sole researcher. Analysis was conducted of all articles across the 4 newspapers from the Politics and News sections. To represent articles published within the wider contexts of each time frame, a sample of 10 articles was selected from also the politics and news sections, to analyse article and headline lengths and allow for a comparison. Table 3 below showcases the results.

Table 3. Average article and headline lengths (words) of (a sample of) all articles within the period context, and economic migration.

Period	All		Economic migration	
	<i>Article avg</i>	<i>Headline avg</i>	<i>Article avg</i>	<i>Headline avg</i>
<i>Brexit</i>	1025	10.5	905	9.9
<i>Normal</i>	520	7.8	567	7.6
<i>Covid</i>	938	8.7	720	9.9

Analysing average articles lengths first, Table 3 shows that average lengths of articles given the broader political contexts and specifically economic migration are reasonably comparable in lengths. Whilst for both the Brexit period and COVID period articles are slightly shorter (110 and 218 words shorter, respectively), they remain within a similar scope of length. Articles published within the normal political context averaged 520 words, with articles surrounding economic

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migration in this period averaging 567 words. This means articles regarding economic migration were on average longer in length. Whilst worth noting, this again is a small length difference. Looking at change over time throughout the contexts, a trend emerges of average article lengths surrounding economic migration peaking at an average of 905 words during Brexit, dipping down to an average of 567 words during the normal period and climbing back up to 720 words during the COVID period. In line with Dickerson (1985) who asserts that article size reflects how important a newspaper deems an issue to be, this suggests economic migration was unsurprisingly the most salient during the Brexit period, the least salient during the normal period, and climbed back, although not matching the pre-Brexit vote levels, during the COVID period.

Newspaper media utilise an array of tools to shape what the public should deem as important to think *about*. Another key method of achieving this is through newspaper titles. These are important, as they are the first thing seen by readers therefore likely to grab attention. As proposed by McCombs (2014), the length of article headlines can play a part in emphasizing the importance of the topic. Table 6 in the appendix gives a breakdown of average article headline lengths (again, of a sample of 10) surrounding each broad context, compared with average headline lengths surrounding economic migration during the same period. Average headline lengths surrounding Brexit stood at 10.5 words, with those on economic migration at 9.9 words. During the normal context, broader article headline lengths stood at 7.8 words, with those on economic migration at 7.6 words. For the COVID context this trend stood at 8.7 words vs 9.9 words. Again, these are reasonably comparable with the exception of the COVID period whereby headline lengths surrounding economic migration were higher, suggesting the issue was of high saliency. Average headline lengths of economic migration also follow a similar pattern of change over contexts, with a high during the Brexit period, a lower dip during the normal period and a high, this time matching that of the Brexit period, during Covid.

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Another useful measure of saliency would focus on how many words were in bold writing within the titles (McCombs, 2014) however as a limitation of working with a dataset downloaded from an online archive, this is not something that was visible therefore could not be analysed. Immigration and economic migration being of highest saliency during the Brexit period is unsurprising, given the perceived importance attached to the issue as a key driver of Brexit.

Therefore, newspapers are able to set the agenda on what the public should *think about*. However, they are also able to suggest to the public *how* they should think about these issues. The next section will analyse the framing, pro-migration, neutral or anti-migration of the four newspapers sampled, any potential changes in these framing approaches over different contexts and discuss some of the frames prevalent.

4.2 Framing

The sample of articles used to analyse the framing in different contexts was narrowed down to the 'Politics' and 'News' sections. After an initial search including all other categories, these categories were deemed to provide a more manageable yet still suitable dataset to analyse, given the limitations of being a sole researcher. They were deemed the most suitable due to the political nature of discussing economic migration and also the 'News' and 'Politics' section showing to be the most common, but still managing to reduce the dataset. This also allowed for analysis outside of editorials and opinion pieces, known for their critical nature.

Table 4. Breakdown of main stances towards economic migration of newspapers for each contextual period.

<i>Period</i>	<i>Pro-migration</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Anti-migration</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Brexit</i>	30.9% (17)	30.9% (17)	38.2% (21)	55
<i>Normal</i>	25.8% (8)	38.7% (12)	35.5% (11)	35
<i>Covid</i>	46.6% (7)	40% (6)	13.3% (2)	15

The above table shows a breakdown of the stance taken by the sample of newspapers across the different time periods selected. The codebook (in appendix) shows the breakdown of the framing which constituted anti-migration and pro-migration. A neutral stance of the article was determined if either no stance was clear or able to be determined, or if the breakdown of anti-migration and pro-migration discourse was equally balanced, meaning the piece was relatively neutral or simply giving a balanced breakdown of both sides of the argument.

Referring to the table above, the row correlating to the Brexit period shows that 38.2% of articles on economic migration published during this period saw an overall anti-migration discursive stance, meaning anti-migration frames dominated the articles. A number of the neutral articles also discussed free movement negatively, however they either didn't adopt the anti-migration stance directly or it was counter-narrated by a positive argument for economic migration. The percentage of articles during this period with a pro-migration stance and a neutral stance stand at the same level, with 30.9% each. These findings mirror those of Morrison (2019), who argued newspaper coverage during the period of the direct run up to the Brexit vote was dominantly anti-migration.

A change can be seen in the next snapshot period 2 years following the vote, spanning from 6th May 2018 until 19th May 2018. Data seen in the second row of table 4 shows that the dominant discursive stance towards migration is a neutral stance, with 38.7% of the articles published during this period. This slightly overtook the anti-migration stance, which dropped down to 35.5% of the sample articles. The proportion of articles with a pro-migration stance also dropped, with this stance running as the least common during this period at 25.8% of articles. As can be seen in this period either side of the stance, both anti-migration and pro-migration stances saw a percentage drop,

potentially suggesting strong sentiments towards economic migration were less prevalent during this period, with newspaper publications most likely to take a neutral, less opinionated stance.

The final timeframe situated during the first few months of the emergence of COVID-19 as a global issue, when global public health and free movement dominated the public agenda, surrounds the dates of 15th April 2020 to 28th April 2020. Results from this period show an interesting shift, with pro-migration narratives dominating the discursive stance of this period, standing at nearly half of all publications sampled (46.6%). This is very closely followed by a neutral stance which appeared in 40% of publications; the dominance of pro-migration frames closely followed by a neutral stance, combined with the fact only 13.3% of articles were dominantly anti-migration suggests a strong shift towards more positive portrayals of free movement and economic migration during this period. This is particularly interesting as given the fact that this period closely follows the news of planes of Romanian seasonal workers being flown into Britain, this suggests newspaper coverage was largely in favour of this decision, despite being predominantly anti free movement 4 years prior.

A breakdown of article positions by specific newspapers for every snapshot period can be seen in the appendix (Tables 9, 10 and 11). It is worth noting that The Times, typically known to be more conservative in political alignment but outright adopted a Remain stance during Brexit, to the surprise of many, saw a particularly interesting pattern. During the Brexit period publications were dominantly (80%) neutral on the topic of free movement and economic migration, with only 20% pro-migration. During the normal snapshot frame, the neutral stance remained dominant, although dropping down to 50%, with 37.5% pro-migration and 12.5% anti-migration. It is already interesting that despite adopting a Remain stance on the Referendum debate, The Times seems to be less pro-migration and more neutral than its pro-Remain counterpart, The Guardian. What is most interesting, is that during the Covid frame when pro-migration framing dominated the publications

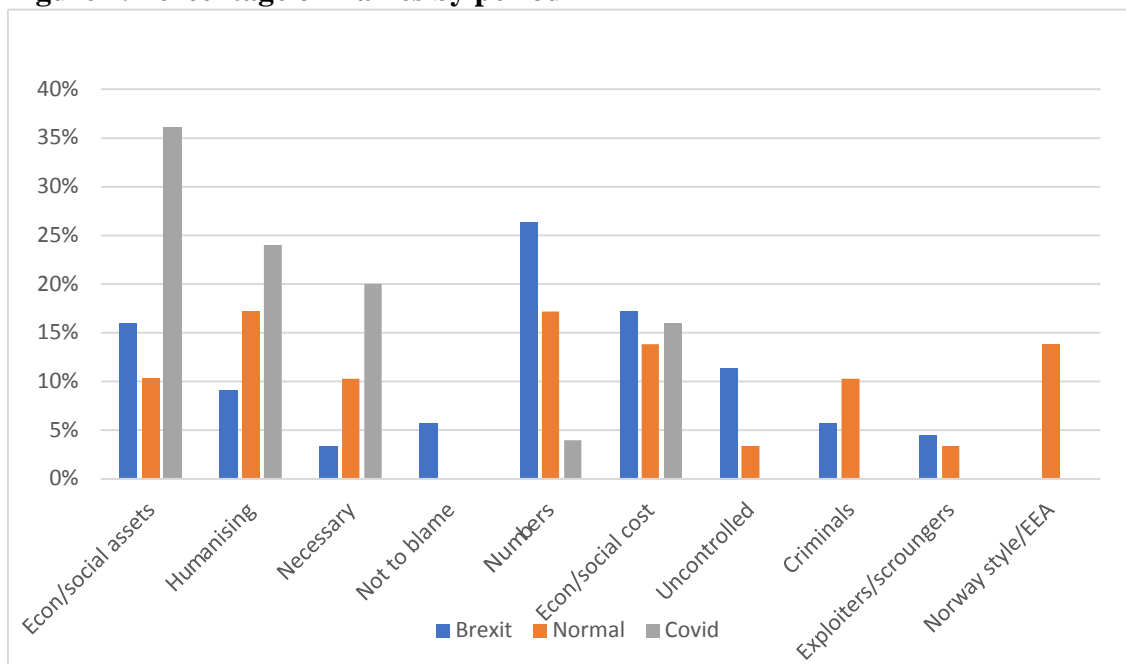
sampled, with even previously dominantly anti-migration Daily Mail now framing free movement in more favourable terms, The Times remained strictly neutral. This perhaps suggests there were other factors at play which drove the paper to a pro-Remain stance, and it wasn't pro-migration sentiments.

Analysis therefore shows that anti-migration discourse was most common during the immediate run up to the Brexit vote, shifting to a neutral stance during a 'normal' context. In the context of COVID-19 when free movement of seasonal workers was a point of discussion, migration discourse shows to have shifted towards a more positive and pro-free movement stance.

4.3 Framing over changing contexts

In order to explain these patterns further, it is useful to explore exactly how free movement and migrants were framed, and how the framing of coverage shifted throughout these contexts. Frames were selected with expected frame content from the literature review in mind, whilst inductively reading through all articles to allow for any other emergent themes to be noted.

Figure 1. Percentage of frames by period



The above graph succinctly presents the findings regarding the percentage of frames prevalent, by time period for easy comparison. A breakdown of these by time period and specific newspapers can also be found in the Appendix (figures 2, 3 and 4).

The most common frame adopted by the newspaper media sampled during the immediate run up to the Brexit vote was a dominant focus on ‘numbers’ (26.4%), referring to the amounts of migrants coming into Britain from the EU. Often casting one homogenous net over migrants utilising free movement granted by EU membership, just as many British citizens utilised it to migrate into the EU as free movement operates both ways, with non-EU migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, in what Morrison (2019) stated was denying difference where it exists. Common terminology across articles with a reference to numbers of migrants referred to an “influx” (The Sun, 21/06/16. Daily Mail, 20/06/16), “mass” (Daily Mail, 23/06/16), “skyhigh” (The Sun, 20/06/16) and even “engulfed” (The Sun, 22/06/16), suggesting an almost invasive and destructive character. These findings mirror that of Morrison (2019), who also drew attention to the prevalence of “influx” and “mass” terminology in reference to numbers of migrants/ The hostile portrayal of migrants entering Britain as one “mass” attempting to invasively “engulf” Britain draws on the “us-vs-them” rhetoric, as Van Dijk (1997, pp61-62) argued painting migrants coming into Britain as an invasive “them”, threatening the civilised, ‘indigenous’ “British” people. The Sun (19/06/16) went as far as stating that “no nation can accommodate literally limitless numbers of newcomers”, a bold claim when considering estimates of new migrant workers in the economy are around 170,000-190,000 a year, which is hardly “engulfing” or “limitless”, given a 2016 economy workforce size of 31.76 million (ONS, 2016). This discrepancy between the dominating framing of migration in terms of numbers, and the large public perception of it as an issue compared to the small-scale reality of the issue draws on the idea that the ‘threat’ of immigration is not of actual immigration, but rather ‘imagined’ immigration (Blinder, 2015).

Looking further at the Brexit time period, the second highest framing of discourse surrounding free movement was the reference to economic migrants as an 'economic cost', with 17.2% of discursive approaches drawing on this idea. This included referring to the economic disadvantages caused by free movement of migrants, the monetary cost of migrants in Britain or the effect of immigration on 'indigenous' British workers. Articles referring to the monetary costs of migrants in Britain portrayed them as a "huge drain" (Daily Mail, 2016) not only stating that "unskilled [migrants] cost £6bn" as The Sun (21/06/16) headline claimed but went as far as stating that "unskilled EU migrants cost each British family more than £200 a year" (Daily Mail, 21/06/16). Firstly, this sensationalised claim was dispelled by research conducted by Oxford Economics (2018), who claimed after calculations, the value of migration is "equivalent to putting approximately 5p on income tax rates, across all marginal rate bands". Again, this merely draws on the idea of the 'imagined' threat of immigration. Secondly, it is an attempt not only to bridge a further gap between the British "us" and "them", but an attempt to take the perceived issue of immigration past an economic problem of the nation, to a personal problem of every 'ordinary' British family, claiming each is personally paying the price for EU immigration. To further portray it as a personal problem, particularly so to working class Brits, a number claimed EU immigration was the reason many were facing unemployment or lower wages (Daily Mail, 22/06/16).

It is important to note, both the frames of 'numbers' and 'economic costs' appeared predominantly in the pro-Leave papers The Daily Mail and The Sun. The dominance of this frame in the run up to the Brexit vote and the prevalence of it in the pro-Leave newspapers is hardly surprising giving the heavy focus of the Leave campaign on portraying migrants as an incoming swarm, not only through rhetoric but also visual means such as the infamous 'Breaking Point' poster. Attempts to appeal to working class Brits through more personalised claims of economic migration directly affecting their job opportunities, was perhaps an attempt by some newspaper media to sway public opinion in a part of the electorate that felt marginalised by the effects of globalisation and EU membership,

appealing to a sense of nationalism and desire to claim back what is theirs. Similarly, it's argued some previously Labour-leaning working class voters felt a sense of abandonment by the party, who now attempted to appeal to more middle-class voters. Given the fact The Sun and Daily Mail are tabloid and mid-market tabloid newspapers, therefore as mentioned have a correlation to a working class readership(Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007), this was perhaps an attempt to resonate personally with issues of readers in an attempt to evoke or sway opinion.

Interestingly, the third most common frame of discourse surrounding free movement contradicted that of migrants as an economic cost, instead asserting the economic and social benefit of free movement and migrants as an economic asset. This dominantly came from the more pro-Remain newspaper The Guardian within the sample: again, although pro-Remain, the economic asset frame appeared in The Times only once- the same number of times as in the dominantly anti-migration The Sun. Discussion surrounding economic migration as an economic asset during this period is particularly interesting, as a clear trend emerges of reference dominantly to *highly-skilled* migration. Many of the same articles previously discussing the drain and cost of unskilled economic migration, particularly in The Sun and the Daily Mail, went on to note the economic boost offered by highly-skilled EU migration. An article in the Daily Mail (21/06/16) complained about the bad treatment by immigration authorities of “incredible individuals whom we ought to have welcomed with a red carpet”, with the likes of Indian investors and high-spending individuals from China, stating they were “harassed” and “treated like second-class citizens”. This is a peculiar comment, as given the anti-migration stance of The Daily Mail and common reference to the cost of unskilled EU migration, such defence of “skilled”, or with the examples given what is more alluded to is that they are simply rich or high net-worth, states that they don't deserve hostile treatment. This therefore suggests that unskilled migrants and those in lower paid jobs are either deserving of this treatment, or simply undeserving of being defended against it. It is safer to assume the latter as, as previously highlighted, the Daily Mail itself labelled them a “huge drain”. Mention of economic

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migration as an economic asset however on occasion did acknowledge the contribution of immigration towards boosting GDP growth, aiding Britain in globalisation and the extent to which eastern European workers were embedded in London cultural life. These references all emerged from the *The Guardian* (22/06/16, 22/06/16 and 20/06/16 respectively).

Further negative frames deployed during the pre-Referendum Brexit period included reference to the social burden caused by immigration, placing huge pressure on education, housing systems, hospitals and roads (*The Sun*, 22/6/16) and free movement as “uncontrolled”, with reference to the government’s lack of control over EU migration (*The Sun*, 23/06/16). Mentions of “uncontrolled” free movement accounted for 11.4% of framing noted during the Brexit period and with 5.7% and 4.5% also drawing on migrants as criminals and scroungers or exploiters, respectively. It is worth noting however that whilst coverage was dominated by anti-migration sentiments and framing, “humanising” (9.1%), “not to blame” (5.7%) and “necessary” (3.4%) discourse was also found, although less frequent. Articles humanising migrants acknowledged the feelings of rejection Eastern European migrants must be feeling due to Brexit, along with the acknowledgement that migration is a necessary component of some sectors of the job market such as seasonal work, unlikely to be taken up by British workers (*Daily Mail*, 21/05/16). The acknowledgement of the necessity of seasonal migrant workers during the Brexit period is interesting, given the rise of the issue surrounding lack of seasonal workers during the upcoming COVID period. Interesting to note also is that whilst only a small fraction of the frames present, the focus on immigration not being to blame but instead a need to focus on the conservative government and its spending cuts arose a few times; this suggests the awareness of some that immigration was merely a scapegoat or proxy for wider issues prevalent in Britain at the time, alluding to the fact that perhaps not everyone bought into the ‘imagined’ threat of immigration.

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To summarise, the Brexit period was dominated by anti-migration frames with a framing focus on numbers of migrants entering the nation and the economic and social cost of this. Whilst discussion was also commonly framed in terms of economic benefits, this came almost as a double-edged sword only accounting for high-skilled migration, at the expense of minimal defence of low-skilled migrants.

The framing of migration in the normal period saw a more neutral stance, with a decreased frequency of both negative and positive frames in favour of a more middle-stance approach. During this period, the most prevalent frame mirrored that of the Brexit period, with 17.2% focusing on numbers. Whilst most common, this is a lower percentage than the 26.4% during the Brexit period and when looking at actual numbers, the amount of articles is significantly lower (even when accounting for a difference in time frame lengths). Contrastingly however, the second most common frame was “humanising” making up 17.2% of all frames found. The uncertainty faced by many migrants from the European Union following Brexit was acknowledged (The Times, 16/05/2018), along with a focus on “unlawful” deportation of homeless EU migrants (Daily Mail, 14/05/2018). Migrants were given a voice as part of the articles, highlighting their struggles and experiences in a post-Brexit vote country, and with a focus on the hostile treatment by immigration services, their treatment as second-class citizens highlighted. This is surprising, as the focus on hostile treatment of homeless European migrants was published by the Daily Mail, whom had previously during the Brexit period referred only to the hostile treatment of high-skilled migrants. This perhaps suggests over time, a sensitisation to the experiences of migrants in Britain following a long period of hostility. Interestingly, the issues surrounding the Settlement Scheme were also discussed, with an article in The Guardian (06/05/2018) stating the Home Office was “abusing its power” resulting in over 1,000 migrants wrongly facing deportation. The next most common framing approach focused on migrants as economic and social costs again, with 13.8% of all frames

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found accounting for this. This is again lower than the percentage during the Brexit period of 17.2%.

Interesting to note from the normal contextual period is a publication by The Guardian (16/05/2018) drawing on the experience of a vegetable farmer who's asparagus was sourced for the upcoming royal wedding. The article focuses on the necessity of seasonal migrants for the farming of the produce, with the farmer declaring he has been struggling as he is typically completely reliant upon seasonal workers for his picking work. He goes as far to suggest "there is not the technology to pick asparagus with robots", nodding to the necessity and irreplaceability of seasonal workers from the EU. This article provides an interesting scenario: the very European workers whose free movement into the UK as part of the EU was voted against, were necessary to the preparations for the Royal wedding, the years "biggest TV event" watched by 18 million Brits (Waterson, 2018). Worth mentioning is a short piece published in the Daily Mail (13/05/2018) named "Robocrop", which claimed a robot was in the last stages of production labelled a "potential saviour" of seasonal migrant labour decreases following Britain's exit from the EU. This serves almost as a justification for the negative portrayal of immigration as an economic cost, suggesting there are more efficient ways of replacing it. Given the upcoming issues surrounding a lack of seasonal agricultural workers from the EU and a focus on the crops lost, we can perhaps assume the 'Robocrop' wasn't actually a saviour.

The COVID-19 context saw a substantial shift towards pro-migration stances, with framing of migration as economic and social assets, humanising migrants and highlighting the necessity of migrant labour dominating free movement discussion. The most common frame during this period was economic and social assets, standing at 36%, the highest percentage dominance of a frame across any contextual period. Two main reasons for the highlighting of economic migration as a benefit were noted: firstly, the appreciation of the role played by migrants in the NHS, with the

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Daily Mail (24/04/2020) noting that “many selflessly caring for our sick are migrants”. Secondly and more commonly, the benefits of economic migration to seasonal, agricultural and low-wage work dominated the discussion within this frame. A headline in *The Times* (27/04/2020) called for an “SOS for army of fruit pickers”. The same articles referred to mobile labour as “critical”, along with statements that overseas workers “must” be flown in in order to aid in fruit picking, otherwise fields will rot. Further articles also point out that due to shortages of lorry drivers, deliveries of food and products cannot keep up with public demand (*The Times*, 27/04/2020). The discourse used suggests that rather than simply economic assets, migrant workers are almost a necessity to certain areas of the economy. During the context of COVID, free movement was restricted for public health reasons, only compounding the labour shortage which began to emerge following the post-Brexit ‘exodus’ of migrants. Therefore, the effects of a labour shortage were being publicly felt. Panic buying due to public fear surrounding the virus increased demand. Combined with a labour shortage of seasonal workers to pick the produce and a shortage of lorry drivers to distribute it decreasing the supply, the effects could be seen and felt by Britain from empty shelves in supermarkets to store closures (Wearden, 2021). Therefore, whilst these references fell under the economic and social asset frame as they asserted the economic benefit of migration, they are perhaps of a different nature to the economic and social asset frames deployed during the Brexit period. Whilst during the Brexit period, reference to migrants as assets took on a more defensive tone, often directly opposing or attempting to contradict the anti-migration argument of them as economic costs, during the COVID period it appears as more of a “told you so” situation, more heavily asserting the need for the economic benefits brought by EU migrants, rather than only discussing it as a defence to attacks on their economic worth. The negative impacts of a migrant labour shortage are being felt, with farmers struggling to fill the labour gaps, therefore this seems less defensive, and more assertive.

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Similarly interesting to note, is the appearance of the economic and social asset frame during the COVID has shifted from its use in the Brexit and normal period: rather than focusing largely on the economic benefits of highly skilled labour, during the COVID period it's largely low skilled economic migrants who are discussed in terms of economic assets, away from the previous discourse focus of economic burdens. Even discussion surrounding the extension of visas for NHS migrant workers acknowledged that the current extension laws do not apply to NHS cleaners or porters, too playing a key part in the social fight against the pandemic (The Guardian, 21/04/2020). The treatment of healthcare workers during COVID perhaps largely came into the spotlight following the hospitalisation of Boris Johnson who fell ill with coronavirus, and after his public return thanked the foreign-born healthcare staff who aided in his recovery (Washington Post, 2020).

The second most dominant frame (24%) is the "humanising" frame, with articles acknowledging concerns about migrants appropriate healthcare during the pandemic, and the "severe financial and health consequences for migrant household" (The Guardian, 21/04/2020). This is particularly important as it acknowledges the issues faced by migrants during the pandemic, such as the increased financial insecurity for reasons like being less likely to receive furlough payments due to zero-hour agency work or issues such as many migrants being to worries to access healthcare, even if they fall severely ill, due to the effects of the hostile NHS policy and general post-Brexit migrant hostility.

Therefore, during the COVID period, newspapers sampled saw a large shift towards pro-migration and neutral stances. If acknowledging the "chicken and egg" approach of media influencing public attitudes, or media simply reflecting public attitudes, this perhaps reinforces Abrams et al (2020) argument that during the coronavirus pandemic, social cohesion and mutual support beyond "us" and "them" could be seen. The media's focus on humanising and framing of migrants as social

assets also reinforced Boyle's (2021) previous argument that during COVID, "uncharacteristic" levels of appreciation and support towards migrants were seen.

5. Conclusions

In conclusion, news framing is able to contribute towards shaping public opinion, particularly during times of heightened political significance. During political events such as Referendums, or socio-political events such as global pandemics and their management by governments, newspaper press can play a part in setting the agenda of what is important to think about and steer the direction in how the public should think about it. With anti-migration stances most common during the Brexit period, framing of discourse surrounding economic migration with a focus on numbers and migrants as economic costs was most prevalent. Whilst framing of migrants as economic assets was the next most common, this was almost a faux positive- whilst on the surface a pro-migration frame, during this period it's use was dominantly only in reference to highly-skilled migrants. Upon consideration of a different political context for which little research into framing of economic migration exists, and to answer the second research question, a number of findings can be noted. Firstly, a substantial shift away from anti-migration stances towards pro-migration and neutral stances can be seen. Upon further exploration, the most common framing of discourse surrounding economic migration focusing on migrants, this time low-skilled migrants, as economic assets to the NHS and largely the agricultural industry. Over time, in line with the final research question, a shift can be seen away from anti-migration stances during a highly politically charged time focused on migration, towards the recognition of the benefits and necessity of economic migration in a time of a public crisis. Given the limitations of this being a short, sole research piece further and more extensive research, perhaps with larger sample sizes, into this would be fruitful.

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APPENDIX

Table 5. Search terms for contexts and topics.

Content	Terms searched
Brexit context	EU Referendum OR Referendum OR Brexit
Normal context	All articles.
COVID-19 context	Covid-19 OR COVID OR Coronavirus OR Pandemic
Immigration	immigration OR immigrants OR migrants OR migrant OR free movement OR migration
Economic migration	economy OR economic OR seasonal workers OR fruit pickers OR lorry drivers OR Polish OR Romanian OR Bulgarian OR Eastern European OR HGV drivers

Table 6. Average article and headline lengths (words) of articles by timeframe across The Guardian, The Times, The Daily Mail and The Sun.

Period	All *(sample of 10 for each newspaper)		Economic migration	
	Article avg	Headline avg	Article avg	Headline avg
<i>Brexit</i>	1025	10.5	905	9.9
<i>Normal</i>	520	7.8	567	7.6
<i>Covid</i>	938	8.7	720	9.9

Table 7. Stance towards economic migration of newspapers by timeframe.

Period	Pro-migration	Neutral	Anti-migration	Total
<i>Brexit</i>	30.9% (17)	30.9% (17)	38.2% (21)	55
<i>Normal</i>	25.8% (8)	38.7% (12)	35.5% (11)	35
<i>Covid</i>	46.6% (7)	40% (6)	13.3% (2)	15

Table 8. Number of articles in politics/news sub-sample per newspaper and timeframe.

<i>Newspaper</i>	<i>Brexit</i>	<i>Normal</i>	<i>Covid</i>
<i>The Guardian</i>	20	10	6
<i>The Times</i>	10	8	5
<i>The Sun</i>	15	1	2
<i>The Daily Mail</i>	10	12	2

Table 9. Newspapers and their economic migration stances during the Brexit timeframe.

Brexit (19/06/2016- 23/06/2016)	Stance		
	<i>Pro-migration</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Anti-migration</i>
<i>The Guardian</i>	70% (14)	30% (6)	0
<i>The Times</i>	20% (2)	80% (8)	0
<i>The Sun</i>	6.6% (1)	13.3% (2)	80% (12)
<i>The Daily Mail</i>	0	10% (1)	90% (9)
Total (55 articles)	30.9% (17)	30.9% (17)	38.2% (21)

Table 10. Newspapers and their economic migration stances during the Normal timeframe.

Normal (06/05/2018- 19/05/2018)	Stance		
	<i>Pro-migration</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Anti-migration</i>
<i>The Guardian</i>	50% (5)	50% (5)	0
<i>The Times</i>	37.5% (3)	50% (4)	12.5% (1)
<i>The Sun</i>	0	25% (3)	75% (9)
<i>The Daily Mail</i>	0	0	100% (1)
Total (31 articles)	25.8% (8)	38.7% (12)	35.5% (11)

Table 11. Newspapers and their economic migration stances during the Covid-19 timeframe.

Covid (15/04/2020- 28/04/2020)	Stance		
	Pro- migration	Neutral	Anti- migration
<i>The Guardian</i>	5	1	0
<i>The Times</i>	0	5 (100%)	0
<i>The Sun</i>	0	0	100% (2)
<i>The Daily Mail</i>	2	0	0
Total (15 articles)	46.6% (7)	40% (6)	13.3% (2)

Figure 2. Brexit timeframe: Frames per paper.

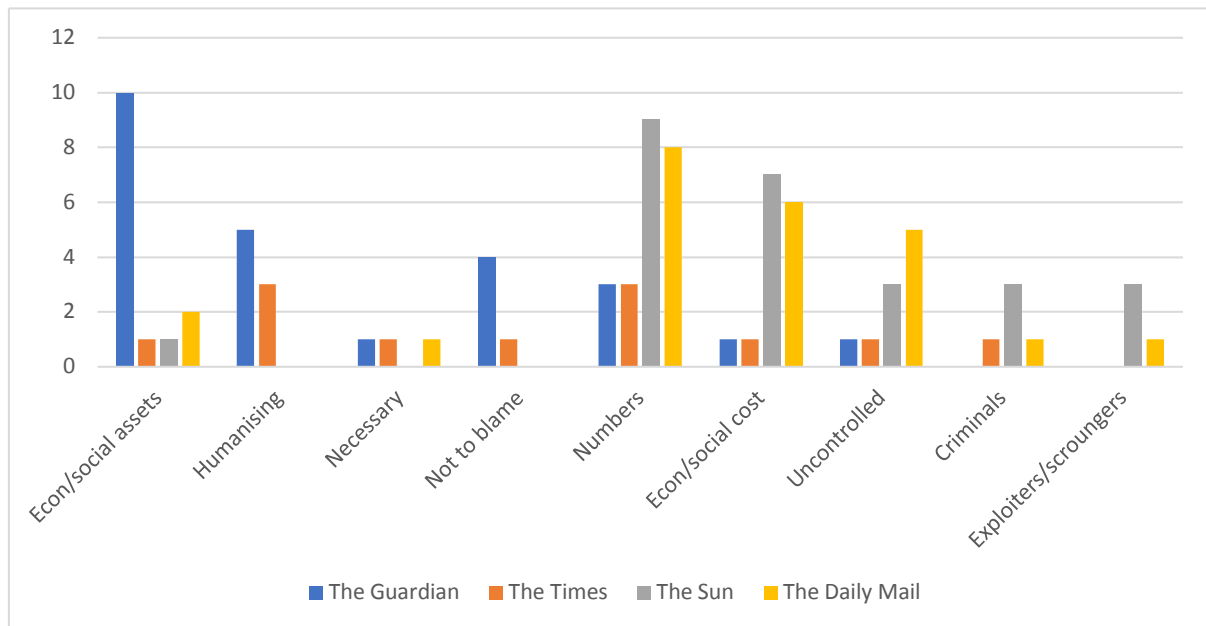


Figure 3. Normal timeframe: Frames per paper.

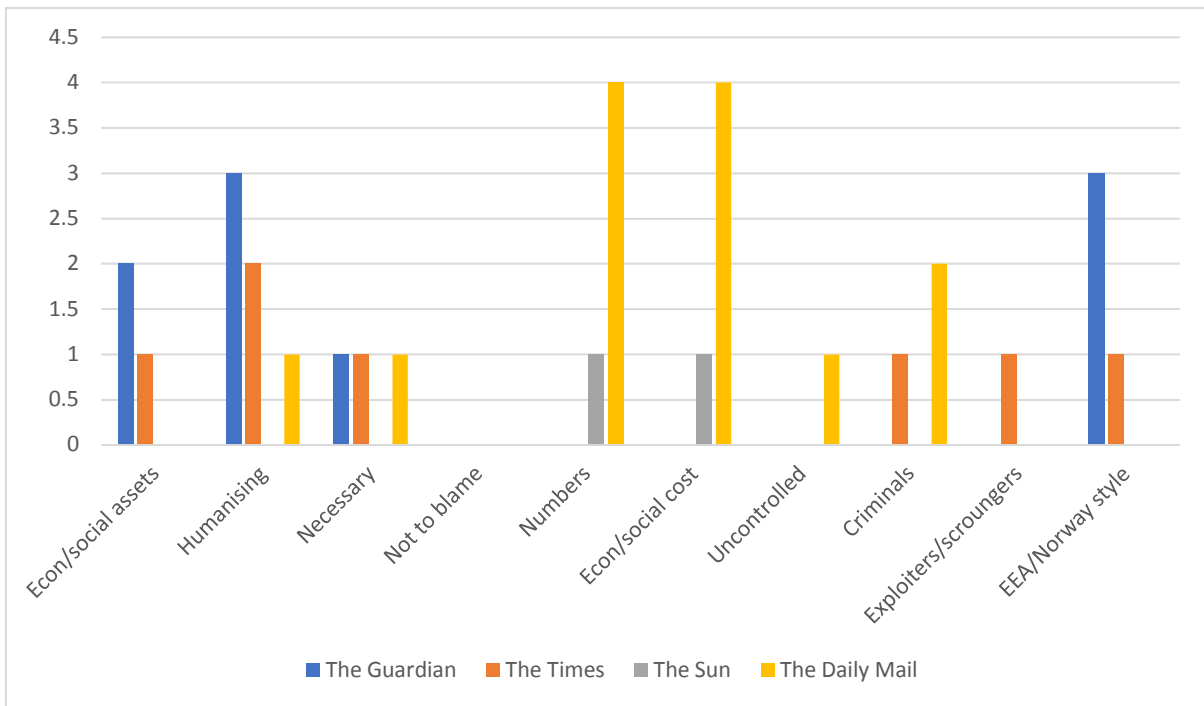
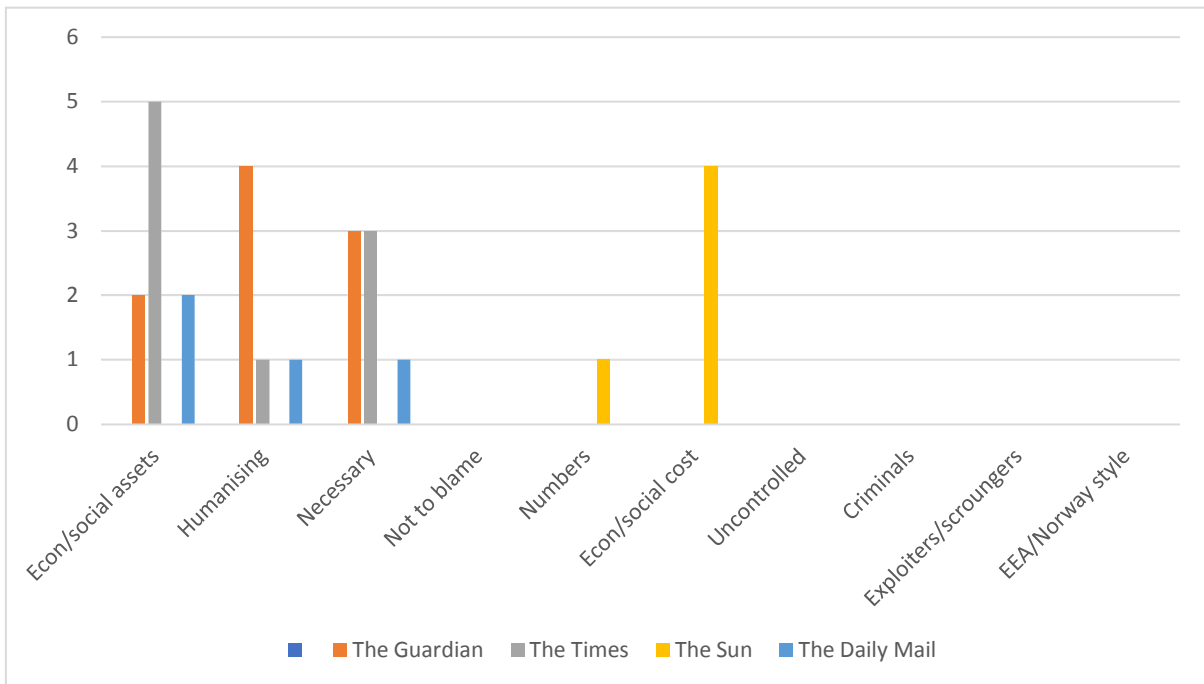


Figure 4. Covid timeframe: frames per paper.



CODEBOOK

Anti-migration

Code/Frame	Definition	Example
<i>Numbers</i>	Reference to the numbers of migrants entering Britain.	“influx” (The Sun, 22/06/16. Daily Mail 21/06/16) “surge” (Daily Mail, 10/05/18) “mass” (Daily Mail, 20/06/16), “engulfed” (The Sun, 22/06/2016), “skyhigh” (The Sun, 20/06/16)
<i>Economic cost</i>	Reference to the monetary cost of migrants in Britain, the effect of immigration on wages of British workers or a general reference to an economic disadvantage caused by free movement of migrants.	“Unskilled [migrants] cost £6bn” (Headline by The Sun, 21/06/16) “Up to 4 million British people cannot get the work they want because of cheap foreign labour” (Daily Mail, 17/05/18)
<i>Social burden/cost</i>	Reference to pressure on communities or pressure on social provisions.	“Without controlling EU migration our health, education, transport and housing systems are under huge pressure” “[migrants are] flooding Britains public services” “Influx from Eastern European... has led to a heavier burden on communities” (Daily Mail, 21/06/16)
<i>Uncontrolled</i>	Reference to a need to take back control over borders and control over immigration.	“Bring down immigration to levels Britain can cope with” (The Sun, 23/06/2016) “Lack of control over EU migrants” (The Sun, 20/06/2016)
<i>Criminals</i>	Mention of illegality, illegal behaviour in reference to immigration, whether referring to illegal immigration or illegal acts carried out by migrants.	“Migrant Keith Vaz greeted died high on cocaine at 100mph” Headline with the migrant being referred to as the “poster boy” for Romanian immigration. (Daily Mail, 10/05/18) “gangs of migrants” (The Sun, 21/06/16)
<i>Exploiters</i>	Reference to migrants exploiting or taking from provisions or the economy.	“Given the difference between what they contribute to the economy and take out” (The Sun. 20/06/16)

<i>Invaders</i>	Reference to “taking over” or a need to defend against migration, suggesting an invasive character.	“Britain will be engulfed or left <i>marginalised</i> ” (The Sun 22/06/16)
<i>Security threat</i>	Reference to free movement or immigration threatening the security of the nation.	“Free movement of people has brought waves of migrants... undermining our security against criminals and terrorists” (Daily Mail, 22/06/16)

Pro-migration

Code/Frame	Definition	Example
<i>Economic assets</i>	Reference to economic migrants as assets to the economy, bringing in a net monetary gain or providing irreplaceable labour that could otherwise result in losses.	<p>“EU immigrants contribute £55 per second to our economy. They are not a cost” (The Sun, 22/06/16, Scottish edition)</p> <p>“EU immigration also boosts the amount of money available to pay for them [schools, housing, healthcare” (The Guardian, 22/06/16)</p> <p>“many fruit and vegetable growers who rely on the EU’s free movement ruled to find cheap labour for seasonal jobs shunned by British workers” (The Guardian, 16/05/18)</p>
<i>Humanises migrants</i>	Articles which give stories from POV of migrants, articles which acknowledge their uncertainty and fears and particularly during Covid, acknowledge their disproportionate suffering.	<p>“Your French/German/Polish workmates will be feeling rejected thanks to Brexit” (The Guardian, 20/06/16)</p> <p>“Some 3 million Europeans with similar fears about their continued rights in Britain” (The Guardian, 23/06/16)</p>
<i>Necessary</i>	Reference to economic migrants as necessary to the workforce and certain jobs, or on the flip side reference to British workers not being able to fill workforce gaps.	<p>“The free movement of goods, <i>people</i> and capital enshrined in EU treaties... have been the framework through which the UK has globalised” (The Guardian, 22/06/16)</p> <p>“Some sectors of the economy such as agriculture rely heavily on EU workers” (Daily Mail, 17/05/18)</p>
<i>Not to blame</i>	Pointing out that the government is to blame for a lot of ills that are blamed on immigration.	“Underinvestment and poor management of immigration are arguably more at fault than immigration itself” (The Guardian, 22/06/16)

		“In response to those who link these problems to immigration, instead of deflecting the blame to where it belongs [on government cuts]” (The Guardian, 20/06/16)
<i>Social assets</i>	Reference to migrants as assets to social life, culture and social provisions.	“Many selflessly caring for our sick are migrants” (Daily Mail, 24/04/20) “the Spanish have become part of the fabric of the city [Edinburgh]” (The Times, 22/06/16)
<i>Hardworking</i>	Mention of migrants being hardworking, committed etc.	“...they’re committed. They’ve left family and friends and travelled thousands of miles to live onside in tiny shared caravans for months on end” (Daily Mail. 28/04/20)
<i>Australian points system/specifically skilled migrants beneficial.</i>	Mostly during COVID period. Mention of being in favour of Australian points style system being implemented in the UK post-Brexit or in favour of high skilled migrants retaining rights to migrate to UK.	“Skilled migrants offer a huge economic boost” (Daily Mail, 21/06/16) “Requests for special health care visas” (The Times, 10/05/18)
<i>Norway style system</i>	Particularly during ‘normal’ time period, reference to being in favour of Norway Style/EEA agreement.	“EEA allows limits to freedom of movement” (The Guardian, 09/05/18)

Article headlines, dates and newspapers:

**from economic migration subset, Politics/UK News sections*

Brexit: (55 articles)

19/06/2016	'44% ready to walk out on Europe'- <i>The Sun</i>
19/06/2016	'Brexit emergency: Beleave in Britain, Why brits should split from Europe with 4 days to go'- <i>The Sun</i>
19/06/2016	'Fear, anger and the future of Britain in Europe'- <i>The Guardian</i>
20/06/2016	'Attempts to elevate the Brexit debate following MP's death begin to fray'- <i>The Guardian</i>
20/06/2016	'Corbyn: We can't limit EU migrants'- <i>The Daily Mail</i>
20/06/2016	'Migration: The issue that just won't go away'- <i>The Daily Mail</i>
20/06/2016	'Immigration: Voters keep challenging PM on migrants'- <i>The Sun</i>
20/06/2016	'PM's TV mauling over migration'- <i>The Daily Mail</i>
20/06/2016	'We jez can't keep them out: Corbyn's migrant confession'- <i>The Sun</i>
20/06/2016	'Brexit camp divided as senior Tory walks out'- <i>The Times</i>
20/06/2016	'We can't curb immigration, admits Corbyn'- <i>The Times</i>
20/06/2016	'Andy Burnham argues against migration cap'- <i>The Guardian</i>
20/06/2016	'London and the EU: how Brexit could damage the Remain City'- <i>The Guardian</i>
20/06/2016	'Immigration and the British working class'- <i>The Guardian</i>
20/06/2016	'Please stay, please go- Europeans make their case to UK voters'- <i>The Guardian</i>
20/06/2016	'Conservatives revolt over Osborne's Brexit 'punishment''- <i>The Guardian</i>
20/06/2016	'A Brexit survival guide: freeze your cheese and holiday in Albania, a land without Polish Plumbers, the end of the Calais booze trip and no more need to learn tricky foreign languages'- <i>The Guardian</i>
20/06/2016	'How do I... make sure Britain remains a member of the EU? The Guardian advocates voting remain in Thursday's EU Referendum'- <i>The Guardian</i>
20/06/2016	'Immigration and the EU referendum: the angry, frustrated voice of the British public'- <i>The Guardian</i>
21/06/2016	'Europhobia: a very British problem. This week's vote is about more than whether Britain stays in the EU'- <i>The Guardian</i>
21/06/2016	'Old, working-class, northern? I know you'll be voting'- <i>The Times</i>
21/06/2016	'EU Referendum: what's on the minds of voters?'- <i>The Guardian</i>
21/06/2016	'Unskilled cost £6bn'- <i>The Sun</i>
21/06/2016	'Schools bulging at seams squeeze in extra classes to cope with influx'- <i>The Daily Mail</i>
21/06/2016	'I will sort EU out'- <i>The Sun</i>

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- 21/06/2016 'Let us in before you vote us out'- *The Sun*
- 21/06/2016 'The PM was told years ago we'd never meet his migration targets while in the EU'- *The Daily Mail*
- 21/06/2016 'Ulster fears return to bad old days'- *The Times*
- 21/06/2016 'It saw off Normans and Nazis. Now the defiant patriotism of my Kent stomping ground might help see off the EU, too!'- *The Daily Mail*
- 21/06/2016 'Our workers paid price of EU dream admits Red Len'- *The Daily Mail*
- 21/06/2016 'Leading, not Leaving'- *The Times*
- 21/06/2016 'Paradoxes of a London Brexiter: In Britain's multicultural, labour-leaning, Europhile capital you meet all sorts of people with very diverse views'- *The Guardian*
- 22/06/2016 'Look into his eyes: Beleave in Britain, 1 Day to go time to make the biggest decision'- *The Sun*
- 22/06/2016 'TV debate overheats as ferocious Tory gives Johnson a bruising'- *The Times*
- 22/06/2016 'Boris Johnson's independence day claim nonsense, says David Cameron'- *The Guardian*
- 22/06/2016 'Britain's meal ticket? Food and drink at the heart of the referendum debate'- *The Guardian*
- 22/06/2016 'EU Referendum: five questions to answer before you vote. Look at the facts about democracy, economics, immigration, security and sovereignty'- *The Guardian*
- 22/06/2016 'Jeremy Corbyn makes final referendum pitch to Labour voters'- *The Guardian*
- 22/06/2016 'It's all abroad for EU: Expats in or out, 1 day to go'- *The Sun*
- 22/06/2016 'Vote for freedom we fought so hard for: Brexit countdown 1 day to go'- *The Sun*
- 22/06/2016 'The return of Project Fear: how hope got sidelined in EU vote'- *The Guardian*
- 22/06/2016 'Traffickers decide who comes in'- *The Sun*
- 22/06/2016 'Spaniard happy with slice of life: Edinburgh's large Iberian community fears Brexit'- *The Times*
- 22/06/2016 'Lies, greedy elites and a divided, dying Europe- Why Britain could have a great future outside of a broke EU'- *The Daily Mail*
- 22/06/2016 'It's out last chance. To remain would be an act of self-harm'- *The Times*
- 23/06/2016 'Let the lion roar: Independence day Boris leads Great Brexit rally cry'- *The Sun*
- 23/06/2016 'Leave or Remain... our lives will still be much the same'- *The Sun*
- 23/06/2016 'Brexit decision day: A lat minute primer as voters cast ballots to leave EU or stay'- *The Guardian*
- 23/06/2016 'Independence day: Decision Time'- *The Sun*
- 23/06/2016 'They don't like being tied to Dorset here, let alone Denmark'- *The Times*
- 23/06/2016 'Nailed: Four big EU lies'- *The Daily Mail*

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- 23/06/2016 'Horror or scope: Independence day dire forecast' - *The Sun*
- 23/06/2016 'The digested referendum campaign: Immigration! Economy! Immigration! Brave little Boris had plenty to say' - *The Guardian*
- 23/06/2016 'I'm voting for Brexit because it could rescue the EU, not destroy it' - *The Daily Mail*
- 23/06/2016 'Final polls leave Britain's future on a knife edge, Leader make their final pleas' - *The Times*

Normal: (31 articles)

- 06/05/2018 'Local election verdicts: too much negative spin?' - *The Guardian*
- 06/05/2018 'At least 1,000 highly skilled migrants wrongly face deportation, experts reveal' - *The Guardian*
- 08/05/2018 'EEA membership could bridge the Brexit divide' - *The Guardian*
- 09/05/2018 'EU withdrawal bill: what happens next after Lords votes?' - *The Guardian*
- 09/05/2018 'Brexit- Bashing Lords at it again' - *The Daily Mail*
- 10/05/2018 'Brexit could cost UK research sector billions, says Oxford boss' - *The Guardian*
- 10/05/2018 'Labour sticks with Brexit stance despite Lords vote' - *The Times*
- 10/05/2018 'Migrant Keith Vaz greeted died high on cocaine... at 100mph' - *The Daily Mail*
- 10/05/2018 'Blair peer who made 'TV for morons' led the plot' - *The Daily Mail*
- 10/05/2018 'Hunt backs NHS visas for overseas doctors and carers' - *The Times*
- 13/05/2018 'Robocrop' - *The Daily Mail*
- 14/05/2018 'Gangs buy planes to smuggle migrants into remote airstrips' - *The Times*
- 14/05/2018 'Homeless migrants sue for thousands after row over their deportation' - *The Daily Mail*
- 14/05/2018 'Failed politicians who flout the people's will' - *The Daily Mail*
- 14/05/2018 'Payouts for rough sleepers after illegal deportations' - *The Times*
- 14/05/2018 'Victims of crime being handed over to immigration enforcement' - *The Guardian*
- 14/05/2018 'Norway-style Brexit option can't be considered, Corbyn tells MPs' - *The Guardian*
- 15/05/2018 'Corbyn comes up with a Brexit policy!' - *The Daily Mail*
- 15/05/2018 'Clegg and his cabal of remoaners in last-ditch bid to sabotage Brexit' - *The Daily Mail*
- 15/05/2018 'Scotland 'facing disaster' if EU migrants stay away after Brexit' - *The Times*
- 16/06/2018 'Jobless lowest in four decades' - *The Sun*
- 16/05/2018 'Labour would end 'hostile environment' policy, says Abbott' - *The Guardian*
- 16/05/2018 'Eastern European workers head home over Brexit fears' - *The Times*
- 16/05/2018 'From royal table to bust: asparagus farmer could close over Brexit' - *The Guardian*

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16/05/2018 'Brexodus? No, we have 2.37m EU workers!'- *The Daily Mail*

17/05/2018 'Rebels tell Corbyn to pick a side'- *The Times*

17/05/2018 'Daily Mail comment'- *The Daily Mail*

17/05/2018 'Job hopes of 4m hit'- *The Daily Mail*

18/05/2018 'Windrush scandal: arrest of vulnerable 62-year-old is 'outrageous'- *The Guardian*

19/05/2018 'Smashed, the Albanian fake passport lab that's helped hundreds sneak into Britain'- *The Daily Mail*

19/05/2018 'If we get Brexit wrong, we will not be forgiven for a generation'- *The Times*

Covid: (15 articles)

15/04/2020 'You clap for me now: video hails key workers with antiracist poem'- *The Guardian*

16/04/2020 'Are Western Europe's food supplies worth more than East European workers health?'- *The Guardian*

16/04/2020 'Stranded or shunned: Europe's migrant workers caught in no-mans lang'- *The Guardian*

17/04/2020 'Scottish farmers demand migrant workers from EU'- *The Times*

18/04/2020 'Strawberry alarm shock: fruit pickers in pickle after Landing Keelings under fire over migrant workers' arrival during crisis'- *The Sun*

19/04/2020 'Fruitcakes! Bitter cabinet row as Romanian crop-pickers fly in to UK untested'- *The Sun*

21/04/2020 'Scrap immigration rules that penalise carers'- *The Times*

21/04/2020 'MPs warned of gaps in pan to NHS workers visas'- *The Guardian*

21/04/2020 'Labour calls for end to migrant benefit block during lockdown'- *The Guardian*

24/04/2020 'Lockdown's snapping backbone of Britain'- *The Daily Mail*

25/04/2020 'Government is 'reviewing' NHS surcharge for migrant medics'- *The Guardian*

27/04/2020 'Food delivery can't keep up with demand'- *The Times*

27/04/2020 'It's SOS for army of fruit pickers'- *The Times*

28/04/2020 'Day I enlisted in the asparagus army'- *The Daily Mail*

28/04/2020 'Reborn Johnson can make the hard choices'- *The Times*

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