

RACISM AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN THE MASS MEDIA

An overview of research and
examples of good practice
in the EU Member States, 1995-2000

on behalf of the

European Monitoring Centre
on Racism and Xenophobia, Vienna
(EUMC)

by

European Research Centre
on Migration and Ethnic Relations
(ERCOMER)

Edited by Jessika ter Wal

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PREFACE

The research interest in analysing the way mass media report on ethnic issues has increased in the Member States over the last decades. And for this reason the EUMC decided to bring together the major research reports and their findings over the last five years in this report "RACISM AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN THE MASS MEDIA - an overview of research and examples of good practice in the EU Member States, 1995-2000".

The project has been carried out by Dr Jessika ter Wal, at Ercomer, Utrecht University, the Netherlands. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to her for her excellent work. The report underlines the importance of media research in the area of racism and diversity.

The mass media, and especially the news media, have an unequivocal position in society when it comes to establishing and disseminating common cultural references. The mass media have an influence on people's attitudes as well as our common knowledge, but not always in the expected and desired ways.

The active democratic role of the mass media in society can be influenced by a number of factors. The way the mass media represent, focus and give voice to different actors and incidents in society could have the unintentional result of strengthening a racist discourse instead of fighting against it. Mass media reporting is especially sensitive when it comes to ethnic, cultural and religious relations in our society.

The mass media organisations in the Member States take different initiatives to promote cultural, ethnic and religious diversity, such as developing codes of conduct, recruiting broadcasters from the migrant and minority communities and training the personnel from multiethnic societies.

The report has already attracted a lot of interest from researchers, from journalists as well as from media organisations. I hope that the report will be of practical use to all those interested in the fight against racism and especially those working in the media.

Beate Winkler

Director of the EUMC

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2 CONCLUSIONS

by Jessika ter Wal

In this chapter, the main findings from the various Member States are compared, in order to trace common trends and patterns, as well as positive developments and changes over time in the media's treatment of racism and cultural diversity. This comparison is based on a cross-section of the main analytical categories on which each Member State report research is based, as outlined in the Introduction. Concrete examples of good practice in promotion of cultural diversity in the media can be found in the chapters dedicated to the Member States individually in section IV. In this chapter, positive practices will only be summarised for as far as comments on the varying utility of codes of practice are concerned. Further reference to good practices that deserve emphasis and (further) support is found in the recommendations at the end of this chapter. It should be repeated here that summaries based on existing findings for Member States only give a partial picture. Results are often a collection of data from single case studies or studies with a limited time frame and limited number of indicators, which do not allow for far-reaching conclusions. The comparison of these results in this chapter will inevitably be more general than the full detail that the single Member State reports can provide. It is therefore recommended to read these for more precise and qualified findings.

The research results on media practices across different countries are meant to provide insight into the characteristics of and factors for negative and positive media reporting. Comparisons are not made here in order to conclude by bench-marking or 'giving grades', but rather - 'beyond good or evil' and across Member States - to uncover typical patterns of news reporting and mechanisms that increase space for the promotion of cultural diversity (both media-internal and media-external factors). In addition, by signalling the main gaps, inconsistencies and merits of existing research and positive action initiatives, the report can provide input for further cross-national research on racism and cultural diversity in the media, and identify crucial indicators for the monitoring of media (for the gathering of reliable, comparable and accurate data).

2.1 AN INVENTORY OF THE EXISTING RESEARCH

2.1.1 DISPARITIES IN AVAILABLE RESEARCH³

One characteristic of the overall findings is the disparity in the amount and type of available data from one Member State to another. Some countries show a general lack of research. This is mainly due to the recent character of immigration to the country, the composition and position of the migrants or ethnic minorities, and the difficult access to the little research that is available.

In some cases, the available data are, rather than proper research, observations made in seminars, reports, and documents of NGOs (Portugal, Luxembourg, and - to some extent - Ireland and Greece). NGOs and migrant associations in general are at the forefront of the struggle against racism and it is therefore not surprising that they play such a prominent role in signalling the issues involved (for example also the work of the Union Romaní in Spain). In Member States with a longer history of immigration and ethnic relations, these issues have often received more attention so that forms of enquiry have been stimulated more, via both official channels and academia. However, their efforts should in the future be more integrated with or supported by thorough scientific research in these countries.

In other countries there is a considerable amount of research, but particular research areas are underdeveloped (for example the German chapter shows particular research on audience effects of reporting and (anti) racist campaigns, but such research is less common in most other countries). Another way in which research is sometimes underdeveloped is in the quality of serious, independent, empirical research.

3 See also the final paragraphs of the Introduction of this report about problems of comparability.

The fact that the amount of research and data available in the Member States varies considerably makes it impossible to draw overall conclusions of a comparable nature. Only common trends and major differences can be identified in coverage on particular issues (e.g. on arrival of refugees, and other issues which affect all Member States), in particular media types, during particular periods, with respect to specific news-making practices and representations of migrant or ethnic minority groups.

Conceptual differences also occur. It is inevitable that a change of focus appears in some of the chapters. For example, in Germany 'xenophobia' and 'racism' have different referents (and are most strictly related to right-wing extremism) than in the UK and other countries. Similarly, the extent to which media stimulate or support critical thinking about multiculturalism (or other forms of integration) inevitably varies between and within countries, depending on political orientations and the amount of institutional support.

Moreover, empirical differences make media content vary because (together with politics) they set the agenda for the discussion of current events and issues, which inevitably vary from one country to the next. For example, in the chapter on Germany studies on the representation of racist violence, right-wing extremism, and the asylum issue have received a major emphasis. Studies in other countries emphasise the role of the media in communicating forms of 'subtle' racism.

Finally, theoretical differences are found especially in countries with an extended literature and established research traditions in the field. Here, due to the longer history in dealing with cultural diversity and racism, different approaches to the subject exist depending on different theoretical and ideological backgrounds that have been developed. An emphasis on quantitative or qualitative research may also depend on theoretical orientations.

2.1.2 TYPE OF RESEARCH AND APPROACH

Most country reports show a variety of different approaches in the study of media and racism, and in general they have all included

studies on the representation of immigrants and ethnic minorities in the media. In the time frame, 1995-2000, qualitative discourse analyses of media reports were common in many countries, in particular the Scandinavian countries, Spain, Italy and Austria. Besides qualitative case studies, quantitative results are also available for these countries. In other Member States, such as Belgium and the UK, quantitative studies prevail which try to cover longer periods. In the Netherlands, several perspectives exist, including studies that are rare in other Member States, such as studies on journalists' attitudes, recruitment policies, ethnic minorities' opinion on their portrayal in the media, and studies showing the relatively positive contribution of TV talk shows addressing multicultural issues. Media effects research is also found both in the Netherlands and Germany, the latter related to agenda setting and mobilisation effects of pro or anti-immigrant campaigns.

These different approaches have of course emphasised a different type of results, which may lead to the formulation of different 'remedies' against racism. For example, research which shows that media draws on collective imagery and social representations with many historical layers suggests that anti-racist reporting needs to go hand in hand with educational programmes. Studies (in particular in critical discourse analysis) that emphasise the role of (political) elites in the formulation of (anti) racist news frames are likely to produce recommendations to a greater awareness among media owners and professionals and official actors and organisations. The different approaches are complementary and may all provide one piece of the complex mosaic that composes the relations between media and racism.

2.1.3 IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES

Even findings of strictly empirical studies can be tailored by different ideological interpretations of the data. Considerations about the role of the media in the reproduction of racism and xenophobia are influenced by ideological and theoretical positions. Although numerous examples show that value-free research does not exist, we nevertheless do have for most countries a general description of media contents.

2.1.4 CODING METHODS IN QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH - PROBLEMS OF RELIABILITY

Some country reports signal problems with coding the mention or appearance of people with a different ethnicity. For example, in France this approach has been almost absent and when it was applied it was criticised. A recent study by the French Audio-visual Governing Council used the category of 'visible minorities' (distinguishing 'Blacks', Maghrebis/Arabs and Asians). This category is highly uncommon in France, where there is a tradition of not using ethnicity criteria in research and monitoring (following the French Republican model it is not acceptable to categorise people on the basis of skin colour or ethnic minority membership). Also projects in other Member States showed the difficulty of monitoring visibility. Indeed, the question is on the basis of which criteria news actors can be identified as being of different origin when the reports do not refer to this explicitly, and whether this is not problematic. A Belgian study, which aimed to score the frequency with which different groups were shown on television, used for this coding the appearance or 'visible' differences (and when available the subtitling, i.e. language). Also in Finland a study counted on the basis of appearance.

2.1.5 LIMITS OF QUANTITATIVE ANALYSES AND CODING

For the coding of reports as either positive or negative, as was done in a Spanish study, conclusions must be drawn carefully and the coding of this feature must be combined with information on the actors involved in the news. Positive articles may turn out to have autochthonous people as main actors and not immigrants. Then it is not enough to say that reports on the immigration issue have become more positive, because the image of immigrants themselves need not be more positive because of that. In other words, databases on media reports, such as the CIPIE database in Spain, cannot only score positive or negative for articles, and have to be very detailed in their indicators for establishing this distinction. In general, quantitative results cannot grasp the detail of subtle evaluations expressed in the news. Therefore, they can reveal the recurrence of main themes and actors, or even the type of claims made

by actors, but they cannot be very precise in the quality of these claims or the role played by the actors: for this additional qualitative research is needed.

2.2 NEGATIVE NEWS MAKING-RELATED MECHANISMS

2.2.1 MEDIA PANICS AND FIXED REPERTOIRES

Several reports registered the negative effects of an internal logic of self-reproducing and self-fulfilling functions of media discourses, especially when this concerned negative event coverage in the print media, leading to so called 'panics'. The latter were typically built around local events and protests, by making selective use of sources that defined the situation in a particularly negative way.

The reports confirm that once a negative discourse on migrants or ethnic minorities was established it tended to remain prevalent. It became a fixed 'repertoire', where event coverage (in printed media) followed a repetitive chain of statements, actions and conclusions (for example in the coverage on protests against immigrant settlements in Italian metropolitan areas, resolved with public order interventions and segregation). This logic was so strong that print media could construct a reading of the events that differed from the way in which the single elements of information were presented to them. It is remarked in several studies that inhabitants of neighbourhoods that become the object of special issue reporting (because of conflicts, protests, or decay) did not recognise themselves or their positions in the way their problems or lives were shown in the media.

Both the Italian and Greek reports found reporting that fuelled hysteria or alarm about (the settlement of) immigrants, an alarm which was then appeased by police operations. An anti-immigrant consensus was constructed in the Italian press coverage on such cases, by combining several forms of stereotypical and negative portrayal supported by representations of 'public opinion', or directly

through the mobilisation by political authorities. The Spanish chapter shows that reports on clashes in areas of immigrant settlement created a distorted image of the events. They focused on the illegal position of immigrants (who were not quoted), used generalising associations between the immigrant community and conflict, and suggested the existence of a unified mobilisation by the Spanish 'neighbours' against them.

The German report speaks of the construction of 'threat scenarios', in which (e.g. through the use of metaphors) migration processes were represented as a danger, and the social changes produced by it as disastrous and unmanageable. Also the Danish case shows examples where a few episodes of migrant youth deviance were repeated and magnified by the media so as to create moral panic, leading to a spiral of increasingly harsh official statements. This mechanism was not merely a result of media routines; it also required the active engagement against or for minorities in politics, and strategies of for example newspaper editors (for example, in the coverage of arranged marriages in Denmark). It was thus difficult to challenge the beliefs on which that discourse was based. This may be further aggravated in a media system dominated by a limited number of market players (e.g. Austria, with dominance of one tabloid newspaper).

2.2.2 MEDIA AND POLITICS

Confirming agenda setting theories, an important result was that news contents (themes) are influenced by policy agendas, for example in the coverage on asylum issues in Germany and Belgium. A Danish study notes that the perspective of authorities was dominant in many news stories on ethnic minorities. It is felt that media reporting in this and other countries has occasionally helped to maintain the mono-cultural outlook propagated in official discourse (Denmark, Greece). In Sweden, instances were found where media failed to counter the predominant views and interpretations of authorities, and trivialised and denied racism, with the aim of restoring the myth of a tolerant enlightened Sweden.

The importance of political sources in news making was also reflected in the frequency of law enforcement themes, in many of

the member states (e.g. in Finland). Also the Spanish, Portuguese and Italian reports register the dependence on official sources in news reporting. In Portugal, official anti-immigrant statements, which associated immigration with crime and a threat to social order, were reported after riots by a group of 'black' youngsters in 1993.

Apart from the generalised predominance of reports related to politics and political decision making, in some countries media discourse is reported to have negative effects, in the sense of legitimising restrictive policy proposals and xenophobia (Austria, Italy, Denmark, Spain). For example, with the arrival of Rumanian refugees in the early 1990s an Austrian tabloid used (official) economic arguments and represented the asylum seekers as a threat to the Austrians and Austrian security and economy, and blamed the Romanians for causing problems because they were unwilling to integrate. A similar discourse based on allegations and negative stereotypes was used in the early 1990s in Italy against immigrants from Albania. In the climate created by this type of reporting, restrictive policy decisions could be more easily justified.

In Spain, the prominence of official news actors suggested that issues acquired news value rather because of political importance than because of the concern with the position of cultural minorities or social organisations assisting immigrants. The findings suggest that this dependence is prevalent, and influential to the images of migrants, in particular in the countries of more recent immigration. On the other hand, the UK and France, with a long history in living with ethnic, cultural, religious diversity in the time frame 1995-2000 showed a more positive official influence. For example, more openness towards the acceptance of multiculturalism (in the UK) gave more space to the various actors involved, and an official agenda aimed at contrasting discrimination (in France) has brought this theme on the media agenda.

However, results from interviews with editors and journalists did indicate that in Britain routine news reporting based on institutional and official sources did contribute to hindering a more positive representation of minorities. Moreover, the British case shows that

programmes watched or heard by political elites generally have a higher proportion of ethnic issue coverage. Although anti-immigrant stances are found in British (in particular tabloid) press, these were not politicised in the coverage preceding the 1997 elections. Despite a relative autonomy, the British media agenda in the long term very much followed the political agenda in its evaluation of ethnic, cultural, religious diversity and immigration.

Several reports mention the need to be vigilant not just to extreme right politicians but also to statements across the political spectrum. The dilemma for both political forces and media often remains that of how to position themselves vis-à-vis the extreme Right and populism. The Dutch report states that the public debate on ethnic, cultural, religious minorities, as transpiring in particular from the print media in the Netherlands, was dominated by the widely felt need to 'break the taboo on negative expressions on ethnic minorities'. The report also observes that Dutch (print) media did not always criticise the hardening of the political discourse on ethnic relations and migration. On the other hand, in the genre of TV talk shows, analysed in one study for the period 1991-94, more positive or varied images were found than in other news background reporting, also due to a greater participation of ordinary people (rather than only politicians and other elite groups).

2.2.3 DIFFERENT NEWSPAPER TYPES

The assumption that only right wing and tabloid journalism are responsible for prejudiced and hostile reporting of ethnicity cannot be maintained. Even quality newspapers can treat migrants and minorities abusively, only in a more subtle way (Belgian and Italian chapter). Conversely, in the UK, some research findings suggest that even a tabloid newspaper has undergone a relative improvement (in a study analysing the coverage in 1995) with respect to previous decades, in that crime issues were not significantly more prominent in this tabloid than in other newspapers.

2.2.4 NEWS GENRES SELECTION

Almost all country reports noted that news media dedicated hardly any background reporting to ethnic, cultural, religious issues. For example, background information about the conditions of asylum seekers living in Germany or about causes of their flight was found to be almost completely absent. A similar finding is reported for Denmark, implying that causes for deviant behaviour of minority youth often went unexamined. Also Spanish media are reported to fail to explaining the causes behind social problems such as poverty and racism. This is further aggravated by a fragmentation of news in bits of daily consumable information, without establishing links between events. Moreover, when covering immigration and ethnic issues, media mainly follow the topics (and 'emergency situations') of the moment (Germany, Italy). In general, ethnic, cultural, religious minorities and migrants were underrepresented in general news coverage (cf. Belgian study), and over-represented in negative news genres such as crime reports.

2.2.5 PROBLEM OF RELIABLE INFORMATION

Another problem related to news making which is signalled in several reports, is that information was not always thoroughly checked. For example, in Spain negative acts (such as crimes) were sometimes attributed to immigrants without evidence and such claims were then later proven false. The same has happened in Italy and Ireland, where credibility to such claims was increased when reporters refer to statements from the police. False reports may be corrected but not supported by a change in practice behind it (Italian and Swedish examples). Spanish quality newspapers also used statistics that exaggerated the actual number of immigrants residing in Spain. A similar case was mentioned for Danish media reporting on arranged marriages in immigrant communities.

2.2.6 QUOTATION/SOURCE USE

A general feature of news found in almost all countries those migrants or ethnic, cultural, religious minorities were not quoted very frequently and were not treated as regular news sources. In

Spanish media, a general under-representation of immigrants' opinion was found. Moroccans were more frequently quoted (but they did not appear more often in news as compared to Roma, who instead were not used as a source of information, but did appear more frequently as news actors). Qualitative research furthermore shows that Spanish quality newspapers gave asymmetrical accounts of demands posed by immigrants, and minimised the number of demands made. When opinions of these groups were represented, they could sometimes be used to confirm the non-existence of racism in Spain, and to present these groups as if they were themselves responsible for the discrimination that affected them.

In the Netherlands, on television ethnic, cultural, religious minorities were hardly interviewed but more often shown in images to illustrate the discussion about (but not with) them. When they were interviewed, it was not about their problems, but about how their situation affected 'us' (for example possible language and communication problems or crime/disturbance). The interviewed ethnic, cultural, religious minority members were mainly ordinary people, not professionals or experts. Similarly, in Finland, immigrants, when interviewed, were asked about their opinions on Finland and how they survived there. In this way, that readers did not learn more about immigrants, but media used the 'Other' to present an identity affirmation of the Finns. Also, authorities spoke on behalf of immigrants and the latter were rarely used as sources in news that regarded them. This is particularly harmful when authorities place groups (e.g. asylum seekers) in a negative light, which is then not counter-balanced by alternative representations.

In Sweden, migrants did not appear as individuals informed on other than their own problems and status. Similarly, the Irish report denounces that immigrants (refugees and migrant organisations) were not quoted in the news, while vague sources were used to report 'facts' and police sources were not challenged. A Danish study found that in the news the same few names of minority representatives appeared again and again in opinion columns, but there was no wider dialogue. In Danish media, migrants were mainly quoted in defensive positions (refuting allegations made against

them or the group). Minority sources were silenced on issues that concerned them (e.g. headscarf affair), quoted rarely or only as an afterthought. Minorities were also not considered a potential audience; that is why they were not only quoted less, but they were not addressed as an audience either, but only treated as an object of reporting. In Germany, asylum seekers and their representatives were hardly ever quoted or invited to interviews, whereas official sources dominated news on asylum issues. In France, the voices of minority ethnic actors were generally underrepresented compared to those of majority ethnic actors, particularly those in positions of authority. Imbalances of this kind were very evident during coverage of the so-called Islamic headscarf affairs.

The quotation of minority sources does not depend only on the journalists, but also on the organisation of minorities. If they organise as better accessible sources, there may still be a power differential and a difference in the credibility attributed to them, but then it is easier to identify these and other factors (such as professional routines or discrimination) as responsible (cf. Finnish report).

An interesting finding for the British case was that minorities were given equally significant news space both in quality centre-left newspapers and in popular (tabloid) newspapers. Thus, the British report claims that tabloid newspapers did not exclude minorities' opinions from the public domain by definition. However, the question is if minority positions were evaluated in the same way in these different media types, and detailed qualitative analyses would have been necessary to know this.

2.3 COMMON TRENDS IN PORTRAYAL

Generally, a focus in the news about ethnic, cultural, religious minorities and migrants on negativity, problems, crime, and conflict was registered in all Member States. A very generalised trend is the over-emphasis on ethnic and immigrant crime. Also asylum is a predominant theme in the coverage of many Member State media (discussed below). Most Member State reports register a different treatment of refugee and immigrant issues, on the one hand, and the issues concerning longer established ethnic minority communi-

ties, on the other. But - as discussed below -these categories were also lumped together in the labels used in media discourse (e.g. in France, Denmark, Belgium and Finland).

2.3.1 CRIME THEMES

A link is often established especially in headlines between the ethnicity or the origin of groups, on the one hand, and their deviant or criminal behaviour (and even character), on the other. This is the basis for generalisations that associate migrants with crime (in Austria, Finland, Italy and Portugal, also on the basis of appearance and skin colour, in Belgium on the basis of migrants' origin, and in more indirect ways, in Danish media). In Spain similar forms of associating migrant origin with crime have been forbidden and denounced by the press council on the basis of the existing press code. In Luxembourg, NGOs started discussions on the possibility of banning the mention of the nationality of perpetrators - however, journalists did not support this proposal. In the Portuguese press reports, journalists criticised the irrational fear ordinary people have of Africans because of criminality.

Several Member States found a difference between reports on foreigners' or migrant crime and reports about domestic crime. For example, crime reports related to asylum seekers are more dramatic and sensational than general crime reports (Austria, Denmark). Similarly, German findings show that foreign suspects and criminals were represented more negatively; their crimes were represented in a more brutal and violent way, and associated particularly with increasing organised crime (gangs, drugs traffic) and abuse of the social system. At the same time, motivations behind criminal acts of foreigners were not mentioned and references usually included for German culprits (such as full confession in trial) were absent when foreigners were involved.

Crime is also typically associated with particular migrant groups, which naturally vary from one Member State to the other (the only group that is negatively portrayed with this stereotype in almost all countries, is that of the Roma and Sinti). For example, in Finland, hardly anything else was covered for the largest groups of Russians

and Estonians than crime; 'crime is more often related to visiting Russians and Estonians than to the family living next door' (Finnish report). Generalisations based on Italian crime news have associated migrants and minorities with a specific petty crime specialisation. The Italian report signals the creation of 'ethnic hierarchies' through the connection of specific negative behaviours and occupations to determined ethnic or migrant groups. In the second half of the 1990s, in both Italy and Greece, Albanian immigrants were most frequently associated with crime. A common trend is the bias towards reports about immigrants as perpetrators, aggressors or defendants and an under-emphasis on news when they are victims or plaintiffs (Austria, Denmark, and France).

The Danish report pointed out that negativity was not a news value when it concerned the negative episodes or events (the difficulties) minority communities experienced in their daily lives. Moreover, causes behind crime or violence among minority youth were not examined. Elite discourse in the media was found to associate crime with ethnicity. When actors involved in crime were Danes, only one story was published. When minority members were implicated many follow-up articles were published until the court ruling. Thus, news value did not depend on crime as such but on the social cultural or ethnic identity of the criminal actors. The problematic image of (deviant) minority youth constructed in the Danish media became the prototype for generalising statements about the minorities to which they belonged or even about 'immigrant culture' in general.

In the Finnish media, asylum seekers are negatively represented and framed as trying to do fraud the social security system; this is the same for refugees in the Netherlands. In the Luxembourg media, especially refugees from the former Yugoslavia were frequently associated with crime, and this portrayal was found to have had effects on popular perception as measured in a recent attitude survey.

2.3.2 DESCRIPTION OF PROBLEMS RELATED TO ETHNIC, CULTURAL, RELIGIOUS RELATIONS

In the Netherlands, the model according to which 'we' are the victims and 'they' are the problem was found to be appearing clearly in coverage of multicultural neighbourhoods and other issues regarding ethnic, cultural, religious minorities. In the majority of TV programmes this model was used and produced an image of multicultural society as polarised between ethnic, cultural, religious minorities and the Dutch. The dominant approach in various Dutch TV programmes dedicated to ethnic, cultural, religious minorities was to break taboos on negative reporting, meaning that frequently ethnic and cultural difference (or socio-economic position) was mentioned as the cause for problems with migrant integration and life in multicultural neighbourhoods/schools. However, another approach found in these shows, was to de-emphasise differences, and emphasise similarities and positive news.

In coverage on housing problems and on removals of Roma and other communities in Spain and Italy, news visibility was acquired when dramatic and emotional forms of representation could be used, and political conflicts were involved. The exclusion of migrants from communities was expressed linguistically in media descriptions of 'inhabitants and others' (i.e. the others are not considered inhabitants like the Spanish/Italians). In Italy and Spain, besides the well-known negative theme of crime, negative attitudes were also fuelled by arguments about the number of immigrants (too many) and the impossibility for them to integrate. These were used to justify attitudes and practices of rejection of migrants.

Content analyses of Danish media also revealed a preponderance of themes which represented ethnic, cultural, religious minorities as a problem to Danish society and culture, as opposed to themes which regard the everyday problems faced by ethnic minorities and migrants in Denmark, that were hardly covered.

2.3.3 DESCRIPTION OF PROBLEMS RELATED TO IMMIGRATION AND ASYLUM

A common feature for all countries facing new immigration is the stereotypical language used, in particular the metaphors comparing arrivals of asylum seekers to a natural disaster and military invasions in headlines, to represent immigration as a major threat. This was a common trend registered in Austria, Italy, Ireland, Finland, Sweden and Spain. In the German discourse these scare-headlines were found mainly in reports about refugees, who were objects of negative stigmatisation. In other countries (esp. southern Europe) this was also related to the phenomenon of 'illegal' immigration, where the negative aspects were aggravated by reference to police actions and supposed criminality. In the portrayal of immigrants, Spanish TV was found to emphasise the following aspects: groups lacking organisation, and social and political influence, residing in ghettos. Instead, themes related to their participation in culture, economy and politics were ignored or underestimated. In Sweden, news about the arrival of asylum seekers was associated exclusively with technical concerns and worries expressed by the police, the immigration authorities and the government. Reports on the deportation of (illegal) immigrants led to interviews with young women deportees represented in a commiserating and pitiful way, but asylum seekers were not interviewed or pitied with when they resided in Sweden.

In Ireland, negative assumptions about poverty and inequality, and trivialisation prevailed in reporting about recent immigration. Similar to reports on other Member States, the UK report found examples of a negative portrayal of immigrants and asylum seekers in the tabloid press, where these groups were represented as dishonest and ungrateful 'bogus' refugees and welfare 'scroungers'. Very little attention was paid to the conditions forcing refugees to come to Britain. 'Blaming the victim' often resulted from this reporting. Thus, the general anti-racist tones of British press reporting on ethnic minorities were not extended to recent migration.

Another common feature in reporting on cultural and ethnic diversity in the countries of more recent immigration was the portrayal

emphasising the exotic character or the cultural backwardness of the groups concerned.

2.3.4 PORTRAYAL AND PERSPECTIVE

A general problem with the representation of migrants in the media registered for various countries is that negative images (which can to some extent be expected considering dominant news values) were not compensated by positive images. The latter was missing completely and any perspective on aspects of daily life and the individual was often absent (in Austria, Italy, Spain, Denmark). For example, in Spain the press hardly spoke about immigrants' cultural contribution at all. Although in Luxembourg a limited coverage on cultural festivals did appear, this coverage was rather helping to maintain a segregationist logic, reinforced by the fact that most information is not presented in French, which is the language of the majority of ethnic, cultural, religious communities. Furthermore, in Luxembourg media, an absence of immigrants was observed, so much so, that they seemed invisible and their presence was treated as a taboo subject. Most of the time, the Luxembourg chapter states, journalists and editors simply lack awareness about the necessity of correct and impartial coverage on these issues. However, NGOs did take initiatives to increase awareness towards these issues and visibility of migrants and minorities. Government bodies also monitor the media in Luxembourg; they intervene against violations of the general press code, and support initiatives to increase cultural (also intended as linguistic) diversity in the media. A similar picture is drawn for Portuguese media.

In Finland, the accent in reporting was on human 'soft' issues when ethnic, cultural, religious minorities were concerned and on hard (e.g. policy decision) issues when majority actors were portrayed. Finnish media were often found to pay no attention to immigrants and silence ethnic, cultural, religious issues. News on negative actions by Finns (e.g. of violence against migrants) was not presented as individual stories or specific faces, just in abstract terms. Instead negative actions of minorities/migrants did lead to individual presentation. The media in Finland were focused on reporting events from the perspective of how they affected (and possibly

harm) the majority. This happened also in the Netherlands (e.g. with emphasis in interviews with minorities on language/communication problems and crime risks). This approach reinforced prejudice. In Belgian reporting on situations of conflict, migrants were not represented as individuals (as opposed to Belgians). They were not interviewed or quoted and the portrayal was negative.

Danish media portrayed violence by ethnic youth as a generic phenomenon; unless implicated in crime, migrants were presented in passive roles. In crime stories individual identities and personal profiles were identified only for majority members, whereas minority members were only described in terms of group identity.

2.3.5 FOCUS ON SPECIAL GROUPS AND BOUNDARY MARKERS

The results in the different Member State reports show some commonality in the way in which media tend to focus on specific ethnic, cultural, religious groups or group characteristics when depicting ethnic and cultural diversity. Stereotypes for Roma and Muslims were found throughout most chapters as the most pernicious and the most negative. However, the Greek and Finnish reports mention an incidental and recently more positive portrayal of Roma people. A study on UK media in 1997 found three times as many reports valuing Islam as those that were anti-Islam; but more research would be necessary as coverage on multiculturalism and Islam was limited in the sample concerned. In many other countries, a frequently stereotypical media portrayal of Muslims was found in the research literature. For example, in the Dutch press, Muslims were viewed as a fifth column in international conflicts and their problems were explained in terms of a homogeneous Islamic culture. Anti-Islamic tendencies in the Dutch press were particularly strong in the first half of the 1990s: for example, distinctions between religion and nationality were blurred, Muslims were represented as a depersonalised collectivity, images of Islam and Muslims were distorted, and Islamic societies were represented as violent and backward. Similar stereotypes were found in two studies on Italian television and press representations, and in a study on Swedish news coverage (in the latter violence, war, terrorism result-

ed as the largely predominant theme). In Germany, anti-Islam stereotypes (i.e. the exclusive association with repressive, anti-modern and anti-feminine positions and terrorism) are even applied in a generalised way to other migrant groups or to foreigners in general.

On the other hand, the German report found that the quality press of the Federal Republic did not report any anti-Semitic statements, and over time it learned to adopt a sensitive language and a more decisive treatment of the theme. Counter-opinions have been marginalised so much, that explicit anti-Semitic positions could only be found in the German radical right-wing press. Former guest workers from Greece, Spain and Italy were represented less negatively in German press than migrants from more distant areas or cultures. In Austria, news discourse on Romanians, with predominant connotations of economic threat and fraud (but later also criminality, also in the case of Bosnian refugees), differed from the image of Africans in the tabloid press, which was predominantly connecting skin colour with (a predisposition to) criminal behaviour. Anti-Semitic attitudes were present in Austrian tabloid press.

The Swedish report shows examples of double discrimination enacted by the media: a combination of gender, age, religion, and culture, cross cutting with ethnicity, increased negativity. Portrayals of immigrant (in particular Muslim) women and men expressed prejudice about different cultural traditions, religious closure, violence against and mistreatment of women, and so on. Interesting observations were also made about specific forms of stereotypical portrayal concerning immigrant youth in Swedish media. This is an important aspect to understand how reports (and their effects) can develop in the future if the image of immigrant youth is particularly problematic. Overall, immigrant youth were portrayed as victims of religion, tradition, culture clashes or social exclusion and as potential or actual criminals. Complementary to the stereotype of the immigrant women as the victim was the image of a strong active woman who had managed to break free from her background. The same emphasis on problems with immigrant youth was registered in Denmark and in the Netherlands. The German case shows a process similar to double discrimination or

'multiple stigmatisation', meaning that migrants were typically categorised on the basis of origin, as victims or perpetrators, and as objects of state measures.

Specific minority groups can also be over-represented in news genres other than that of crime reporting. For example, the French report indicates that an over-representation of post-colonial minorities has been found in 'problem' news genres. It was also found that Maghrebis did not appear in drama and light (entertainment) programmes and TV commercials, while 'Blacks' were over-represented there. This is unusual, given that Maghrebis are far more numerous than 'Blacks' among the general population of France.

2.3.6 LABELLING

In France, labelling of migrants has shown a gradual improvement, in the sense that these labels have become partly more positive over time. Previously, media discourse focused only on the banlieues (a byword for social disadvantage, lawlessness, ethnic alterity and criminality). Another label or category - that of 'immigration' was usually emphasised in French media and official discourse since the 1980s. This referred in reality to second and third generation members of minorities, who hold French citizenship, and more in particular to post-colonial minorities⁴. Recently, next to these negative labels also more positive ones are found in French media: that of *sans papiers*, which in many contexts has replaced the formerly used *clandestins*, indicating a partial softening of public opinion towards illegal immigrations. In addition, discrimination is a recently more frequently covered theme (see also below, tracing developments).

In contrast, the most frequently used labels in Italian media referred to illegality (*clandestini*) or apparently neutral denominations with implicit negative connotations. Discriminatory labelling was also registered in the Finnish press, where certain migrants and minorities come to be associated with one theme. The word 'Somali' in Finnish media represents much more than nationality, it

4 A similar situation applies to Dutch media using the nationality of former generations to label groups (e.g. Turks, Surinamese, and so on) who have actually in most cases Dutch citizenship.

is used as a symbol for undesirable refugee. Therefore using this label in a headline about a criminal offence may spur racial hostility. The label 'gypsy' is no longer used in Finnish media to denote Roma people, except in a positive context. In Spanish media, offensive terms such as 'moros' are no longer used, but the terms that have replaced this are also generalising (e.g. 'coloured people', 'Africans'). This shows a slightly positive development, which seems to count also for other countries of more recent immigration such as Italy. In the Portuguese press, 'Africans' used to be one of the predominant labels, often a synonym of Cape Verdian.

The Swedish report shows the negative and positive functions of most common labels (with connotations of problem and difference). In Danish media, minority and migrant actors were often lumped together in homogeneous categories of 'foreigners' and 'immigrants'. Also in Finnish media, immigrants and ethnic minorities were frequently represented as one group. In Belgian media the same happens, but here the preferred label used to be that of 'migrants'. Similarly, the Irish report talks about confused labelling, meaning that the terms of immigrant, refugee and asylum seeker were used interchangeably in headlines and news text and by the wider society as reported in the media. The Portuguese report points out the necessity to distinguish between ethnic minorities (Roma and citizens from former Portuguese colonies) and immigrants (e.g. from Eastern Europe).

In the British media, minorities were most often referred to by racial references ('black' and 'white'). 'Asian' is usually of more common usage than religious references, and there is very little usage of homeland national identities. The British report states that these findings simply underline that the officially sponsored categories in British Race Relations politics of 'black' and 'Asian' were the predominant forms of identification for minorities that were used by the media.

2.4 DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN MORE POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE INSTANCES

2.4.1 VARIATION DEPENDING ON MEDIA TYPE AND GENRE

Although - as mentioned above - in most countries crime and political action against migrants overall belonged to the main themes in coverage, in some studies distinctions are made. One study found that the Swedish language press (mostly national) in Finland was more positive than the Finnish language press (incl. local). The former covered more stories on anti-racist projects and tolerance as well as stories on everyday life of ethnic minorities, fortress talk was more problematised, there was a more positive source use, and problems received less attention. In Belgian mainstream media, explicitly negative statements about ethnic minorities were rare. Public broadcasting in Belgium has until now implemented more actively positive policies than commercial channels. In the Netherlands, TV talkshows gave a more positive and flexible view of multiculturalism (from a lay perspective) than print media (which tended to favour official views).. The German quality press was found to draw on threat imageries to depict asylum seekers, in particular in its headlines and formatting of the news. Also, in the 'More Colour in the Media' project in Germany some public service broadcasters were more reluctant to accept special trainees from ethnic minorities. The differences between more positive and negative instances have to be judged from case to case and cannot be generalised for the country as a whole.

A Danish study showed that, although there was little difference between the negative images found in tabloid and quality newspapers, two newspapers (a labour union-owned newspaper and a quality newspaper) were less biased and were even more balanced than public service broadcasting in the portrayal of ethnic minorities.

Spanish local and regional media have been more sensitive towards solidarity and diversity than the national media, which however

have also started to introduce more programmes that reflect cultural diversity. In Italy, this is reportedly the opposite: local newspapers and local sections of national newspapers were found to be less sensitive and to focus more on crime news and mobilisation of intolerance.

In the UK, centre-right broadsheet newspapers and the tabloid press were more likely to treat immigration and asylum issues, and centre-left broadsheets reported more on civil society issues of combating racist acts in the public domain, and campaigning by minorities themselves towards such aims. Furthermore, public broadcasting was found to give more coverage to ethnic relations and immigration issues than independent broadcasting. Moreover, specialised news programmes, which are more likely to be watched or heard by political elites, were also likely to have a higher proportion of coverage on these issues than the other more populist formats of broadcasting. Broadsheet newspapers in the UK carried more coverage on ethnic issues than tabloids and local newspapers.

2.4.2 SUBTLE AND BLATANT RACISM

In Italy a difference was found between a mainstream press revealing subtle racism (though with racialisation of difference), and a right-wing/conservative press, which was at times overtly or blatantly racist. In Belgium, implicit racism was found in mainstream media and explicit racism was found in extreme right media. The Finnish report noted a division between news and current affairs sections in daily newspapers and television, which did not publish overtly racist attitudes, and letters to the editor and opinion sections, tabloid and on-line newspapers, which revealed more blatant and explicit expressions of racism. The Danish report also registered subtle racism in the portrayal of minorities as a threat and found more blatant expressions in common forms of hate speech against Muslims. In Germany, examples of negative media reporting surrounding the asylum debate (and its possible impact on the rise in racist violence) were counterbalanced by examples of positive awareness-raising campaigns. In both cases the impact of media on voting and attitudes seemed to be fairly limited.

2.4.3 DIFFERENT GROUPS

The positive stance in British tabloid newspapers was reserved only for ethnic minorities and not for immigrants and asylum seekers. Thus, whereas anti-racist formats and ethnic minority claims tended to predominate in UK news media, the tabloid press did take an anti-immigrant stance, sometimes expressed in stigmatising images of migrants and refugees. Also, a British ethnic minority journalist in an interview stated that - despite overall improvement - one could still find negative images of pathology and backwardness related to the 'black' and Asian communities too. Similarly, links between ethnic background and crime could still be found (in tabloid press).

In Greek media, on the one hand positive examples were found where longer established minorities (e.g. Roma) were concerned, but on the other hand media helped building conspiracy theories around the discourse on migrants/minorities from neighbouring countries. Similarly, in Denmark ethnicity was routinely emphasised, except in cases where individuals were shown to represent Denmark in a positive way (sports, music, etc.). The generally negative representation of asylum seekers in Finnish media was not given to Kosovo Albanians, who were instead welcomed. In the Portuguese press in the 1980s expressions of complicity towards the African community were found which showed the parallels with the destiny and the mood of the Portuguese. In the 1990s, Africans were also represented as a complement of the Portuguese self in the press. This is a remarkable form of positive representation (in terms of cultural proximity), which is rarely found in other Member States. Unfortunately no research exists which compares the recent representations of Africans and Eastern European immigrants in the Portuguese press.

2.4.4 HEADLINES

Several reports noted the problem with misleading headlines and contents, which seemed either positive or negative, but actually were not. A general problem with headlines is that they tend to simplify, factualise, generalise, and distort (Finnish report). The Belgian

case gives an example, which shows that even when articles apparently express concern with migrants' position (e.g. in headline) they may at the same time reproduce prejudice and stereotypes. The opposite also happens: headlines are negative but the story itself is a different one (e.g. the Finnish case shows how a headline can change agency and blame in reports on racial harassment, silencing in-group responsibility and blaming the victim).

2.5 POSITIONS TOWARDS RACISM AND ANTI-RACISM

In the Netherlands, media focused on racism when it concerns right-wing extremism and racist violence. In Swedish media, racism was only taken serious (and covered regularly and in-depth) when it was related to political activities of the extreme Right; overall, racism and anti-racism were covered rarely and mostly when political or other controversy and conflict was involved. The same attention was not given to more generalised practices of discrimination and xenophobia. In this context, the definition of racism was only based on that of biological superiority: the news did not challenge this definition or the official definition of racist attacks in terms of a mutual conflict. In Italian media discourse, racism was often dismissed and (erroneously) redefined as a 'war between the poor' or understandable 'tolerance thresholds'. Forms of new racism were not recognised as such in the Italian press. In the Italian quality press, editorials could thus even declare that anti-racism was the motive for recommending harsh measures and police controls against (illegal) immigrants.

An absence of clear definitions of racism in media discourse was registered for the Greek and Belgian case. In Belgian media and official discourse, racism was seen as very negative, but xenophobia was seen as 'rather normal'. Even racism would be seen as acceptable when the number of foreigners was perceived to be too high (i.e., when this high number and the 'other' were depicted as 'abnormal' as opposed to the 'normal' Belgian population). On Spanish television, discrimination was represented only as an isolated phenomenon attributed to extremist groups, and not as a struc-

tural social problem. Responsibility for 'conflicts' was more easily attributed to the out-group and causes of racist acts were obfuscated, or the time sequence of events related to discrimination was changed so that it seemed that the in-group had promptly intervened to act against discrimination. In general, everyday racism or Islamophobia were rarely recognised by the media as such.

Did journalists take distance from or criticise xenophobic statements? Not everywhere, for example in Denmark and Sweden not always. A Danish study found that ethnic, cultural, religious minority members who had complained about racial harassment or discrimination were sometimes confronted with critical questions by the media, so that their statements were presented as less credible. On the other hand, the Danish report argues, media did not always take distance from xenophobic statements by official actors. Hence minority and official majority sources were not treated in the same way, and allegations of racism were not always taken serious. In Portugal, the press in the 1980s was found to report on racism by reporting statements from Africans that showed diverging opinions: some said no racism existed, others talked about the existence of subtle racism. It is in itself remarkable that Africans in the Portuguese press were given space to air their opinion on this matter. Italian studies notice an indifference of the media towards xenophobia (in particular in the press). But on other occasions (esp. on television) media were also found to create alarm around cases of racial discrimination; however, they did not dedicate in-depth continuous attention to this theme. In Austria, differences between newspapers were registered: some newspapers openly supported, others (the quality press) openly challenged the anti-foreigner campaigns of the populist right-wing FPÖ.

Another reaction to xenophobic statements is the use of irony (reported for Austria and Italy), but this did not provide facts or counter-arguments to challenge prejudice. In Greece this did happen to some extent. A Dutch experimental study showed that subjects confronted with an ironic presentation of extreme right-wing statements were corrected less than those who read the same statements accompanied with educational remarks that refuted these statements.

2.5.1 RIGHT-WING EXTREMISM AND POPULISM

German media are reported to have reacted to right-wing extremism with a discourse between taboo and mitigation, on the one hand, and dramatisation and over-reaction, on the other. There was also a change over time found in German media. Whereas in 1992 racist violence was commented on ambivalently (condemning acts but understanding motives) only in 1993 was it decisively condemned and rejected and more background information provided. This suggests that public opinion may have also influenced media contents and orientations (and not just the other way around, and not just official sources). Spanish editorials showed a similar development in the treatment of racist violence and aggressions, which on a shorter time scale of three days moved from a justification to overt condemnation.

The existing research shows that unintended and counterproductive effects of reporting on the extreme Right depended on the type and quality of reporting. First, a public outcry can be counterproductive, when interpretations are incidental and not based on a continuous thematisation and problematisation. Also the representation of extreme forms of racism as an individual pathology may support forms of denial of racism, as signalled in a German study. Another study on coverage of racist violence in German media argued that a rejection of form (violence) went hand in hand with the acceptance of substance (harsh policies, e.g. against asylum seekers). The same finding is reported for official reactions to racist violence that were reported and supported in the Italian media in the early 1990s.

The attention given to the Republikaner in the German media during the 1989 election campaign depended on the newspaper. Whereas the left-wing alternative press started a debate about this party from the very beginning, other newspapers only did so after the appearance of a provocative electoral spot of the party. Electoral spots represented the only (inevitable) direct visibility given to this party; otherwise the extreme Right was shunned (not quoted, hardly interviewed) in the media.

In line with general news making features, the attention given to the extreme Right on German television was found to be lacking an analytical perspective, i.e. political and social causes behind the emergence of the extreme Right were rarely investigated. Rather, a sentimental personalising perspective prevailed.

In the Netherlands, a study was done interviewing journalists on reporting of right wing and populist extremism. It showed that journalists did not always actively seek to restrain the effects of reporting on racist violence (since their first aim was factual reporting), but did feel media should discuss racism. The majority of interviewed journalists did not see it as their task to put the struggle against racism on the political agenda. Reporting on the extreme Right in the Netherlands was particularly negative during election campaigns.

2.5.2 RACIST CRIMES (VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT)

Coverage of racist violence as part of the so-called Nazi skinheads culture received ample coverage in Italian media in the early 1990s and led to a debate in mainstream press on racism and how to contrast it. Contrasting positions were found: concern about right-wing extremism and anti-Semitism was counter-balanced by a concern with immigration, indirectly identified as the cause of the racist excesses. A similar mechanism was observed in the German media, which dedicated as much attention to asylum issues as to the violence against those seeking asylum. Other cases show that racist crimes were not always taken seriously. In some cases, the victims were blamed: this happened in reports in an Austrian tabloid, in the Italian press especially after 1995, and in single cases in the Swedish mainstream press, and in the Dutch press. In Italy and the Netherlands, official sources (such as the police) were found to play a crucial role in the interpretation of (racist) violence. Denial of the racist nature of violent attacks against immigrants (or denial of in-group responsibility) was found to occur quite commonly. The attacks were then for example presented as 'accidents'. The Swedish case also shows deficiencies in coverage on racism and racist violence: an accidental coverage of racist harassment and violence, and a denial of racist motives and blaming the victim strate-

gies were enacted in coverage on harassment of an ethnic minority family. Hereby the victims were typically portrayed as 'normal' and perpetrators were very 'abnormal', authorities' positions were blindly trusted and dominant views were not challenged, while the understanding of racism was actually quite limited.

In the British press, racial attacks, violence, and incidents of racial abuse achieved a prominent place on the news agenda, but no results were found on the quality of this reporting, apart from the more generalised orientation to expose racism and give voice to ethnic minorities.

2.5.3 ANTI-RACISM

Anti-racist or humanitarian positions of organisations defending refugees and migrants were not always taken seriously in the Member States' media. For example, in the conservative/tabloid press in Italy and Austria anti-racist discourses was occasionally the object of defamation or marginalisation. In one case, editorialists of an Austrian tabloid newspaper used a strategy by which anti-racist organisations were accused of fuelling xenophobia. At the same time, Austrian quality newspapers tended to express their criticism of xenophobic reactions to the settlement of Eastern European refugees primarily with a rhetoric of irony rather than with concrete counter-arguments.

Sometimes media messages were only partially effective in challenging prejudice and racism, when the importance of anti-racist mobilisation is represented in a partial way. For example, in Belgian press reports on protests in Germany following waves of racist violence, the emphasis was on Turkish (violent) protesters rather than on the German anti-racists involved. Similarly, messages for tolerance, transmitted on Spanish TV, were found to be conforming to, rather than challenging, existing stereotypes. In the Italian report examples are given of 'cautious anti-racism', meaning that opposition to racism was avoided when it seemed that widely accepted negative stereotypes (about crime or social exclusion) were at play. On other occasions, anti-racism in particular on Italian television (analysed for the early 1990s) has been addressed with a focus on

political controversy, favouring attitudes of compassion, paternalism and alarm, which have maintained and increased perceptions of difference and have not tackled racial discrimination in any consistent way.

Official statements in Belgian media contained explicit positive statements about migrants in Belgium, who were said to bring economic benefits and to enrich the majority culture. These positively intended portrayals may have again reinforced rather than broken down boundaries between 'us' and 'them'. Anti-racist projects have been a continuous subject in the Finnish public sphere. However, news stories on actions for tolerance usually presented the Finns as primary actors, and ethnic minorities were usually absent as sources or actors in these stories.

Anti-racism in the media is thus not so unambiguous. Coverage on anti-racism turned out to be highly context dependent in Finnish local media. In one case, it led to the representation of racism as a problem that regarded the entire society and readership. In the other case, the local media denied everyday racism and attributed responsibility to solve the problem to ethnic minorities themselves. On the other hand, more fully positive examples are found as well. Anti-racism in Portuguese media was visible and commented upon by specialists in particular when a special thematisation occurred, as on occasion of the European Year Against Racism. In Germany, anti-racist demonstrations and political action against racist violence occurring in the early 1990s had a positive effect (anti-racism was not ridiculed or marginalised in this context). Dutch media have also focussed on anti-racism when there were mass mobilisations, protest meetings and demonstrations to report. The British case shows a more truly positive example, as here in recent years anti-racism and initiatives of ethnic minority sources were not marginalised but instead given ample space in the media (the report speaks of three-quarters of media coverage carrying broadly anti-racist themes). In the British press, activism by anti-racist movements was hardly the main topic of any news and ethnic minority activism was less likely to be a main news topic than extreme right activism. Nevertheless, ethnic minorities did receive space to articulate their demands, and the extreme Right was not given more

voice than ethnic minorities (ethnic minorities were the sources of political claims between four and ten times more often than the extreme Right). As opposed to ethnic minorities, anti-racist organisations were rarely used as sources - probably because these organisations were not the only bodies to represent anti-racism, and mainstream and state-sponsored forms of anti-racism were very strong. Indeed, findings suggest that the standard norm for British media reporting was in general to perpetuate anti-racist stances that were in fact in line with the official policy stance of the state on race relations.

In France, specific media responsibility for anti-racism (framed as a human rights issue) has for a long time been an option, as the French state has traditionally not accepted to acknowledge the role of ethnicity and the use of ethnic criteria in data collection as a result of its history and constitution. Recently, greater priority has been given in public policy to anti-discrimination initiatives, and this has also been reflected in special attention and (highly debated) measures directed at the media.

2.6 TRACING DEVELOPMENTS

Several types of developments in coverage on ethnic issues have been registered. The German report notes a thematic change influenced by policy agendas: from the Turkish "guest worker" issue (early 1980s) to the asylum and refugee issue (mid 1990s). In France, media framing shifted from an emphasis on 'immigration' (connoted as related to problems) in the 1980s, to a debate on 'integration' and the banlieues (see above, labelling) in the 1990s. A similar positive development is the new emphasis in French politics and media on (anti-) discrimination themes (since 1997), which may have helped to attenuate some of the negative connotations given to the themes of immigration and banlieues. Negative constructions of post-colonial minorities were also countered by the positive portrayal of minority ethnic footballers, for example on the occasion of the 1998 World Cup.

A study on Spanish media coverage indicated a development from 'invisibility' of migrants and minorities in the media (early 1990s) to

a perception of migrants as a threat to the social order (end 1990s). In the latter period, i.e. since 1999, the number of reports on immigration and racism in Spain is found to have increased. The percentage of reports with a negative evaluation of immigration, though predominant towards the end of the 1990s, slightly declined since 1999, though again slightly increasing in 2000. Countries where immigrants were still relatively invisible in media coverage are Portugal, Luxembourg and - to a lesser degree - Finland. Cases such as the Portuguese and Luxembourgian, which are the most recent and less researched, show (for as much as is known) an awareness of cultural diversity and proximity. In the Portuguese case, this is attributed to the partially more positive attitudes towards post-colonial minorities. However, portrayal of these groups in the Portuguese press in the 1980s was found to be a mixture of attitudes of fascination and repulsion, of sympathy and racism, and to date there is no research indicating in which direction this further developed.

2.6.1 SUBTLE/NEW RACISM

Several country reports, especially ones reporting results from discourse analytical studies, noted a development since the 1990s from forms of blatant racism, which used to be registered in the past, to more subtle forms of racism. In countries of recent immigration, subtle racism stands for the avoidance of overt expressions of racism, and an awareness of basic anti-racist norms. But these norms and their incidence vary from one country to the next. In countries with a longer history of immigration and ethnic, cultural, religious relations, 'new racism' was generally associated with a cultural differentiation of ethnic, cultural, religious minority groups as opposed to a differentiation on the basis of skin colour or a biological inferiorisation. But also other forms of differentiation were found in recent discourses that did not lead to a direct rejection of out-groups, but 'rationalised' these. For example, in studies on Austrian press portrayal after 1989, a 'new' discourse was signalled in the justification of the rejection of (Romanian) refugees on the basis of economic arguments. This type of argumentation was found especially in official discourse.

2.6.2 NEGATIVE DEVELOPMENTS

Swedish research mentions a negative development in that news in 1995-2000 was more concentrated on problems and conflicts than before, and stereotyping of immigrants and criminals occurred more frequently. A similar development is mentioned in the Italian case, when comparing the early 1990s with the late 1990s. On the other hand, the Swedish case did observe efforts in media organisations to adapt to multiculturalism. Nevertheless in the 1990s, Swedish media practices have worsened also in the sense that they mentioned more frequently migrant origin in relation to crime and give explanatory value to it (which did not exist before). This practice was also found in recent Finnish and Italian press accounts. Also in the Netherlands despite the general knowledge of the rule that ethnic, cultural, religious background should only be mentioned when functional and relevant, it was found that journalists now seem more inclined to mention it.

The Italian case also showed deterioration, in the increasing criminalisation of illegal immigrants and the racialisation of immigrant crime (mainly focused on specific ethnic, cultural, religious groups, based on identification of origin), especially in the second half of the 1990s. Although with respect to the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s, during the last decade labels for immigrants have apparently improved, in that overtly pejorative and discriminatory labels were no longer used, apparently neutral terms have acquired an increasingly negative connotation in Italian media.

2.6.3 POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS IN THEMATIC CHANGE OR MEDIA SENSITIVITY

The results reported from the UK show that the recent literature has undergone a transition from a linguistic/cultural studies approach, which was highly critical of the media, to a sociological approach that is emphasising (or showing) the positive developments and the relevant space dedicated to anti-racist initiatives. The overall evaluation of the British situation in the second half of the 1990s is more positive when compared with the 1980s and early 1990s: it showed

an improvement in standards of journalism regarding the representation of ethnic minorities relative to previous decades (in particular television). In the most recent period, minorities received significant news space as sources and claim-makers. However, despite these positive developments minorities employed in the media were still under-represented, and programming by ethnic minorities was limited. The conclusion is that change in reporting has simply kept pace with (or lagged behind) general changes and perceptions that have occurred within British society.

In France labels used to discuss 'foreigners' issues in the media shifted away from the '*banlieue*' (metropolitan periphery) theme to the issue of discrimination. Similarly, the discourse on illegal immigrants transformed the previously used term of 'clandestin' into the more positive wording of 'sans papiers' (without papers/undocumented). There was also an improvement in the representation (esp. on TV) of immigrant youth. Before they used to be associated mainly with deviance in the metropolitan areas, now also positive roles are attached to them (e.g. in commercials, rap music, etc.).

The Italian report speaks of modest signs of pro-immigrant positions gaining ground in the media. But this happened mostly in relation to political or official (church or economic and labour organisations) initiatives, in the context of the introduction of a new law for immigration and integration introduced in 1998 by the centre-left wing government. This also triggered political opposition and debate, using reports on the problem of illegal immigration and crime to contrast the more positive voices.

The Danish report states that in recent months (2000), news making of the Danish Broadcasting Company and in some newspapers became more sober and less sensational. Although the Swedish report speaks mostly of a negative development, it does identify a new trend in coverage on neo-Nazism (following a surge in racist attacks in late 1999) with an increase in continuous and in-depth investigative journalism on this issue, and an increase in initiatives to combat blatant racism.

The Greek media also show signs of improvement. In the period 1995-2000, there was an increased sensitivity and an increasing acceptance of diversity: fewer stereotypes and more portrayals that recognised the cultural specificity of migrants. Part of the Greek media showed a critical awareness of state action, in the sense that this should improve the living and working conditions of migrants, rather than implementing public order policies. There was also a tendency to give voice to minorities and NGOs, to present critical accounts of poor social and economic conditions, and of state policy. However, it is also mentioned that the media did not cover or defend the political rights of minorities.

Examples of positive or correct labelling of Roma people were found in Greek and Finnish media. Also the Irish media is reported to have become more sensitive to the status of the Irish Traveller community as a minority, but correct designations were mostly not used, and anti-Travellers prejudice has all but disappeared from Irish media.

Modest improvement or simply single positive examples were registered in most countries in the area of initiatives to combat racism and promote cultural diversity in the media, in terms of special broadcasting programmes, and monitoring and lobbying agencies. A partial exception is represented by the French case where until recently only few measures for pro-active equal opportunities and French media institutions enacted training policies. However, recently initiatives have been formulated to combat racial discrimination and promote fair representation of ethnic minority groups. The report, which issued these recommendations, was however met with so much public criticism that 'corrections' had to be made and it had to be guaranteed that no ethnic monitoring or ethnic quotas would be introduced.

Moreover, the Finnish report comments on initiatives that focus on separate media or programmes directed at ethnic minorities. The report expresses scepticism, as the empowerment of socially excluded groups may unconsciously reinforce marginal positions, for example, by separating the viewpoints of minorities from those of the authorities, and by failing to encourage a dialogue between the two parties. This can have the consequence of segregating the

space where minorities have a 'right' to air their views from the discussion of the more important issues by the official actors. More attention should thus be paid to a fair and equal portrayal of ethnic minorities' views within mainstream debates.

2.6.4 PARALLEL DEVELOPMENTS OVER LONGER PERIODS OF TIME

An observation found in several country reports was that past developments for countries with a longer history of immigration and living in ethnic, cultural, religious diversity (such as the UK and France) is repeated now in other countries of more recent immigration. The British case and literature are used here in particular as a reference point. The mechanism of moral panic construction, which was first analysed for the British press in the seminal work of Hall et al (1978) for the 1970s and early 1980s, has been registered for more recent samples in other countries. Indeed, the French report notes how the situation of the UK in the 1970s was later experienced (though with different connotations) in France in the coverage on the *banlieues*. A similar phenomenon of 'moral panic' construction by the media was observed in the 1990s in Southern European countries. An example is the coverage on protests against and removal of immigrant settlements in larger metropolitan areas in Italy (esp. early 1990s) and Spain (esp. late 1990s). Similarly, Portuguese media images of immigrants living in the peripheries of metropolitan areas characterised by marginality and an often-illegal position are said to have an impact on public opinion.

In the UK, with time, awareness of this process and the organisation of migrant and minority groups as well as positive state support have increased, and resulted in a more positive press treatment for the ethnic minority community (but not for new immigration). Perhaps the same will happen in the future for the countries that have faced these processes more recently, although the different background and current situation will probably bring not entirely the same result. Although some processes are universal and may show similar results beyond the national level, considering also developments of globalisation, we should not lose sight of the

specificity of the single Member State media and ethnic, cultural, religious minority group positions.

2.6.5 DEVELOPMENT IN REPORTING ON SPECIFIC CASES OR GROUPS

Particular case studies have traced developments in the discourse concerning specific issues or groups. For example, in the attitudes towards Romanians in the Austrian press, towards Albanians in the Italian newspapers, and in the Irish press towards refugees and asylum seekers in general. This discursive change ranged from attitudes of compassion to open hostility.

In general, we see a pattern in the coverage on recent immigration (found for Italy, Spain, Austria, and Ireland and in a different way for Sweden and Finland). Initially, positive attitudes based on abstract principles of humanitarianism and solidarity is found. However, as soon as refugees or migrants seem to stay, xenophobic and racist attitudes rise. The Irish case for example shows that coverage on refugee arrivals (from Bosnia) in the early 1990s was not hostile, and the existence of racism was recognised. But with the rising numbers of refugees and asylum seekers media coverage grew, and negative terminology in headlines became more explicit. The Greek case shows a similar development, but also indicates that after a peak in negative coverage on arrivals from Albania in 1996-97, in the two following years less negative elements were also found in the media and attitudes of compassion returned.

Changeable reporting from one day or one phase to the other is typical of highly stereotypical and superficial representations, by which media reproduce common sense rather than produce or increase new knowledge and information (found in Italy, Portugal, and Spain). Images may change from the positive and exotic to the commiserating and the image of people causing nuisance. Similarly, a Spanish research - on the riots against immigrants in the Andalusian village of El Ejido in 2000 describes the fluctuation between attitudes of compassion and fear, with a final preponderance of the latter over the former. Also, in Spain and Greece, although humanitarian perspectives were used as a way to dissim-

ulate prejudice, it is observed that these did not lower the perception of difference between 'us' and 'them' (and maintained an attitude of fear and compassion towards other countries).

In Britain, whereas ethnic minorities were given ample space, the portrayal of immigrants and asylum seekers was negative, and to a certain extent at the end of the 1990s these groups received the same type of coverage which 'Black' and Asian minorities received in the 1980s. The report therefore states that the criteria for newspapers to include groups within their vision of the British community has changed over time and is now applied on the basis of citizenship. Therefore British minorities are no longer an 'out-group' but to a certain extent are included in the 'we' who are defined in opposition to 'them' the foreigners.

2.7 MEDIA EFFECTS

One of the relative 'gaps' in existing research is that concerning the study of media effects. Some interesting results are reported in the Dutch, French, Finnish, Swedish and Danish chapters mostly by relating knowledge about media contents to survey data. But in the German chapter in particular more detailed studies on media effects are presented (some findings were already mentioned under right-wing extremism). Overall, the findings about media effects are contradictory and seem to suggest that such effects are fairly limited. The existing results also show a wide variety in methodological approaches to the study of media effects.

One important finding on effects from the German case is the indication that the absence of reports on political positions about foreigner's issues (in tabloids) may be the most dangerous form of indirectly providing popular support for extreme right-wing populism. Indeed, the increase in anti-foreigner attitudes (as channeled by the *Republikaner*) was not related to crime reporting, the amount of coverage or to a negative approach. Rather, it was the absence of a political issue that seems to have directed voters towards the positions of the *Republikaner*. This finding challenges the analytical framework according to which relations between pol-

itics and media are the most detrimental to the communication of racism. However, the study did not analyse the possible concomitant effects of TV on readers' attitudes.

Whereas in Germany the absence of a general coverage on immigration issues thus seems to have contributed to the success of the *Republikaner*, in France it was precisely the opposite. Generalised coverage and problematisation of 'immigration' issues (such as the headscarf affair or 'immigration problems' picked up by mainstream parties) spurred the success of the *Front National*. By contrast, specific coverage (information, and denouncing its violence and aggressive language, in particular when anti-Semitism was concerned) allowed awareness to be raised against racist violence and the Front National. Also, imbalance in media representations of ethnic minorities as 'threats' to social order have sustained deep-seated feelings of insecurity and anti-immigrant attitudes, which are also one of the main reasons for supporting the FN. Overall, however, direct media effects on the (declining) success of FN could not be found.

The German studies also suggest that the political and media debate on asylum alone did not increase racist violence (it did affect the nature of violence, in that this was in a limited period more specifically directed at asylum seekers, whereas before other individuals were targeted). The reports on racist violence are claimed to have had effects only with consonant media tenor. Copycat effects were not found in the sense that there was no causal link between a single report on a racist attack and subsequent attacks (also not in terms of the place where these events took place). On the other hand, the coverage on racism in Germany also increased the public mobilisation and the political debate on how to oppose racism, and actually led to a great number of anti-racist media campaigns.

Another interesting finding is that event reporting contributed more to an increase in racist violence than background reporting. In other words, where journalists engaged in background reporting, a more positive contribution of the media was registered (this happened also in Italian coverage on racist violence). On the other hand, special issue reporting for the sake of 'foreigners' crime' is reported to have had the opposite effect.

Another finding was that media reporting influenced the public perception and evaluation of xenophobia, right-wing extremism, foreigners and asylum issues in Germany. Importantly, the racist attacks in Rostock in 1992 triggered more attention to asylum issues than to the issue of xenophobia and right-wing extremism. Furthermore, the German findings suggest that positive effects of anti-racist campaigns are limited, when messages are framed in a way, which produces defensive or disinterested reactions in the public.

At the same time, electoral spots of the extreme Right *Republikaner*, triggering a debate that had an enormous media impact, had important effects on the visibility of this party in public opinion. Findings from the German report about attitude changes and anti-racist campaigns are useful for recommendations: positive outcomes may be expected when information focuses on backgrounds, when campaigns highlight concrete examples to challenge prejudice, and raise awareness for particular instances of (institutional) discrimination. This approach should yield better results than the general appeals to moral principles and the abstract positive portrayals of foreigners' used in anti-racist campaigns in Germany in the 1990s.

Studies in the Netherlands have dealt with media effects of fiction programmes on children, and with the effects of a different focus in news reports on evaluations about the extreme Right (showing the importance of informative articles on the extreme Right as opposed to neutral or ironic ones). Exposure to fiction and entertainment programmes was found to produce negative attitudes towards ethnic minorities in children. Watching one of the commercial stations known for its large proportion of programmes made in the US also resulted in 'subjective experienced threat' from ethnic minorities. Another study measuring attitude effects found that time of TV exposure had no influence on audience attitudes, and that effects overall were minimal.

The Finnish chapter reports that hierarchies for migrants and minorities in public opinion and media were more or less the same. The Swedish report speaks of a correlation between the coverage

on asylum and the willingness to receive refugees, in the sense that when there was no coverage the preparedness was higher, possibly because abstract commitments are made more easily than when one is faced with concrete problems. Also, opinions on Islam and Muslims and media coverage on these subjects seemed to correlate.

The Danish chapter reports the finding that Danish public opinion (in 1995) was a reflection of the shifting emphasis on various topics of political debate reported by the media. Another interview study (from 1999) revealed that the media were a major source for prejudiced attitudes and expressions of covert and subtle forms of 'new racism'. A third study over a longer period (1970-98) showed that media exert considerable influence on public perception and definitions of minority issues in terms of 'us' versus 'them'.

2.8 POSITIVE ACTIONS TO COMBAT RACISM AND PROMOTE CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Many forms of positive action exist in the various Member States, as reported in the final sub-sections of each single Member State chapter contained in section IV. To avoid listing the examples, which are also contained in the chapter, here only the discussion on codes of practice is presented in a comparative way.

2.8.1 CODES OF CONDUCT

Professional codes or regulations for the coverage of ethnic affairs exist in many Member States (Belgium, the Netherlands, Ireland, Italy, Spain, Sweden, Finland, France and the UK). Also general press codes or other legal provisions mostly contain a general article on the need to avoid discrimination on grounds of racial or ethnic origin, which could be invoked too in cases where such articles are breached by the media. However, the problem is that the codes and regulations only have the value of recommendations and do not lead to effective legal action. It has no serious consequences when one violates these rules (e.g. Austria, Italy). However, in some coun-

tries, for example Belgium, regulations were effective. A recent change in the constitution has contributed to a crackdown on racist messages, and also earlier actions have seen convictions of the *Vlaams Blok*. The Belgian chapter also reports examples of guidelines for reporting, both about racial issues and about the extreme Right. In the latter case, guidelines recommended among other things to emphasise these parties are not normal, democratic parties like the other political parties.

Accordingly, the British report points out that codes and related legal provisions do not extend toward influencing how minorities are represented in the press beyond the most extreme cases, such as overtly racist propaganda. In non-extreme cases, more important than guidelines, journalists and editors value the professional 'common sense' and knowledge acquired through investigative journalism. Another type of deterrent to the use of guidelines is that the existence of racism in journalism sometimes is still denied or it is simply avoided to reflect upon this issue (Denmark and Luxembourg). Moreover, even if journalists accept guidelines for fair reporting, effective change requires influencing owners and editors as well.

Not only the application, also the recommendations themselves are considered limited by some. For example, the Greek report states that codes of practice are often too general and that they alone cannot provide for a change in journalistic practices and working conditions and routines, which make for example that certain events are not reported. At the same time, precisely in a profession that is already hindered by so many other (news production) constraints, the guidelines are perceived as over-constraining (Ireland). However, the Irish report argues that even unintentional consequences, produced by the routine construction of a newspaper article, can be circumvented when made explicit. The immigrant and Traveller groups in Ireland believe that these codes, although limited in over-all effects, have nevertheless increased awareness and favoured a more accurate use of minority sources. The Swedish report highlights that codes of practice have been applied to criticise and denounce individual cases where people were harmed by media coverage, but that it is more difficult to prosecute media for

biased coverage when this concerns large groups of people (for example asylum seekers or Roma).

