D4.1. Cross-country reports on the media discourses and digital cultures on gender, inclusion and gender empowerment

RETHINKING INCLUSION AND GENDER EMPOWERMENT: A PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe Research & Innovative Action under Grant Agreement No. 101093987

D4.1. Cross-country reports on the media discourses and digital cultures on gender, inclusion and gender empowerment

Rethinking Inclusion and Gender empowerment: a participatory action research

SHORT SUMMARY DELIVERABLE

Objectives

- Analyse traditional media framing of five debates.
- Examine CSO communication on social media.
- Compare representations to identify gaps and support inclusive public debate.

Main findings

- Strong ideological differences shape media coverage
- Migrantised women's voices remain limited across outlets
- CSOs are more active and autonomous on social media but face resource and visibility constraints
- Media and CSO communication offer divergent but complementary views on gender empowerment.

Short summary

This deliverable analyses how five key public debates on gender empowerment and inclusion are represented in traditional media across six European countries and how Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) engage with these debates through their own social media channels. It compares mediated representations with CSO self-representation to understand whose voices shape public discourse and how empowerment narratives circulate. The findings highlight significant gaps, constraints and opportunities for strengthening inclusive communication across both media environments.

The ReIncluGen Project

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Executive summary

This deliverable presents a cross-country media analysis conducted within the ReIncluGen project, examining how gender empowerment and inclusion, particularly in relation to migrantised women and girls, are constructed, debated and contested in six European countries: **Austria, Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland and Spain**. The report analyses five central public debates: **Femicide, Abortion, Islamophobia, Citizenship and Rights, and Paid Domestic Work**. It follows these debates across traditional and social media. The analysis is anchored in the broader ReIncluGen conceptual framework, which emphasises situated intersectionality, translocality, transcalarity and transtemporality. These perspectives recognise that gender empowerment is dynamic and context-dependent, shaped by the interplay of historical trajectories, political structures and media environments. CSOs play a central role in this framework: both as actors whose voices appear (or are absent) in traditional media, and as agents who produce their own narratives through social media.

The five debates were selected through literature reviews and country-level expertise, reflecting themes that carry high emotional, political and symbolic resonance in the public sphere. The analysis covers the entire calendar year of 2024, a choice that ensures comparability across countries while allowing observation of both peak moments and continuous background coverage.

For the **traditional media** analysis, each country examined two major outlets—the combination of one liberal or progressive source and one conservative or right-leaning source—chosen for their reach, relevance and ideological diversity. A full corpus of articles published in 2024 and relating to the five debates was assembled and analysed through a shared qualitative coding framework. This framework captured article types, actors, tones, framing strategies and key thematic dimensions such as empowerment, intersectionality, representation, CSO visibility, stereotyping and rights discourses. Differences in database access meant that some countries relied partly on manual searches, leading to uneven numbers of retrieved articles for certain debates.

The **social media** analysis follows a different methodological logic. Due to the transnational nature of social media—where linguistic spheres overlap, and content circulates across borders—neither feasible nor analytically meaningful to analyse “national” social media debates. Instead, the consortium focused on how CSOs communicate through their own social media channels. This decision reflects ethical considerations, methodological constraints and the project’s aim to understand CSOs’ strategic communication practices. CSOs’ own channels offer a unique window into how they frame issues, the topics they prioritise, and the challenges they face in environments shaped by algorithmic visibility, limited resources, digital backlash and safety concerns. A shared analytical template was applied to assess posting rhythms, thematic emphasis, visual and narrative strategies, and engagement with the five debates.

Across both traditional and social media, clear patterns emerge. Traditional media landscapes show strong ideological polarisation: liberal outlets tend to highlight structural inequalities, feminist perspectives and systemic drivers; conservative outlets often foreground individual moral responsibility, institutional concerns or security narratives. Intersectional framings appear inconsistently, with limited attention to

race, migration status or class in most national contexts. CSOs are unevenly visible, often marginalised or absent from mainstream coverage.

On social media, CSOs demonstrate commitment and creativity in communicating empowerment-related issues, yet face significant obstacles. Many operate with minimal resources, struggle to maintain consistent posting, or confront online hostility when addressing contested topics. Rights-based and educational content often receives low engagement due to platform algorithms, and smaller organisations face difficulties competing with large institutional actors. Despite these challenges, social media remains an important space for CSOs to articulate alternative narratives, represent marginalised voices and respond to public debates on their own terms.

Overall, the findings demonstrate how media systems, political contexts and organisational capacities shape public narratives on gender empowerment and inclusion. The deliverable reveals how gendered and racialised inequalities are mediated across Europe and highlights the importance of strengthening CSO visibility, communication capacities and support structures within increasingly polarised media environments.

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The media plays a pivotal role in shaping public debates and perceptions related to gender empowerment, migration, and inclusion. Across Europe, these debates unfold in both traditional media (print and broadcast journalism) and social media platforms, each contributing in distinct ways to public discourses. Recognising this dual influence, the ReIncluGen project undertook a two-part media analysis aimed at understanding how five key debates are framed in media systems in **six European countries**: **Austria, Belgium, Italy, Spain, Poland, and the Netherlands**. This deliverable is divided into two parts. Part I presents the results from the traditional media analysis and part II – from the social media analysis. Together, both strands of analysis offer a comprehensive understanding of how gender empowerment and inclusion are articulated, contested, or silenced across media landscapes

The ReIncluGen project brings together 12 partners—including six academic institutions, five civil society organisations, and one software partner—across six countries: Austria, Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, and Spain, supported by a Horizon Europe Research & Innovation Action Grant (Grant Agreement No. 101093987), the project's core aim is to investigate and co-develop innovative approaches to reversing socio-economic and cultural inequalities, with a particular focus on gender empowerment and inclusion of migrantised women and girls.

The project seeks to challenge mainstream, often Western-centric understandings of empowerment. Rather than viewing gender empowerment as a static or universally defined outcome, ReIncluGen treats it as a dynamic, context-dependent process—shaped by the political, social, and cultural environments in which it unfolds. We place specific emphasis on the diversity and agency of migrantised women and girls, recognising that empowerment may take different forms depending on lived experience, legal status, and social location.

This comparative media analysis forms one part of the ReIncluGen research, focusing specifically on how traditional and social media shape public understanding of gender empowerment and inclusion, and what is the role the CSOs play in these debates. The analysis investigates five key public debates across the six partner countries: **Femicide**, **Abortion**, **Islamophobia**, **Citizenship and Rights**, and **Paid Domestic Work**. These debates were selected because of their prominence in public and media discourse, their relevance to CSO work, and their potential to highlight different framings of empowerment, voice, and visibility. The analysis of traditional media focused on two opposing sources in each of the six countries we analysed. Conversely, the social media analysis focused on how selected CSOs working in the field of gender empowerment and inclusion, use their social media accounts to communicate on the five hot debates.

The research also included a specific focus on the challenges and needs that CSOs face when engaging with traditional media and communicating through their social media channels. Based on focus group discussions and interviews, we identified a number of structural, ethical and strategic concerns that shape how organisations navigate increasingly polarised media environments. These findings, presented in the final section of the report, highlight the barriers CSOs encounter in sustaining visible, safe and impactful communication, as well as the support structures required to strengthen their capacity for public engagement.

DISCLAIMER: This report does not necessarily reflect the views of the participating CSOs on the five hot debates but rather provides an overview and comparison of existing debates in traditional and social media in the six countries. Neither InteRed, nor La Strada, have participated in the discussion of the debate of abortion. Consistently with this position, InteRed asked not to be part of the analysis of this debate on its social media coverage.

Project Approach and Key Concepts

The media analysis is anchored in four key conceptual pillars that frame the broader ReIncluGen project:

Situated Intersectionality

The concept of intersectionality—first articulated by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989)—serves as the foundational theoretical lens of the project. We build on this by emphasising its situated nature (Yuval-Davis, 2015), which acknowledges that gender, race, migration status, and other axes of identity have different meanings and effects depending on geographic, social, and historical contexts. This perspective is further informed by feminist standpoint theory and the notion of "situated knowledge" (Haraway, 1988), highlighting how perspectives on empowerment are shaped by specific socio-political positions and conditions.

Translocality, Transcalarity, and Transtemporality

These three core dimensions of the project are also embedded in the design and implementation of the media research, providing a multilayered lens to examine how gender empowerment and inclusion are constructed and contested in public discourse.

- ***Translocality*** captures how empowerment discourses travel across physical, social, and digital spaces.

  In this media analysis, the transnational comparative lens plays a central role: by examining how similar debates are treated in five different national contexts, we can identify not only divergence but also shared patterns across borders. Moreover, the selection of both national and local media sources within each country allows for attention to how discourses circulate and are shaped at different geographic and institutional levels—revealing how global conversations about empowerment are embedded in and refracted through local realities.

- ***Transcalarity*** refers to how power dynamics and social meaning are shaped across multiple, interacting scales—ranging from household to neighbourhood, national, and supranational levels.

  In this analysis, we attend to the different institutional, political, and social actors involved in shaping media discourses. This includes state bodies, political parties, international organisations, CSOs, activists, and individual citizens. The analysis also considers how media sources mediate between these levels, influencing whether issues are framed as matters of individual morality, national identity, or international obligation.

- ***Transtemporality*** concerns the ways in which power relations and discourses evolve over time.

  While the core focus of this analysis is the calendar year 2024, the background research conducted for each country report enables us to situate current narratives in longer trajectories of policy reform, public debate, and media engagement. This diachronic perspective allows us to understand not only what is being said today, but how current frames and absences are shaped by historical developments in feminist politics, migration policy, and public discourse within each country.

Civil Society and Participatory Action Research

The **core aim of the ReIncluGen project** is to include civil society organisations (CSOs) as active partners in the research process co-producing knowledge and evaluating empowerment practices in a participatory manner. Nonetheless, the **specific aim of the media analysis** is to understand how CSOs are represented in public debates and how they themselves participate in shaping these discourses. This involves not only identifying the most visible or "hot" debates in national media, but also examining how CSOs are depicted within them: Are they present as authoritative voices? Are their actions acknowledged, marginalised, or contested? What roles do they play in shaping the narratives around gender empowerment and migrant inclusion?

In the **traditional media analysis** (Part I of this report), we assess how CSOs are included or excluded from mainstream journalistic coverage of five key debates: Abortion, Citizenship and Rights, Femicide, Islamophobia, and Paid Domestic Work. This includes tracking their visibility, how their voices are framed, and whether they are presented as agents of change, as sources of expertise, or as marginal actors.

In the **social media analysis** (Part II), we focus directly on the communication practices of CSOs themselves, primarily through their Instagram activity. Instagram has been selected as many CSOs are present here, reach out to a broad audience (and not only professional audience), which is also more used by CSOs compared to Facebook, X and Tiktok. Here, we investigate how CSOs express their positions, frame empowerment issues, and engage with broader public discourses. This analysis captures the voices of organisations that may be underrepresented in traditional media and explores how they construct alternative narratives, mobilise audiences, and interact with institutional discourses. Together, both parts of the media analysis allow us to trace the interaction between media portrayals of civil society and the self-representation of CSOs across different platforms.

OVERALL METHODOLOGY

Five hot debates

We conducted first the traditional media analysis and secondly, conducted a social media analysis. In both analyses, we focused on five 'hot debates'. The selection was informed by a **two-pronged approach**. First, national teams carried out literature reviews of existing academic and policy research on gender, media, and empowerment in their countries. This secondary source analysis was combined with the **country-specific expertise** on which debates have been most visible, polarising, or symbolically charged in the national media landscapes. Through this process, the consortium identified debates that were not only thematically relevant but also carried high emotional and political resonance in the public sphere.

The preliminary debate selection was discussed and finalised at a **project consortium meeting**, ensuring that each country was represented by at least one debate that held particular national importance. While not all five debates carried equal weight in each national context, the collective selection allowed for comparative analysis that highlights shared patterns across Europe as well as national divergences in tone, attention, and framing. By including both long-standing issues (e.g. abortion and domestic work) and more contested or emergent debates (e.g. wearing of the veil and CSO legitimacy), the analysis reveals how gendered public discourse is constructed and contested in different national settings.

Timeframe and Scope

To ensure feasibility and comparability across countries and debates, the project teams selected a shared **analysis period of one calendar year: January 2024 to December 2024**. This decision was taken after an initial **quantitative scan** of media coverage from 2018–2024, where national teams examined the number of media "hits" per topic and per country across that timeframe. The goal of the scan was to understand broader media trends and identify peak periods of attention.

The team concluded that while a longer time span might allow for capturing exceptional "hot moments" (e.g. legal reforms, high-profile cases), it would have required sampling strategies that risk omitting the richness of media coverage and introducing arbitrary temporal biases. In contrast, a comprehensive analysis of all entries over a 12-month period allows us to observe both episodic spikes and background coverage, and to explore a wider diversity of article types (e.g. reports, opinion pieces, interviews, editorials).

We acknowledge the trade-off: the 2024 focus may underrepresent longer-term trends or reactive peaks triggered by specific events prior to or after this window. However, the uniform timeframe ensures comparability across national contexts and between debates, and offers a rich and current empirical basis for qualitative thematic analysis.

Country-Level Methodological Approach

Each national team followed a **shared methodological framework** for both parts of the analysis. The methodological approaches for traditional media are presented in Part I of this deliverable, and the social media analysis approach is presented at the beginning of Part II of the deliverable.

Traditional Media Approach

For the traditional media analysis, each country team selected two major news sources, one with a liberal or progressive editorial stance and one with a conservative or right-leaning orientation, ensuring ideological diversity and capturing contrasting forms of public discourse. Selection criteria included national reach, audience impact, representativeness within the media landscape and the availability of searchable digital archives. Using these outlet pairs, teams compiled a full 12-month corpus of all articles published in 2024 that directly addressed or substantively referenced the five selected debates. The corpus covered different journalistic genres, such as reports, opinion pieces, interviews and editorials, identified through country-specific keyword searches and manual screening. All articles were coded using a shared qualitative framework capturing article type, tone, actors and framing strategies, followed by a thematic coding stage examining empowerment, intersectionality, representation, CSO visibility, stereotyping and the inclusion or exclusion of marginalised voices. This approach enabled systematic cross-country comparison while remaining attentive to national specificities and uneven patterns of media attention.

Social Media Approach

For the social media analysis, the project concentrated not on wider social media debates, but rather on the communication practices of selected Civil Society Organisations working on gender empowerment and inclusion. This focus was chosen in view of methodological constraints in large-scale social media monitoring, including platform data access, sampling limitations and the uneven availability of analysis tools. Within this rationale, the consortium agreed that examining how CSOs use their own social media channels would provide clearer insight into their capacities, constraints and engagement strategies across the five debates. Building on earlier project research, each country team identified nationally relevant CSOs with established visibility and active engagement in gender-related advocacy. Teams systematically reviewed their social media content over the 2024 period using a shared analytical template, assessing posting patterns, thematic focus, discursive strategies and links to the selected debates. The thematic analysis mirrored the framework used in the traditional media component, enabling each debate to be examined through comparable lenses across both media environments. This targeted approach allowed the project to identify how CSOs navigate digital communication environments and where additional support or visibility may strengthen their participation in shaping gender empowerment discourses.

Cross-country Comparative Approach

The cross-country comparison presented in this report is not a full comparative analysis in the classical methodological sense. The media sources selected in each national context differ in scale, reach, editorial orientation and format, reflecting the specific structure of national media landscapes rather than aiming

for perfect symmetry across countries. For example, Italy combines one national and one regional outlet, while the Belgian sample includes only Flemish-language sources; similarly, the distinction between progressive and conservative outlets served as a guiding principle but was adapted pragmatically to each context. The availability of searchable archives, access to media databases and the tools used for data retrieval and coding also varied, influencing the depth and breadth of each national corpus. Keyword strategies differed as well, shaped by linguistic particularities and national debate dynamics.

A similar limitation applies to the social media component. The analysis depends on the CSOs selected in each country not only as organisations but also in terms of their digital communication behaviour. Their visibility, posting frequency, thematic priorities and engagement strategies vary considerably, which allows us to identify patterns and tendencies but does not permit a strict cross-country comparison of volume or intensity of activity.

Finally, the media analysis is embedded within the broader analytical framework of the project and should be read in conjunction with the other deliverables that provide the conceptual, policy and empirical grounding for this work. To fully contextualise the findings, readers are encouraged to consult other Deliverables of the project for a fuller picture.

PART I TRADITIONAL MEDIA ANALYSIS

I. TRADITIONAL MEDIA METHODOLOGY

I.1. Traditional Media Source Selection

Each country selected **two main traditional media sources**: one with a **liberal or progressive** editorial stance, and one with a **conservative or right-leaning** orientation. The selection criteria included:

- High readership or audience impact (print circulation or online traffic)
- National reach or broad influence in public discourse
- Ideological diversity, to reflect distinct framings and tones
- Accessibility of online archives

The selection for each country was based on prior existing analysis of the representation and relevance of each source for the respective country. The final sources reflected leading newspapers and online platforms: *Der Standard and Kurier in Austria, De Morgen and Het Laatste Nieuws (HLN) in Belgium, Corriere della Sera and L'Adige in Italy, De Volkskrant and De Telegraaf in the Netherlands Gazeta Wyborcza and wPolityce.pl in Poland, and El País and El Mundo in Spain.*2. Data Collection and Corpus Compilation

In **Austria,** *Der Standard* and *Kurier* were selected because they represent two distinct segments of the national media landscape. *Der Standard* is widely classified in media monitoring and analytical sources as a quality newspaper with a liberal or socially liberal editorial stance, appealing especially to well-educated readers, with Eurotopics[1] and Media Bias Fact Check[2] identifying it as a centre left, high factual reporting outlet. *Kurier*, in contrast, is one of Austria's major purchase daily newspapers with broad national reach, positioned more centrally within the mainstream press and consistently highlighted in Media Analyse reports for its strong readership. Together, these two sources capture both the quality press perspective and the mainstream public debate, allowing for a meaningful comparison of how gender, citizenship and migration topics are framed within Austria's media environment.

In **Belgium,** *De Morgen* and *Het Laatste Nieuws* (HLN) were selected because they represent two contrasting segments of the Flemish media landscape while both being part of the same media conglomerate, DPG Media[3]. French-language sources have not been analysed. *De Morgen* is positioned as a progressive, left-leaning elite newspaper targeting younger, highly educated, urban and politically engaged readers. It emphasises intellectual analysis and investigative reporting on political, social and cultural issues, reflecting its historical roots in socialist values and its profile as a quality newspaper (Beckers, 2019). In contrast, HLN is the most commercially successful newspaper in Flanders and adopts

[1] https://www.eurotopics.net/en/148488/der-standard; https://media-ownership.eu/findings/countries/austria/
[22] https://mediabiasfactcheck.com/der-standard-bias
[3] https://www.eurotopics.net/en/148481/de-morgen

a populist, market-driven and highly accessible journalistic style. With its tabloid format, it focuses on entertainment, celebrity news, sports and human-interest stories, avoids strong political positioning and appeals to a broad cross-section of everyday readers (Beckers, 2019, De Bens, 2016). Their digital strategies diverge. HLN aggressively expands across platforms including video and TikTok to maintain mass-market reach, while *De Morgen* pursues a digital-first strategy that prioritises quality over volume (De Bens et al., 2016). Together, these two outlets capture contrasting forms of public discourse in Flanders and allow for meaningful comparison in the analysis.

Italy offers highly diverse services for migrantised women and that regional authorities have significant decision-making power, particularly in welfare policies, it was of particular interest to include a local newspaper focusing on the Trentino-South Tyrol region. This region was selected the rest of the project research took place there. At the same time, for comparative purposes, it was equally important to consider a national perspective that, while including the Trentino-South Tyrol region, also incorporates broader realities and discourses. Therefore, *l'Adige* was chosen for the regional level, while *Corriere della Sera* was selected to represent the national context.

In **the Netherlands** *De Telegraaf* and *De Volkskrant* are among the top five Dutch news outlets, yet their readerships and profiles differ markedly: 13% of Dutch citizens visit *De Telegraaf's* website daily, compared to 3.3% for *De Volkskrant* (Commissariaat voor de Media, 2024). *De Telegraaf,* which brands itself as the "voice of the common man," maintains broad demographic reach and is known for its sensationalist, emotionally charged reporting with a right-wing, conservative orientation (NOS Nieuws, 2018; Schaap & Pleijter, 2012; Brouwer et al., 2017). In contrast, *De Volkskrant* caters mainly to highly educated, affluent readers and is characterised by a higher level of journalistic professionalism and a progressive editorial stance (Bakker & Scholten, 2019; Schaap & Pleijter, 2012; Brouwer et al., 2017). These distinctions make their comparison particularly revealing for analysing ideological and stylistic polarisation in Dutch media.

In **Poland** two major media outlets were selected: *Gazeta Wyborcz***a** and *wPolityce.pl*, representing opposite ideological poles and exerting significant influence within their respective readerships. *Gazeta Wyborcza*, founded in 1989 as a platform of the democratic opposition, is one of Poland's leading dailies known for its investigative journalism, in-depth political analysis, and centrist to centre-left orientation. It targets an urban, well-educated audience and includes thematic supplements such as *Wysokie Obcasy* (focused on women's issues and gender equality) and *Duży Format* (long-form journalism). In contrast, *wPolityce.pl* is a conservative online news portal aligned with traditionalist, patriotic, and Catholic values, catering primarily to a right-wing audience and functioning as a digital platform combining news with ideological commentary. Closely linked to the weekly *Sieci*, it positions itself as a counterpoint to liberal outlets like *Gazeta Wyborcza*, appealing to readers critical of mainstream media and supportive of conservative governance.

In **Spain** *El País* and *El Mundo* were selected because they represent the two dominant ideological poles shaping national debate on gender, inclusion, and migration. Both are highly influential newspapers with large readerships, but with contrasting editorial positions that allow for a meaningful comparative analysis. *El País*, aligned with a centre-left orientation, generally promotes feminist and inclusion-focused narratives, giving space to gender equality, structural critiques, and coverage of women's rights—though its portrayal of migrantised women can sometimes lean toward paternalism. *El Mundo*, positioned on the centre-right/liberal spectrum, maintains a more sceptical stance toward progressive gender policies,

frequently focusing on legal implications, institutional debates, and security concerns. Its reporting on migration often highlights issues of criminality or integration, drawing criticism from migrant-rights advocates. Together, these two outlets illustrate how gender-related issues are framed differently across Spain's media landscape, revealing the ideological tensions that shape public perceptions of feminist policies, migrant women's rights, and broader inclusion debates.

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For each of the five debates, the teams collected all articles published in the selected sources during 2024 that directly addressed or significantly mentioned the topic in question. These included not only news reports but also editorials, opinion pieces, interviews, feature articles, and short commentary. The corpus therefore comprises a **qualitatively rich and diversified dataset**, which reflects different journalistic genres and authorial voices.

The search was conducted using a combination of **keywords**, aligned across countries where applicable and **manual review** to ensure relevance (see Table 4 for keywords per country and per debate). Articles that referred only tangentially to the debate were excluded unless they contributed substantively to the discourse on gender empowerment, rights, or civil society involvement. Given the different languages of all media sources selected and local interpretations and usages of specific words per debate, we could not provide one set of keywords that were used among all partners. We provided an overview of the keywords used in the section "Hot debates - quantitative analysis".

Not all country teams had access to comprehensive media databases that allow automated retrieval of articles through advanced keyword combinations. In several cases, searches had to be conducted manually through the online versions of the selected outlets, which made data collection slower, more labour-intensive and, in some contexts, more constrained. These limitations affected the breadth of retrieved material for certain debates, not because of a lack of public relevance, but because broader or more complex keyword searches were not technically feasible. This issue was particularly pronounced in the Italian case, where the researcher could enter only one search term at a time. As a result, indirect formulations or descriptions of a phenomenon that did not explicitly include the searched term were excluded. For abortion, for example, Italian media use several terms—*aborto*, *IVG*, and *interruzione volontaria di gravidanza*—but the constraints of the search engine made it impossible to use all three

simultaneously. Articles that referred to abortion without using the acronym *IVG* were therefore not captured. Similar constraints also contributed to the lower number of retrieved entries for debates such as Islamophobia. These methodological gaps were documented and should be taken into account when interpreting cross-country variations in media coverage.

I.2. Traditional Media Coding Framework and Thematic Categories

Each article was analysed using a shared **qualitative coding framework**, applied consistently across countries and debates. The framework focused on the following dimensions, related to the nature of the article:

- **Type of article** (e.g. report, opinion, interview)
- **Actors mentioned or quoted** (e.g. CSOs, politicians, experts, victims, state institutions)
- **Framing of the issue** (e.g. individualised vs. structural, emotional vs. analytical)
- **Tone** (neutral, alarmist, celebratory, moralising, etc.)

A second set of codes of the Thematic Analysis, articles were assessed for how they engaged with specific thematic lenses, including:

- Empowerment and agency
- Intersectionality (gender, race, class, migration)
- Inclusion and representation of marginalised voices
- Responsibility and moral framing
- CSO visibility and influence
- Exclusion of certain actors or perspectives
- Stereotyping and stigma
- Local vs. global framing
- Human rights vs. women's rights framing

Not all country teams addressed all themes for all debates, as they were less relevant or hardly covered during the period selected for the analyses. In cases where a topic received limited coverage (e.g. Islamophobia in Italy), this absence was also documented and analysed as a finding in itself.

II. CONTEXT AND SOURCES

II.1. Media Structure and Polarisation

Across all six countries, the traditional media landscape includes a mix of public broadcasters, private television channels, national dailies, and an expanding digital media sector. While the structural models vary, **media polarisation is a common feature**.

- In **Poland and Spain**, media outlets are highly ideologically aligned, often acting as proxies for political factions. Liberal outlets (e.g. *Gazeta Wyborcza*, *El País*) directly contest conservative narratives promoted by sources such as *wPolityce.pl*, or *El Mundo*.
- In **Belgium and the Netherlands**, polarisation exists more subtly, marked by differences in tone, audience, historical/pillarized affiliations, and editorial style rather than direct party affiliation. The target audience and the type of media outlet often determine how discourses are discussed and the framing used. Given language barriers in Belgium, we solely focused on Flemish media and left out French-speaking or German-speaking media.
- **Austria** and **Italy** reflect a combination of national and regional divides. Austria's public broadcaster ORF retains wide reach, but press outlets like *Der Standard* and *Kurier* cater to distinct ideological and demographic niches. Italy's mix of national dailies and regionally rooted sources (e.g. *L'Adige*) allows for both top-down and community-based coverage.

Table 1: Traditional Media Sources by Country and Type of Source

Country	SOURCE 1	Profile	SOURCE 2	Profile
Austria	*Der Standard*	Centrist-liberal daily; national readership; rights-focused coverage	*Kurier*	Centre-right; pragmatic, institutional voice
Belgium (Flanders)	*De Morgen*	Progressive daily; covers structural inequality and social issues	*HLN*	Mainstream tabloid; practical information and human interest
Italy	*Corriere della Sera*	Centrist with liberal leanings; high journalistic standards, technocratic	*L'Adige*	Regional newspaper; moderate, community focus
The Netherlands	*De Volkskrant*	High-quality progressive paper; focuses on anti-discrimination, inclusion	*De Telegraaf*	Sensationalist and right-leaning; focus on national identity

Poland	*Gazeta Wyborcza*	Centre-liberal; investigative reporting, protest coverage, feminist inserts	*wPolityce.pl*	National-conservative; populist digital news with religious tones
Spain	*El País*	Centre-left; covers feminism, migrant rights, internationalism	*El Mundo*	Centre-right; critical of feminist agenda promoted by the current left-wing government and inclusion policies

II. 2. Gender and Gender Empowerment Narratives

Across the six ReIncluGen countries, gender and empowerment discourses have become more prominent in the media landscape over the past decade. However, **how gender is framed, which actors are visible, and whether empowerment is portrayed systemically or individually** varies greatly across media outlets and national contexts.

- **Progressive media** tend to present gender issues as part of broader democratic or rights-based struggles. For instance, *Gazeta Wyborcza* in Poland and *Der Standard* in Austria frame gender-based violence and reproductive rights within civil society mobilisation and legal reform. However, empowerment is frequently individualised, especially in lifestyle supplements (e.g. *Wysokie Obcasy*), focusing on personal success rather than structural inequality.
- **Conservative media** frequently cast "gender ideology" as a threat to tradition, religion, or national identity. This is particularly evident in *wPolityce.pl*, *El Mundo*, and *De Telegraaf*, which often critique feminist movements or legal reforms like abortion access or gender quotas.

Traditional gender stereotypes persist in mainstream entertainment and tabloid media across all countries, often reinforcing patriarchal norms through visual culture, celebrity coverage, and framing of political women.

In **Belgium**, progressive outlets like *De Morgen* address gender inequality through investigative reporting and in-depth commentary, but even here, women tend to be underrepresented in political coverage and are often framed through personal lenses — such as their appearance or private lives — rather than professional achievements. Advertising and entertainment programming in mainstream Flemish media continue to reinforce traditional roles, where women are often depicted as caregivers or objects of desire. Coverage of sports, for instance, remains disproportionately focused on male athletes, with women's events gaining visibility primarily during global competitions like the Olympics.

In **Spain**, *El País* frequently reports on feminist legal reforms, such as the "Only Yes is Yes" Law and the Trans Law, presenting them as milestones in gender justice. However, even within supportive coverage, there is a tendency to frame feminist struggles through **individualised success stories** or through emotionally driven narratives rather than through structural critique. Meanwhile, conservative outlets like *El Mundo* offer a more sceptical stance, highlighting unintended legal consequences and challenging the legitimacy of feminist demands.

Similarly, in **Austria**, *Der Standard* consistently gives space to CSOs and feminist voices, covering topics such as access to reproductive healthcare and gender-based violence. Yet, in broader media discourse, feminist concerns are often depoliticised. For example, public debates on mental health or "regretting motherhood" rarely reference feminist analysis, and the framing of women's health often centres on personal wellbeing rather than structural rights.

In **Italy**, gender equality appears in national broadsheets like *Corriere della Sera*, especially through specialised columns such as *La27esimaOra*. However, mainstream television and popular press still propagate stereotypical portrayals of women, especially in entertainment media. Women are underrepresented as experts in news programs, and when they do appear, they are often confined to "feminised" topics such as family, education, or lifestyle.

In **Poland**, the divide is particularly stark. *Gazeta Wyborcza* strongly supports feminist causes and frequently reports on women's protests and gender-based violence. The daily was a vocal supporter of the 2022 mass street protests against restrictive abortion laws, framing them as civic resistance and democratic mobilisation. In contrast, *wPolityce.pl* and other conservative media portray these same protests as threats to social order, often invoking "gender ideology" as a foreign imposition undermining traditional Polish values.

The **Netherlands** presents a more subdued but still evident divide. *De Volkskrant* covers gender issues with analytical depth, often in relation to education, culture, or politics, while *De Telegraaf* focuses more on cultural controversies — for example, negative portrayals of mosque-based education or conservative gender roles in migrant communities. These stories often use sensational framing and lack an empowerment perspective.

Across all countries, a notable trend is the systematic underrepresentation of migrantised women as agents of empowerment. When migrantised women do appear in gender debates, it is often in the context of victimhood (e.g., trafficking or forced marriage), reinforcing narratives of passivity rather than agency. Intersectional analyses that consider the interplay of gender, race and class remain scarce, appearing primarily within specialised feminist or digital outlets.

II. 3. Migration, Race/Ethnicity, and Inclusion in Gendered Media Discourses

with security, cultural identity, and race. In most countries, **migrantised women's agency and voice are largely missing or underrepresented** from mainstream media debates. When present, they are often tokenised or filtered through the lens of institutional actors.

- Sources grouped under **Source 1** (e.g. *De Morgen*, *El País*, *Gazeta Wyborcza*) present migration through **humanitarian or EU solidarity frames**, particularly in contexts like the Belarus–Poland border or Mediterranean arrivals. Yet, even these outlets often **frame migrantised women as passive victims**, especially in stories about trafficking or domestic labour.
- Sources grouped under **Source 2** (e.g. *wPolityce.pl*, *De Telegraaf*, *El Mundo*) associate migration with or as cultural threats, Islamist extremism, or national insecurity. Muslim women, in particular, are framed in **binary terms**: veiled equals oppressed, unveiled equals integrated in

society. Few media sources adopt **intersectional framings** that account for the compound effects of gender, race, and legal status.

Migration and inclusion, particularly as they intersect with gender, are among the most polarising and underdeveloped areas in traditional media coverage across the six countries. While liberal outlets often adopt humanitarian or rights-based frames, **migrantised women's voices and lived experiences are largely absent**, and intersectional perspectives are rare.

In **Poland**, liberal media like *Gazeta Wyborcza* have drawn attention to the humanitarian crisis at the Belarusian border, highlighting the work of NGOs and legal advocates. Coverage emphasises Poland's obligations as an EU member and condemns pushback policies. However, in *wPolityce.pl* migration is framed as a **threat to national sovereignty and cultural identity**, often invoking fears of terrorism or social disintegration. Migrantised women are rarely mentioned, and when they are, it is either as anonymous victims or as part of broader alarmist narratives about Islam.

In **Spain**, *El País* covers migration as a European responsibility and has reported on the dangers of securitised border regimes. Yet, even here, migrantised women are most often portrayed as **victims of trafficking or exploitation**, with limited focus on their civic or political agency. Debates about the Islamic veil, for example, tend to alternate between liberal-defensive and conservative-oppressive framings, rarely including the voices of Muslim women themselves. There are a few recent pieces that take a more grounded and critical and intersectional perspective, which may indicate a shift in how these topics are approached. It is unclear, however, whether these are isolated efforts to signal pluralism or the beginning of a more consistent line.

Flemish media in Belgium similarly reproduce binary framings of migrant and migrantised women, particularly in relation to Muslim identity. Studies show that veiled women are depicted as 'backward' or 'oppressed, while unveiled Muslim women are described as "modern" and integrated. *De Morgen* occasionally gives space to intersectional analysis, but this is the exception rather than the rule. Migrant and migrantised women's labour — particularly in domestic and care work — is almost entirely invisible in mainstream media narratives. This may, in some topics, also be due to the specific political debates during the time of our research, that mainly focused on the changes in administrative organisation of paid domestic and care work.

In **Austria**, public discourse has long been shaped by the so-called "Kopftuchdebatte" (headscarf debate). Media coverage often conflates veiling with submission or cultural deviance. Muslim women are included in debates selectively and frequently filtered through dominant liberal-secular frames. While CSOs like the *Forum of Muslim Women* have attempted to shift the narrative, their impact in mainstream outlets like *Kurier* remains limited. Refugees are frequently framed in homogenising language, as an "anonymous mass," with little distinction between legal status, background, or experience.

In **Italy**, the national press, including *Corriere della Sera*, tends to portray migrantised women as passive — often in connection with domestic work, trafficking, or cultural backwardness. In contrast, regional outlets like *L'Adige* occasionally highlight migrantised women's civic contributions and leadership roles in integration programs. However, these localised stories rarely reach national prominence or reshape dominant narratives.

The **Netherlands** presents a similar pattern: *De Volkskrant* occasionally reports on migrant rights, but migrantised women are still most often presented through themes of marginalisation or cultural conflict. In *De Telegraaf*, coverage of migrant communities is typically linked to **crime or conservative gender norms**, with little nuance or engagement with migrantised women's lived realities.

Across countries, **intersectional and empowering narratives are rare**. Media coverage seldom connects gender with migration status, legal precarity, race, or socio-economic position. Migrantised women are most often framed as either burdens, threats, or victims — with very few stories centring their agency, activism, or contributions to public life.

II. 4. Visibility and Media Engagement of Civil Society Organisations

Civil society organisations working on gender equality and migrant rights are more visible in **liberal-progressive media**, though even here their presence is selective:

- In Austria and Belgium, **CSOs appear regularly in newspapers** like *Der Standard* and *De Morgen*, often positioned as expert voices or organisers of campaigns. This could also be due to the institutionalisation of CSOs in the governance structures in these countries, but dependent on the studied debate and integration of these CSOs in the local landscape.
- In Poland, CSO visibility is sharply divided by media ideology: *Gazeta Wyborcza* amplifies activist work, while conservative outlets like *wPolityce.pl* either dismiss CSOs as "elitist" or ignore them entirely. Spain shows a similar ideological divide, *El País* tends to amplify and legitimise the work of progressive CSOs, while *El Mundo* gives them limited visibility and often treats them with suspicion or frames them as part of a broader partisan confrontation.
- In Italy, regional and local press (e.g. *L'Adige*) sometimes highlight grassroots associations, offering a more **community-embedded perspective** that national dailies tend to overlook. Still, CSO involvement in media debates about **labour precarity, mental health, or intersectionality** remains limited, signalling a need for greater outreach and stronger media engagement strategies.

Conclusion: Common and Divergent Patterns

Across all six countries, the media landscapes reflect deep ideological divisions that shape how gender, empowerment, and inclusion are framed. The **selected media sources**, while varying in format and reach, collectively illustrate the contours of this polarisation and its implications for public discourse. The situated nature of discussing gender – especially when focusing on ethnicity and migration, cannot be unseen and is key in understanding media discourses.

Key cross-country patterns include:

- **Increased visibility of gender and empowerment themes**, though often framed through depoliticised or individualistic narratives.
- **Consistent marginalisation of migrantised women**, with empowerment narratives largely absent.

- **Polarised discourse** on both gender and migration, with liberal media emphasising rights and solidarity, and conservative outlets foregrounding tradition and threat.
- **Selective visibility of CSOs**, with stronger representation in liberal press and regional media.

Table 2 Key Debate Characteristics by Country and Source

AUSTRIA		
Debate	***Der Standard***	***Kurier***
Femicide	In-depth and rights-based; features feminist CSOs and survivors' voices	Covers incidents factually; less analysis or gender lens
Abortion	Covers access and healthcare rights; includes CSOs and policy critiques	Highlights political debates; presents abortion neutrally
Islamophobia	Reports structural racism and veiling debates; includes Muslim voices	Frames hijab as cultural threat; minimal inclusion of Muslim perspectives
Citizenship & Rights	Covers disenfranchisement; amplifies CSOs and migrant voices	Reflects party politics; moderate on inclusion
Paid Domestic Work	Low coverage; focuses on care sector reform and affordability	Frames around elderly affordability; ignores workers' rights
BELGIUM		
Debate/Source	***De Morgen***	***Het Laatste Nieuws***
Femicide	Strong focus on systemic violence; uses feminist framing	Event-driven, crime-focused; little structural context
Abortion	Minimal coverage; rights-based framing when present	Procedural/legal tone; limited depth
Islamophobia	High coverage of Islamophobia, notably related to wearing the veil	High coverage of Islamophobia, , notably related to wearing the veil
Citizenship & Rights	Highlights structural barriers and racism; CSOs visible	Focus on administration and service impact; neutral framing
Paid Domestic Work	Discusses reforms and abuse cases; union voices present	Pragmatic, technical focus on service cheque system
ITALY		
Debate/Source	***Corriere della Sera***	***L'Adige***
Femicide	Reports on femicide with some gender lens; inconsistent	Limited local coverage; community focus

Abortion	Symbolic debate; moral and religious framing present	Rare coverage; no strong stance
Islamophobia	Rarely covered; mostly external focus (e.g., France, Gaza)	No significant coverage identified
Citizenship & Rights	Covers policy debates; lacks migrant voices	Local focus; limited national-level citizenship coverage
Paid Domestic Work	Discusses migration and informality; lacks workers' own voices	Very limited coverage; regional rather than structural
THE NETHERLANDS		
Debate/Source	***De Volkskrant***	***De Telegraaf***
Femicide	Highlights systemic causes and gender inequality	Sensationalist, crime-focused coverage
Abortion	Rights-based framing; limited emotional tone	Minimal coverage; medicalised and technical
Islamophobia	Covers anti-discrimination; includes critical and comparative voices	Frames Muslims as antithetical to Dutch values; sensationalist
Citizenship & Rights	Foregrounds migrant perspectives; critiques restrictive policies	Focus on Dutch identity, integration strain, housing crisis
Paid Domestic Work	Frames care as public strain; includes caregivers' narratives	Focuses on systemic fraud, burnout, and cost to Dutch families
POLAND		
Debate/Source	***Gazeta Wyborcza***	***wPolityce.pl***
Femicide	Frames femicide as a civic crisis; feminist CSOs visible	Moralistic, family-centered framing; blames feminism
Abortion	Protest-centred, feminist; rights-based framing	Frames abortion as murder; strong religious tone
Islamophobia	Highlights structural racism; criticises state policy	Alarmist framing post-2015; Muslims portrayed as threats
Citizenship & Rights	Amplifies CSOs and legal critiques of exclusion	Frames citizenship as threat to identity; anti-immigration tone
Paid Domestic Work	No coverage beyond indirect mentions of gender division	No coverage identified
SPAIN		
Debate/Source	***El País***	***El Mundo***

Femicide	Rich framing of GBV; feminist sources, legal reforms	Often de-politicised or framed as societal degeneration
Abortion	Strong feminist framing; linked to legal reform	Presents abortion as controversial; focus on minors and conscience rights
Islamophobia	Frames Islamophobia structurally; uses international Muslim voices	Links Islam to cultural conflict/security; minimal Muslim voices
Citizenship & Rights	Rights-based; includes migrant testimonies and CSOs	Managerial framing; bureaucratic and security concerns
Paid Domestic Work	Structural, feminist framing; extensive CSO and worker voices	Employer concerns and legal burden; minimal worker perspective

III. HOT DEBATES IN NUMBERS

The quantitative overview of the media entries for the year 2024 reveals significant differences in the intensity and distribution of coverage across the five selected debates among the participating countries

Abortion emerges as the most intensively covered debate overall, driven almost entirely by the extremely high number of entries in Poland. With nearly 4,000 articles (3,929) recorded in 2024, the abortion debate in Poland dominates the national media landscape, clearly reflecting the country's ongoing political and social tensions around reproductive rights. In Spain, too, this is the most numerous debate with 382 articles. While in Austria, Belgium and the Netherlands, it is almost equal with "Citizenship and Rights". This contrasts sharply with the coverage in Italy, which recorded only 96 entries and it is the fourth in numbers, only before Islamophobia, despite the topic's continued relevance.

"Citizenship and Rights" also generated substantial coverage in all countries. In Italy and the Netherlands this is the most present debate, while in Poland, Belgium, and Austria, this is the second most present debate. The keywords in all countries were adjusted to include topics of migration and access to rights. The prevalence of the debate in all countries shows how the topic of inclusion and migration is indeed a hot debate everywhere.

"Femicide" shows a more country-specific pattern. Austria recorded the highest number of entries (566), reflecting intense media attention to gender-based violence, particularly around high-profile cases. In Italy, this is the second most popular debate, while in Spain, it is the third. In the other three countries, this is not a topic that was very prevalent in the media. Belgium had only 44 articles on this topic, despite having similar incidents of partner violence.

"Islamophobia" was among the less covered debates as shown in our keyword search. However, some of the entries that were categorised under "Citizenship and Rights" focused on migration and inclusion could have also fallen in this category with different sub-keywords. Islamophobia is the third most popual debate, very close to the second in both Belgium and the Netherlands. In Poland, it comes on third place, but way lower under "Abortion" and "Citizenship and Rights". In Austria (48), Spain (43) and Italy (14),

Islamophobia has very few hits. This does not necessarily reflect the wider public opinions and debates, where Islamophobia is quite prevalent in all three countries, but rather the language used in the selected media sources does not reflect this prevalence, as compared to the other debates. For example in Austria, references to religious or cultural background come up often in relation to the topic of "Femicide", but would not be explicitly named as Islamophobia through a keyword search.

Finally, "Paid Domestic Work" received consistently limited attention in most countries. Italy led with 104 articles, suggesting some ongoing engagement with this issue in the context of care and migration. Belgium followed with 153, but the debate was marginal in Austria (22) and Spain (30). Poland did not report quantitative data for this category. These figures suggest that the role of domestic and care work—despite being central to migrantised women's labour conditions—is still underrepresented in mainstream media, particularly in countries with high dependence on migrantised care workers like Austria.

Overall, the distribution of media entries reflects both the national relevance of specific debates and the influence of broader political developments. Poland stands out for the sheer volume of media coverage on abortion and citizenship, while Austria and Belgium focus more on "Femicide" and "Islamophobia" respectively. Italy and Spain demonstrate more balanced but less intense engagement across debates, and several important topics—such as "Paid Domestic Work"—remain underexplored in most national media landscapes.

Table 3 Number of hits per country and per debate

Country	Abortion	Citizenship & Rights	Femicide	Islamophobia	Paid Domestic Work
Austria	272	297	566	48	22
Belgium	464	409	44	375	153
Italy	96	246	175	14	104
The Netherlands	479	929	80	425	313
Spain	319	282	101	34	30
Poland	3,929	2,828	*n/a*	642	*n/a*

Across the six countries analysed, there is a general trend showing that liberal media sources tend to publish a higher number of entries on the selected gender empowerment and inclusion debates than their conservative counterparts. However, the magnitude and consistency of this difference vary by country and topic.

In **Austria**, depending on the debate, there are stark disparities between the two sources. "Femicide" was clearly much more represented in *Kurier* with 456 entries compared to *Der Standard* with four times less, at only 110 entries. The type of entries, however, vary significantly, with *Kurier* publishing much more often 'spectacular' news, while *Der Standard* focused more on analytical entries. For "Citizenship

and Rights" the disparity is reversed with *Der Standard* publishing 199 articles, and *Kurier* only half of that with 98 entries. The other three debates received equal attention (or lack of attention) by both sources.

Belgium shows the biggest disparity between the two sources in the debates on "Citizenship and Rights" and "Paid Domestic Work". For "Citizenship and Rights" HLN published 245 entries, while *De Morgen* – 164. And for "Paid Domestic Work" *De Morgen* published double than HLN with 100 entries vs. 53. The other three debates are relatively equally distributed between the two sources.

In **Italy**, the gap between the two sources is great in almost all debates, except "Islamophobia", which as previously discussed, has very few entries in both sources. The biggest gap is visible in the "Citizenship and Rights" debate, where *Corriere della Sera* published 213 entries, while *L'Adige* published only 33. This can be attributed to a great extent to the national vs local profile of the sources and the relevance of the topic on political, policy and legal level. Similarly, for "Paid Domestic Work", the national sources had many more entries than the local one (92 vs 12), and for "Abortion" again *Corriere della Sera* has substantially more entries than *L'Adige* (76 vs. 20). For "Femicide" the results are reverse, with *L'Adige* having almost double entries than *Corriere della Sera* (113 vs. 63).

In **the Netherlands** *De Volksrant* and *De Telegraaf* featured similar numbers of articles on the debates "Citizenship and Rights", "Islamophobia" and Paid Domestic Work", with "Citizenship and Rights" being the most prominent debate in both sources (444 vs. 485), and Femicide the one with least numbers of articles with only 20 for *De Volkrant,* and 60 for *De Telegraaf.* The biggest difference in coverage is on the topic of "Abortion", where *De Volksrant* features almost three times more articles (353) than *De Telegraaf* (126).

Poland presents a slightly more complex picture. Despite a strong presence of conservative media, it is the liberal outlet *Gazeta Wyborcza* that dominates the media landscape in terms of coverage of the analysed debates. It produced far more entries than the conservative *wPolityce.pl*, especially visible in the abortion debate, where *Gazeta Wyborcza* published 3,001 articles, compared to 928 in *wPolityce.pl*. Similar disparities appear in the citizenship and rights debate (1,639 vs. 1,189) and Islamophobia (523 vs. 119), though the differences are less extreme. While *wPolityce.pl* does engage with these topics, the liberal source consistently publishes more, suggesting broader or more sustained engagement.

In **Spain**, the clearest contrast appears in the abortion debate, where *El País* published 261 entries, compared to *El Mundo*'s 117. While El País publishes slightly more content on Islamophobia (21 vs. 13) and paid domestic work (21 vs. 9), the opposite pattern appears in femicide (49 vs. 52) and citizenship and rights (133 vs. 149). This does not necessarily reflect greater engagement by El Mundo in these topics; the higher number of articles may instead relate to a more case-driven, sensationalist or audience-oriented approach that tends to generate higher visibility and sales. Overall, the difference seems to stem less from volume than from editorial priorities: El País contextualises issues within broader rights-based and structural frameworks, whereas El Mundo focuses more on incidents, security concerns, and judicial developments.

From a **comparative perspective**, liberal media across all countries publish not only a higher volume of articles on all debates but also appear to cover more nuanced and varied aspects of gender empowerment and inclusion. Conservative outlets, although they participate in the debates, do so with less frequency and—based on the qualitative findings in earlier sections—often adopt more cautious,

critical, or traditionalist framings. This imbalance in coverage also affects the visibility of civil society organisations and feminist actors, who are more frequently cited and featured in liberal outlets.

Overall, the quantitative data supports the conclusion that **liberal media play a central role in shaping and sustaining public discourse on issues related to gender, migration, and empowerment**. The lesser volume in conservative outlets may reflect editorial choices rooted in ideological positioning, audience preferences, or differing definitions of newsworthiness in relation to gendered social issues.

Table 4. Keywords and number of hits per country and per debate

AUSTRIA

Debate	Search Terms	Der Standard	Kurrier	Total
Abortion	((Abtreibung) OR (Schwangerschaftsabbruch) OR ("Pro-Choice"))	141	131	272
Citizenship & Rights	(Staatsbürger* OR Migra*) AND (Wahlrecht* OR Wahlberecht*)	199	98	297
Femicide	((Femizid) OR (Mord an Frau) OR (Ehrenmord) OR (Geschlechtermord))	110	456	566
Islamophobia	((Islamophobie) OR (Islamfeindlich*) OR (Antimuslim*) OR (Muslimfeindlich) OR ("Religiöse Intoleranz") OR ("anti*islam")) ((Kopftuch) OR (Burka) OR (Schleier) OR (Hijab))	24	24	48
Paid-domestic work	((Pflegearbeit) OR ("bezahlte Pflege*") OR ("24-Stunden Pflege*") OR ("24h Pflege*")OR ("24h Betreu*") OR ("24-Stunden Betreu*") OR ("persönliche Pflegeassistenz")))	11	11	22

BELGIUM

Debate	Search terms	*De Morgen*	*HLN*	Total
Abortion	("Abortus") OR ("Pro-Life") OR ("Pro-Choice") OR ("Pro-Leven") OR ("Zwangerschapsafbreking"))	246	218	464
Citizenship & Rights	(("Burgerschap en rechten") OR ("juridische status") OR ("staatsburgerschap") OR ("naturalisatie") OR ("Verblijfsvergunning") OR, ("illegaal" AND "migrant") OR ("Burgerschap"))	164	245	409
Femicide	(("Femicide") OR ("Moord op vrouwen") OR ("Eerwraak")	14	30	44
Islamophobia	(("Islamofobie") OR ("Islamvijandig") OR ("islamhaat") OR ("Antimoslim") OR	187	188	375

	("Religieuze Intolerantie") OR ("anti-islam") OR (“hoofddoek”) OR ("Hijabverbod") OR ("hoofddoekenverbod") OR ("discriminatie tegen moslims") OR ("halal-discussie") OR (" Xenofobie"))			
Paid-domestic work	(("dienstencheques") OR ("huishoudelijke zorgverlening") OR ("betaald huishoudelijk werk")OR ("zwart werk in huishoudelijke sector"))	53	100	153

ITALY

Debate	Search terms	Corriere della Sera	L’Adige	Total
Abortion	Aborto, interruzione gravidanza volontaria, IPV	76	20	96
Citizenship & Rights	Cittadinanza, ius solis, ius sanguinis, ius scholae, diritto di cittadinanza	213	33	246
Femicide	Femminicidio, femminicidi	62	113	175
Islamophobia	Islamofobia	9	5	14
Paid-domestic-work	Badante, badanti	92	12	104

THE NETHERLANDS

Debate	Search terms	De Volkskrant	De Telegraaf	Total
Abortion	("abortus") OR ("Abortusrecht") OR ("Pro-Choice") OR ("Pro-Life") OR ("zwangerschapsafbreking") OR ("baas in eigen buik")	353	126	479
Citizenship & Rights	("verblijfsvergunning") OR ("illegale immigratie") OR ("illegale immigranten") OR ("illegaal" AND "migrant") OR ("verblijfsstatus") OR ("statushouders")	444	485	929
Femicide	("Femicide") OR ("Gendercide") OR ("Partnergeweld") OR ("Huishoudelijk geweld") OR ("Eerwraak")	20	60	80
Islamophobia	("Islamofobie") OR ("Moslimhaat") OR ("Discriminatie" AND "Moslims") OR ("Religieuze Intolerantie") OR ("Anti-Islam") OR ("Hijabverbod") OR ("Hoofddoekverbod") OR ("Hoofddoek") OR ("Xenofobie" AND "Islam")	203	222	425

Paid-domestic-work	("Betaald huishoudelijk werk") OR ("Betaalde mantelzorg") OR ("Huishoudelijk werk") OR ("mantelzorg")	161	152	313

POLAND

Debate	Search terms	Gazeta Wyborcza	wPolityce.pl	Total
Abortion	Abortion OR Reproductive rights OR Right to choose OR Pro-choice vs pro-life OR Safe abortion access OR Termination of pregnancy OR Reproductive justice OR Reproductive health access (in rural/urban areas) OR Contraception	3001	928	3929
Citizenship & Rights	Citizenship rights OR Legal status OR Refugees' rights OR Border control OR Irregularity/Irregular migrants/Illegal migrants OR Access to social citizenship OR Nationality laws/Naturalisation regulation OR Access to the labour market OR Right to citizenship	1639	1189	2828
Femicide	Femicide OR Gender-based violence OR Violence against women OR Murder of women OR Gendercide OR Intimate partner violence (IPV) OR Domestic violence murders OR Honour killings	6	1	7
Islamophobia	Islamophobia OR Anti-Muslim sentiment OR Discrimination against Muslims OR Religious intolerance OR Islamophobic rhetoric OR Anti-Islamic prejudice OR Veil or hijab regulation/bans OR Xenophobia and Islam	523	119	642
Paid-domestic-work	Paid domestic work OR Paid care work OR Paid domestic carers (e.g. badante, enterna/externa, etc.) OR Live-in domestic work/care work OR Domestic labour OR Domestic workers' rights OR Household workers OR Paid housework ORDomestic servitude	n/a	n/a	n/a

SPAIN

Debate	Search terms	El Pais	El Mundo	Total
Abortion	Aborto OR "Interrupción voluntaria del embarazo" OR IVE OR Provida OR antiaborto//(Aborto OR "Interrupción	202	117	319

	voluntaria del embarazo” OR IVE OR Provida OR antiaborto) AND España			
Citizenship & Rights	(("Regularización" OR "Papeles" OR "reforma migratoria") AND ("migrante" OR "migrantes" OR "inmigrante" OR "inmigrantes" OR "migración")) OR (("Canarias" OR "Melilla" OR "Ceuta") AND ("pateras" OR "llegadas de inmigrantes" OR "llegadas de migrantes" OR "crisis migratoria"))	133	149	282
Femicide	(Feminicidio OR (“Violencia machista” AND (homicidio OR asesinato OR muere OR mata OR asesinada)) OR (“Violencia de género” AND (homicidio OR asesinato OR muere OR mata OR asesinada)) OR (“Sistema viogen” AND (homicidio OR asesinato OR muere OR mata OR asesinada)) OR ("crimen de honor" AND (homicidio OR asesinato OR muere OR mata OR asesinada)))	49	52	101
Islamophobia	Islamofobia OR "discriminación islam" OR "discriminación musulmán" OR "discriminación musulmanes" OR " prohibición velo" OR "prohibición hiyab" OR "polémica mezquita" OR "debate mezquita" OR "debate menú halal" OR "polémica menú halal"	21	13	34
Paid-domestic-work	(Derecho OR derechos OR ley OR leyes OR normativa) AND (“Trabajo del hogar” OR “empleo del hogar” OR “empleada del hogar” OR "empleadas del hogar" OR “trabajadora del hogar” OR "trabajadoras del hogar" OR “trabajo doméstico” OR "servicio doméstico" OR “régimen interno” OR “asistenta del hogar”)	21	9	30

IV. HOT DEBATES: UNDERSTANDING THE DISCOURSE

IV.1. Abortion

The degree to which abortion appears in public debate and media coverage varies widely across the six countries. The most intense and politically visible media debates take place in Poland, Spain, and Italy, where abortion remains a core ideological battleground. In contrast, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Austria show more muted, legalistic, or procedural forms of coverage, with fewer polarising headlines or sustained public controversy.

IV.1.1. AUSTRIA

1) Media Coverage

Although abortion has been legal in Austria since 1975 under the three-month time-limit regulation, it remains embedded in the penal code and continues to provoke debate. The discussion in 2024 was largely driven by two interrelated issues: unequal access to abortion services—especially in conservative regions like Tyrol, where few doctors perform the procedure—and political disagreement between parties over expanding access and financing. The debate gained traction during the same period as the U.S. election, which was frequently used as a comparative frame for ideological polarization around reproductive rights.

Both *Der Standard* and *Kurier* covered the topic extensively. Articles revealed that abortion remains privately financed in most of Austria, with limited public support available only in Tyrol, Vienna, and Graz. While *Kurier*'s reporting focused mainly on political clashes and legislative proposals, *Der Standard* provided more analytical and educational coverage, clarifying legal frameworks and exposing misinformation. *Der Standard* also diversified its sources—featuring survey data, expert opinions, and interviews with gynaecologists—whereas *Kurier* relied more heavily on statements from political actors. Across both outlets, abortion was approached as a political and social issue, though with differing levels of depth and ideological nuance.

2) Thematic Analysis

Empowerment: Women are represented as active decision-makers whose freedom of choice should be respected. A *Standard* interview with a gynaecologist highlights this framing: "It is part of my specialty—supporting women in realizing their reproductive rights." Even centrist and right-wing politicians echo this stance, emphasising that "women must not feel left alone when making the difficult decision to terminate a pregnancy." In *Kurier*, women's rights and autonomy are recognised but often framed through political debates rather than individual experience. Both sources largely exclude broader civic or feminist voices, though *Der Standard* integrates more perspectives from women and professionals directly engaged in abortion care.

Responsibility, Drivers of Change and Role of CSOs: Responsibility in this debate is primarily political. *Der Standard* and *Kurier* report neutral coverage overall, yet moral undertones emerge when conservative parties like the ÖVP and FPÖ invoke pro-natalist messaging such as the campaign *"Ja, zum Kind"* ("Yes, to the child"). The SPÖ and Green Party are positioned as the main drivers of change, calling for nationwide, free abortion services and protection zones around clinics. Civil society organizations are largely absent from both newspapers, though *Der Standard* briefly discusses the

influence of Agenda Europa, a transnational religious-right network. CSOs are not portrayed as active participants in shaping the policy debate.

Intersectionality and Gender Visibility: Intersectional perspectives are scarce. Class and financial status are the only dimensions explicitly mentioned, primarily through the SPÖ and Green Party's demands that abortion be free of charge or subsidized for low-income women. Broader issues—such as migration, race, or disability—are missing from the debate. Overall, the discussion constructs a relatively uniform image of "women" without exploring differentiated experiences or vulnerabilities.

Stigmatization and Stereotypes: Neither outlet exhibits strong stigmatizing language or overt stereotyping. The tone is generally factual and policy-oriented, with limited moral judgment except in statements by conservative politicians. While the FPÖ explicitly promotes anti-abortion rhetoric, mainstream coverage avoids sensationalism and does not criminalize women or doctors.

Rights Framework: Both sources link Austria's debate to broader European developments. The EU Parliament's 2024 initiative to classify abortion as a fundamental right is mentioned in *Kurier*, situating Austria's discussion within an international context. Nonetheless, the coverage remains predominantly domestic, centred on access, affordability, and service provision. Neither newspaper makes a clear distinction between women's rights and human rights frameworks; both approach abortion as part of reproductive and healthcare rights rather than as a constitutional question.

3) Comparison

Der Standard delivers deeper, more analytical coverage, combining political reporting with expert voices and factual clarification. It frames abortion as an issue of reproductive rights and informed access, aligning with feminist perspectives. *Kurier* adopts a more neutral, event-driven tone, highlighting party politics and regional access disparities without extensive contextualisation. While both papers recognise abortion as a legitimate healthcare issue, *Der Standard* provides stronger advocacy for structural change, whereas *Kurier* remains closer to centrist, procedural reporting.

IV.1.2. BELGIUM

1) Media Coverage

For Belgium, the concrete focus for the traditional media analysis was specifically on pregnancy termination and the rights to it, excluding wider debates on contraception, reproductive health or reproductive rights. Abortion represents one of the most visible gender-related debates in Belgian media, cutting across moral, political, and social dimensions. The Belgian media landscape approaches the abortion debate through distinct but complementary lenses. In both *De Morgen* and *HLN*, abortion remains a headline issue linking questions of ethics, politics, and gender equality. The discussion centres on reforming the 1990 law extending the legal term, abolishing the mandatory waiting period, and potentially enshrining abortion in the Constitution. Yet the framing diverges: *De Morgen* embeds abortion within a global struggle for women's rights and bodily autonomy, whereas *HLN* presents it mainly as a contested political and moral battleground. *De Morgen* adopts a rights-based and feminist framing, treating abortion as a question of bodily autonomy, equality, and democratic citizenship, while critically interrogating the influence of religion and conservative politics. *HLN,* in contrast, presents abortion mainly as a political and moral controversy, focusing on interparty disputes (especially the role of CD&V) and

public reactions, often through emotional and personalized narratives. Across both newspapers, abortion functions as a mirror of Belgium's negotiation between tradition and progress, morality and autonomy, and national politics and global feminist trends.

2) Thematic Analysis

Empowerment: *De Morgen* portrays women as autonomous agents entitled to self-determination—summarized in the slogan *"baas in eigen buik"* ("boss within my own belly"). It stresses that restricting abortion violates women's fundamental rights and situates the decision as belonging solely to the woman, free from political or religious interference. *HLN*, however, often frames women as victims or passive figures shaped by circumstance—women forced to travel abroad for abortions or struggling emotionally afterward. While *HLN* includes more first-person stories, these accounts evoke compassion rather than empowerment. *De Morgen* focuses on collective autonomy and feminist struggle, while *HLN* foregrounds personal suffering and moral dilemmas.

Responsibility, Drivers of Change and Role of CSOs: *De Morgen* emphasizes political and social responsibility to safeguard reproductive rights, criticizing male-dominated policymaking and highlighting the role of conservative and populist parties as key obstacles. It positions feminist movements and abortion centres as agents of change, advocating for legal reform and access to safe abortion care. *HLN* also mentions these organizations, particularly LUNA vzw and VUB Dilemma (a service on unwanted pregnancies offered for students enrolled at the Free University of Brussels), but focuses more on their campaigns as part of political disputes rather than sustained advocacy. For both outlets, political divisions—especially around CD&V's[4] opposition—define the debate's dynamics. *HLN* stresses government accountability to modernize legislation, whereas *De Morgen* underlines collective civic responsibility and the ethical duty to uphold gender equality.

Intersectionality and Gender Visibility: *De Morgen* acknowledges that migrantised women face additional vulnerabilities but does not systematically differentiate between migrantised and non-migrantised women in its coverage. *HLN* gives even less attention to migrantised women, focusing primarily on religion as a factor influencing abortion attitudes—particularly among conservative Catholic and Muslim communities. In both sources, intersectional dimensions such as class, ethnicity, and migration remain underexplored, reinforcing an image of women as a homogeneous group.

Stigmatization and Stereotypes: *De Morgen* challenges patriarchal and religious authority, presenting the Church's stance as an impediment to women's autonomy, though this framing can risk portraying religious belief as uniformly oppressive. *HLN,* by contrast, sometimes reinforces cultural stereotypes—for instance, by associating Muslim women with passivity or framing religious conservatism as a monolithic barrier to equality. The moral rhetoric in *HLN*—drawing on figures like Pope Francis—positions abortion within a moral hierarchy rather than as a rights issue, while *De Morgen*'s analytical approach exposes such framings as structural inequality.

Rights Framework: Most attention is given to local legal extensions of abortion periods. However, both newspapers situate Belgium's abortion debate within an international context. *De Morgen* draws strong parallels with U.S. and European developments, especially the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* and France's constitutional recognition of abortion, using these cases to reinforce its rights-based perspective. *HLN*

[4] CD&V: A Christian political party (Christian Democratic and Flemish) active in Flanders

also reports on these events but in a more descriptive manner, linking them to Belgian politics and public sentiment. *De Morgen* presents abortion as part of broader human and reproductive rights, intertwined with citizenship and autonomy. *HLN* recognises abortion as a women's right but frames it primarily through political conflict and emotional resonance rather than structural analysis

3) Comparison

De Morgen frames abortion as a fundamental rights issue, rooted in women's autonomy and democratic equality, with clear criticism of political and religious interference. *HLN*, conversely, treats abortion as a political and moral battleground, emphasizing party tensions and religious controversy while often portraying women as victims rather than agents. Both connect Belgian developments to international trends, yet *De Morgen* offers a deeper, more analytical perspective, whereas *HLN* relies on human-interest framing and emotive storytelling.

IV.1.3. ITALY

1) Media Coverage

Abortion remains one of the most contested issues in Italy, rooted in the country's enduring struggle between secular and religious influences. While Law 194/78 legalized abortion within the first 90 days under certain conditions, its implementation continues to be undermined by widespread conscientious objection—with nearly two-thirds of gynaecologists and almost half of anaesthetists refusing to perform abortions. This lack of medical access, particularly in rural regions, forces many women to travel long distances for care. The debate is sustained by tensions between the Catholic Church, conservative parties seeking to restrict access, and feminist and human rights advocates defending reproductive autonomy. Media coverage reflects these divides, frequently framing abortion as a moral and legal dilemma rather than as a matter of healthcare or rights. The issue also intersects with Italy's broader political discourse, particularly regarding secularism and the role of religion in shaping public policy. Despite the prominence of the debate, women's voices—and those of reproductive rights advocates and healthcare professionals—remain largely absent. Coverage in both *Il Corriere della Sera* and *L'Adige* is limited in scope. *Il Corriere* offers a national overview centred on legal disputes and party politics, while *L'Adige* focuses on regional legal and moral dimensions. Both retain a tone influenced by Catholic values and rarely address systemic inequalities or the lived experiences of women seeking abortions.

2) Thematic Analysis

Empowerment: Women are portrayed predominantly as passive figures caught in moral and legal controversies rather than as autonomous decision-makers. Abortion is framed in ethical and legal terms, overshadowing women's reproductive agency and bodily autonomy. Neither *Il Corriere della Sera* nor *L'Adige* foregrounds testimonies from women, medical professionals, or feminist activists. Instead, political institutions and religious authorities dominate the narrative, reducing women's presence to symbolic representations within a broader moral discourse.

Responsibility, Drivers of Change & Role of CSOs: Responsibility in the Italian abortion debate is framed primarily through moral and religious values. The Catholic Church is presented as the key actor influencing public opinion, reinforcing conservative norms around family and motherhood. Political figures—particularly from right-wing parties—are depicted as the main agents of change, often in defence

of restrictive policies. Conversely, civil society organizations (CSOs) and feminist collectives that advocate for reproductive rights are marginalised or absent in media coverage, despite their active role in promoting safe abortion access and reproductive justice. The discourse thus attributes moral responsibility to individuals and religious institutions rather than structural or policy-level actors.

Intersectionality & Gender Visibility: Media reporting on abortion in Italy largely omits intersectional analysis. The discussion remains narrowly focused on gender, failing to consider how class, migration status, or geography shape women's access to reproductive healthcare. Migrantised women—who face additional barriers such as language difficulties, irregular legal status, and lack of access to public healthcare—are **almost invisible** in mainstream coverage. When mentioned, they are portrayed as burdens on the healthcare system rather than as rights-holders facing compounded discrimination.

Stigmatization & Stereotypes: Both newspapers reproduce stigmatizing narratives by framing abortion as a moral dilemma or social problem, rather than a legitimate healthcare service. This reinforces societal taboos around abortion and contributes to the moralisation of women's reproductive choices. Women seeking abortions are implicitly portrayed as morally conflicted or irresponsible, while the act itself is depicted as harmful to societal values. The lack of personal testimonies or nuanced representation perpetuates a one-dimensional image of women as subjects of pity or reproach rather than empowerment.

Rights Framework: Abortion in Italian media is framed primarily within moral and legal boundaries, with limited engagement with international or rights-based discourses. Although comparisons to U.S. abortion debates occasionally appear, these references serve more as political analogies than as part of a global feminist context. Neither *Il Corriere della Sera* nor *L'Adige* meaningfully connects abortion to human rights or women's rights frameworks. Instead, abortion is treated as a contentious ethical issue rooted in questions of secularism, morality, and national identity. The media rarely acknowledge reproductive rights as integral to gender equality or democratic citizenship.

3) Comparison

Both *Il Corriere della Sera* and *L'Adige* adopt restrained, legally oriented reporting that maintains a moral undertone consistent with Catholic influence. *Il Corriere* offers a broader national perspective focused on political debates and legislation, while *L'Adige* approaches abortion as a regional moral and legal issue. In both cases, women's voices, intersectional experiences, and the work of CSOs are notably absent. The framing prioritizes ethical deliberation and institutional positions over lived experience or rights-based advocacy. Overall, the Italian media present abortion not as a question of gender justice or autonomy, but as a divisive moral and political issue shaped by enduring religious and cultural traditions.

IV.1.4. THE NETHERLANDS

1) Media Coverage

In the Netherlands, abortion is not a polarizing issue, reflecting the country's broad public consensus on women's reproductive rights. In 2024, fewer than 500 articles across both newspapers referenced abortion which places it in the middle range of the five debates examined. Abortion is not very controversial among Dutch citizens, with 86% of the population stating they support women's rights to abortion (De Graaf et al., 2023). Mostly, articles covering the topic of abortion make a connection to the

loss of abortion rights abroad. Domestic reporting was largely descriptive, focusing on political developments abroad or tangential references within broader policy or social discussions. In both *De Volkskrant* and *De Telegraaf* abortion was treated as uncontroversial and a settled social norm. De Volkskrant provided slightly more in-depth coverage, often contextualizing global trends and citing civil society organizations (CSOs) and experts. De Telegraaf, by contrast, leaned toward brief reports and human-interest stories, sometimes highlighting individual experiences of abortion or motherhood. Overall, abortion in Dutch media functions as a symbol of liberal consensus and civic rationality rather than moral or political division.

2) Thematic Analysis

Empowerment: Both newspapers frame women as informed and autonomous decision-makers. De Volkskrant situates abortion within the framework of bodily autonomy and gender equality, occasionally referencing CSOs and professional associations advocating access. *De Telegraaf* includes more personal narratives—stories of women who either chose or declined abortion—emphasizing empathy and emotional nuance without moralizing. In one account, a young mother's decision to continue her pregnancy is celebrated without judgment, while another features a singer candidly sharing her abortion experience and emotional aftermath. These portrayals collectively affirm women's right to choose, while avoiding political or ideological polarization.

Responsibility, Drivers of Change and Role of CSOs: Media responsibility is expressed through the maintenance of factual, neutral coverage, with abortion treated as a social norm rather than a policy crisis. Structural or political "drivers of change" are largely located abroad—such as *Roe v. Wade* in the U.S. or tightening restrictions in Italy and Poland. *De Volkskrant* is the only outlet that features CSOs, such as women's rights groups and doctors' organizations, who warn about the consequences of restricting abortion access internationally. *De Telegraaf* rarely includes such organizations, focusing instead on individual experiences and institutional voices like courts and political figures.

Intersectionality and Gender Visibility: Intersectional perspectives are largely absent in both newspapers. Neither source explores how class, migration, or regional disparities affect abortion access. Migrantised women's voices are entirely missing, reflecting the limited inclusivity of the Dutch public discourse on reproductive rights. Both outlets portray women as a homogeneous group, representative of the national consensus on autonomy rather than diverse lived realities.

Stigmatization and Stereotypes: Dutch media coverage is remarkably non-stigmatizing. Abortion is presented as a legitimate and accepted choice, and both choosing or rejecting it is portrayed with empathy. Even in crime reporting, where abortion appears incidentally, women are described sympathetically as victims of coercion or circumstance. There is no moral condemnation or framing of abortion as socially deviant. This neutrality reinforces the perception of abortion as a private healthcare decision rather than a moral fault line.

Rights Framework: Both newspapers frame abortion within a human-rights discourse, emphasizing the importance of protecting reproductive freedom as a fundamental right. However, this framing is implicit rather than activist: abortion is seen as a settled norm requiring vigilance rather than advocacy. Coverage is predominantly global, focusing on threats to abortion rights abroad (e.g., the U.S., Italy, Poland) and rarely engaging in detailed domestic debate. The Dutch consensus on abortion rights leaves little space

for internal controversy, situating the Netherlands as a model of stability in contrast to more restrictive international contexts.

3) Comparison

Both *De Volkskrant* and *De Telegraaf* treat abortion as a non-contentious, normalized issue, but their approaches differ subtly. *De Volkskrant* maintains a policy-oriented and rights-based framing, occasionally citing CSOs and experts to reinforce the importance of reproductive freedom. *De Telegraaf*, in turn, employs human-interest storytelling, offering intimate yet balanced depictions of women's experiences. Neither paper introduces significant moral judgment or political polarization. In contrast to many European contexts, Dutch media portray abortion as an established element of gender equality and healthcare policy rather than a site of ideological struggle.

IV.1.5 POLAND

1) Media Coverage

Between 2018 and 2024, abortion and women's rights became one of the most prevalent topics in Poland, generating at least twice as many media hits as any other gender-empowerment debate. The issue reached its peak in 2020–2021, following the Constitutional Tribunal's decision to outlaw abortion in cases of severe foetal defects, and resurfaced in 2023 and 2024 around election debates and the "morning-after pill" controversy. For 2024, the corpus comprises 2408 liberal-media articles and 926 conservative-media articles, making abortion the most covered gender issue that year. Conservative outlets consistently framed abortion as a danger to "conceived life" and a moral duty to protect it; liberal outlets advocated for women's bodily autonomy, frequently using cases of women who died or suffered severely under the near-total ban.

2) Thematic Analysis

Empowerment: Liberal media (*Gazeta Wyborcza*) presented women as active agents of resistance, particularly during the mass protests of 2020–2021 organised by *Ogólnopolski Strajk Kobiet* ("Women's Strike"). Women and CSOs were portrayed as mobilising to defend reproductive autonomy and broader democratic rights. The coverage included first-person stories of women who had undergone abortions and highlighted the role of female solidarity networks. Conservative media (*wPolityce.pl*), by contrast, did not represent women as empowered subjects; rather, it framed them as victims of moral decay or misguided individuals manipulated by "Western ideology." Migrantised women's experiences, especially Ukrainian refugees facing sexual violence, were completely absent from conservative reporting but received attention in liberal outlets through the actions of feminist CSOs.

Responsibility, Drivers of Change and Role of CSOs: Conservative media place responsibility in moral terms—families, youth, and society resisting "demoralisation"—and cast the EU, global firms, and health education as vehicles of ideological intrusion. Liberal media emphasise state accountability and legal reform, documenting actions after the 2023 change of government (penalties for hospitals refusing lawful abortions; tighter rules limiting conscience-clause misuse; action against graphic anti-abortion vans). For the liberal source, CSOs are seen as providers of care, information, and rights education for women, and as trainers of state officials, contributing to advocacy and public awareness. Conservative narratives marginalise or problematise such actors within a broader culture-war frame.

Intersectionality and Gender Visibility: Intersectional treatment is uneven. Liberal media surface migrantised women's specific vulnerabilities and regional disparities in access (e.g., uneven availability of the morning-after pill), and discuss youth attitudes toward religion classes and moral teaching. Conservative media omit migrant-focused strands and frame youth primarily as at risk of "demoralisation." Overall, gendered harms are visible in liberal coverage but rarely connected to compounded axes (migration status, region) in conservative outlets.

Stigmatization and Stereotypes: Conservative discourse relies on moral absolutism and stigmatizing labels (abortion as "murder"; women misled by secular Europe), portrays emergency contraception as dangerous for 15-year-olds, and casts health education as indoctrination. Liberal outlets attempt to debunk myths (mechanism of the pill), expose inconsistencies between Church teachings and social practice, and criticise rhetoric that fuels fear and hostility; they also connect low birth rates to the climate of legal risk and denial of care.

Rights Framework: Liberal media frame abortion as human rights, public health, and state responsibility, referencing international warnings and comparative developments (e.g., El Salvador's harsh laws, U.S. electoral stakes, France's constitutional guarantee). Conservative media reject rights-based codification (e.g., EU moves) as a threat to Christian civilisation and national identity, and valorise countries resisting "ideology." Both sides remain nationally anchored, but liberal outlets more often situate Poland within global rights debates.

3) Comparison

Conservative media depict abortion as a moral and civilisational threat tied to "gender ideology," emphasising protection of life from conception, condemning liberalisation efforts, and recasting health education and emergency contraception as demoralising. Liberal outlets frame abortion as a fundamental question of human rights, public health, and accountability, foregrounding women's testimonies, debunking medical myths, and highlighting CSO-led support and post-2023 policy steps. Migrantised-women's needs and service access appear in liberal reporting but are absent from conservative coverage. Overall, the two ecosystems present antagonistic narratives of agency, responsibility, and rights under Poland's near-total ban.

IV.1.6. SPAIN

1) Media Coverage

Abortion is one of Spain's most polarising gender debates, resurfacing persistently at specific moments, particularly during legislative changes, electoral cycles, or periods brought up by far-right mobilisation. Despite legality since 2010, and a 2022 reform removing parental consent for minors, territorial access gaps, conscientious objection, and conservative opposition keep it highly salient. Far-right actors, such as Vox, openly question abortion rights and promote restrictive, pro-natalist frames. Civil society organizations (CSOs) highlight access barriers in rural areas, the challenges posed by conscientious objection among doctors, and the exclusion of migrantised women from healthcare services. In 2024, El País published 202 abortion-related articles (53 focused on Spain), while *El Mundo* published 117 (32 focused on Spain). This quantitative gap reflects both *El País*'s broader editorial interest and its more global orientation. El País frames abortion as a matter of human rights, public health, and social

justice, emphasizing inequalities in access and the persistence of institutional barriers. It features a diversity of voices (activists, experts, healthcare professionals, and affected women) offering empathetic, contextualized coverage. *El Mundo* focuses on legal and political dimensions, with limited engagement in human rights or healthcare perspectives. Its reporting is data-driven, often linking abortion to party politics or demography, and tends to depoliticize structural inequalities.

2) Thematic Analysis

Empowerment: *El País* portrays women as active agents defending reproductive rights, highlighting feminist mobilizations and cross-border campaigns such as *My Voice, My Choice*. Although direct testimonies are limited, the tone emphasizes women's collective agency and political participation. *El Mundo* rarely connects empowerment to feminist activism, framing abortion largely as a partisan or legal matter. When women's voices appear, they are often in international contexts rather than the Spanish one, resulting in a more detached and institutional narrative.

Responsibility, Drivers of Change & Role of CSOs: *El País* attributes institutional responsibility for protecting abortion rights to democratic governance and explicitly links the issue to resistance against far-right rollback. It includes CSOs and feminist actors as key forces driving policy change, connecting national and global movements. *El Mundo* focuses on institutional processes and political negotiation, often omitting feminist or CSO perspectives. Its coverage can dilute accountability by presenting all positions as politically equivalent, occasionally amplifying anti-abortion organizations without critical framing.

Intersectionality & Gender Visibility: *El País* occasionally introduces intersectional perspectives in international cases, such as the compounded exclusion faced by poor, Indigenous, or racialized women in Latin America. However, intersectional analysis remains limited in its national coverage. *El Mundo* almost entirely omits intersectionality, focusing instead on institutional and partisan discourse, and offering little reflection on how class, migration status, or region affect reproductive access.

Stigmatization & Stereotypes: *El País* explicitly addresses abortion stigma, citing activists and experts who connect it to fear and shame among women. *El Mundo* generally omits these discussions, emphasizing statistics or political positioning. Neither outlet reproduces negative stereotypes of women or migrant groups, but *El Mundo's* omission of social and emotional dimensions contributes to a more detached portrayal.

Rights Framework: *El País* situates abortion within a transnational rights framework, linking Spanish developments to global feminist struggles and highlighting conservative diffusion across Europe and the Americas. It treats abortion as part of a wider agenda for gender justice and democratic integrity. *El Mundo* keeps abortion within a national frame, focusing on legal structures and party conflict, rarely connecting it to human rights principles. Editorials downplay potential threats, framing abortion as settled and uncontroversial in Spain.

3) Comparison

El País and *El Mundo* differ in both scope and framing. *El País* provides broader, rights-based, and globally contextualized coverage, emphasizing abortion as a social right under threat and highlighting feminist and CSO activism. *El Mundo* focuses narrowly on national legal and political debates, offering fewer articles and limited engagement with civil society or intersectional perspectives. As a result, *El País*

foregrounds abortion as a question of gender justice and democracy, while *El Mundo* portrays it primarily as an institutional and partisan issue.

COMPARISON

Across the media discourse analyses across the six countries, abortion appears as a differently weighted and differently framed topic, depending on national context, media landscape, and the political actors involved. The intensity of the debate varies across countries: while abortion generates regular media attention in Poland and also appears frequently in Spain, in the Spanish case this visibility in 2024 could respond less to a sustained domestic conflict and more to moments of political instrumentalisation, particularly by the far right, and the influence of broader international and electoral debates. In others (Austria, Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands), the debate appears less frequent and is often linked to specific events or policy discussions rather than constant confrontation.

A recurring pattern across the texts is the clear contrast between conservative and progressive media. Progressive outlets generally frame abortion as a matter of women's autonomy, access to healthcare, and implementation gaps in existing laws. They often include the voices of experts, activists, and, in some cases, women affected by restrictive policies. Discussions typically highlight concrete barriers, such as conscientious objection by doctors, uneven regional access, or administrative delays. Progressive outlets also tend to situate national developments in a wider European or international context, particularly when discussing setbacks or reforms abroad.

Conservative or right-leaning outlets, across several countries, present abortion more often through political, moral, religious, or demographic arguments. These outlets frequently cite political parties and institutional actors and tend to focus less on women's testimonies. In some contexts (Poland), conservative coverage includes strong moral language and associates abortion with threats to cultural or religious norms. In other cases (Spain, partly Italy), abortion is framed primarily as a point of political disagreement, with limited attention to structural inequalities affecting access.

Intersectionality is weakly represented overall. Only a few texts refer to how migrant women or socioeconomically disadvantaged groups encounter additional obstacles. When mentioned, these points appear mainly in progressive outlets. Conservative outlets generally do not discuss differentiated impacts. Another shared pattern is the contrast between legal frameworks and practical access. Even in countries with established legal rights, media report on uneven implementation, regional disparities, or administrative barriers. This is the case in Spain, Italy, and the Netherlands. Where laws are highly restrictive (Poland), the debate centres on consequences of the legal framework, including delays in care and reported health risks.

Finally, while some countries link abortion strongly to national politics (Spain, Poland), others treat the topic more as a technical or administrative issue (Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands). This difference shapes the extent to which abortion becomes a broader societal controversy or remains a limited policy debate.

IV.2. Citizenship and Rights

IV.2.1. AUSTRIA

1) Media Coverage and Main Nature of the Debate

From the 82 retrieved articles, 56 focused on Austria, including 22 on citizenship and electoral law. The left-wing newspaper published twice as many pieces (15) as the conservative one (7). The conservative outlet largely cited ÖVP[5] representatives defending the status quo or calling for tighter voting rights, though it also included the Chamber of Labour[6] and SOS Mitmensch[7], and published one neutral article and three supporting more liberal rights. Its overall tone can be considered neutral. The left-wing newspaper featured a wider range of actors, including EU and non-EU residents and young adults born in Austria without citizenship. It reported on SPÖ[8] and Green Party proposals as well as SOS Mitmensch's "Pass-Egal Wahl,"[9] and included ÖVP positions but with critical contextualisation. None of its articles endorsed the status quo; its overall tone was progressive, advocating easier access to citizenship and voting rights. The ÖVP continued to insist that citizenship is a "valuable asset" awarded only "at the end of integration," opposing any "softening" of requirements. Economic aspects also surfaced, quoting a Chamber of Labour economist that long-term unemployed and low-income groups are structurally underrepresented because many lack Austrian citizenship. Of roughly 190,000 social assistance recipients in 2022, only 43 percent had citizenship, and foreigners were overrepresented among unemployed persons. Overall, both newspapers treated citizenship and voting rights as national issues, but the conservative outlet emphasised party positions while the left-wing outlet prioritised affected residents and CSOs advocating reform.

2) Thematic Analysis

Empowerment: Empowerment is primarily expressed through who is given a voice. The left-wing newspaper amplifies the perspectives of those directly affected by restrictive citizenship laws—migrant residents, EU citizens, non-EU citizens, and young people born in Austria without voting rights. These groups appear as legitimate political subjects advocating for change. In contrast, the conservative outlet foregrounds institutional and governmental actors (especially ÖVP), so migrant voices appear less frequently. Empowerment is therefore more visible in the left-wing paper, where the structural impact of disenfranchisement is highlighted through personal testimonies.

Responsibility, Drivers of Change and Role of CSOs: Responsibility is framed differently across outlets. The conservative newspaper presents ÖVP positions defending restrictive laws and emphasising citizenship as the culmination of integration. Responsibility for safeguarding democracy is implicitly placed on the state maintaining strict requirements. The left-wing outlet highlights political drivers of change, mainly SPÖ, Greens, and CSOs advocating for reform. It also criticises the restrictive positions

[5] ÖVP Österreichische Volkspartei, Austrian People's Party is a liberal-conservative party
[6] Arbeiter Kammer, a statutory organisation representing employees' interests, providing legal assistance, research and advocacy on labour rights, social protection and workplace conditions
[7] SOS Mitmensch is an advocacy organisation that actively campaigns for the protection of human rights, promoting equal rights and equal opportunities for all.
[8] *SPÖ: Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs:* The Social Democratic Party of Austria
[9] Pass Egal Wahl is an initiative that organises symbolic elections for people without Austrian citizenship, advocating for inclusive political participation and drawing attention to voting rights inequalities

of ÖVP and addresses structural barriers that prevent residents from exercising democratic rights. CSOs, particularly SOS Mitmensch, play a central role in the debate. Both outlets report on the “Pass-Egal Wahl,” but the left-wing newspaper features CSO representatives directly. SOS Mitmensch argues that 1.5 million residents of voting age are excluded from elections despite contributing to society and maintaining the system. The organisation calls for full democratic inclusion and highlights the need for reliable information, independent media, access to dialogue, and fair resource distribution to realise democracy.

Intersectionality and Gender Visibility: Intersectionality is not a major theme in either newspaper. The focus is overwhelmingly on citizenship and migration status rather than gender. Categories such as class, nationality, economic exclusion, and integration status appear, but gendered dimensions are largely absent. Articles discuss EU vs. non-EU citizens, socioeconomic marginalisation, and the overrepresentation of migrants among welfare recipients and unemployed persons. Gender is not foregrounded as an analytical category.

Inclusion and Representation: Inclusion is inherent to the topic. The left-wing newspaper provides more meaningful representation by centring the voices of non-citizens and young adults born in Austria without rights to vote, as well as EU citizens affected by the regulations. The conservative newspaper includes some non-governmental actors such as the Chamber of Labour and SOS Mitmensch but otherwise relies heavily on political elites. Debates around voting rights for EU vs. non-EU citizens appear, but deeper reflection on representation beyond citizenship categories is limited.

Stigmatization and Stereotyping: No explicit stigmatization is reported in the material. The debate focuses on legal rights, political positions, and structural barriers to democratic participation. While ÖVP rhetoric frames citizenship as a “valuable asset” that should not be made more accessible, this is presented as ideological rather than stigmatizing. Neither outlet portrays non-citizens in a derogatory manner within the retrieved articles.

Rights Framework: The debate is framed almost entirely within a democratic and citizenship rights framework rather than women’s rights or gender equality. Both newspapers treat the issue as one concerning political participation, integration, and societal inclusion. SOS Mitmensch explicitly situates citizenship and voting rights within broader democratic principles—access to information, independent media, dialogue, and fair resource distribution. The conservative outlet frames rights restrictively, while the left-wing outlet emphasises expanding democratic participation.

3) Comparison (*Der Standard* versus *Kurier*)

The left-wing newspaper (*Der Standard*) provides broader representation, highlighting voices of non-citizens directly affected by exclusion from voting and citizenship. Its coverage is consistently progressive, emphasising structural inequality, democratic participation, and the political programs of SPÖ, Greens, and CSOs such as SOS Mitmensch. It frames citizenship rights within democratic inclusion and critiques OP̈ V positions. The conservative newspaper (*Kurier*) centres institutional and party-political voices, particularly the ÖVP’s restrictive stance. While it includes some CSO references and even publishes articles supportive of more liberal rights, its overall tone is neutral, with more weight given to maintaining existing regulations. Migrant voices are far less present, and citizenship is framed mainly as a legal and political issue rather than a structural democratic concern. Overall, *Der Standard* foregrounds resident

participation and democratic inclusion, while *Kurier* privileges political party discourse and maintains a more cautious or status-quo position.

IV.2.2. BELGIUM

1) Media Coverage

The debate on citizenship and rights in Belgium spans a wide range of issues, from migration and integration to justice, education, and equality. Both *De Morgen* and *HLN* devote significant attention to these themes but approach them from distinct perspectives. *HLN* adopts a pragmatic and governance-oriented tone, focusing on law enforcement, social policies, and civic engagement. Its reporting links migration and inclusion to electoral dynamics and community life, often highlighting local initiatives such as school-based citizenship projects, mock elections, and programmes promoting social participation. Broader policy measures—like parental leave or free school meals—are discussed as tools to reduce inequality. Citizenship is portrayed primarily as a civic duty rooted in responsibility, participation, and the smooth functioning of institutions.

De Morgen, by contrast, offers a more analytical and socially critical narrative. It foregrounds the lived experiences of migrants and refugees and highlights systemic barriers to equality, from discriminatory institutions to exclusionary policies. The newspaper calls for structural reform and positions the press as a democratic watchdog, holding political actors accountable. It also situates Belgian debates within a global framework—addressing wars in Ukraine and Gaza, human rights violations, and the global rise of far-right movements—while focusing on the domestic consequences of racism, inequality, and polarisation. Education, labour, and mental health appear as central fields where social inequalities are reproduced and challenged.

2) Thematic Analysis

Empowerment: *De Morgen* frames empowerment through active citizenship, participation, and resistance to discrimination. It highlights how migrants, refugees, and minority citizens engage in civic life and stresses the role of education and the media in supporting equality. The press itself is portrayed as an agent of democratic accountability. *HLN* presents empowerment in terms of civic participation and engagement, focusing on schools and local politics as spaces where democratic values are practiced. It celebrates projects that encourage inclusion, social responsibility, and cooperation at the community level.

Responsibility, Drivers of Change and Role of CSOs: *De Morgen* places responsibility on political and social institutions, educational systems, and the media. It advocates for transparency, dialogue, and structural reforms to counter systemic discrimination and inequality. *HLN* attributes responsibility to local governments and public services, emphasizing law enforcement, integration policies, and civic education as drivers of change. Both newspapers reference CSOs, though briefly. *De Morgen* highlights advocacy and anti-discrimination organisations such as Unia[10] and Minderhedenforum[11], while *HLN* focuses on

[10] *Unia:* Independent public institution that promotes equality and combats discrimination About Unia | Unia
[11] *Minderhedenforum* is an organisation that strives for the full participation of people with a migration background in an inclusive society, free from racism and discrimination Home

operational actors like Vluchtelingenwerk[12] and LABO vzw[13] engaged in direct assistance and civic action.

Intersectionality and Gender Visibility: *De Morgen* explores intersectionality through race, migration, and postcolonial critique. It features voices like Nadia Nsayi[14], who links colonial legacies to present-day migration and inequality. The newspaper also addresses racist stereotypes in education and dehumanising rhetoric toward migrants, exposing how discrimination shapes identity and belonging. *HLN* touches on intersectionality more narrowly, usually in local contexts such as representation in municipal communications or housing for status holders. It notes socio-economic disparities but rarely connects them to race, gender, or structural power relations.

Stigmatization and Stereotypes: Both outlets occasionally publish divisive or stereotypical comments without full contextualisation, which can inadvertently reinforce prejudice. *De Morgen* tends to challenge these statements by analysing their ideological roots, while *HLN* reports them as part of public discourse, offering limited critique.

Rights Framework: *De Morgen* explicitly grounds citizenship and equality in a rights-based perspective, framing access to education, fair work, and gender justice as essential democratic rights. It draws connections between reproductive rights, freedom from violence, and the protection of minorities as part of a shared human-rights agenda. *HLN* addresses discrimination and inequality mainly as social or policy problems, without consistently framing them in terms of fundamental rights. Its approach prioritises practical solutions and governance effectiveness over systemic critique.

3) Comparison

Overall, *De Morgen* presents citizenship and rights as structural and moral questions linked to democracy, global justice, and equality, whereas *HLN* treats them as matters of civic responsibility, participation, and local governance. The two outlets share a concern for inclusion but differ in scope: *De Morgen* emphasises rights, accountability, and structural change; *HLN* focuses on participation, policy implementation, and everyday civic engagement.

IV.2.3. ITALY

1) Media Coverage

The citizenship debate in Italy is deeply intertwined with political contestation, legal frameworks, and questions of belonging that reflect broader social hierarchies linked to gender, race, and migration. Media discussions revolve around the competing principles of *ius soli* (citizenship by birth), *ius scholae* (citizenship through education), and *ius sanguinis* (citizenship by descent),[15] yet the framing tends to privilege political negotiation and ideological polarisation over the lived realities of migrants, particularly women. Citizenship is frequently presented as a privilege to be earned rather than a right, reinforcing

[12] The Flemish Refugee Association working to support refugees in Flanders.
[13] LABO vzw is an organisation that promotes critical civil participation in society: LABO vzw – Leren – Ageren – Bewegen – Organiseren
[14] An author and employee of the Royal Museum for Central Africa (Africa Museum) in Tervuren, Belgium
[15] *Ius soli* refers to acquiring citizenship by birth on Italian territory. *ius scholae* (or 'right to school') is a proposed legal reform that would allow children of immigrants that are born or raised in Italy to obtain Italian citizenship based on their education.|*ius sanguinis* awards citizenship based on descent from an Italian parent, which remains the dominant legal principle.

conditional notions of inclusion. The debate intensifies during moments of legislative discussion, with left-leaning actors framing reform as a matter of equality and social cohesion, while conservative voices emphasise national identity and cultural integration. Although migrantised women play a crucial role in Italian society—especially through care work and community life—their presence in the public debate remains minimal, confined to exceptional stories of success or symbolic achievements. Overall, citizenship is treated primarily as a legal and political matter rather than a broader issue of gendered and racialised social justice.

2) Thematic Analysis

Empowerment: Migrantised women are predominantly depicted as passive beneficiaries of citizenship rather than active participants in shaping it. Articles often recount individual success stories—citizenship acquired after long bureaucratic struggles, through marriage, or for notable achievements in sports—but these examples highlight endurance rather than agency. The absence of migrantised women's collective voices in discussions about reform underscores the limited recognition of their political or civic engagement. Empowerment appears mediated through institutional or exceptional pathways rather than through representation in policymaking or activism.

Responsibility, Drivers of Change and Role of CSOs: The main drivers of the debate are political parties, with civil society and migrant organisations playing secondary or invisible roles. Left-wing parties frame citizenship reform as an ethical and social imperative, whereas right-wing forces often portray it as a reward contingent on integration and cultural conformity. This framing individualises responsibility, placing the burden on migrants to prove their "worthiness." Civil society organisations occasionally appear in reporting as supporters of inclusive policies but are rarely shown as leading actors shaping narratives or legislative momentum.

Intersectionality and Gender Visibility: Intersectional perspectives are largely absent. While migrants as a collective are discussed in terms of bureaucracy and integration, the specific experiences of migrantised women, shaped by gendered labour markets, domestic work, and precarious status, remain unexplored. The homogenisation of "migrants" erases how legal insecurity intersects with class and race, perpetuating the invisibility of women who experience compounded exclusion.

Stigmatisation and Stereotypes: The debate occasionally reinforces stereotypes that depict migrantised women as dependent, passive, or primarily defined by caregiving roles. Citizenship is often represented as a reward for moral conduct or cultural conformity, implying that integration is conditional. The absence of systemic analysis perpetuates a view of migrants as outsiders whose belonging must be validated by merit, rather than as rights-bearing residents contributing to Italian society.

Rights Framework: The discussion remains nationally confined, with limited reference to global or European human rights frameworks. Citizenship reform is treated as a matter of political strategy and social cohesion rather than a question of equality or anti-discrimination. While progressive actors sometimes invoke human rights language, the broader framing focuses on administrative and demographic concerns rather than gendered justice or universal rights.

3) Comparison

L'Adige covers citizenship mainly through individual human-interest stories rather than structured legal or policy debates. Articles highlight personal achievements—such as sports success or community

service—that lead to citizenship recognition, illustrating how inclusion is often framed through exceptional merit. The broader legislative controversies around *ius soli*, *ius scholae*, and *ius sanguinis* are occasionally mentioned but presented as a distant political struggle rather than a rights-based issue. The coverage remains locally grounded, focusing on how regional communities experience or symbolically celebrate citizenship acquisitions, without engaging deeply with questions of discrimination, gender, or systemic reform.

Il Corriere della Sera offers a more comprehensive national view, placing the debate within Italy's political and ethical tensions. In 2024, the discussion of *ius scholae* dominates coverage, highlighting divisions within the right-wing coalition and framing reform as a contest between political strategy and moral responsibility. While most articles adopt a policy-oriented tone, focusing on parliamentary negotiations and party dynamics, some introduce ethical perspectives—such as the endorsement of *ius scholae* by the president of the Italian Episcopal Conference, who frames it as a human rights issue. Nonetheless, the overall discourse remains politically charged and only marginally engages with gendered or intersectional dimensions. Compared to *L'Adige*, *Il Corriere della Sera* presents a broader and more analytical treatment, yet both sources reflect the persistent marginalisation of migrantised women's voices and the limited visibility of citizenship as a feminist or human rights concern.

IV.2.4. THE NETHERLANDS

1) Media Coverage

"Citizenship and rights" is a hot debate that includes a broad array of discussions and is prevalent in both sources. It is also the largest debate of the five: this search term yields almost a thousand articles across the two selected newspapers in the Netherlands. In Dutch news media, this debate most prominently covers discussions on policy and societal issues, highlighting the link with migration. The debate is characterised by discussions regarding (illegal) immigration, integration of migrants, and migration in connection to the ongoing housing crisis. Thus, the debate is often centred around questions of demography and cultural integration referring to how 'full' the Netherlands is (i.e, high population pressures), and the notion that migration could threaten the functioning of the existing welfare state and put more pressure on it. Similarly, migration is often linked to the ongoing housing crisis linking it to migration. Hereby, *De Telegraaf* tends to argue that migrants are causing a housing shortage, while *De Volkskrant* is more likely to argue against this frame. Hereby, there is a notable divide between news media with different political leanings. Other discussions that arise on this topic regard the societal position of migrants. This is often linked to factors like employment or cultural integration

2) Thematic Analysis

Empowerment: *De Telegraaf* rarely presents migrants as empowered actors. Instead, it portrays them as dependent on policy frameworks or as potential subjects of control, with empowerment framed largely as compliance with Dutch norms or successful integration. Migrant voices are generally excluded in *De Telegraaf*. *De Volkskrant* includes these voices, humanizing migrants and challenging dominant narratives and foregrounding migrants' agency, illustrating how individuals contribute economically and socially when provided with fair opportunities. Stories of employment, civic engagement, and resilience serve to counter stereotypes of passivity and dependency.

Responsibility, Drivers of Change & Role of CSOs: In *De Telegraaf*, responsibility for migration management rests squarely with the state. Political actors, immigration services, and legal authorities dominate the discourse, with limited attention to civil society. Policy changes are often framed as necessary measures to preserve social order or national capacity. *De Volkskrant*, however, places emphasis on CSOs and expert voices, portraying them as watchdogs and advocates for humane policies. Organisations like Doctors Without Borders are quoted to expose the deteriorating conditions in asylum centres, such as Ter Apel, drawing moral attention to systemic neglect.

Intersectionality & Gender Visibility: Both newspapers show limited engagement with intersectional dimensions of migration. *De Telegraaf* reduces migrants to a homogenous group, obscuring differences of gender, race, and status. *De Volkskrant* occasionally recognises these distinctions—for example, noting that migrants without residence permits face additional barriers—but rarely develops them analytically. Migrantised women are almost invisible in *De Telegraaf* and only appear sporadically in *De Volkskrant*, typically within broader stories about refugees rather than as a distinct category of experience.

Stigmatization & Stereotypes reinforces exclusion and constructs migrants as societal threats. Right-wing parties are often presented as “critical” voices rather than ideological actors, normalising their discourse. *De Volkskrant* counters this by humanising migration through individual narratives and contextual reporting. Its use of names, personal stories, and empathetic framing challenges dehumanisation, implicitly arguing for recognition and equality.

Rights Framework: Migration and citizenship Stigmatisation is most evident in *De Telegraaf*, where language such as “illegalen” (‘illegals’ instead of people without papers) are discussed primarily within a human rights framework in *De Volkskrant*, which consistently ties policy debates to questions of dignity, access, and belonging. It frames migration restrictions as moral and legal issues, not merely administrative challenges. *De Telegraaf*, conversely, treats the issue through a national-interest lens, where rights are balanced against perceived social stability. Discussions of integration or asylum are framed less as universal rights and more as matters of privilege to be earned through compliance and adaptation.

3) Comparison

De Telegraaf tends to focus on migration as a political and societal problem, aligning closely with the rhetoric of right-wing and anti-immigration parties. Its articles are often descriptive yet ideologically charged, highlighting concerns about population density, integration, and the perceived strain migrants place on housing and welfare systems. The newspaper frequently links migration to the ongoing housing crisis, amplifying narratives that attribute the shortage of homes to the arrival of asylum seekers. Politicians and government officials dominate its coverage, with experts supporting restrictive measures often cited. Terms such as “illegalen” (illegals) are used, reinforcing a dehumanising frame that presents migrants as a policy challenge rather than social actors. By contrast, *De Volkskrant* adopts a more analytical and human-centred approach. While also reporting extensively on policy developments and political debates, it devotes greater attention to migrants’ lived experiences. Through interviews and first-person stories such as that of Syrian refugee Diyaa Ghanem, who fears for his family’s future, or Ugandan worker Daphine, who finds renewed dignity in employment, the paper humanises migration and frames it as a matter of social justice. Civil society organisations (CSOs) like Doctors Without Borders and

migration experts are regularly cited, offering critical perspectives that challenge governmental narratives. While both newspapers cover international developments such as Trump's immigration policies or migration debates in Italy and Poland, *De Volkskrant* consistently situates these examples within broader discussions of human rights and solidarity, whereas *De Telegraaf* uses them to underscore political polarisation and security concerns.

IV.2.5. POLAND

1) Media Coverage and Nature of the Debate:

The debate on citizenship and rights in Poland was closely tied to the question of migration and humanitarian responsibility, reflecting broader tensions between national security and human rights discourses. The topic gained prominence during the 2021 Polish-Belarusian border crisis and remained central after 2022, when large numbers of refugees from Ukraine arrived in Poland. Between 2018 and 2024, migration was among the most visible and politically charged issues in the Polish press. In 2024 alone, 1,639 articles appeared in liberal media and 1,189 in conservative outlets.

Conservative newspapers framed the 2021 border crisis primarily as a matter of national security and sovereignty, describing it as part of a "hybrid war" orchestrated by Belarusian leader Alexander Lukashenko. Migrants, mostly from the Middle East and Africa, were portrayed as instruments of political manipulation, not as victims of conflict. Reports focused on the number of illegal crossings and episodes of migrant "aggression," often omitting the humanitarian situation in the forests along the border. Liberal media, in contrast, foregrounded the human suffering of those trapped in the border zone—families, women, and children exposed to freezing temperatures and deprived of aid. They documented the work of volunteers and CSOs operating despite state restrictions, and they criticised government policies for their opacity and violence.

After Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, the tone of the debate partially shifted. Ukrainian refugees were covered more sympathetically by both political camps. However, the framing diverged: conservative outlets emphasised national unity and Polish generosity, while liberal ones focused on the government's unpreparedness, the burden on public institutions, and the inequalities affecting migrants from outside Europe. The cultural and political impact of these debates was further amplified by Agnieszka Holland's 2023 film *Green Border*, which exposed abuses at the Polish-Belarusian frontier. While praised internationally and awarded at the Venice Film Festival, it was denounced by conservative politicians as "anti-Polish propaganda" and "an insult to the nation."

2) Thematic Analysis:

Empowerment and Inclusion: Liberal media gave visibility to migrants' voices and humanitarian actors, depicting volunteers and CSOs as moral agents filling the void left by the state. Outlets such as *Gazeta Wyborcza* included testimonies of migrants and interviews with activists, highlighting solidarity networks and individual agency despite systemic hostility. Migrants from Ukraine, South Asia, and Africa were presented as contributors to Poland's increasingly multicultural society, especially in cities like Warsaw. In contrast, conservative media portrayed migrants as passive subjects or security threats. No migrant or refugee voice was directly included; instead, migrants appeared as faceless figures in a geopolitical game or as potential perpetrators of violence.

Responsibility, Drivers of Change, and Role of CSOs: Liberal outlets stressed the role of civil society organisations like *Grupa Granica*[16], *Fundacja Ocalenie*[17], and *Doctors without Borders* as crucial first responders and watchdogs. These groups provided food, shelter, and legal aid at the border and exposed abuses by the Border Guards, sometimes at legal risk. State responsibility was depicted as failing in both humanitarian and administrative dimensions: lack of asylum procedures, inadequate reception systems, and disregard for basic rights. Conservative outlets, however, assigned responsibility to external actors, especially the Belarusian regime and the EU, accusing them of weaponising migration against Poland. CSOs were absent or portrayed implicitly as politically motivated critics of national policy.

Stereotyping and Stigmatization: Conservative media frequently employed alarmist and dehumanising language. Migrants were described as "attackers" or "aggressors," often characterised by nationality or religion ("Rwandan vandal," "migrants from 53 countries"), reinforcing ethnicised stereotypes. Reports emphasised crime, violence, and economic costs, while dismissing sexual violence against Polish women by Polish men as a distraction from "the real migrant threat." Liberal media challenged these stereotypes by focusing on victims' suffering and exposing abuses at the border, but they, too, tended to differentiate between "deserving" (Ukrainian) and "non-European" refugees, indicating subtle hierarchies of empathy.

Rights Framework: In liberal reporting, the border crisis was framed as a violation of international and European human rights norms. Journalists referenced pushbacks, deaths, and legal barriers to asylum as indicators of Poland's democratic regression. The coverage aligned with humanitarian law and EU values, presenting migration management as a moral and legal test of the state. Conservative outlets rejected this framing, positioning border militarisation as a necessary defence of sovereignty and order. The EU Migration Pact was depicted as an imposition on Polish independence, reinforcing a binary of "Brussels versus the nation."

3) Comparison (Gazeta Wyborcza vs. wPolityce.pl):

The migration and citizenship debate reflected the divergent editorial logics. *Gazeta Wyborcza* foregrounded humanitarian responsibility and systemic failure, framing the border crisis as a moral litmus test for Polish democracy. It highlighted individuals' suffering, documented CSO involvement, and linked migration to broader issues of rights, transparency, and state accountability. The outlet also discussed cultural dimensions, describing the increasing diversity of urban Poland and addressing films, social campaigns, and international awards as part of a shifting social consciousness.

wPolityce.pl, by contrast, reinforced a securitised, nationalist frame, portraying migration as a form of invasion and the border as a frontline of warfare. It emphasised threats, financial burdens, and the moral aspect of defending Europe as catholic. References to international criticism or humanitarian claims were dismissed as anti-Polish and manipulative. Ukrainian refugees were treated more positively, seen as

[16] *Grupa Granica* is an informal coalition of Polish NGOs and activists providing humanitarian, legal and monitoring support specifically on the Polish-Belarusian border to people on the move, documents human-rights violations and advocates for respect for asylum and protection standards

[17] *Fundacja Ocalenie* is a Polish NGO that supports refugees and migrants through legal assistance, social counselling, integration programmes and advocacy for humane migration policies https://ocalenie.org.pl/en/homepage

aligned with Poland's anti-Russian stance, yet other migrant groups remained portrayed as dangerous outsiders.

IV.2.6. SPAIN

1) Media Coverage

Unlike abortion, the debate on citizenship and rights in Spain is more event-driven, gaining prominence during shifts in migration patterns, border crises, or legislative reforms. However, broader structural discussions on naturalisation, regularisation, and access to rights persist within civil society spaces. The Spanish analysis focuses on three main issues: legal status and pathways to regularisation (the *Regularización Ya!* movement), refugees' rights and border control (notably in Melilla and the Canary Islands), and irregularity and labour market access under precarious conditions. Spain's law regulating the rights, residence permits, and conditions under which non-EU migrants can live and work in Spain, the Organic Law 4/2000, popularly known as the *Ley de Extranjería*, continues to be criticised for restricting full citizenship and social inclusion despite the amendments introduced over the years. Progressive parties and CSOs call for simplified pathways to regularisation and denounce racialised exploitation and systemic precarity, while conservative actors frame migration as a security and welfare concern, warning that expanding rights might encourage irregular arrivals and strain public resources.

Among the selected five debates, "Citizenship and rights" ranks second after abortion in coverage across both *El País* and *El Mundo*, with 282 articles. Both newspapers devote significant attention to migration, but they approach it through sharply contrasting frameworks. *El País* combines structural analysis with testimonies from migrants, experts, and CSOs. Its coverage of the 2024 Popular Legislative Initiative (ILP) for the regularisation of undocumented migrants foregrounds the mobilisation of migrant-led groups such as *Regularización Ya!* and includes first-person accounts of migrants describing journeys, bureaucratic exclusion, and everyday life in Spain. In contrast, *El Mundo*'s coverage emphasises control, logistics, and the perceived burden of migration. Its language often frames the issue in crisis terms, using expressions like "avalanche," "record arrivals," or "drama". Reports focus predominantly on overcrowding in reception centres in the Canary Islands (a Spanish archipelago located in the Atlantic Ocean) or Melilla (an autonomous city located geographically on the Northern African coast) and on the administrative response of the state. With a few exceptions, migrants appear mainly as collective figures rather than individual subjects and where a more personal depiction is presented, it remains male-centred. At the international level, *El País* connects migration to human rights issues in Europe and the U.S., while *El Mundo* largely follows a securitarian logic, portraying migration as a test of state capacity.

2) Thematic Analysis

Empowerment: Both outlets feature limited empowering narratives, particularly for migrantised women. *El País* incorporates occasional first-person perspectives that expose exclusion and resilience, such as the accounts of Luna, the Peruvian woman facing irregularity, and long-term residents like Noelia Ceroni, who describes finally gaining Spanish nationality after decades of being a "citizen in obligations, not in rights." These narratives bring awareness to structural barriers and social invisibility. *El Mundo*'s reporting remains more masculinised, focusing on male migrants' survival strategies or involvement in irregular labour, offering little space for women's voices or agency.

Intersectionality and Representation: Intersectional analysis is underdeveloped in both newspapers. *El País* sometimes acknowledges how gender, class, and administrative status intersect to shape vulnerability, such as when it reports on entire families crossing to the Canary Islands or mentions women and girls among Afghan arrivals. However, these women rarely appear as speaking subjects. *El Mundo* presents migrants as a uniform group, omitting gender distinctions or other axes of inequality. This contributes to a homogenised narrative of migration as a collective "problem," rather than a complex social process involving differentiated experiences.

Responsibility, Drivers of Change and Role of CSOs: *El País* consistently highlights the role of CSOs and migrant-led movements as agents of change, particularly in connection with the 2024 ILP. It reports on alliances between organisations like *Regularización Ya!*, *Cáritas*, and trade unions, showing how these coalitions influenced even conservative sectors of parliament to discuss the proposal. The newspaper portrays CSOs as legitimate political actors and often includes their assessments of policy shortcomings. *El Mundo* focuses on institutional responses, offering limited visibility to civil society. When CSOs appear, they are often described from a distance or with scepticism—portrayed as part of an overextended or inefficient system. Occasionally, it gives space to more neutral or positive voices, such as the interview with the current president of the NGO *Cáritas* Manuel Bretón, who advocates regularisation, but such examples are exceptions. It is worth noting that this NGO is closely linked to the Catholic Church and resonates strongly with conservative sectors, which makes its inclusion as a positive example consistent with the newspaper's editorial line

Stigmatization and Stereotyping: *El Mundo* frequently employs alarmist and dehumanising language that portrays migrants as a faceless mass or a source of instability, while amplifying statements from far-right politicians without critical framing. Phrases like "the avalanche may come after next summer" reinforce the image of invasion. Vox figures such as Rocío de Meer and Jorge Buxadé are quoted blaming migrants for "bringing jihad" or undermining Christian values, with little contextualisation. *El País* generally critiques such rhetoric, providing counter-narratives and denouncing dehumanising speech—such as Trump's claim that undocumented migrants "are not people." Still, even in *El País*, migrantised women's experiences of stigma are only marginally visible. Testimonies like that of María Fernanda Ampuero, who recalls being reduced to stereotypical domestic roles ('I had to invent a CV with what was expected from a woman of my nationality: cooking, cleaning, caregiving') and explicitly denounces these imposed identities, highlight how such structural and cultural stereotypes persist in society. But, while *El País* gives some space to these critical voices, their presence in the reporting remains limited.

Global vs. Local Perspectives and Rights Framework: *El País* connects Spain's migration debates to broader international trends. It covers the militarisation of EU borders, the outsourcing of migration control, and the humanitarian crises in the U.S. and Latin America. Its perspective situates migration within global human rights dynamics but also occasionally adopts an economic rationale, linking migrant inclusion to growth and labour needs. *El Mundo* maintains a narrower focus, emphasising domestic policy challenges and institutional management. Internationally, it covers migration mainly through a security lens—such as German deportation reforms or Venezuelan displacement—without exploring underlying structural causes. Both newspapers primarily frame migration as a matter of governance, with limited discussion of women's rights or gender equality within the citizenship debate.

3) Comparison *(El País* vs. *El Mundo*): *El País* offers more comprehensive, rights-oriented, and contextually rich coverage. It includes CSO voices, direct migrant testimonies, and links Spain's migration

policy to global human rights issues. Its focus on regularisation initiatives and migrant-led activism positions citizenship and rights as ongoing social struggles. Nonetheless, its coverage remains partially masculinised and occasionally instrumentalises migration within economic or demographic frames. *El Mundo* approaches migration as a challenge of control and capacity, foregrounding state responses, political conflict, and numbers. Its language often reinforces crisis imagery and marginalises migrant perspectives, particularly those of women. Civil society appears sporadically, and feminist or intersectional viewpoints are largely absent. Overall, *El País* frames migration as a humanitarian and structural issue demanding inclusive policy reform, while *El Mundo* presents it as a logistical and political challenge tied to national sovereignty and order.

COMPARISON

Across the six national contexts, the debate on "Citizenship and Rights" is shaped by the intersection between migration, political ideology, and media practices. Although the specific emphases differ, several consistent patterns emerge from the materials. Citizenship debates are closely tied to migration everywhere, but the tone and depth of coverage vary significantly. In Austria and Spain, the topic appears as a highly politicised issue linked to electoral participation, regularisation pathways, and access to basic rights. The media divide is particularly visible: progressive outlets (such as *Der Standard*, *El País*, *De Morgen*, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, *De Volkskrant*) foreground structural inequalities, while conservative outlets (*Kurier*, *El Mundo*, *HLN*, *De Telegraaf*, *wPolityce.pl*) emphasise control, legality, and national sovereignty. In Italy and Poland, the discussion is even more deeply embedded in broader ideological struggles about national identity, belonging, and cultural homogeneity.

The visibility of migrantised women is generally limited. In several countries (Austria, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland), those most affected by restrictive citizenship regimes appear rarely as speaking subjects. Their experiences are mediated through institutional actors, political leaders, or exceptional stories of individual success. Only in a subset of cases (notably Spain's *El País* and Belgium's *De Morgen*) do migrants speak directly in the articles, and even there, women's voices remain comparatively scarce. As a result, empowerment is primarily reflected in the editorial choices of individual newspapers rather than as a cross-national trend.

CSOs play a central but variably visible role. In Austria and Spain, CSOs, such as SOS Mitmensch, Cáritas, and migrant-led platforms. actively shape public debate and appear frequently (mostly in progressive outlets). In Poland, humanitarian organisations are crucial actors at the border, highlighted in liberal coverage but absent or delegitimised in conservative reporting. In Belgium and the Netherlands, CSOs appear mainly as service providers or watchdogs, part of the overall welfare state and landscape, often subsidised by the governments. Overall, civil society is most visible in newspapers adopting a rights-based approach and nearly absent in securitarian or state-centred narratives.

Responsibility is framed in contrasting ways. Progressive newspapers generally attribute responsibility to the state: failure to reform citizenship laws, inadequate reception systems, or discriminatory structures. Conservative newspapers emphasise individual responsibility, "integration readiness," or national order, framing citizenship as a privilege rather than a right. In several countries (Italy, Poland, Austria), right-leaning outlets treat strict citizenship rules as necessary safeguards, while left-leaning outlets argue that exclusion undermines democratic participation.

Intersectionality is largely absent, with only isolated mentions that citizenship restrictions intersect with class and migration status (e.g., Austria's analysis of low-income non-citizens; Belgium's discussion of racism; Spain's reference to irregularity and labour precarity). Gender rarely appears as an analytical category, despite women's disproportionate presence in precarious sectors, like care and domestic work.

Stigmatization and stereotyping diverge sharply across outlets. Conservative media in the Netherlands and Poland frequently deploy alarmist or dehumanising language, framing migrants as threats, burdens, or instruments of external manipulation. Spanish conservative coverage also uses crisis-oriented language ("avalanche," "skyrockets"). Progressive outlets counter this with humanising narratives, testimonies, and structural analyses. However, even in countries with more rights-driven reporting, hierarchies of empathy persist—such as the more positive framing of Ukrainian refugees in Poland compared to refugees from other regions.

Overall, the cross-country comparison shows that citizenship and rights are central yet contested themes, with media coverage reflecting broader political divisions. Progressive outlets tend to highlight structural exclusion, migrant voices, and the role of CSOs, while conservative outlets emphasise security, national identity, and institutional control. Across all contexts, migrantised women remain notably underrepresented, signalling a persistent gap between the realities of gendered exclusion and their visibility in national public debates.

IV.3. Femicide

IV.3.1. AUSTRIA

1) Media Coverage and Main Nature of the Debate

Femicide and violence against women are covered primarily through case-based reporting in both *Kurier* and *Der Standard*. Annual statistics appear regularly, and both outlets highlighted the events of 26 February 2024, when five women were murdered within 24 hours. *Der Standard* repeatedly emphasises Austria's "lack of data" and reports on the promised "permanent analysis centre" in the Federal Criminal Police Office, noting it is still "in the process of being set up". The difficulty of determining motives post hoc is stressed: "*In fact, the assessment of whether a woman was killed because of her sex can sometimes be very difficult*". The European Football Championship also appeared as a related topic, particularly in reports on German national player Jérôme Boateng, convicted of wilful assault on his ex-partner.

Kurier often mentions the nationality of perpetrators, though this is the case for both Austrian and non-Austrian suspects. No consistent differences in terminology ("femicide", "murder of women," "violence against women") were identified. Motives were generally not discussed because "police investigations were still underway." *Kurier* includes voices from CSOs and political parties: CSOs advocated expanding violence protection and working more with men, while ÖVP statements focused on repression and legal tightening, for example proposing discussions on "how we punish under-14s when they commit crimes", referring to ÖVP's proposal to lower the age of criminal responsibility from 14 to 12 years in certain cases.

Reporting styles differ considerably. *Kurier* articles are typically shorter and less detailed. *Der Standard* provides more extensive coverage, including explanatory articles on what constitutes a femicide or broader statistics on gender-based violence. *Der Standard* uses the term "femicide" more consistently and frequently includes helpline information. Overall, both newspapers treat femicide primarily as a national issue, focused on specific incidents, political reactions, and prevention debates.

2) Thematic Analysis

Empowerment: *Kurier* maintains a neutral tone, and portrayals depend strongly on the cited political actors (e.g., ÖVP, SPÖ). Its reporting rarely contextualises structural issues. *Der Standard*, with more in-depth coverage, generally places political statements in context, adopting a more progressive stance that avoids implying responsibility on the women themselves. No survivor or victim voices appear in either outlet, limiting portrayals of agency.

Responsibility, Drivers of Change and Role of CSOs: Responsibility is framed differently across actors. The ÖVP women's minister partly places responsibility on women: "Only very few women" who experience violence turn to support centres, and "*even very few women who were murdered had contact with a violence protection center beforehand*". In contrast, the Green Party stresses victimhood and societal responsibility: "*You are not alone and you are not to blame! Please get support… Please don't look or listen away when violence occurs in your neighborhood*". *Der Standard* also features commentary describing the situation as a "*Failure on many levels*". Drivers of change include the Greens, calling for a "*tightening of the Weapons Act*", and the SPÖ, advocating a "*national action plan against femicide*". ÖVP

demands closer cooperation among "*women's shelters, counseling facilities, violence protection centers and police departments*" while simultaneously emphasising women's responsibility to use these services. CSO voices appear in both newspapers but more substantively in *Der Standard*. The head of the Vienna Women's Shelter argues "*femicides do not only occur in one particular group*" and calls for more work with "*young men who come from very patriarchal structures*".

Intersectionality and Gender Visibility: Intersectionality is absent from *Kurier*. *Der Standard* mentions it minimally, noting for example: "*Violence against women cuts across all social classes*". There is no deeper engagement with how migration status, class, or ethnicity impact vulnerability. Although nationality is often mentioned, it is not linked to an intersectional analysis.

Stigmatization and Stereotyping: No explicit stigmatization was found despite expectations. Both newspapers mention perpetrators' and victims' nationalities, but not in a stigmatizing way. Neither outlet uses culturalising or ethnicising explanations. Motives are rarely discussed, limiting opportunities for stereotype reproduction.

Rights Framework: Neither outlet consistently uses a rights-based discourse. *Der Standard* is more likely to reference systemic misogyny, with titles such as "Misogyny must become a core issue in the election campaign" and commentary on institutional failures. *Kurier* frames femicide more as a criminal justice issue, centred on incidents and political reactions.

3) Comparison (*Der Standard* versus *Kurier*)

Der Standard offers more detailed, contextual, and structurally aware reporting, uses "femicide" more consistently, includes helpline information, and incorporates political critique and expert voices. It foregrounds prevention, institutional coordination, and systemic causes. CSOs appear more prominently and substantively. *Kurier* provides shorter, incident-focused articles with limited contextualisation. Its framing depends heavily on which political actors are cited, especially ÖVP figures advocating stronger repression. Intersectional or structural perspectives are largely absent. Although nationality is often mentioned, it is not used to stereotype. CSO inclusion appears but with less depth. Overall, *Der Standard* frames femicide as a systemic social issue, while *Kurier* presents it primarily as a series of crimes with political commentary and legal implications.

IV.3.2. BELGIUM

1) Media Coverage

The analysis focuses on the terms honour killings, femicide, murder of a partner, and murder of women, deliberately excluding broader categories like "violence against women" to capture media representations of femicide specifically. In *De Morgen*, 14 articles were published between 2023–2024. Coverage approaches femicide from a global and cultural perspective, with frequent references to cases and statistics from Africa, Mexico, and Spain. The newspaper situates femicide within broader gender-based violence discussions, often through reviews of books, films, and policy developments, such as the Stop Femicide Law[18], which is the first law to define femicide, which aims to contriute to better mapping data

[18] Colloquium to launch the historic #StopFeminicide law | Marie-Colline Leroy

on the topic, and which was accompanied with the introduction of a mobile stalking alarm by the Belgian Secretary of State for Gender Equality[19]. Its coverage is analytical and contextual, emphasizing structural inequalities and the evolution from the notion of "passionate crime" to femicide. In contrast, *HLN* published around 30 shorter and more frequent articles, primarily focused on local Belgian cases. Stories typically begin with individual femicide incidents—naming victims and perpetrators—and link them to policy or institutional responses. *HLN* reports on developments such as the Temporal Restraining Order (THV), the Helpline 1712, and the 2023 Femicide Law on risk assessment and protection measures. While informative, the tone is case-driven and often limited to immediate causes or outcomes, such as partner conflict or suicide. *HLN*'s columns and reader letters occasionally include discriminatory or stigmatizing comments, especially regarding "honour killings," which are associated with migrants.

2) Thematic Analysis

Empowerment: *De Morgen* frames women primarily as victims within structural gender inequalities rather than individual tragedies. Its few long-form pieces explore power dynamics, psychological violence, and the systemic buildup leading to femicide. The tone is reflective and supported by expert commentary, offering context rather than sensationalism. *HLN* employs a more descriptive style, focusing on the act itself ("murder of a woman") rather than naming femicide as gendered violence. Women are often presented as victims rather than as social agents, though the paper occasionally emphasizes prevention through education and awareness.

Responsibility, Drivers of Change and Role of CSOs: *De Morgen* highlights institutional and structural responsibility, examining power dynamics, societal tolerance of abuse, and policy reforms like the Stop Femicide Law. It mentions the need for state protection and the role of political actors such as the Secretary of State for Gender Equality. CSOs appear mainly in the context of expert analysis or global activism (e.g., Amnesty International, Femicide Count Kenya[20], Mirabal Belgium[21]). *HLN* situates responsibility primarily with individual perpetrators, often describing psychological instability or relationship breakdowns as causes. However, it also acknowledges systemic failures—particularly police inaction and inadequate protection of women who had already reported violence. CSOs are visible as frontline actors offering services and advocating for prevention, such as Collectif contre les Violences Familiales[22], Mirabal Belgium, and women's shelters. Governmental helplines and specialized services are also frequently mentioned.

Intersectionality and Gender Visibility: *De Morgen*'s intersectional lens is limited, mostly highlighting femicide rates in non-European contexts (e.g., Kenya, Mexico, Uganda) and implying that gender-based killings are more prevalent abroad. This framing indirectly constructs Belgium as relatively safe. *HLN* acknowledges gender differences but occasionally references men as victims of partner violence to suggest symmetry. Ethnicity is mentioned primarily when the perpetrator is of non-Belgian descent, and "honour killings" appear mostly in columns or reader letters. Migrantised women's experiences are largely absent from both newspapers.

[19] Mobile stalking alarm now available nationwide | Marie-Colline Leroy
[20] Femicide Count Kenya: Femicide Count Kenya
[21] Mirabel Belgium is a national platform that organises the annual gender-based violence manifestation in Belgium.
[22] CVFE - Dire NON aux violences conjugales ! 04/223.45.67

Stigmatization and Stereotypes: *De Morgen* avoids stigmatizing narratives and focuses on explaining structural causes rather than assigning blame. *HLN*'s news articles generally maintain a neutral tone, though its opinion sections and reader letters sometimes introduce racist or sexist stereotypes—linking "honour killings" to Muslim or Arab cultures and trivializing gender-based violence in sports commentary. While *HLN* occasionally stresses that men can also be victims, this can dilute the recognition of femicide as gender-specific violence.

Rights Framework: *De Morgen* frames femicide within a global human-rights discourse, linking local awareness to international struggles against gender violence. It references legal and activist initiatives in countries, like Spain and Mexico, and discusses policy innovation in Belgium as part of broader feminist progress. *HLN* remains more nationally oriented, focusing on legal reforms, prevention measures, and helplines. It adopts a pragmatic approach centred on safety and justice mechanisms rather than on women's rights or social transformation.

3) Comparison

De Morgen and *HLN* diverge sharply in scope and depth. *De Morgen* adopts a global, reflective, and analytical stance, embedding femicide in structural and cultural discussions through references to art, policy, and activism. *HLN* focuses on individual cases and domestic policy responses, with a more factual and event-based tone. *De Morgen* privileges expert and institutional voices, while *HLN* prioritizes victims' and families' experiences. Both newspapers acknowledge state responsibility but differ in framing: *De Morgen* sees femicide as a systemic and rights issue, whereas *HLN* treats it as a public safety and criminal justice concern.

IV.3.3. ITALY

1) Media Coverage

Femicide (*femminicidio*) has become one of the most visible and emotionally charged debates in Italy, reflecting broader tensions between feminist advocacy and traditional gender norms. The term gained prominence in 2008 through feminist mobilisation and has since become embedded in public and political discourse. Media attention has increased markedly, but reporting often prioritises the emotional and sensational dimensions of individual cases over structural analysis. Coverage typically focuses on high-profile crimes, describing the brutality of the acts and the grief of families, while offering limited discussion of systemic causes such as patriarchy, judicial bias, or policy gaps. Television programmes, like *Amore Criminale*[23], dramatise cases and reinforce victim stereotypes, whereas feminist digital outlets and some progressive newspapers call for attention to structural gender violence and institutional accountability. The parliamentary Femicide Commission established in 2017 has repeatedly underscored persistent failings in prevention and protection, including limited use of monitoring devices and weak enforcement mechanisms. The public debate thus oscillates between emotional storytelling and fragmented policy commentary, often failing to connect individual tragedies to systemic gender inequality.

[23] Amore Criminale (Criminal Love - Stories of Femicide) was an Italian television program broadcasted since 2007 on Rai, which is part of an awareness campaign to fight against gender-based violence. In 2007, Italy did not have a law against femicide, but it was passed in 2009.

2) Thematic Analysis

Empowerment: Women are almost exclusively represented as victims of violence rather than as active agents in shaping change. The predominant media framing centres on their suffering and death, reinforcing a narrative of passivity and loss. Empowerment surfaces only in coverage of demonstrations, remembrance events, and activist campaigns, which highlight collective solidarity but remain marginal compared to the extensive crime reporting. Discussions rarely depict women's resistance, self-protection strategies, or leadership within anti-violence movements.

Responsibility, Drivers of Change and Role of CSOs: Moral condemnation of femicide is widespread, yet responsibility is mostly individualised—focused on perpetrators rather than on systemic failures. Institutional accountability is acknowledged but inconsistently pursued: while some articles criticise political inaction and the limited implementation of prevention programmes, others remain descriptive and avoid assigning blame. Policy responses, such as new anti-violence centres or proposed legal reforms, tend to appear as reactive gestures following public outrage. Civil society organisations and feminist associations are occasionally mentioned as providers of support services or advocates for policy change, but their contributions are often secondary to political and institutional voices. The structural role of CSOs in shaping public debate or influencing long-term reform is rarely elaborated.

Intersectionality and Gender Visibility: Intersectional dimensions are largely absent from the debate. Media narratives seldom address how class, race, or migration status intersect with gender to shape women's vulnerability to violence. Migrantised women appear, if at all, as peripheral figures or statistical references rather than as participants in the discourse. Their absence reinforces a universalised image of "the female victim," obscuring the diverse realities of women who face compounded discrimination or lack access to protection due to their socio-economic or legal status.

Stigmatisation and Stereotypes: Although explicit victim-blaming is rare, subtle stereotypes persist. Women are portrayed as powerless and dependent, and violence is often framed as a crime of passion or emotional excess rather than as a manifestation of structural inequality. When perpetrators are migrants, racialised narratives emerge, suggesting cultural or moral deficiency rather than addressing the broader societal roots of gender-based violence. Such framings divert attention from systemic issues and reinforce nationalistic distinctions between "Italian" and "foreign" forms of violence.

Rights Framework: The coverage situates femicide largely within national debates on gender equality, with limited engagement in global human rights frameworks. It is treated primarily as a women's issue rather than as a human rights violation encompassing the right to life, safety, and dignity. While calls for education and cultural change are frequent, these are rarely contextualised within broader international or cross-sectoral strategies to combat gender-based violence. The gap between reactive policymaking and structural prevention remains a defining feature of the discourse.

3) Comparison

L'Adige frames femicide through a regional lens, combining reports on specific local cases with reflections on community and institutional responses. The focus lies on the immediate impact of violence within the local context—statements from mayors, law enforcement, and regional councillors underline both the gravity of the issue and the need for collective vigilance. Articles draw attention to awareness-raising

initiatives, peace marches, and the establishment of local anti-violence centres, which are presented as tangible steps towards prevention. Occasional commentaries go beyond reporting, calling for cultural change and education to challenge entrenched gender stereotypes. However, these reflections remain general and do not engage with intersectional or systemic analyses. The overall emphasis is on mourning, solidarity, and the moral duty of local institutions, with less discussion of long-term policy reform or national coordination.

Il Corriere della Sera provides a national perspective, situating femicide within broader societal and political debates. The newspaper discusses how cultural norms, legal shortcomings, and persistent gender stereotypes perpetuate violence against women. Its coverage often includes expert commentary and statistical data, contributing to a more analytical approach. Several articles address misconceptions about femicide—such as its mischaracterisation as domestic disputes or isolated crimes—and highlight the need for educational and cultural transformation. The establishment of anti-violence centres and legal measures is examined within the context of state responsibility and public awareness. While the tone is critical of institutional inertia, it remains cautious, focusing on policy efficiency rather than explicitly feminist critique. Compared to *L'Adige*, *Il Corriere della Sera* places stronger emphasis on the national scale of the problem, linking it to Italy's broader cultural structures and calling for systemic, rather than purely moral or local, change.

IV.3.4. THE NETHERLANDS

1) Media Coverage

Femicide is present but not very prominent in Dutch news media in 2024, unlike in 2025, when it became much more visible. The search terms yielded around 80 relevant articles in total: about 20 in *De Volkskrant* and 60 in *De Telegraaf* once duplicates and irrelevant pieces were removed. This quantitative difference reflects the distinct profiles of the two outlets. *De Telegraaf*, known for its crime reporting, approaches femicide primarily through short, descriptive reports recounting individual cases. Articles focus on events, victims, and perpetrators, with limited contextual or structural analysis.

De Volkskrant devotes fewer articles to femicide, but its coverage is more clearly oriented toward awareness-raising and structural reflection. Instead of centring on crime reporting, it tends to frame femicide as a broader societal issue, linking it to gender-based violence and occasionally to international developments. More inclusive pieces in both newspapers appear as opinion columns or calls to action, often involving experts, politicians, or occasionally CSOs (for example, lawyer groups dealing with sexual violence), but these are far less frequent than descriptive reports.

A notable pattern in *De Telegraaf* is the presence of divisive opinion pieces that frame femicide as a "non-Dutch" problem and shift responsibility onto migrant or Islamic communities. References to "honour killing" and emphasis on perpetrators' non-Western backgrounds reinforce this narrative. *De Volkskrant*, by contrast, explicitly challenges such framings and presents femicide as a structural problem that transcends specific cultural or religious groups. Geographically, *De Telegraaf* focuses almost exclusively on cases within the Netherlands, whereas *De Volkskrant* more often situates femicide within wider global discussions of gender-based violence, including cases in countries such as Hungary, Turkey, the USA, or Kenya.

2) Thematic Analysis

Empowerment: In *De Telegraaf*, women are most often portrayed as passive victims within crime reporting. The emphasis lies on what was done to them, not on their agency or on collective efforts to prevent femicide. Structural causes and women's own political or social responses are rarely explored, and when broader explanations are offered, they sometimes veer towards blaming migrant communities. *De Volkskrant* offers a more empowering framing, showing women as active participants in debates and struggles against gender-based violence. Experts, activists, and CSOs (such as Amnesty International or Fier) are cited to contextualise femicide as a systemic problem. Women appear not only as victims but also as advocates, professionals, and organisers calling for recognition and policy change.

Responsibility, Drivers of Change & Role of CSOs: In *De Telegraaf*, responsibility is mainly individualised: perpetrators and, to some extent, families are placed at the centre, with institutions occasionally blamed for inaction. CSOs appear rarely and are sometimes criticised for "not showing up" or failing to engage, as in the complaint that "not one women's organisation" supported a silent demonstration on femicide. Policy proposals or structural reforms are not a consistent focus. *De Volkskrant* more clearly frames femicide as a societal responsibility, bringing in experts and organisations that push for change. CSOs and feminist groups are portrayed as drivers of awareness and reform, and the debate is tied to institutional accountability and the need for broader prevention strategies rather than only case-by-case responses.

Intersectionality & Gender Visibility: Intersectionality is largely absent in *De Telegraaf*. The paper frequently attributes femicide to "other" cultures, particularly non-Western or Muslim communities, without analysing how gender, race, migration status, or class interact. Migrantised women are visible mainly as passive victims, and their experiences are often instrumentalised to stigmatise their communities. *De Volkskrant* explicitly challenges the idea that femicide is an "immigrant problem" and stresses that it is not a "typical immigrants' disease." It situates femicide within patriarchal violence that cuts across groups. However, while it counters ethnicized blame, it does not systematically develop an intersectional analysis of compounded risks, and migrantised women's specific positions are only partially explored.

Stigmatization & Stereotypes: Stigmatization and stereotyping are most pronounced in *De Telegraaf*. Explicitly, opinion pieces describe honour killing as a primarily Middle Eastern or South-Asian "cultural issue" and link femicide to "immigrant" communities. Implicitly, perpetrators with non-Western backgrounds are frequently labelled as "Syrian brothers" or similar, while Dutch or Western perpetrators are not marked by ethnicity. Crimes involving migrants are more readily described as "honour killing," whereas comparable cases with Dutch perpetrators may be softened as "family drama," which downplays severity. These patterns collectively construct migrants and Muslims as primary bearers of blame. *De Volkskrant* actively works against this framing, explicitly stating that linking femicide to immigrants "could not be further from the truth." It positions femicide as a societal problem rooted in gendered power relations rather than in specific ethnic or religious groups, thereby challenging the stereotypes perpetuated elsewhere.

Rights Framework: In both newspapers, femicide is most often treated as an issue of gender justice and safety rather than framed explicitly within a formal human rights framework. In *De Telegraaf*, the focus is on violations of women's rights in a narrow sense, often tied to conservative values on women's roles and honour, but without broader rights-based language. *De Volkskrant* more clearly connects

femicide to structural gender inequality and systemic violence, implicitly invoking women's rights and equality before the law, and more often linking national discussions to global struggles against gender-based violence.

3) Comparison

Overall, *De Telegraaf* and *De Volkskrant* construct sharply different narratives around femicide. *De Telegraaf* concentrates on individual cases within the Netherlands, using crime reporting and opinion pieces that can reinforce cultural and religious stereotypes and give little space to structural analysis or CSOs. *De Volkskrant* offers fewer but more reflective articles, framing femicide as a systemic societal issue that transcends migrant communities and national borders. Where *De Telegraaf* tends to stigmatise and individualise, *De Volkskrant* seeks to de-ethnicise the problem and foreground broader patterns of gender-based violence and collective responsibility.

IV.3.5. POLAND

Despite alarming estimates from Poland's Women's Rights Centre *Centrum Praw Kobiet* (CPK)[24] suggesting that between 400 and 500 women die annually as a direct result of domestic violence, the issue received minimal press attention: only nine articles in liberal media and two in conservative outlets across the entire 2018–2024 period. Gender-based violence continued to be treated as an individual tragedy rather than a systemic social problem. Media coverage—especially in tabloids—often focused on the victims' appearance or behaviour, implicitly blaming them instead of scrutinising the perpetrators or structural causes.

Liberal media, particularly *Gazeta Wyborcza* and its supplement *Wysokie Obcasy*, occasionally highlighted the issue through awareness campaigns and individual stories. Other articles included interviews with representatives of the Feminoteka Foundation, who underlined the persistence of institutional neglect and police indifference in cases of domestic and sexual violence. Legal counsellors reported that nearly all calls received concerned instances in which police officers discouraged victims from filing official complaints. In contrast, the conservative media barely addressed the topic, mentioning it only in the context of EU legislative initiatives, such as defining rape in European law as sex without explicit consent. Some conservative commentaries dismissed Poland's gender violence problem, asserting that the country had "the best violence indicators in the EU" and mocking feminist concerns by suggesting that Polish women were simply "too backward to recognise" when they were victims of violence. Such narratives starkly contrasted with liberal accounts, which pointed to underreporting and institutional failures as central problems.

Overall, the coverage of femicide in Poland remained sporadic, fragmented, and highly asymmetrical across the political spectrum. *Gazeta Wyborcza* and affiliated feminist media attempted to give visibility to individual cases and grassroots activism, but these efforts rarely evolved into a sustained national debate. Conservative outlets, including *wPolityce.pl*, treated the issue with irony or denial, rejecting

[24] The Women's Rights Centre (Centrum Praw Kobiet, CPK) is a CSO providing legal, psychological and social support to women experiencing violence, and advocating for stronger institutional protections and gender-equality legislation. https://cpk.org.pl

structural explanations and discrediting feminist sources. The marginalisation of the topic, despite its severity and the persistence of high rates of gender-based killings, reflects broader societal reluctance to address violence against women as a systemic form of inequality and a violation of fundamental rights.

IV.3.6. SPAIN

1) Media Coverage

Femicide is one of the most consistently debated gender issues in Spain, with continuous media coverage, strong legal frameworks, and high public mobilization. The 2004 Organic Law on Comprehensive Protection Measures against Gender-Based Violence and the 2007 Gender Equality Law framed gender-based violence as a structural expression of gender inequality rather than a private or domestic matter. The 2017 State Pact against Gender-Based Violence, approved unanimously before the rise of Vox, reflected broad political consensus, but this consensus has eroded in recent years. Femicide rates remain persistently high, and political discourse around the issue has become increasingly polarized.

A central point of conflict is the definition of femicide. Feminist movements and progressive organisations call for an expanded legal definition that includes non-intimate partner killings, arguing that current official statistics—limited to murders by current or former partners—underestimate the problem. Conservative actors have avoided emphasising the notion of gender-based violence and have instead favoured broader framings such as 'domestic' or 'intrafamilial' violence, which dilute its explicitly gendered nature, thereby obscuring the structural dimension of gender-based violence. Vox goes further by openly rejecting gender-based violence as a specific phenomenon and linking it to immigration.

Despite Spain's advanced legal framework, implementation gaps are significant. Many women never enter the VioGen[25] system because it is activated only when a formal complaint is filed, and numerous victims do not report out of fear, mistrust of institutions, or economic dependency. Migrantised women face additional barriers such as fear of deportation, lack of interpreters and cultural mediators, and precarious work (e.g. domestic employment), which make leaving violent situations more difficult. Spanish media have increasingly recognised the systemic nature of gender-based violence, but sensationalist reporting and victim-blaming discourses persist, particularly in conservative outlets. Progressive newspapers tend to link femicide to structural inequality and institutional failure, while conservative press often emphasises individual cases and highlights migrant perpetrators. Femicide accounts for 102 articles (13.3% of the sample), with higher domestic than international coverage, indicating that it is primarily framed as a national issue.

2) Thematic Analysis

Empowerment: In *El Mundo*, women are often portrayed as passive and vulnerable, with headlines and narratives that emphasise repeated victimisation or the "last steps" of murdered women, reinforcing an image of women as inherently at risk. Empowering narratives appear only occasionally, for example in

[25] VioGen is Spain's Comprehensive Follow-Up System in Cases of Gender Violence, operated by the Ministry of Interior. Created in 2007 under the Organic Law 1/2004, it is a nationwide risk-assessment and monitoring system that classifies the level of danger faced by victims, coordinates police protection measures, and facilitates information-sharing among institutions involved in gender-violence cases.

pieces on the Ugandan athlete Rebecca Cheptegei who passed away in 2024 or on forced marriage prevention, where survivors and activists are shown exercising agency. *El País* more frequently incorporates narratives of resilience and structural critique. Articles such as *"El deber de toda una sociedad*" ("the duty of an entire society") and profiles of figures like Regina Jardim (who documents feminicides in Brazil) or judge Lucía Avilés[26] present empowerment as both collective resistance and professional commitment. These pieces underscore the need to believe women and focus on society's responsibility, not merely on the dramatic account of individual crimes.

Responsibility, Drivers of Change and Role of CSOs: In *El Mundo*, responsibility is usually framed in descriptive and institutional terms. Domestic articles tend to attribute failures to the Ministry of Equality, especially in assessments linked to anniversaries of the Gender Violence Law or waves of femicides, without delving into structural causes. Opinion columns, such as those by Iñaki Ellakuría, editor-in-chief at El Mundo, frequently adopts a sarcastic and dismissive tone towards feminist frameworks and gender-based violence, at times even praising far-right positions as 'accurate'; while systemic critiques are more readily applied to foreign contexts, like Mexico or Ecuador. CSOs are rarely mentioned and, when they appear, it is often in passing or in commemorative pieces; their ongoing advocacy and support work is not explored in depth.

El País more consistently frames femicide as a systemic problem and attributes responsibility to broader state structures and patriarchal norms. It explicitly links femicide to institutional shortcomings and to denialist political discourse. In its coverage of the July 2024 crisis and the shortcomings of VioGen, it quotes Equality Minister Ana Redondo acknowledging that "the model is not infallible, but it saves lives." CSOs and feminist collectives are more visible than in *El Mundo*, for instance through testimonies from local groups like Bekos Beko[27], although their structural role in prevention and support still tends to remain in the background.

Intersectionality and Gender Visibility: In both newspapers, intersectional perspectives are largely absent. *El País* offers some notable exceptions, such as the interview with Marcela Lagarde, a Mexican politician and feminist activist, linking gender-based violence to class, ethnicity and community, or pieces that identify victims as migrant domestic workers. However, these conditions are not systematically analysed in relation to institutional exclusion or structural racism. Women's voices, particularly migrantised women's, remain scarce. *El Mundo* mentions nationality or socio-economic context more often as a risk marker than as a starting point for structural analysis. Even when it recognises that foreign women represent a disproportionately high percentage of victims, this is not contextualised in relation to precarious employment, lack of support networks or unequal access to institutions. Migrantised women are frequently depersonalised: their biographies and perspectives are absent, and gender visibility is reduced to basic descriptors such as age and origin.

Stigmatization and Stereotypes: In *El Mundo*, subtle forms of stigmatization persist. Nationality labels (Colombian, Moroccan, Romanian) are often included without explanation, reinforcing the association

[26] Judge Lucía Avilés is a specialised gender-violence judge who advocates for a more empathetic, gender-sensitive justice system and highlights society's and institutions' responsibility to protect victims.
[27] Bekos Beko is a feminist association in the Basque Country that works to combat all forms of gender-based violence and promote gender equality through prevention, support, awareness-raising, and community engagement. In the El País article, its spokesperson Cristina Agirrebeña, who personally knew the victim, provides testimony on her situation and the local support networks

between foreign origin and vulnerability or danger. International pieces sometimes “culturalize” violence, presenting femicides in places like Kenya’s Rift Valley as linked to a local culture or region and using terms like “patriarchal” only for migrant or foreign communities, never in relation to Spanish society. *El País* avoids explicit stigmatizing language and does not highlight nationality in headlines, but victims—especially foreign women—are often portrayed in generic terms, and in some reports more attention is devoted to the perpetrator than to the victim. However, some opinion columns , including pieces by feminist writers such as Gioconda Belli, Lola Lafon and Lucía Lijtmaer, explicitly challenge common stereotypes, including narratives of “rough sex gone wrong” used to discredit young, sexually autonomous women, and expose how such framings shift blame from the aggressor to the victim.

Rights Framework: *El País* tends to frame femicide within broader human rights and women’s rights discourses. It connects Spanish developments with international contexts, for example by linking femicide in Latin America to state impunity and structural violence, or by covering rollbacks of women’s rights under presidents like Milei in Argentina. Patriarchy is explicitly named in some pieces, and femicide is embedded in discussions of legal structures, inequality and democratic backsliding. *El Mundo* uses “femicide” less frequently and with less analytical depth. Its domestic coverage emphasises individual moral and institutional responsibility, but avoids systemic legal critique or explicit rights-based framing. More structural analyses appear mainly when the focus is on other countries, such as Mexico, Ecuador or Iran, where gender-based violence is presented as a central social and political problem.

3) Comparison (El País vs. El Mundo)

El País and *El Mundo* both report regularly on femicide, but their approaches differ substantially. *El País* offers more structural and rights-oriented coverage, linking femicide to patriarchy, institutional failures, and broader socio-political contexts. It includes expert, activist and, occasionally, CSO voices, and situates Spanish debates within transnational discussions on gender-based violence. At the same time, intersectional perspectives and migrantised women’s voices are present only in a limited and uneven way. *El Mundo* follows a more crime— and institution-centred model, focusing on case details, police investigations, and political responsibility—often directed at the Ministry of Equality. It rarely engages in structural analysis of gender-based violence within Spain and tends to externalise systemic failures when reporting on foreign contexts. CSOs and feminist networks remain largely invisible. It is significant that El Mundo tends to offer structural or cultural explanations only when covering femicides abroad, associating them with local customs or regional patriarchy, and framing them as rooted in ‘other’ societies, implicitly positioned as distant from a supposedly more ‘modern’ Spanish context. Overall, *El País* frames femicide primarily as a systemic problem of gender inequality and rights, while *El Mundo* treats it mainly as a matter of individual crimes, institutional performance, and political controversy.

COMPARISON

Across the countries analysed, femicide receives uneven but generally significant media attention, though the depth and framing vary widely. In several contexts, including Spain, Italy and Austria, the topic appears regularly in the news, while in others, such as Poland, it remains strikingly marginal despite high reported prevalence. A shared tendency across most settings is that femicide is covered primarily through individual case reports rather than sustained structural analysis. Crime-focused reporting dominates in many outlets, especially in conservative or tabloid formats, whereas only a few newspapers with more

progressive orientations place consistent emphasis on gender inequality, institutional shortcomings or prevention.

Structural explanations appear most clearly in sources such as *Der Standard*, *De Morgen*, *De Volkskrant* and *El País*, which link femicide to broader patterns of violence and policy failures. By contrast, other outlets concentrate on incident details, motives or police investigation updates, often without situating cases within wider social dynamics. Survivor voices are almost completely absent across countries, and even when CSOs appear, their role is unevenly represented. Some newspapers regularly cite women's organisations and experts, while others rely mainly on political figures, police or judicial authorities.

Intersectionality is rarely developed. Although some articles mention migrant or non-national victims, this rarely leads to deeper discussion of unequal access to protection, classed vulnerabilities or racialised patterns of violence. In certain contexts, such as the Netherlands, the nationality of perpetrators is emphasised more than the structural risks faced by migrant women, while progressive outlets explicitly challenge such framings.

Rights-based perspectives are present in only a subset of newspapers, where femicide is linked to gender equality, state responsibility or systemic discrimination. Elsewhere, the topic is treated largely as an issue of criminal justice or public order. Overall, the comparison shows that while femicide is widely recognised as a serious problem, media coverage still relies heavily on case-based reporting, offers limited structural interpretation and provides little space for the voices of affected women.

IV.4. Islamophobia

IV.4.1. AUSTRIA

1. Media Coverage

Islamophobia is one of the least covered debates in Austria. Out of the total corpus, only 48 articles (24 in *Kurier* and 24 in *Der Standard*) address Islamophobia or anti-Muslim racism—significantly lower than other debates. Much of the reporting focuses on Muslim-majority countries such as Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, or Pakistan. Within Austria, the debate centres primarily on veiling, particularly the hijab, rather than on systemic Islamophobia more broadly. The 2017 burqa ban appears as a reference point in several *Der Standard* articles, often described critically or in historical context, noting that a ban targeting only burqas would have been unconstitutional. However, the ban itself is not a major topic of dispute in the press. *Kurier* presents a wide spectrum of views: veiling appears either as an element of intercultural empowerment or as a sign of compulsion and cultural incompatibility. Austrian speakers quoted in *Kurier* often express discomfort with visible changes in neighbourhoods, whereas migrantised women frequently describe veiling as a personal, autonomous choice. Veiling is also linked to everyday racism or workplace discrimination. *Der Standard* provides more differentiated and in-depth coverage. It discusses veiling in relation to labour market discrimination, stereotypes in educational settings, and the political instrumentalisation of the hijab debate. It tends to frame veiling through empowerment and autonomy, featuring reflective statements from teachers, young women, and experts. Across both newspapers, coverage of Islamophobia is limited in scope, but *Der Standard* consistently offers more contextual analysis, while *Kurier* alternates between intercultural framing and narratives emphasising pressure or non-belonging.

2) Thematic Analysis

Empowerment: Both newspapers present mixed portrayals of veiled women as either active agents or passive victims. In *Kurier*, empowerment narratives come primarily from young migrantised women who describe veiling as a personal spiritual decision, emphasising that neither parents nor religious authorities pressured them. *Der Standard* includes similar empowerment statements, sometimes embedded as brief observations within broader articles, and features Austrian teachers supporting girls' autonomy and rejecting prescriptive moral expectations.

Responsibility, Drivers of Change and Role of CSOs: In *Kurier*, when veiling is framed as forced, responsibility is often attributed to men or to Islam as a religious system ("compulsory full-body veiling"). Some articles implicitly present men as drivers of coercion. *Der Standard* shifts responsibility toward structural factors, emphasising discrimination, stereotypes, and the political use of the hijab debate. Drivers of change are not discussed in *Kurier*. In *Der Standard*, proposed solutions include strengthening Islamic religious education to counter prejudices or supporting school-based dialogue with families to empower girls. CSOs appear only marginally in both newspapers, mainly the Islamic Religious Community in Austria (IGGÖ), which is referenced critically and without being given a direct voice.

Intersectionality and Gender Visibility: The debate centres almost exclusively on gender and religion. In *Kurier*, migrantised women are highly visible as speakers, largely contrasted with Austrian voices. *Der Standard* highlights discrimination in employment and education more frequently, though without

developing a broader intersectional analysis. Other dimensions such as class, citizenship status, or race appear only implicitly.

Inclusion and Representation: Migrantised *women* are regularly included in *Kurier*, where they often defend veiling as voluntary and meaningful. Austrian speakers in *Kurier* are more likely to oppose veiling or interpret it as non-belonging. *Der Standard* includes fewer explicit references to origin and often presents voices without foregrounding ethnic background. Across both newspapers, there is no article dedicated solely to women explaining their choices about the hijab.

Stigmatization and Stereotyping: *Kurier* contains both neutral and stereotyped framings. Some articles equate veiling with Islam as a whole or link violent behaviour directly to religious or regional background ("suspected Islamist … from West Africa"). Such framings appear without alternative explanations, reinforcing stereotypes. *Der Standard* critiques stereotyping more often and avoids reproducing it. It highlights how narrow interpretations of religion influence hiring discrimination and calls for change.

3) Comparison

Kurier and *Der Standard* both provide diverse viewpoints, but differ in depth and emphasis. *Kurier* alternates between intercultural depictions of veiling and narratives framing veiling as incompatible with Austrian values or as a sign of compulsion. It frequently includes Austrian residents who express discomfort and migrantised women who describe veiling as voluntary. Some articles reproduce stereotypes by linking violence to religious or ethnic origins. *Der Standard* provides more contextualised, analytical coverage. It discusses the hijab debate in relation to discrimination, labour market barriers, and political instrumentalisation. Empowerment narratives appear more consistently, and the newspaper features more nuanced Austrian viewpoints. Stereotyping is critiqued rather than echoed. In both outlets, CSOs are minimally present, and Muslim women's voices—though more visible in *Kurier*—remain limited overall. Neither newspaper foregrounds structural rights frameworks, but *Der Standard* offers deeper analysis, whereas *Kurier* presents more fragmented and tone-shifting coverage.

IV.4.2. BELGIUM

1) Media Coverage

The Belgian media debate on Islamophobia and the headscarf ban shows two distinct but overlapping patterns. In both *De Morgen* and *HLN*, Islam and discrimination are highly visible topics: each outlet contains 187 articles touching on issues such as headscarf bans, women's oppression in Iran or Afghanistan, and broader debates on migration and racism. The most frequent and visible topic is the "hijab ban," which therefore became the central focus of the analysis here.

HLN adopts a broad, event-driven approach, covering political positions on headscarf bans, protests in Iran, the oppression of women, Islamophobia in Belgium and Europe, and wider themes like migration and discrimination. Its coverage tends to emphasize political tensions, controversies and emotionally charged incidents, often amplifying statements from political actors and reducing debates to simple binaries.

De Morgen also covers a wide range of issues but with a more analytical, opinion-driven focus. It explores how policies such as headscarf bans reflect structural exclusion, institutional discrimination and

polarization. It delves into the role of social media in spreading hate and extremism, examines the intersection of religion, gender and politics, and links Belgian debates to international human-rights struggles (e.g. Iran, Afghanistan, Gaza).

Both *HLN* and *De Morgen* yielded 187 articles, yet they approach the subject in markedly different ways. *HLN* adopts a broad and fact-oriented perspective, covering a wide range of issues—from political debates on headscarf bans and protests in Iran to migration, discrimination, and women's oppression—often providing international context but limited analytical depth. *De Morgen*, by contrast, offers a more interpretive and critical stance, examining the political and social implications of Islamophobia, the role of Muslims in politics, and the intersection of religion, gender, and identity. It pays particular attention to polarization and the influence of social media in spreading extremism and hate. While *HLN* aims to present a comprehensive overview appealing to a general audience, *De Morgen* engages more deeply with Belgian and European contexts, highlighting structural discrimination and linking local debates to broader global patterns, including varying meanings of the hijab across cultural and political settings.

2) Thematic Analysis

Empowerment: *De Morgen*: Women—especially Muslim women—are portrayed both as victims of discrimination and as active political and social agents. Figures like Petra De Sutter (Deputy Prime Minister and first transgender minister), Loubna Khalkhali (Belgian journalist) and Hafsa El-Bazioui (politician and alderman in Ghent) are presented as influential actors advocating for self-determination, while women in Iran resisting mandatory headscarf laws symbolize broader struggles for autonomy. Feminist activism among Muslim women is framed as a form of self-empowerment, including women using the headscarf as a symbol of agency. At the same time, the newspaper shows women's exposure to oppression, harassment and structural racism. *HLN*: Women are often framed as active participants in political movements and resistance (e.g. the Belgian lawyer Zohra Othman and mailwoman and activist Sonia Hamidi, Iranian protesters), and as professionals contesting career discrimination and beauty norms. Yet coverage also underscores their vulnerability as victims of systemic discrimination—from headscarf bans and workplace exclusion to gender-based violence in Iran and Afghanistan. Muslim women appear caught between defending religious rights and facing multiple forms of exclusion, which produces a mix of agency and passivity.

Responsibility, Drivers of Change and Role of CSOs: *De Morgen*: Emphasizes collective and structural responsibility. Politicians in power are held accountable for creating solutions rather than avoiding difficult topics, and the media itself is criticised for spreading misinformation or sensationalism. The outlet foregrounds deeper socio-economic roots of exclusion and polarization and proposes structural remedies such as better socio-economic policies, inclusive political engagement and more responsible media practices. CSOs like Unia that combats discrimination and international NGOs such as Amnesty International appear as reference points but are not systematically foregrounded. *HLN*: Focuses heavily on political responsibility, frequently criticising politicians—particularly radical-right actors—for fuelling fear and polarization for electoral gain. Debates are often framed in short-term, conflict-driven terms (migration, security, identity politics), with proposed solutions reflecting readers' immediate concerns (e.g., security, border controls). CSOs rarely appear as central actors; political confrontations and sensational stories dominate.

Intersectionality and Gender Visibility: *De Morgen*: Acknowledges that media often fails to capture the full complexity of migrantised women's lives, with coverage that can focus on gender while underplaying race, class and migration status. Structural issues like racism and socio-economic inequality are recognised but not always explicitly linked to migrantised women's specific challenges. It notes that women with migration backgrounds are not a homogeneous group, with internal diversity in views on gender roles, sexuality and religion. *HLN* Sometimes addresses how gender, migration status and class combine—for instance, in stories of labour discrimination—but often treats these dimensions separately rather than as interconnected systems of inequality. Migrantised women's visibility is strongly tied to debates on Islam and the hijab; they feature prominently in those debates but are less visible in broader gender discussions.

Stigmatization & Stereotypes: *De Morgen* adopts a de-stigmatising, analytical approach. It challenges the stereotype of migrants as a "problem" by discussing racism as structural and by acknowledging that some Muslim women see the hijab as a feminist or empowering choice. It also reflects critically on how politicians and media perpetuate negative perceptions and underscores the complexity of identity, including unexpected alliances between conservative Muslims and far-right actors. *HLN* frequently uses a more sensational style, especially in stories that portray migrantised women as victims (e.g. of domestic violence or headscarf bans) and migrant men as perpetrators of crime. It amplifies fears around migration (e.g. "*tsunami of asylum seekers*"), contributing to perceptions of migrants as a threat. Emotional, incident-focused storytelling often lacks structural context, risking a skewed understanding of Islamophobia and reinforcing stereotypes of Muslim communities.

Rights Framework: *De Morgen* frames the hijab and Islamophobia debate within broader human-rights, women's-rights and anti-discrimination agendas. The headscarf is discussed in terms of individual freedom, feminist agency and identity, while Islamophobia is linked to wider xenophobic and racist trends. The paper contextualises conflicts over sexual education, religion in schools and far-right exploitation of fear as part of deeper struggles over equality and citizenship. It offers a global perspective, connecting Belgian debates to issues like women's rights in Iran, abortion rollbacks in the US and human-rights violations in Gaza. By contrast, *HLN* posits the hijab ban largely as a clash between personal freedom and secular or "neutrality" principles, highlighting emotional stories of resistance and conflict without systematically embedding them in a broader rights framework. Islamophobia is discussed, but often via immediate, visible events (e.g., bans, abaya controversies, crime stories) rather than long-term structural analysis. International cases (e.g., Iran, Afghanistan) serve mostly as dramatic reference points to reflect on Belgian debates.

3) Comparison

Across 187 articles in each outlet, *De Morgen* and *HLN* construct markedly different narratives of Islamophobia. *De Morgen* offers a more analytical, structurally oriented account, foregrounding institutional discrimination, media responsibility, social polarization and the intersection of religion, gender and race. Muslim women appear as both vulnerable and empowered, situated in broader feminist and human-rights struggles. *HLN* provides a broader but more conflict-driven panorama, centred on political disputes, visible controversies and emotionally charged stories. While it does highlight women's activism and individual agency, its incident-driven style and limited use of CSOs and structural analysis risk reinforcing polarized and stereotypical views of migrants and Islam in Belgian society.

IV.4.3. ITALY

Islamophobia is an almost invisible topic within Italian media discourse. In 2024, only fourteen articles were identified across both sources as using the term, and the majority of these refer to developments abroad, focusing on incidents and debates in countries such as the UK, Germany, France, and the United States. Within this limited set, only two articles—one in *L'Adige* and one in *Il Corriere della Sera*—address islamophobia in relation to Italy itself. *L'Adige* confines the issue largely to an international context, with just one letter to the editor mentioning the influence of right-wing parties on anti-Islamic rhetoric, while *Il Corriere della Sera* similarly treats Islamophobia as a geopolitical concern, occasionally referring to the participation of migrant Muslim communities in Italian public life. The overall scarcity of coverage suggests that islamophobia is not perceived as a major social or political problem within the national media landscape, indicating both a lack of public debate and the marginalisation of Muslim voices in Italy's mainstream press.

IV.4.4. THE NETHERLANDS

1) Media coverage

Islamophobia represents one of the most prominent and divisive debates in Dutch media, situated at the intersection of migration, religion, and national identity. As Damstra et al. (2021) argue, media attention and political discourse reinforce one another: increased coverage of Islam and migration feeds into support for restrictive policies, which in turn generate new waves of media focus. Within this renewed media climate, Islamophobia manifests through recurring sub-debates, the most visible of which is the *hoofddoekjesdebat* (headscarf debate - they use the diminutive form of headscarf in Dutch). This long-standing national discussion has recently intensified around the question of whether special investigating officers[28] should be permitted to wear religious symbols such as the hijab. Media sources across the spectrum have portrayed the issue as a conflict between freedom of religion and the secular nature of state institutions. The debate has polarised public opinion and serves as a key lens through which Islam's place in Dutch society is discussed. Another salient point in 2024 has been discussions of islamophobia in *connection* to or as *opposed* to – depending on the news outlet – antisemitism. Following violent clashes between Maccabi Tel Aviv F.C. hooligans and pro-Palestinian demonstrators, a national discussion emerged around whether Islamic communities in general, and pro-Palestinian activists specifically, are antisemitic (NOS Nieuws, 2024). This event fuelled wider debates about discrimination and religious intolerance, though framed differently in various news outlets.

2) Thematic Analysis

Empowerment: *De Telegraaf* presents Muslim women primarily as oppressed figures or passive victims of religious constraint, rarely as active agents. Empowerment is framed as liberation from Islam, with critique of the hijab portrayed as a defence of gender equality and women's freedom. The agency of Muslim women who choose to wear the hijab is largely ignored, and their voices are seldom included unless they align with anti-Islamic narratives. *De Volkskrant*, by contrast, portrays Muslim women as

[28] Buitengewoon OpsporingsAmbtenaar (*BOAs)*, comparable to police officers

capable actors who participate in public life and resist discrimination. It gives space to female voices that challenge stereotypes and promotes empowerment through inclusion, representation, and the right to self-expression. The paper situates gender equality within broader anti-discrimination efforts rather than against Islam itself.

Responsibility, Drivers of Change and Role of CSOs: In *De Telegraaf*, political leaders and government officials dominate the discussion, with responsibility for addressing Islamophobia often deflected or reframed as a need for stricter integration measures. CSOs and human rights organisations are virtually absent, and solutions are mainly policy-driven, reflecting a preference for restriction and control. *De Volkskrant*, in contrast, highlights civil society actors and human rights institutions as key drivers of change. It cites organisations advocating against discrimination and for religious freedom, framing them as essential in countering hate speech and polarisation. Its reporting calls for institutional accountability and inclusive policymaking, linking Islamophobia to broader struggles for equality and democratic participation.

Intersectionality and Gender Visibility: Neither newspaper offers sustained intersectional analysis, but the differences in emphasis are clear. *De Telegraaf* conflates religion, ethnicity, and gender, depicting Muslim women as a monolithic group defined by oppression or difference. This lack of nuance obscures how gender, race, and migration status interact in shaping experiences of exclusion. *De Volkskrant* does not always engage explicitly with intersectionality either but resists reductionist framing. It recognises the diversity within Muslim communities and occasionally presents the perspectives of women who navigate both cultural and societal barriers, thereby giving some visibility to complex, layered identities.

Stigmatisation and Stereotypes: Stigmatisation is a defining feature of *De Telegraaf*'s coverage. The newspaper often employs inflammatory language, especially in opinion pieces, describing Islam as a "*blood-hungry religion*" or associating Muslim communities with antisemitism. The hijab is framed as a symbol of female subjugation, and Islam is portrayed as incompatible with Dutch values. These narratives reinforce a binary between a modern, secular Netherlands and a conservative, foreign "Other." *De Volkskrant* explicitly counters such stereotypes, calling for a nuanced understanding of Islam and its adherents. It situates prejudice within broader far-right discourse, exposing how political rhetoric fuels hate and polarisation. Through critique and analysis, it reframes Islamophobia itself—not Islam—as the social problem demanding attention.

Rights Framework: *De Telegraaf* frequently invokes women's rights and secularism to legitimise anti-Islam positions, casting religious expression as a threat to equality or public order. Rights are presented conditionally, tied to assimilation and compliance with secular norms. *De Volkskrant*, on the other hand, adopts a human rights framework grounded in equality, freedom of religion, and protection against discrimination. It frames Islamophobia as a violation of democratic values and human dignity, linking the debate to wider questions of inclusion and justice.

3) Comparison

The contrast between *De Telegraaf* and *De Volkskrant* is among the sharpest across all debates. *De Telegraaf*'s coverage is conservative and divisive, often using political commentary and opinion pieces to criticise Islam, depicting Muslim women as victims of repression. The hijab debate is framed as a defence of women's freedom: "*The cultural relativism closes the doors towards a future where girls are free and without hijabs*." (Kanko, 2024). A recurring theme links Islam to antisemitism, portraying Muslims

as collectively responsible for intolerance: “Islam and antisemitism are inherently connected thanks to indoctrination through Mohammedan holy writings” (“Onderwerping” (Submission), 2024, p.1). Such language reinforces a dichotomy between Dutch secularism and Muslim identity. By contrast, D*e Volkskrant* explicitly rejects this framing. It addresses antisemitism and Islamophobia as parallel forms of discrimination, denouncing far-right exploitation of religious tensions: “*Whichever philosopher Wilders [politician for the far-right party Party for Freedom (PVV) and member of the House of the Representatives] cites to whitewash his Muslim hate: intolerant Muslims aren’t in the Second Chamber. Intolerant neofascists are*.” (Schimmelpenninck, 2024, p.2).

The *hoofddoekjesdebat* is covered with more nuance in *de Volkskrant*, balancing neutrality and religious freedom: “*A uniform is a different question, especially when it concerns staff members working for the government*”. Ultimately, *De Telegraaf* constructs Islam as the problem, while *De Volkskrant* identifies Islamophobia itself as the issue requiring confrontation. Islamophobia thus emerges in the Dutch press through several interconnected sub-themes: the hijab debate, the question of religious expression in public institutions, Islamophobia in relation to antisemitism, and, more marginally, discussions on religious education. While both *De Volkskrant* and *De Telegraaf* focus primarily on the Netherlands, *De Volkskrant* occasionally extends the discussion to an international context. Both newspapers combine political reporting with opinion pieces, yet the contrast between them is most visible in tone and framing. *De Telegraaf* adopts a divisive and conservative style, while *De Volkskrant* tends to take a more analytical and inclusive stance.

IV.4.5. POLAND

The topic of Islamophobia became a hot issue in 2018, in the aftermath of the 2015 migration crisis in Europe. Conservative media at the time portrayed the migration wave as a threat to Poland’s national safety and cultural identity, constructing the image of the Muslim man as a symbol of danger. Terms such as “invasion” and “terrorist threat” were widely used, and migrants were described as potential perpetrators of violence with phrases like “they will put bombs in our schools,” “they will rape our women.” In contrast, liberal media focused on the humanitarian dimension of the crisis, emphasising the plight of women and children fleeing war, persecution, and poverty. After 2019, with migration numbers declining and the Covid-19 pandemic shifting public attention, the intensity of the debate decreased but never disappeared.

The analysis included 340 articles in liberal media and 59 in conservative outlets published in 2024. When Polish mainstream and tabloid press addressed issues of Islam and Muslims, they often relied on alarmist tropes, presenting Islam as “foreign” or “un-European,” and conflating Muslim faith with security threats or cultural incompatibility. Muslim women were frequently depicted as oppressed victims in need of rescue, reinforcing narratives of dependency on Western-style gender equality. Only occasionally did journalists attempt to challenge such views—for instance, by featuring stories about the historical presence of Polish Tatars, a Muslim minority in the country’s northeast, or by reporting on discrimination faced by Muslim students in Warsaw.

In liberal outlets, references to Islam most often appeared within broader discussions on migration, demographic change, and multicultural coexistence. Some articles invoked Poland’s historical pluralism and multi-faith heritage to counter fear-based narratives, while others highlighted instances of prejudice

and everyday challenges for Muslim residents. In contrast, conservative media situated Islam within a civilisational conflict frame, depicting it as a destabilising and expansionist force filling the "vacuum" left by Christian decline in secularised Europe. The coverage reflected wider anxieties over national identity and demographic decline rather than engagement with Poland's small but visible Muslim communities.

2) Thematic Analysis:

Empowerment and Inclusion: Liberal media included occasional first-person stories and interviews with women who had converted to Islam, focusing on their experiences of prejudice and social misunderstanding. Articles in *Wysokie Obcasy* (a *Gazeta Wyborcza* supplement) discussed gender inequalities within Islamic contexts through cultural figures, such as Iranian artist Shirin Neshat. However, even these narratives remained limited and gender-asymmetric—conversion stories featured only women, while Muslim men's perspectives were absent. Conservative media did not feature Muslim women as subjects at all; women appeared symbolically, framed through fertility, motherhood, or as representatives of religious virtue.

Responsibility, Drivers of Change, and Role of CSOs: Neither side of the media spectrum explicitly discussed the role of civil society organisations or institutional mechanisms addressing Islamophobia. In liberal reporting, responsibility was implied through appeals for social inclusion, cultural awareness, and educational adaptation—such as acknowledging dietary needs in schools or addressing interethnic bullying. Conservative media located responsibility in moral and religious terms: the defence of Christian Europe against secularism and "aggressive Islam" was portrayed as a collective duty. The absence of explicit references to CSOs or policy actors reflects the limited institutional framing of Islamophobia as a public issue.

Stereotyping and Stigmatization: Stereotyping was most evident in conservative reporting, where Islam was linked to demographic and civilisational threats. Common narratives warned that while Europeans "choose death" through low birth rates, Muslims "choose life" by reproducing, implying a demographic conquest. Islam was also portrayed as intolerant and incompatible with Christianity, particularly through claims that "radical Islam" was overtaking Western Europe. Liberal outlets challenged some of these narratives, stressing discrimination against Muslims and recalling Poland's multicultural past, yet they occasionally reproduced cultural generalisations, particularly around topics such as female genital mutilation or gender inequality, attributing them loosely to "Islamic tradition."

Rights Framework: A rights-based framing appeared only sporadically in liberal outlets. References to the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA 2024) report on anti-Muslim discrimination in Europe were used to highlight the need for fair treatment and integration of Muslim residents in Poland. [29] Conservative outlets rejected relativist or pluralist approaches, reaffirming the superiority of Catholic values. Articles criticising Pope Francis's statement that all religions lead to one God illustrated unease within conservative circles about interreligious tolerance and the perceived erosion of doctrinal authority.

Comparison (Gazeta Wyborcza vs. wPolityce.pl): *Gazeta Wyborcza* approached Islam primarily through the interconnected lenses of migration, demography, and cultural inclusion, adopting a contextual and occasionally empathetic tone. It referenced global and regional developments, such as the FRA

[29] The report documents experiences of racism, xenophobia and Islamophobia among Muslim communities across EU member states

report (2024) on discrimination, security controversies around the Paris Olympics[30], and the Mecca heatwave[31], to situate Polish debates within broader transnational conversations. Lifestyle and cultural pieces (for example, features on Arab tourism in Zakopane[32] or the popular Muslim athlete Mamed Khalidov[33]) served to normalise Muslim presence and to contrast pluralist, cosmopolitan imagery with conservative alarmism. Although the liberal coverage recognised structural discrimination and Poland's historical coexistence with Muslim minorities, it remained selective and rarely included first-person voices from contemporary Muslim communities.

wPolityce.pl, by contrast, depicted Islam through the prism of moral and civilisational threat, closely tied to anxieties about Western secularisation and demographic decline. It echoed long-standing narratives from the 2018–2020 migration crisis, presenting Muslim men as symbols of danger and warning of "radical Islam" overtaking Western Europe. The outlet positioned Catholicism as the only true moral order and rejected Pope Francis's ecumenical statements as doctrinally dangerous. Compared with *Gazeta Wyborcza*, its coverage was ideologically charged, security-oriented, and devoid of sociocultural nuance.

Overall, both outlets reflected wider European tensions between pluralist and defensive cultural paradigms. *Gazeta Wyborcza* attempted to open space for pluralism and anti-discrimination but within a limited, middle-class liberal frame; *wPolityce.pl* consolidated a defensive narrative of Polish and Catholic exceptionalism, amplifying moral and religious boundaries between "us" and "them."

IV.4.6. SPAIN

1) Media Coverage

Islamophobia is less consistently debated but resurfaces during controversies over the hijab, religious accommodation, and security-related narratives. It has gained prominence in Spanish public discourse, particularly in debates surrounding Muslim women's rights, religious freedom, and the veil. The presence of hijab-wearing women in public institutions, schools, or workplaces has sparked legal disputes and media controversy. Muslim women are often targeted by media stereotypes, and Spain's Muslim community faces systematic discrimination in employment, education, and public discourse, where Islam is frequently linked to terrorism, radicalization, or cultural backwardness. Progressive parties and CSO actors advocate religious freedom and anti-discrimination, condemning racial profiling and the portrayal of Muslim women as passive victims; right-wing parties, particularly Vox, frame Islam as incompatible with European values and support restrictions on religious symbols in public spaces. CSOs respond with media-literacy and anti-rumour campaigns, legal support for women facing workplace discrimination (including hijab-related barriers), and public education on religious diversity. Intersectional challenges persist as migrantised Muslim women face both racial and gender discrimination; some secular feminist

[30] A reference to media debates ahead of the 2024 Olympic Games regarding counter-terrorism measures, surveillance technologies and fears of potential extremist attacks
[31] A reference to international reporting on extreme temperatures during the annual Hajj pilgrimage in 2024, raising global concerns about climate vulnerability and risks for Muslim pilgrims
[32] A reference to lifestyle coverage highlighting the growing presence of visitors from Arab countries in the Tatra mountain resort town, often framed as a sign of cultural diversification in Poland
[33] *Mamed Khalidov* is a well-known Polish MMA fighter of Chechen Muslim background, frequently featured in cultural and sports reporting as a high-profile public figure with Muslim heritage

voices argue that the hijab is oppressive and should be restricted in schools, presenting gender equality as incompatible with veiling.

Islamophobia accounts for 34 articles (4.4%), making it one of the least debated topics. *El País* published 21 articles (16 focused on Spain); *El Mundo* published 13 (8 focused on Spain). The overall low volume, especially in *El Mundo,* indicates that Islamophobia is not a priority compared to other gender and inclusion debates. Both newspapers include some international coverage, but the topic remains comparatively marginal in the Spanish press.

2) Thematic Analysis

Empowerment: In *El País*, the debate is approached from a rights-based perspective, and there is greater space for representations in which Muslim women are not only victims. Direct female Muslim voices are limited but present in notable pieces (e.g., the interview with French-Algerian journalist Louisa Yousfi critiquing France's model and the impulse to "save" Muslim women). In *El Mundo*, comparable empowerment narratives are largely absent. Muslim women tend to appear indirectly, often through opinion pieces that criticise defence of the hijab without including Muslim women's own positions.

Responsibility, Drivers of Change and Role of CSOs: *El País* more frequently highlights institutional responsibility and includes political actors who denounce Islamophobia's normalisation (e.g., Humza Yousaf, Sadiq Khan). Articles analyse how exclusionary discourses are constructed across the political spectrum and reference concepts such as "femonationalism" and "enlightened Islamophobia." CSOs appear as counter-actors—challenging media stereotypes, offering legal support, and running awareness campaigns—though their long-term roles are not always developed. *El Mundo* generally treats Islam through a securitised, state-centred lens (closures of centres, policing frames) and often embeds Islamophobia within broader geopolitical or ideological tensions. Critiques of far-right actors appear but are sometimes tied to other agendas (e.g., Catalan politics). CSOs are scarcely visible; change is discussed more in terms of electoral dynamics or control measures than rights-based reform.

Intersectionality and Gender Visibility: *El País* occasionally recognises how gender, migration status, and religion intersect (e.g., cases where lack of citizenship and veiling compound exclusion), but this remains episodic rather than a sustained framework. *El Mundo* rarely adopts an intersectional lens. Muslim communities are often treated as culturally homogeneous; women's specific experiences are marginal, and migrantised Muslim women's voices are largely absent.

Stigmatization and Stereotypes: *El Mundo* contains recurrent stereotypes linking Islam to extremism, gender oppression, or cultural incompatibility; opinion columns may trivialise Islamophobia or frame defence of the hijab as moral inconsistency. International reporting can "culturalise" problems, reinforcing essentialist readings. *El País* avoids explicit stigmatization and publishes opinion pieces that warn against polarised framings; nevertheless, Muslim women's perspectives are still underrepresented, and coverage sometimes relies on non-Muslim experts or political voices to characterise Islamophobia.

Rights Framework: *El País* situates Islamophobia within human- and citizenship-rights frames, connecting national cases to transnational dynamics (normalisation of far-right discourse, links to broader exclusion). Women's rights appear within a universalist frame that cautions against their instrumentalisation to justify anti-Muslim policies. *El Mundo* tends to frame Islamophobia outside a formal rights discourse. When women's rights are invoked, they are often positioned against Muslim practices

(e.g., veiling) in ways that support restriction rather than inclusion, with limited exploration of structural discrimination.

3) Comparison (*El País* vs. *El Mundo*)

El País frames Islamophobia as a structural and transnational problem connected to rights, democratic norms, and the normalisation of exclusionary discourse. It incorporates political actors critical of Islamophobia and occasionally foregrounds Muslim voices; CSOs appear as counter-narrative actors, though not systematically. *El Mundo* frames Islam largely through security and geopolitical lenses, often linking it to ideological tension and global instability. Critiques of far-right Islamophobia occur but can be selective or embedded in other political aims. Muslim women's voices are largely absent; CSOs have minimal visibility.

El País offers limited but clearer pathways to agency and episodic attention to compounded exclusions (citizenship status, veiling, labour precarity*). El Mundo* rarely centres Muslim women's perspectives and seldom develops intersectional analysis. El País is more consistent in critiquing Islamophobic discourse and warning against instrumentalising women's rights to legitimise anti-Muslim agendas. El Mundo includes opinion pieces that question the very framing of Islamophobia or cast defence of the hijab as moral inconsistency; it relies less on rights-based analysis and more on security/ideological frames.

El País provides a comparatively rights-oriented and contextualised treatment, with some inclusion of Muslim and CSO voices but still limited intersectional depth. El Mundo gives fewer articles, privileges securitarian and geopolitical frames, and offers minimal space to Muslim women's testimonies or CSO roles. Both papers underrepresent Muslim women as direct interlocutors; Islamophobia remains a low-salience topic relative to other debates.

COMPARISON

Across the six national contexts, debates that include islamophobia emerge as uneven and, in some countries, marginal debates, reflected in both the quantity and the framing of media coverage. While combatting islamophobia is often not on the agenda or topic of attention, the attaques on the Islam are. In some countries, such as Austria, Belgium, and the Netherlands, the discussion centres largely on veiling, religious symbols, and the place of Islam within public institutions. The Austrian debate is particularly narrow, with veiling functioning as a proxy for broader questions about belonging and integration, and with differing portrayals across *Der Standard* and *Kurier*. In Belgium, Islam and the hijab appear frequently across both *De Morgen* and *HLN*, though in very different ways: one focuses on structural discrimination and political polarisation, the other on incident-driven stories that foreground conflict and emotional tension. In the Netherlands, Islamophobia is highly prominent and polarised, with the hijab debate and the question of religious expression forming the core points of disagreement between *De Telegraaf* and *De Volkskrant*. The Dutch discussion extends to perceived links between Islamophobia and antisemitism, though framed very differently across the two outlets..

In contrast, Italy shows almost no media engagement with Islamophobia. The few articles that do employ the term situate the issue primarily in foreign contexts, treating it as an international rather than domestic concern. This limited attention contributes to an absence of sustained debate or visibility of Muslim voices in the Italian media landscape. Spain occupies an intermediate position: Islamophobia is not a central

public debate but reappears around controversies involving the hijab, discrimination in workplaces and schools, and securitised narratives. While *El País* provides more analytical and rights-based perspectives, *El Mundo* treats Islam mainly through geopolitical or security lenses, with relatively limited visibility for Muslim women's voices.

Across all countries, the visibility and representation of Muslim women is uneven. In some contexts—such as Austria and Belgium—they appear more frequently as direct speakers, especially in discussions about veiling, though even there their voices remain partial and often contrasted with those of non-Muslim actors. In the Netherlands and Spain, Muslim women's agency is more selectively presented, depending on the editorial orientation of the newspaper. In Italy, they are largely absent. While empowerment narratives exist, they are often embedded within broader debates shaped by national political climates rather than centred on Muslim women's own perspectives.

Responsibility for Islamophobia is framed in different ways. Some outlets focus on individual attitudes or cultural conflicts, while others analyse structural discrimination, media polarisation, or political instrumentalisation of the debate. In several countries, the discussion is tied to electoral politics, securitisation, or migration narratives rather than to institutional mechanisms addressing discrimination. The role of civil society is limited across all contexts: CSOs appear occasionally as reference points but rarely as central actors shaping the debate.

Stigmatising language and stereotypes vary markedly. Some outlets reproduce narratives conflating Islam with extremism, gender oppression, or cultural incompatibility, while others explicitly critique such framings and examine their societal effects. However, even where critique exists, sustained intersectional analysis—linking gender, religion, race, class, and migration status—is limited. In most contexts, the debate remains compartmentalised, with gender or religion discussed in isolation rather than as interlinked dimensions of exclusion.

A rights-based framing appears unevenly across countries. In Belgium and Spain, certain outlets connect Islamophobia to broader questions of discrimination, dignity, and political participation. In Austria and the Netherlands, rights-based analysis is present mainly in the more progressive newspapers, counterbalanced by more restrictive or assimilationist framings in others. In Italy, rights frameworks are almost absent due to the minimal engagement with the topic.

Taken together, the country cases show that Islamophobia is shaped less by the size or visibility of Muslim communities than by national political climates, dominant media norms, and editorial orientations. While some newspapers contextualise Islamophobia within wider patterns of discrimination and societal polarisation, others frame it primarily through identity-based or security narratives. Across all contexts, the voices of Muslim women, as well as deeper structural analyses, remain limited, and the debate tends to surface episodically rather than as a sustained discussion of rights and inclusion.

IV.5. Paid Domestic Work

IV.5.1. AUSTRIA

1) Media Coverage

Despite a broader initial search, only six articles directly addressed the topic of 24-hour live-in care in Austria (three in *Der Standard* and three in *Kurier*). One was a brief news item that did not require detailed analysis, resulting in a final corpus of five articles. In comparison with the other Austrian hot debates (Femicide 566 articles, Citizenship and Rights 297, Abortion 272, Islamophobia 48), Paid Domestic Work emerges as the least visible theme, indicating that live-in care remains a marginal or virtually absent public debate.

In both newspapers, reporting concentrates primarily on the situation of elderly Austrian citizens and the political challenges posed by rising care costs, rather than on the workers themselves. The few actors given voice—a care agency, an activist, and older Austrian residents—largely framed the issue as a matter of affordability and the need for political action to stabilise the care system. Coverage in *Der Standard* emphasised the necessity of comprehensive reforms to strengthen the sector and ensure equitable access to care, while *Kurier* focused on the risk that pension increases and inflation could make publicly supported 24-hour care unaffordable for many retirees.

Notably, none of the articles included perspectives from 24-hour live-in care workers, despite the sector's heavy reliance on female migrants from Eastern Europe. Their working conditions, structural vulnerabilities, and everyday experiences remained absent across all analysed texts. Overall, the debate is shaped by a recipient-centred framing that prioritises concerns about care provision and household affordability. Labour rights, exploitation, and the broader structural inequalities affecting live-in care workers receive no attention in either newspaper.

2) Thematic Analysis

The limited media coverage on 24-hour live-in care work reveals a narrow and largely one-sided framing of the issue in both *Der Standard* and *Kurier*. Rather than addressing domestic work as a gendered and migrant labour sector marked by structural precarity, the articles focus almost exclusively on the affordability of care for elderly Austrian citizens and the political debate surrounding care funding. Structural issues such as exploitative working conditions, excessive working hours, dependency dynamics in live-in arrangements, or the legal vulnerabilities of predominantly Eastern European women are absent from the reporting. Intersectional factors appear only marginally when referring to elderly women unable to afford care, while the intersecting vulnerabilities of care workers themselves remain unaddressed. Responsibility is consistently attributed to the political level, framed around the need for reform of the Austrian care system, yet this responsibility pertains to the financing and organisation of care, not to labour rights or protections for workers. Civil society actors play almost no role in the debate, and the primary voices featured are those of care agencies, activists advocating system-level reform, and elderly individuals concerned about rising costs. In this sense, both newspapers reproduce a care-recipient perspective, overlooking the lived realities of live-in carers and reinforcing their structural invisibility within the public debate.

3) Comparison

Across both *Der Standard* and *Kurier*, 24-hour live-in care receives minimal attention, especially when compared to other hot debates in Austria. The two newspapers share a recipient-centred framing that prioritises the needs and financial pressures of elderly Austrian citizens, while the working and living conditions of live-in carers remain almost entirely absent. *Der Standard* adopts a more systemic lens, highlighting the need for comprehensive care reforms and positioning 24-hour care within broader discussions on the sustainability of Austria's care system. *Kurier*, by contrast, places stronger emphasis on affordability for pensioners and the fiscal implications of rising costs. However, neither outlet includes the voices of care workers themselves or engages with the gendered and migrant-specific vulnerabilities of this labour sector. As a result, live-in care work appears not as a labour rights issue but as a technical or financial challenge for Austrian households, reinforcing the marginalisation of domestic workers in the national media landscape.

IV.5.2. BELGIUM

1) Media Coverage

The debate on paid domestic work in Belgium is shaped by ongoing reforms to the *dienstencheques* (service check) system, which subsidises household labour. Both *De Morgen* and *HLN* report extensively on these changes but with different emphases. *HLN* focuses primarily on practical, financial, and political aspects, price increases, government formation decisions, and their effects on citizens and the labour market. It presents the topic through a lens of consumer impact and governance efficiency, detailing how much each check costs, where the money goes, and how policy shifts affect employers and employees. Coverage often includes ministers, economists, and business leaders, providing factual and explanatory commentary rather than critical social analysis. Some human-interest stories appear, but they range from positive depictions of committed household workers to negative portrayals involving theft or unreliability, reinforcing contradictory social images.

De Morgen, in contrast, takes a more analytical and socially reflective approach. It situates the *dienstencheques* system within debates about redistribution, class, and social justice. Articles examine who benefits most—employers or workers—and discuss the "Matthew effect," whereby middle-class users gain more advantages than the low-paid workers performing the labour. The paper links these debates to labour-market inequalities and calls for systemic reforms. While it includes expert commentary by male sociologists and economists such as Ive Marx, Wim Van Lancker, Christophe Vanroelen, and Maarten Hermans, affiliated with universities, the direct voices of domestic workers are largely absent, appearing only in reports on social protests. Overall, *De Morgen* highlights the tension between protecting workers' rights and maintaining an affordable model for users, framing the sector as a test case for broader welfare and employment reforms.

2) Thematic Analysis

Empowerment: In both newspapers, empowerment is discussed indirectly, primarily through debates about fair pay, professional protection, and labour conditions. *De Morgen* interprets the service-cheque system as a symbolic policy choice reflecting which social groups the government prioritises—middle-class users or low-paid domestic workers. Experts call for protecting these workers' rights and ensuring

decent wages. *HLN*, while more pragmatic, echoes the idea that “our household workers” deserve protection, presenting empowerment as tied to improved job security and state regulation rather than activism or agency.

Responsibility, Drivers of Change and Role of CSOs: *De Morgen* frames responsibility within the political and redistributive sphere, questioning whether reforms genuinely benefit workers or primarily the middle class. Trade unions (ABVV, ACV) appear as key voices during social protests, and employer organisations, such as Federgon and Zorggezind are mentioned in policy debates. *HLN* focuses on ministerial responsibility and practical governance—emphasising decisions by Flemish ministers and political negotiations. CSOs appear sporadically, mostly as employer federations or administrative platforms, while trade unions receive little attention compared to government actors.

Intersectionality and Gender Visibility: Both outlets recognise that domestic work disproportionately affects women, but intersectional perspectives remain limited. *De Morgen* refers briefly to “women with migration roots” as an inactive group that should be activated in the labour market, pointing to the gendered and racialised segmentation of this workforce. *HLN* discusses language coaching for workers with low Dutch proficiency and the vulnerability of household workers, particularly women facing abuse or unsafe conditions. However, neither paper explores migrantised women’s structural precarity in depth.

Stigmatization and Stereotypes: *HLN* occasionally reproduces stereotypes by highlighting cases of theft or misconduct among household workers, presenting them as untrustworthy or marginal figures. Other stories counterbalance this by portraying them as “indispensable heroines.” *De Morgen* focuses on structural inequality rather than stigma but does not directly challenge cultural stereotypes or address the emotional dimensions of household work. Both media treat domestic workers as subjects of policy rather than agents of change.

Rights Framework: *De Morgen* links the debate to workers’ rights and economic justice, calling for fair wages and improved working conditions as core social rights. It situates the issue within a broader conversation on class inequality and labour dignity. *HLN* discusses the same issues through the lens of employee rights and collective labour agreements (*CAOs*), often focusing on procedural or contractual details, such as end-of-year bonuses or tax deductions, rather than the social meaning of care and domestic work.

3) Comparison

While both *De Morgen* and *HLN* focus on the *dienstencheques* system as the cornerstone of the domestic work debate, they diverge in tone and purpose. *De Morgen* offers a critical, expert-driven discussion centred on redistribution and inequality, questioning who benefits from public subsidies. *HLN* provides an accessible, consumer-oriented view, focusing on practical outcomes and government accountability. In both, the voices of domestic workers remain peripheral, but *De Morgen* approaches the topic through structural critique, whereas *HLN* translates it into the everyday economic concerns of middle-class readers.

IV.5.3. ITALY

1) Media coverage

Paid domestic work, particularly in eldercare, occupies a central yet undervalued position in Italian society and media. It is an essential pillar of the informal welfare system that sustains Italy's ageing population in the context of limited state provision, yet it remains highly exploitative and dependent on migrantised women. Over 70% of domestic care workers are migrants, primarily from Eastern Europe and Latin America, who often face informal employment, low wages, long hours, and minimal social protection. Media narratives—both national and regional—recognise the sector's demographic and economic significance but largely frame it as a matter of labour market regulation and demographic sustainability rather than gender justice or human rights. Traditional outlets tend to depict *badanti* (live-in care workers)[34] either as victims of exploitation or as enablers of family-based care models, obscuring their agency. Social media and activist networks occasionally amplify migrant workers' voices, yet institutional and expert commentaries dominate. The debate is thus situated at the intersection of migration policy, labour regulation, and family ethics, with the *Bossi-Fini Act*[35] and more recent *Decreto Flussi*[36] often cited as reference points for understanding ongoing tensions between formalisation and reliance on informal labour.

2) Thematic analysis

Empowerment: Women in the caregiver sector are predominantly portrayed as passive figures within policy and media discourse. Their visibility is framed in terms of vulnerability and economic dependency, rather than as active participants capable of shaping labour reforms or collective advocacy. Empowerment is seldom linked to agency, self-organisation, or voice; instead, it is associated with their need for protection and regulation. The debate, though attentive to their indispensable role in care provision, fails to recognise their strategies of resilience and negotiation within exploitative systems.

Responsibility, Drivers of Change and Role of CSOs: The burden of responsibility for the precarious conditions in the sector is ambiguously distributed. Families are portrayed as struggling actors forced into informal hiring due to bureaucratic barriers and financial constraints, while the state's limited intervention shifts moral and structural accountability onto private households. Policy responses, notably through the *Decreto Flussi*, emphasise migration management and workforce supply rather than social rights. Civil society organisations are mentioned mainly in connection with training programmes and advocacy for better working conditions but do not appear as central policy actors. The driving forces behind change remain institutional and technocratic, with little bottom-up or worker-led mobilisation visible in the debate.

Intersectionality and Gender Visibility: The intersection of gender, migration status, class, and race is acknowledged but insufficiently examined. Media references note that over 90% of caregivers are women, mostly migrants from Eastern Europe, South America, and Asia, yet there is little reflection on how these intersecting factors produce compounded inequalities. Issues such as discrimination, social

[34] *Badanti* is the term in Italian for ive-in or hourly migrant care workers who provide domestic and elder care, often employed informally in private household

[35] The Bossi–Fini Act (Law 189/2002) restructured Italy's migration regime by tightening entry requirements, linking residence permits to employment contracts and expanding detention and deportation powers

[36] The *Decreto Flussi* refers to annual government decrees that set quotas for non-EU labour migration, regulating legal entry channels for care, domestic and other sectors.

isolation, and language barriers are mentioned only tangentially. The gendered and racialised segmentation of the care labour market is thus treated as a descriptive reality rather than a site of structural injustice requiring policy redress.

Stigmatisation and Stereotypes: The figure of the *badante* continues to carry stereotypical connotations, reinforcing the perception of care as "women's work" and, more specifically, "migrantised women's work." This racialised and gendered framing positions migrant caregivers as naturally predisposed to domestic and emotional labour, thereby depoliticising their employment precarity. The media seldom challenges this assumption or interrogates the cultural hierarchies that underpin it. Instead, the emphasis on their economic indispensability coexists with narratives that portray them as marginal, temporary, and subordinate.

Rights Framework: The debate remains anchored in national and local policy discussions, with limited connection to broader global frameworks on care and human rights. Caregiving is framed primarily as an economic and demographic issue rather than as one of gender or social justice. Labour regulations and migration controls dominate, while human and women's rights perspectives are largely absent. Although the need for formalisation and better working conditions is recognised, these are justified mainly on grounds of efficiency and demographic necessity rather than equality or dignity.

3) Comparison

L'Adige covers the debate from a regional perspective, focusing on the situation in Trentino, where the demand for caregivers is growing alongside the ageing population. The articles emphasise the persistent imbalance between the increasing need for care and the shortage of qualified workers, as well as the difficulties families face in affording and finding suitable caregivers. Attention is given to regional initiatives, such as free training programmes for registered caregivers, offering courses on dementia care, family communication, and domestic safety. These measures are portrayed as positive but limited in scope, unable to resolve the wider problems of informal employment, low wages, and lack of recognition. The tone is factual and community-oriented, addressing care as a local welfare concern. Migrantised women appear as an essential workforce, yet their voices are not represented directly, and their experience remains framed through policy and service perspectives.

Il Corriere della Sera approaches the topic nationally, linking paid domestic work to demographic ageing and structural dependence on migrant labour. Its articles underline the scale of informality—around half of domestic workers without contracts—and the urgent need for regulation and enforcement. The Decreto Flussi is discussed as an effort to streamline legal hiring processes, though doubts are raised about its effectiveness in addressing undeclared work. Policymakers, economists, and labour organisations dominate the debate, while caregivers themselves remain largely absent. The coverage highlights the economic and legal aspects of the issue, connecting it to wider questions of taxation, sustainability, and labour market reform. While acknowledging the central role of caregivers in maintaining Italy's welfare system, it pays little attention to the gendered and emotional dimensions of their work.

IV.3.4. THE NETHERLANDS

1) Media Coverage

Paid domestic work is not a salient discussion in Dutch society or in news media. Many results referred to *un*paid domestic work. and informal (unpaid) care work. Subtopics within this debate include discussions of the rights of caregivers, including financial compensation. Such discussions are particularly relevant in light of governmental cutbacks in this field, such as reduced elderly care homes. This also sparks debate around the role of informal caregivers, as a decrease in formal care makes those in need of care more dependent on help from family. Both *De Telegraaf* and *De Volkskrant* published a similar number of articles on the topic in 2024 (152 and 161 respectively), but their framing and focus differ markedly.

In *De Telegraaf*, the debate centres on the economic dimensions of care. The newspaper frequently presents caregiving as a growing necessity caused by governmental cutbacks and the closure of elderly care homes. Articles emphasize the increasing burden on informal caregivers, linking care responsibilities to financial hardship, burnout, and labour market pressures. Fraud prevention and accountability are recurring subthemes, often discussed through concrete cases of theft or budget misuse, and then afterwards the political errors and scandals when checking the misuse, such as the “toeslagenaffaire” (childcare benefits scandal). The newspaper’s reporting stresses individual responsibility and the need for stricter regulation within the sector.

De Volkskrant, by contrast, adopts a structural and societal lens. It situates the debate within broader critiques of the privatization of healthcare and declining state support. Articles examine the bureaucratic barriers and economic struggles caregivers face, highlighting the emotional toll of care work through personal stories and interviews. The paper links caregiving to social inequality, gender imbalance, and systemic policy failures, stressing the human side of care rather than its financial implications. Both newspapers address fraud and abuse, but *De Telegraaf* focuses on individual wrongdoing, whereas *De Volkskrant* examines institutional oversight failures and exploitative labour conditions.

2) Thematic Analysis

Empowerment:
De Telegraaf primarily frames caregivers as overburdened individuals struggling with financial and practical challenges. Empowerment is limited to resilience in the face of systemic neglect. *De Volkskrant*, on the other hand, presents caregivers as moral and emotional pillars of society, emphasizing their strength, compassion, and need for recognition. Through testimonials and narratives, it highlights the dignity and solidarity inherent in care work, drawing attention to its social and emotional dimensions.

Responsibility, Drivers of Change and Role of CSOs: Responsibility in *De Telegraaf* rests with individuals and employers. Articles stress self-reliance, fraud prevention, and the importance of efficient regulation, with little mention of collective or institutional accountability. CSOs are rarely present. *De Volkskrant* shifts the focus toward government responsibility, policy reform, and social investment. It cites unions and advocacy groups that call for better pay, training, and protection for domestic workers. Here, the debate connects caregiving to broader welfare and equality frameworks.

Intersectionality and Gender Visibility: Intersectionality is absent in *De Telegraaf*, where caregivers are treated as a gender-neutral, homogenous group. Gender is acknowledged only in lifestyle sections

such as “Wie doet wat” (“Who does what”) which reinforces traditional family roles. *De Volkskrant* explicitly addresses the gendered nature of caregiving, linking women’s disproportionate share of domestic and care work to systemic inequalities in employment, pay, and time use. Although the intersection with migration or class is not deeply developed, gender remains central to its critique.

Stigmatization and Stereotypes: *De Telegraaf* occasionally reinforces stigma by associating caregiving with fraud, irresponsibility, or inefficiency. By highlighting incidents of theft or abuse, it risks portraying domestic workers as untrustworthy. *De Volkskrant* avoids individual blame and instead exposes the structural causes of exploitation, such as inadequate funding, low wages, and precarious contracts, thereby countering stigma with contextual analysis.

Rights Framework: In *De Telegraaf*, caregiving is depicted as a private duty rather than a public or collective right. Discussions revolve around affordability and responsibility rather than the social value of care. *De Volkskrant*, conversely, frames paid domestic work within a rights-based perspective, connecting care to social justice, gender equality, and fair labour conditions. It stresses that undervaluing care labour undermines both women’s rights and human dignity.

3) Comparison

In *De Telegraaf*, the debate on paid domestic work is framed primarily through an economic and regulatory lens. The newspaper portrays caregiving as a growing necessity driven by government cutbacks and the closure of elderly care homes, emphasising the resulting strain on households and the labour market. Articles link the burden of informal caregiving to financial hardship, burnout, and the need for greater efficiency, while frequently addressing fraud prevention and accountability through examples, and affiliated scandals, such as the *toeslagenaffaire* (childcare benefits scandal). Responsibility is placed largely on individuals and employers, with little attention to emotional or gendered dimensions of care. This perspective reflects a neoliberal approach that prioritises cost, self-reliance, and stricter regulation, occasionally reinforcing stigma through narratives of dependency or misconduct.

De Volkskrant, by contrast, adopts a structural and societal approach that situates caregiving within broader critiques of privatisation, austerity, and the erosion of welfare systems. Its reporting highlights bureaucratic barriers, low pay, and the emotional toll of care work, often through personal stories and interviews that humanise caregivers. The newspaper links care to social inequality, gender imbalance, and systemic policy failure, framing it as a collective responsibility rather than a private duty. Fraud and abuse are discussed not as individual failings but as consequences of inadequate oversight and exploitative labour conditions. By foregrounding caregivers’ voices, especially those of women, D*e Volkskrant* portrays care work as essential yet undervalued labour, calling for policy reform, public investment, and recognition of care as a matter of social justice.

IV.5.5. POLAND

Paid domestic work is the least discussed issue in both media. In the period under study there was only one article in the liberal media that tackled the problem strictly as an issue of care work that should be paid additionally, and none in the conservative media. Further two articles showed the disparities in the amount of housework done by women as opposed to men, with several others mentioning the disproportion in different contexts – either as an element holding back careers or as an obstacle that was

overcome (usually by celebrities). These results show that the subject of paying for domestic work of women is not a hot debate in the Polish media. In *Gazeta Wyborcza*, the few mentions focus on inequalities in unpaid labor, the economic consequences for women, and occasional attempts to quantify domestic tasks in financial terms. Yet the debate is framed more as a private issue than a structural injustice. In wPolityce.pl, the topic is entirely absent, which reflects a broader disinterest in feminist economic critiques or challenges to traditional gender roles.

Apart from the researched media outlets, there were several articles on the subject framing women as a "domestic hearth managers" and mapping out their emotional-management duties (scheduling, family well-being checks) in business term. Some feminist outlets have written about the imbalance in emotional labour. Polish CSO's, such as Centrum Praw Kobiet (CPK), Workers' Initiative (OZZIP)[37] or Krytyka Polityczna[38] address this issue as one that needs legal solutions and social recognition.

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IV.5.6. SPAIN

1) Media Coverage

"Paid Domestic Work" is one of the most feminised and racialised sectors in Spain, with migrantised women—particularly from Latin America, Africa and Eastern Europe—concentrated in precarious domestic and care jobs. The sector remains structurally unequal: domestic work has historically been treated as low-status and "invisible," excluded from full labour protections and reliant on informal arrangements. Despite Spain's ratification of ILO Convention 189 in 2022 and subsequent reforms, many workers still face low wages, long hours, lack of contracts and limited access to social security. The live-in model (*internas*) is particularly problematic, reinforcing isolation, dependency and vulnerability to abuse.The live-in model (internas) refers to domestic workers who reside in their employer's home, often working very long hours with limited privacy or autonomy. Employers frequently justify constant availability and low wages because the job involves having accommodation and because of the promise of help with regularisation, promises that often materialise slowly or not at all. Because the work takes place inside a private household, limited institutional oversight is routinely justified, which further increases workers' vulnerability, especially for those in irregular administrative situations.

Debates on paid domestic work are intermittent and usually resurface around labour-law reforms, migration debates or high-profile abuse cases. Media coverage tends to portray domestic workers either as exploited victims or as "essential caregivers," without always addressing the structural factors that produce precariousness. Undocumented migrant workers face multiple forms of discrimination:

[37] The Workers' Initiative (OZZIP) is an independent, radical trade union federation in Poland that organises precarious and under-protected workers, focusing on labour rights, collective bargaining and workplace mobilisation. https://ozzip.pl

[38] Krytyka Polityczna is a left-wing intellectual and activist organisation comprising a publishing house, cultural centres and an online journal, promoting progressive debate on democracy, social justice, feminism and minority rights. https://krytykapolityczna.pl

administrative insecurity, limited bargaining power and heightened exposure to exploitation, especially where families justify 24-hour availability as a "necessity" for elder care. Progressive sectors advocate full labour rights, unionisation and complete social security inclusion, stressing gendered and racialised inequalities. Conservative actors emphasise employer flexibility and argue that stricter regulations risk making domestic services unaffordable. CSOs demand comprehensive reform, stronger inspection mechanisms and pathways to regularisation, but criticise the slow and partial pace of government action.

"Paid Domestic Work" is the least covered topic, with 30 articles (3.9%), and a predominantly national focus (19 articles in *El País*, 8 in *El Mundo)*. This indicates that the debate is framed mainly as a domestic labour issue, rather than as part of a broader transnational care and labour rights discussion. In 2024, the Ministry of Labour and Social Economy (Ministro de Trabajo y Economía Social del Gobierno de España) introduced reforms to align Spanish legislation with ILO Convention 189. *El País* presented these changes as "*another step forward for a group made up mostly of women—90%, the majority of whom are immigrants—following the important legislative progress adopted in September 2022*" highlighting both advances and remaining challenges. *El Mundo* covered the same reforms with a legalistic and bureaucratic lens, stressing their impact on employers and warning that higher minimum wages and contributions may push employment into the informal economy. Opinion pieces in *El Mundo* strongly criticised the reforms and portrayed the Labour Minister as harming employment, while *El País* produced more in-depth reports linking domestic work to labour rights, social justice and international standards.

2) Thematic Analysis

Empowerment: *El País* frames domestic workers as rights-bearing subjects and potential agents of change. It regularly includes first-person testimonies ("*Bosses think we're like Superman*") and narrative pieces that show workers organising, demanding recognition and articulating class pride alongside precarity. Articles also point to the role of literature and cultural production in giving domestic and care workers a voice, moving beyond simple victimhood and presenting them as protagonists of their own stories. Overall, domestic workers are depicted as active political and social actors, not only as dependants or beneficiaries.

El Mundo adopts a more institutional and employer-focused perspective. Domestic workers rarely appear as empowered agents; the emphasis lies on the employer–employee relationship framed in terms of "duties and obligations" and regulatory burden. Workers' agency surfaces mainly in one piece about a theatre group using art for collective advocacy, but this is an exception rather than a pattern. Most coverage sidelines workers' subjectivity and presents them as objects of regulation rather than actors shaping change.

Responsibility, Drivers of Change and Role of CSOs: In *El País*, responsibility for improving domestic work conditions is clearly attributed to the state and to structural socio-economic arrangements. The ratification of ILO Convention 189 and subsequent reforms are presented as part of a longer trajectory of rights expansion. The paper highlights rulings such as the European Court of Justice decision on time-tracking systems for domestic work as evidence that institutional reforms are necessary to guarantee basic rights. Government actors (e.g. Labour Minister Yolanda Díaz) are quoted affirming that governing means "transforming" and "giving power to the most invisible and the most vulnerable." Trade unions

(CCOO, UGT), domestic workers' associations and labour/migration scholars are frequently cited as key drivers of change, and CSOs are shown providing legal aid, advocacy and collective support.

El Mundo positions responsibility largely in terms of how regulations affect employers and the labour market. Government measures are often framed as costly interventions that risk increasing informality and unemployment, with columns arguing that higher contributions and stronger protections drive domestic work into the black market. Experts cited tend to criticise the reforms from an economic or legal perspective; unions and domestic worker organisations are virtually absent. CSOs' demands for stronger oversight or regularisation are not foregrounded. Drivers of change are thus seen mainly as state regulations perceived as burdensome, rather than as coordinated efforts by workers' collectives or rights-based movements.

Intersectionality and Gender Visibility: *El País* explicitly links gender, migration status and labour precariousness. It repeatedly notes that the vast majority of domestic workers are women and immigrants, earning very low wages and working in private homes — conditions described as a *"perfect storm of lack of protection*". Many articles mention the migrant status of workers and highlight how legal vulnerability (irregular residence, weak contracts, informal arrangements) intersects with gendered expectations of care and availability. Cases such as a domestic worker denied disability benefits until a court decision illustrate how health, class and administrative status combine to restrict rights.

El Mundo rarely develops intersectional analysis. Migration is mentioned only sporadically, and there is little exploration of how migrant status, race and class shape domestic workers' experiences. Gender is present as a background fact (i.e. feminised sector), but not analysed in depth, and the interlocking nature of gendered, racialised and legal inequalities remains largely unaddressed.

Stigmatization and Stereotypes: *El País* avoids overt stigmatization and does not foreground nationality in headlines. It emphasises structural inequalities rather than blaming individual workers or particular national groups. Domestic workers are portrayed as precarious but also as dignified and organised, and reporting tends to counter the notion that domestic work is "unskilled" or secondary.

El Mundo has moved away from explicit stigmatizing language, reflecting wider changes in journalistic norms. However, its framing implicitly normalises a hierarchy where domestic workers are primarily seen as cost factors in household budgets. By focusing on employer burdens and regulatory "excesses," it risks reproducing the idea that workers' rights are problematic or excessive, rather than questioning the underlying low valuation of their labour. Stereotypes are thus conveyed more through omission and economic framing than through direct derogatory labelling.

Rights Framework: *El País* situates paid domestic work firmly within a labour and human rights framework. Articles connect national reforms to ILO standards, European Court of Justice rulings and global debates on forced labour and the global care economy. Domestic work is described as part of a global exploitation economy generating enormous profits while relying on systematic rights violations. The sector is framed as a test case for Spain's commitment to equality, social justice and recognition of invisible care work.

El Mundo approaches domestic work mainly through a national legal and economic lens, focusing on labour regulation, contributions and contract formalisation. Rights language appears, but is secondary to concerns about costs, competitiveness and informality. International standards or human-rights framings

(ILO Convention 189, global forced labour data) are not central to its narrative. Domestic work is treated as a specific category within Spanish labour law rather than as a human-rights issue embedded in global structures of care and migration.

3) Comparison (*El País* vs. *El Mundo*)

In the debate on paid domestic work, *El País* and *El Mundo* differ in scope, framing and actors. *El País* publishes more articles (19 vs. 8 in *El Mundo*), offers deeper analysis and consistently centres labour rights, gendered and racialised inequalities, and the role of unions, CSOs and state reforms. Domestic workers appear as visible protagonists whose testimonies and struggles are central to the narrative. *El Mundo* treats paid domestic work as a marginal and predominantly national labour topic, embedded in broader concerns about regulation and employment. Its coverage is more fragmented and legalistic, focusing on employer obligations, the risk of increased informality and criticism of government intervention. Domestic workers and CSOs are rarely given voice, and the structural dimensions of gender, migration and global care chains remain largely in the background. Overall, *El País* frames paid domestic work as a structural labour and human-rights issue at the intersection of gender, migration and class, while *El Mundo* frames it mainly as a technical and economic matter of labour regulation and costs, with far less visibility for workers' perspectives and for the role of civil society.

COMPARISON

Across all six countries, Paid Domestic Work is consistently the least visible of the hot debates. In Austria, the topic appears in only a handful of articles and is framed almost exclusively around the affordability of 24-hour live-in care for elderly citizens. In Poland, it is nearly absent, with only scattered references to unpaid domestic labour and no sustained discussion of paid household work. Even in countries where the debate is more developed, such as Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain, media coverage remains uneven and often fragmentary.

Despite national differences, several common patterns emerge. First, domestic workers' own voices are largely absent. In Austria, the workers do not appear at all in the debate. In Belgium and the Netherlands, workers surface mainly through isolated human-interest pieces or protests, but remain peripheral to policy analysis. In Italy and Spain, whose care systems rely heavily on migrant women, domestic workers are more present, but still tend to appear as figures described by others rather than as central political actors. Only in Spain does one newspaper regularly include worker testimonies, yet even there this occurs within a broader environment where domestic work remains structurally undervalued.

Second, the debate is shaped by a tension between labour rights perspectives and economic or household-centred frames. In Belgium and the Netherlands, domestic work is often discussed through the functioning of subsidised systems, consumer costs, and administrative efficiency. Spain's debate recognises structural inequalities and links them to gender, migration and class, but conservative media focus on employer obligations and regulatory burdens. Italy's discussion situates domestic work within demographic pressures and migration policy, treating the sector as essential but rarely adopting a rights-based approach. Austria similarly frames the issue as a problem of care provision and funding, not as a labour sector with distinct vulnerabilities.

Third, the gendered and migrantised nature of domestic work is acknowledged in some cases but seldom analysed in depth. Spain and Italy explicitly highlight that the workforce consists largely of migrant women, often from Eastern Europe and Latin America, who endure low pay, informality and long hours. Belgium mentions “women with migration roots,” and the Netherlands notes the gendered imbalance in care work. Austria and Poland barely address these dimensions. Intersectional factors, such as legal status, race, class or isolation in live-in arrangements, remain marginal across the entire dataset.

Fourth, the role of CSOs and unions varies sharply by country. In Austria and Poland, CSOs are either absent or mentioned in passing. In Belgium, unions appear during protests but do not shape the narrative. In Italy, organisations involved in training and advocacy are referenced but not treated as driving forces. Only in Spain do unions, domestic worker collectives and labour scholars feature prominently, although visibility differs between newspapers.

Finally, very few articles adopt a broader rights framework. Spain is the only case where references to ILO Convention 189, European Court of Justice rulings and global forced-labour debates appear consistently. In other countries, domestic work is largely treated as a technical, economic or demographic issue rather than a field shaped by structural inequality and labour-rights gaps.

PART II SOCIAL MEDIA ANALYSIS

I. METHODOLOGY

The social media component of this deliverable does not analyse national social media debates. Instead, it focuses on how selected Civil Society Organisations communicate through their own social media channels in relation to the five hot debates. This direction emerged from an initial review of existing academic and policy research on digital cultures and online communication in each country. While some countries had isolated studies on specific online controversies or political communication, very few had systematic analyses relevant to gender empowerment, migrant women or CSO visibility. The absence of a consistent analytical tradition meant that adopting any pre-existing model would have created methodological inconsistencies across the consortium.

At the beginning of the research process, the project consortium explored multiple designs for analysing social media debates. Several options appeared promising in theory, including mapping the activity of prominent influencers and political actors, following hashtags connected to the five debates, or analysing discussions in Facebook groups or other semi-closed online communities. However, each approach presented significant methodological constraints. Political public figures or influencer-based analysis risked privileging individual personalities whose audiences, activities and visibility often extend far beyond their national contexts. Hashtag-tracking proved unreliable due to the volatility of online debates and the difficulty of identifying which discussions genuinely reflect national discourses. Closed-group analysis raised ethical concerns related to anonymity, privacy and comparability; and a bias in selecting comparable groups in each countries. It was not feasible to observe private interactions across countries in a way that would meet shared standards of transparency and consent.

Transnational and Linguistic Constraints

A central obstacle was the inherently transnational character of social media. Unlike traditional media, which is typically rooted in national editorial structures, platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok and X/Twitter cut across linguistic and geographic boundaries. This makes it extremely difficult to isolate debates that belong to a single national context. For Austria, for example, the German-language online environment is deeply interconnected with those of Germany and Switzerland. Large accounts and news platforms based in Germany or Switzerland regularly shape discussions that Austrian users engage in, particularly around issues such as gendered violence, Islamophobia, migration and care work. Any attempt to analyse Austria “on its own” would have inevitably included non-Austrian content, clouding the ability to understand Austria-specific dynamics. A similar situation characterises Belgium and the Netherlands, where Dutch-language digital spaces overlap closely. Flemish and Dutch users inhabit the same communicative sphere, and debates, controversies and trending topics circulate freely between the two countries. As a result, distinguishing a Belgian from a Dutch online debate becomes largely artificial and methodologically unsound. For Spain, the challenge is even more pronounced due to the global reach of the Spanish language. Spanish-speaking influencers, journalists, activists and organisations from Latin America, the United States and Spain all contribute to a shared transnational

online environment. Spanish users routinely engage with content from these regions, making it extremely difficult to isolate social media discussions that belong solely to Spain. Adding to this complexity is the widespread use of English across European CSOs, activists and journalists. English-language content on feminism, migration, Islamophobia and social justice circulates globally, and many European organisations use English to reach wider audiences. Including such content in a national analysis would have made the comparison even more intertwined and blurred the distinction between national and transnational narratives.

In light of these interdependencies, it became clear that analysing social media debates at the national level was not feasible for the project aims, neither would have produced meaningful comparable analysis for our purposes. National boundaries, which are central to the traditional media analysis, do not structure social media communication in comparable ways.

Focusing on CSOs' social media engagement

After extensive methodological reflections and consultations with all partners and with the project's ethics advisor, the consortium concluded that the most coherent and ethical approach was to analyse how CSOs communicate through their own social media accounts. This direction aligns with the broader aims of the project and offers several advantages. CSOs retain full control over the content they produce, the timing of publication, and the narrative framing of their posts. These are conditions not guaranteed in traditional media, where interviews may be edited or reframed and where they are only given voice when invited. CSOs' own social media channels allow for intentionally public communication and therefore raise fewer ethical concerns than analysing the activities of private individuals or interactions within semi-closed digital communities.

The selection of CSOs in each country was grounded in earlier mapping work and further refined through consultations with national partner organisations. This ensured that the sample reflected a range of feminist organisations, migrant-led associations and advocacy groups relevant to the five debates.

Data Collection and Analytical Framework

Country teams analysed the 2024 social media outputs of the selected CSOs using a shared analytical template. This template captured the rhythm and frequency of posts, the thematic priorities of the organisation, the visual and narrative strategies they employed, and the extent to which posts engaged directly with the five debates. The analytical framework mirrored the thematic structure used in the traditional media component, allowing issues such as empowerment, intersectionality, rights-based framing and the representation of marginalised groups to be examined across both media environments in a parallel and coherent manner.

Scope and Significance of the Analysis

It is important to underline that this analysis does not aim to represent national social media debates. Rather, it provides insight into how CSOs choose to engage with social media under the conditions of visibility, algorithmic pressure and limited resources. This approach fills a significant gap in the existing literature, as analyses of CSO digital communication remain limited in most participating countries. By focusing on CSOs' own communicative practices, the project was able to identify strategic priorities,

stylistic tendencies, and structural barriers that shape their ability to participate in digital discussions related to gender empowerment and inclusion.

II. CSO SELECTION AND PROFILE

II.1. CSO SELECTION PROCESS

This chapter outlines the methodology used to examine how civil society organisations (CSOs) across different countries engage with the project's five debates. It outlines how organisations were recruited for the social media analysis and clarifies that Instagram was the main platform used to assess their communication practices.

The selection of **Austrian** CSOs was informed by an initial focus group discussion with the partner organisation, which provided an entry point into the national civil society landscape and its digital communication practices. This exchange provided insights into the organisation's social media strategies and contextual knowledge on how Austrian CSOs position themselves in relation to the five ReIncluGen debates. Based on this information, an initial map of CSOs active in Austria that engage, either directly or indirectly, with one or more of the project's thematic debates was created. Afterwards, an exploratory desk review of the Instagram accounts of ten CSOs to assess their level and form of engagement was conducted. This step focused on identifying organisations with regular activity, identifiable framing strategies, and a clear thematic commitment. From this broader pool, at least one CSO per debate that demonstrated sustained and meaningful engagement in 2024 was selected. Then a sample was defined, to include a minimum of two organisations per debate to ensure analytical comparability. The final sample reflects diverse modes of engagement, including advocacy, raising awareness, providing services, intersectional activism, and migrant-focused work. Finally, it was examined how each CSO addressed the remaining debates beyond its primary focus. This enabled the partners to identify patterns of overlap, silence or selective engagement. This process ensured full coverage of all five debates and methodological coherence with the sampling approach applied to the other country cases.

In **Belgium**, the selection of civil society organizations was initiated in close collaboration with their partner CSO, which served as an anchor point for identifying relevant actors within the broader social landscape of Flanders. Together, CSOs, which engaged with the five selected hot topics in Flanders were mapped. Based on this mapping, organisations were identified that are visibly active around these themes. Afterwards, their social media content from the year 2024 was analysed to assess their framing strategies, communication styles, and thematic engagement.

The identification of relevant CSOs in **Italy** was carried out in close collaboration with the partner organisation, which served as a key reference point for mapping actors engaged in gender empowerment and inclusion across the Trentino-South Tyrol region. This joint mapping exercise allowed locating CSOs with visible activity and commitment in these areas. The analytical process was structured in two main phases. First, a content analysis of the Instagram profiles of the two CSOs most actively involved in the ReInCluGen project was conducted. This initial step was complemented by in-depth discussions with representatives of these organizations, focusing on their social media strategies, organizational goals, and lived experiences in digital engagement. As these two CSOs did not comprehensively address all five of the project's designated hot topics, the scope was expanded by selecting four additional CSOs from the regional mapping. These organizations were chosen for their potential to contribute to a broader understanding of how the hot topics are approached within the local civil society landscape. Again, their

social media content from the year 2024 was analysed, paying particular attention to their discursive framing, communication styles, and thematic priorities.

Since there was no partner CSO based in the **Netherlands** that was part of the consortium, the selection process for the social media analysis was somewhat different from the other academic partners. The selection process was based on finding coverage of each of the five debates. CSOs were chosen based on their coverage of these topics, resulting in six CSOs in total that together cover each of the debates, with some overlap present. This overlap allowed for in-topic comparison. The chosen CSOs are different in size and focus.

In **Poland**, the CSO selection followed a two-step approach. First, desk research was conducted to map organizations with visible engagement across the five debates, prioritizing actors with a public-facing digital presence, an identifiable position in public discourse (e.g. via campaigns, advocacy, publications), and evidence of regular activity on social media platforms, especially Instagram. Second, the selection was refined based on insights gained during focus group discussions with representatives of Polish CSOs held during previous fieldwork. The final selection includes organizations with complementary missions, some oriented toward legal aid, others toward community mobilization or service provision, ensuring a diverse representation of strategies, voices, and digital practices across the social media landscape.

In **Spain**, the selection of CSOs for the social media analysis included the national partner organisation, along with those that had already collaborated closely with the research team in earlier stages of the project. This ensured continuity and made it possible to build on existing knowledge. Additional organisations were then selected to better capture the range of debates, especially those that the initial group of organisations did not address at all. Based on this premise, it was agreed that for each of the project's five key debates the digital content of two CSOs would be analysed: the project partner organisation and a second additional organisation. This second CSO could be selected from those with which prior fieldwork had been conducted, provided they demonstrated clear engagement with the relevant topic, or could be another organisation with a well-established trajectory in the specific field. In this case, priority was given to working with the three CSOs that had participated in the previous ethnographic fieldwork. This choice was made both for methodological coherence and due to the strong relationships developed with these organisations. However, in cases where one of these organisations did not explicitly address a given debate, an external CSO with recognized commitment to the topic was included. In the case of the abortion debate, the partner organisation was not included, in line with the organisation's request (see disclaimer).

Finally, important to note is that the findings are very dependent on the presence of specific organisations, and their posts. For instance, in some countries we followed a CSO with the main goal to increase awareness on reproductive rights and contraception, then automatically the concept of "abortion" is on the agenda. However, this does not mean that "abortion" as such is a topic trending in that specific country. Hence, this means that our analysis is not a reflection of social media discourses and trending topics, but rather delves deeper into the existing CSO presence and landscape on social media, and how CSOs take part in local discourses, shed more critical light on specialised topics and raise awareness.

II.2. CSO DESCRIPTIONS

The analysed civil society organisations comprise a diverse and interconnected ecosystem of feminist, social justice and community-based organisations across Europe. Through advocacy, education, direct support, and activism, they engage with five key societal debates: abortion, femicide, Islamophobia, citizenship and rights, and paid domestic work. It should be mentioned that this classification of CSO types is analytical and for purposes of understanding, and therefore not exhaustive, as there are organisations that do not fit into a single debate but rather span several of them. It should be noted that this classification of CSO types is analytical and intended to facilitate understanding. Therefore, it is not exhaustive, as there are organisations that do not fit into a single category, but rather span several.

Feminist rights and advocacy organisations are well-established groups that work to advance gender equality, reproductive freedom, and women's participation in public life. They engage in all five debates, focusing particularly on femicide, abortion, and citizenship. Their goals centre on combatting structural discrimination, eliminating gender-based violence, and challenging restrictive reproductive laws and the persistent stereotypes that undermine women's rights**. Reproductive health and justice organisations** focus specifically on sexual and reproductive rights, prioritising access to contraception, safe abortion, and unbiased health information. They communicate in a legalistic and rights-based manner, addressing the structural barriers created by criminalisation, stigma, and medical bias for women's bodily autonomy and healthcare equality.

Migrant and refugee support organisations primarily engage with debates on citizenship, rights, and Islamophobia. Combining service provision with advocacy, they promote integration and equal treatment, addressing xenophobia, institutional exclusion, and multiple forms of discrimination. Their work highlights the intersection of gender, migration status, and socio-economic precarity, often amplifying the experiences of migrantised women. **Anti-violence and shelter services** play a central role in debates on femicide and gender-based violence. They provide legal, psychological and housing support to survivors while campaigning for systemic reforms to strengthen protection and accountability. Their social media presence serves as both an awareness tool and a means of reaching out to survivors. Labour and care work collectives contribute to the debate on paid domestic work by focusing on the rights and recognition of care and domestic workers, many of whom are migrantised women. These organisations advocate for fair pay, formal contracts and social protections, redefining care work as a profession that deserves structural support and dignity.

Equality and policy platforms operate at the intersection of gender, the economy, and representation. They address issues such as unequal care burdens, wage gaps, and media stereotyping, contributing to debates on topics including paid domestic work, femicide, and Islamophobia. Their goal is to promote gender equality across public institutions and to encourage evidence-based, intersectional policymaking. **Community integration and local service providers** primarily work within the citizenship and rights debate, supporting refugees and newcomers through providing assistance with education, employment, and housing. They tackle social isolation and legal insecurity by fostering local networks of inclusion and participation. **Anti-racism and intersectional activist networks** engage with debates on citizenship and Islamophobia, challenging discriminatory policies and far-right narratives. They use social media to mobilise people and raise awareness, linking the fight against racism, sexism, and economic injustice through coalition-based activism.

Coalitions and thematic campaign alliances bring together multiple CSOs around shared causes such as abortion rights and anti-violence campaigns. These coalitions coordinate national and regional efforts for legislative change and public awareness, amplifying collective voices in highly politicised contexts. Finally, **transnational equality and policy networks** connect local and national initiatives to European and global agendas. These networks promote gender mainstreaming, monitor equality commitments and facilitate cross-border learning. By bridging grassroots activism with institutional advocacy, they ensure that local experiences inform broader policy developments.

III. CSO ENGAGEMENT WITH HOT DEBATES: FREQUENCY AND TONE

Across all analysed countries, CSOs demonstrate a highly uneven level of engagement with the five core debates. Of the several hundred posts coded for 2024, only aboutthree-quarters could be explicitly linked to one of these debates. The remaining ones focused on visibility, service promotion or community events. This implies that a significant share of the CSO communication is oriented towards institutional presence and public education rather than continuous political advocacy. Femicide and broader gender-based violence related topics are strongly present within the social media discourse in almost all national contexts, reflecting a commitment to combatting violence against women. Citizenship and rights also feature prominently, particularly in campaigns on migrant inclusion, access to services, and anti-discrimination. In contrast, Islamophobia and paid domestic work are addressed less frequently and often indirectly, while abortion is mentioned only sporadically and is usually associated with specific awareness days or service-oriented messaging rather than sustained mobilisation.

Posting frequency and format vary substantially across organisations. Some CSOs maintain a high posting frequency with repetitive informational content that generates limited engagement, while others post less frequently but achieve a higher impact through activist, creative and audiovisual formats, such as reels, storytelling videos or collective art. Educational and service-oriented approaches remain widespread, especially among organisations providing social or legal support. Advocacy-driven and mobilising communication, meanwhile, is concentrated among feminist, migrant-led, or union-affiliated groups. Most content is reactive, peaking around international awareness days (e.g. International Women's Day on the 8th of March and the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women on the 25th of November, International Migrants Day on the 18th of December) rather than being part of a sustained campaign.

Tone and style differ significantly across social media and CSOs. Many organisations use an informative and institutional voice to focus on raising awareness of rights and prevention, while others adopt an activist or narrative style, using emotional, participatory storytelling to humanise issues and build solidarity. There is also divergence in consistency of posting. As already mentioned in the paragraph above, some CSOs maintain a steady rhythm with low engagement, while others concentrate activity strategically around symbolic events. In terms of audience engagement, format and authenticity matter more than quantity. Posts incorporating videos, first-person testimonies or imagery of collective action achieve far greater reach than static flyers or institutional announcements.

IV. CSO ENGAGEMENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA WITH HOT DEBATES

IV.1. ABORTION

Across Europe, abortion remains a highly visible yet deeply contested theme in feminist and human rights discourse. The manner in which CSOs address the issue on social media reflects national political cultures, advocacy traditions and the prominence of reproductive rights in public debate. While Austria and the Netherlands demonstrate a high level of activism and visibility, Belgium tends to frame abortion in terms of care and support, while Italy shows only limited engagement. For Spain and Italy,

The visibility of topics related to abortion in **Austria** was particularly heightened around symbolic dates such as the international “Safe Abortion Day”, when organisations coordinated campaigns and produced a significant volume of content. The dominant framing was rights-based, portraying abortion as a healthcare issue, a matter of bodily autonomy, and a matter of gender justice rather than a moral controversy. Women were consistently depicted as active rights-holders and decision-makers, empowered to make choices about their bodies. Intersectionality was only sporadically addressed. The specific challenges faced by migrantised women were largely overlooked, despite some Austrian CSOs' broader commitment to migrant rights in other thematic areas. Responsibility was often attributed to the state, with calls for improved access, funding and geographic equity in abortion services. Civil society positioned itself as not only a service provider, but also a policy advocate and movement leader. It explicitly linked national struggles to transnational campaigns through hashtags, such as #MyBodyMyChoice.

By contrast, abortion seemed to be a relatively marginalised topic in among the selected CSOs in **Italy**. Only one organisation addressed reproductive rights explicitly, launching a small-scale campaign on sexual health at the end of 2024. This campaign focused primarily on education, providing information on contraception, sexual health, and bodily autonomy through accessible multimedia formats. The intention was to address gaps in public knowledge and reach marginalised groups, such as migrantised women and young people, who may face barriers to accessing information. However, most other organisations remained silent on abortion, preferring to concentrate on topics such as community well-being, women’s empowerment, and civil rights. This absence may reflect a lack of expertise, the prioritisation of other issues for strategic reasons, or the sensitivity of abortion within the Italian political and cultural context. Where abortion was addressed, it was part of a broader package of sexual and reproductive health rights, but lacked the prominence and political edge seen in other countries.

In **Belgium,** the selected CSOs on the topic of reproductive rights focused on providing support and information and reducing stigma. Posts focused on the lived experiences of unplanned pregnancy and abortion, highlighting decision-making processes, emotional well-being, and post-abortion care. Testimonies, peer support groups and educational resources were shared with the aim of normalising abortion and reducing the associated taboos. Rather than campaigning for legislative change, the emphasis was placed on personal empowerment and care, positioning individuals as active participants in their own reproductive decisions. The tone was pragmatic and empathetic, focusing on emotional processing, physical recovery and relational aspects, such as the role of partners. The perspectives of migrantised women were not explicitly foregrounded, and there was little direct engagement with policy reform or international feminist campaigns. Instead, abortion was presented as a localised, individual

experience requiring community support, with CSOs acting as facilitators of care and destigmatisation rather than as political advocates. These accounts show that social media is used as a way to communicate with an audience, raise awareness on the topic, debunk stereotypes and provide support.

In the **Netherlands**, there are very specific organisations that work on reproductive rights. These accounts - often representing knowledge platforms or organisations, present abortion as a fundamental right closely tied to women's dignity, health, and autonomy. Campaigns emphasised the importance of free choice and sought to influence policy debates by organising protests, countering anti-abortion demonstrations, and encouraging voters to prioritise reproductive rights in national and European elections. Empowerment was central, with slogans such as "*Women's bodies, women's choices*" and calls to remove unnecessary barriers, such as the requirement to provide reasons for an abortion. At the same time, CSOs invested heavily in destigmatising abortion. For example, they called for the provision of neutral information, debunked misinformation, and tackled stereotypes portraying women as irresponsible or "stupid" for becoming pregnant. Some degree of intersectionality was acknowledged, with recognition that religion, gender and heritage intersect in shaping access to reproductive healthcare. Nevertheless, the visual and narrative representation of migrantised women remained limited, with most imagery reflecting white women. Significantly, CSOs active in the Netherlands positioned abortion within a broader transnational context, explicitly linking their campaigns to debates in the US, struggles in Poland against criminalisation, and discussions in Europe on reproductive rights. This global-local framing reinforced the idea that abortion is both a national policy issue and part of a wider feminist struggle.

Women's right's organisations together with grassroots movements play a central role in steering the abortion debate on social media in Poland. They employ a highly mobilised, defiant, rights-based discourse centred on women's agency and institutional accountability. Posts frame abortion as a matter of bodily autonomy, human dignity and systemic failure rather than a moral dilemma, portraying women as active political actors rather than passive victims. The foreseen opening of Poland's first abortion clinic opposite Parliament in 2025 was presented as a symbolic challenge to political inaction, demonstrating the link between activism and spatial and legal resistance. Frequent calls to protest, donate, challenge laws and pressure policymakers are disseminated alongside legal advice, medical guidance and policy demands. Responsibility is consistently attributed to political institutions, courts and legislators, with rights-based critique replacing moral or religious framing. In contrast, opposition narratives employ moral absolutism, religious symbolism and stigmatising labels such as "baby killers", which feminist actors counter by emphasising health, autonomy and justice. References to intersectional issues, such as the reproductive struggles of migrantised or low-income women, are present but secondary, and direct visibility of migrantised women's experiences is minimal. Broader exclusions also persist, with little representation of conservative or religious feminist voices, rural perspectives, the role of men or minority communities. CSOs act as central protagonists, using social media not only to comment, but also to organise campaigns, coordinate protests, provide services and advance legal advocacy. While the debate is anchored nationally in the restrictive legal environment shaped by the Constitutional Tribunal, it is also connected to transnational feminist solidarity through shared slogans, support networks and international references. The framing merges women's rights and human rights discourses, invoking international obligations and treating abortion restrictions as a form of gender-based violence and state-inflicted harm. Overall, the conversation portrays abortion as a site of resistance, mobilisation and

structural critique, with CSOs leading the narrative, though marginalised perspectives remain underrepresented.

In the case of the five **Spanish** CSOs analysed, the abortion debate is largely absent from their social media communication, possibly reflecting both the legal normalisation of access and organisational dynamics. One of the organisations analysed does engage with abortion and reproductive health, but only in a limited, service-oriented way. Its posts are mainly informative and focus on providing assistance, with an emphasis on free services, contraception, high-risk pregnancies and family planning. There is little focus on public debate, advocacy or mobilisation. Women are portrayed as beneficiaries of support rather than as political agents defending reproductive rights, and the tone is practical rather than confrontational. Engagement with these posts is minimal, reinforcing the idea that communication is targeted outreach rather than a tool for collective mobilisation. Intersectionality is only indirectly present: migrantised and precarious women are acknowledged as vulnerable recipients of care, but their voices, testimonies, and the specific barriers they face are not explicitly articulated. Responsibility is framed as a matter of service provision and institutional mediation rather than a political or legal struggle. No actors are named and no reforms are demanded, presumably because abortion is not currently a legal issue. While the discourse avoids moralisation and religious opposition, it also fails to articulate a feminist or rights-based narrative of reproductive justice. Consequently, the issue appears depoliticised in the digital sphere. It is shaped by discretion, local service delivery, and the assumption that legal guarantees eliminate the need for public advocacy. This leaves migrantised women's experiences and rights largely unspoken and unclaimed in online spaces.

IV.2. CITIZENSHIP AND RIGHTS

Debates on citizenship and rights are a consistent theme across the selected CSOs. However, the ways these issues are framed differ substantially between national contexts. In the analysis, these differences are evident in the narratives that actors construct around inclusion, exclusion, and participation. Rather than treating "citizenship and rights" as a single, uniform theme, the comparison reveals variations in framing practices, attribution of responsibility, and representation of migrant communities.

In **Austria**, discussions about citizenship and rights frequently arise in communications within the selcetd CSOs, particularly during election campaigns and broader public debates about migrant participation and integration. Posts consistently highlight themes such as political participation, voting rights, anti-discrimination measures, and inclusive policymaking. The framing is primarily rights-based, with an emphasis on democratic equality rather than gender-specific claims. Organisations frequently use the policy advocacy frame to call for reforms such as voting rights for non-citizens, linking the absence of these rights to broader issues of exclusion and democratic deficit. Migrant communities are depicted as politically engaged and active, participating in demonstrations and public debates. Women are more visible here than in other debates, often through multilingual or inclusive messaging that presents them as citizens with political voices. However, migrantised women are more often represented collectively than individually, as few posts rely on personal testimonials. Government institutions are clearly identified as responsible actors. However, the tone remains strategic and fact-based rather than accusatory. Civil society portrays itself as both an advocate and a mobiliser, playing an active role in defending citizenship rights while maintaining a strong local and national focus.

In **Italy**, the discussion among selected CSOs is more diverse, with some organisations using citizenship and rights as a central axis of mobilisation and others approaching the topic through cultural empowerment or service provision. At the more political end of the spectrum, communication often critiques bureaucratic restrictions in immigration and welfare policy, highlighting structural discrimination and demanding reforms. Posts link systemic exclusion to broader historical and legal contexts, including colonial legacies and lawsuits against far-right actors. Intersectionality is explicitly foregrounded, with migrantised women being described as experiencing “double discrimination” in the labour market. The tone is both educational and mobilising and is often accompanied by grassroots activism, such as youth-led protests or storytelling initiatives. Conversely, some organisations in Italy emphasise community cohesion and cultural participation as a means of framing rights. Rather than directly confronting state institutions, they organise events, festivals and workshops that foster visibility and a sense of belonging. Their emphasis is on resilience and everyday empowerment rather than legal critique. Together, these approaches demonstrate a dual orientation: one is explicitly political and intersectional, while the other is rooted in cultural participation and relational empowerment.

In **Belgium**, topics focusing on citizenship and rights are most prominently articulated through legal and policy-oriented communication in social media accounts. The selected organisations frequently report on high-profile lawsuits against far-right groups, cases of housing and labour discrimination, and the systemic challenges faced by refugees and undocumented migrants. Posts also address emerging concerns such as online hate speech, discriminatory uses of technology and colonial continuities. Here, the justice system is portrayed as a site of contestation and a potential tool for defending civil rights. Responsibility is attributed to state institutions, political parties, and structural frameworks, with particular criticism of under-resourced support systems and far-right narratives. Intersectionality is explicitly addressed, particularly in highlighting how migrantised women face compounded discrimination. Alongside this legal approach, Belgian CSOs also adopt a community-focused approach, emphasising cultural empowerment and social cohesion through events and visibility campaigns. Although less politically confrontational, these approaches still emphasise inclusion and representation as core values. Overall, Belgian civil society balances structural critique with community engagement, positioning itself as a legal advocate They see Instagram as a way to communicate to a broader audience, while at the same time staying professional and in line with the tasks assigned to them as CSOs and their relationship to the governments.

In the **Netherlands**, topics such as citizenship and rights are mainly communicated through two main topics by looking at local community building and activist mobilisation. At the local level, organisations promote their initiatives, including intercultural campaigns, educational workshops and creative projects that celebrate the talents and voices of migrants. Migrants are depicted as active contributors and experts by experience, with posts celebrating their skills and resilience. The framing used by the selected accounts is largely empowerment-oriented, though intersectionality is rarely explicit. At the activist level, the discourse becomes more overtly political and mobilising. Here, citizenship and rights are linked to protests against discriminatory policies, solidarity with Palestine/Gaza and criticism of the use of scapegoats in political rhetoric. The language used is more urgent and moralising, urging citizens to take action and holding government institutions responsible for exclusionary practices. In both contexts, migrants, including women, are visible and are often portrayed as agents of change. In the activist discourse, however, they are situated within broader struggles against racism, Islamophobia, and

systemic oppression. Consequently, Dutch civil society oscillates between celebrating local achievements and calling for structural political transformation.

In **Spain**, communication about citizenship and rights by the selected social media accounts is shaped by a focus on structural racism, access to basic services, youth participation and the everyday barriers faced by migrants rather than direct political confrontation or institutional denunciation. Content centres on themes such as local registration, labour rights, hate speech, housing exclusion, and community belonging. Organisations approach these issues through education, participatory storytelling, and creative activism. One approach emphasises training educators and community professionals to recognise and counter structural racism. This approach works to reshape social imaginaries and promote critical citizenship, rather than addressing specific legal or policy failures. Another approach involves positioning young people, including those with migrant backgrounds, as narrators of their experiences of exclusion, particularly with regard to housing. Audiovisual and collective projects are used to transform these personal stories into shared accounts of injustice and resistance. Responsibility is framed in cultural and social terms, appealing to schools, communities, and broader society to foster coexistence and uphold rights. While economic precarity, migration and racism are recognised as interconnected factors that affect access to citizenship, the voices of migrantised women remain largely indirect. They appear more as implied subjects of labour exploitation than as first-person speakers. Although ethical and rights-based language is used, the tone is not confrontational, nor does it name institutional actors. Instead, it prioritises preventative work, narrative change and community empowerment. This is in contrast to migrant-led organisations working on care and domestic labour, which adopt more explicitly political and denunciatory framings, naming responsible parties and demanding structural change. By contrast, the dominant approach in the analysed Spanish communication is one of mediated advocacy, cultural transformation and indirect critique rather than direct mobilisation or legal action, with social media serving as a space for education, raising awareness and creative expression rather than applying institutional pressure.

In **Poland**, discussions on citizenship and rights within the analysed social media accounts are largely shaped by CSOs that approach migration, asylum and integration from a rights-based and intersectional perspective. Their messaging emphasises the agency and vulnerability of migrants, especially women, portraying them as active contributors to social and economic life, while also highlighting the structural barriers they face. These narratives frequently counter securitised and nationalist framings by promoting solidarity, legal entitlement and shared responsibility. Although migrant visibility is relatively high compared to other contexts, voices are often mediated rather than expressed directly, with testimonials and stories typically relayed through organisational accounts. Content highlights issues such as pushbacks at the Polish–Belarusian border, access to legal aid and integration services, and the expansion of EU-funded support centres. The state and policymakers are held responsible, with CSOs proposing reforms, denouncing legal violations, and calling for compliance with international standards. Economic and social arguments are strategically employed to challenge stigmatisation and stereotypes, emphasising migrants' fiscal contributions and civic participation. At the same time, Ukrainian refugees are more highly represented than migrants from the Middle East or Africa, whose perspectives remain underrepresented. The tone is assertive yet pragmatic, grounded in humanitarian and human rights discourse rather than confrontational activism. Organisations present themselves as frontline actors, providing legal and psychosocial services, coordinating advocacy efforts, shaping public opinion, and

mobilising audiences to volunteer, donate, or campaign. While institutional critique is evident, the communication also seeks to forge alliances between migrants and host communities by linking local struggles with European legal frameworks and broader human rights norms.

IV. 3. FEMICIDE

Femicide has become a key issue in European feminist and human rights discourse. However, the observed CSOs engage with it in strikingly different ways in different national contexts. A comparison of social media accounts in Austria, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, Poland and Spain focusing on femicide or the intersection between gender and migration, illustrate how distinct political cultures, advocacy traditions and thematic priorities influence the framing and communication of this issue.

In **Austria**, for example, the topic of femicide has gained considerable visibility within the majority of the observed CSOs. They frequently use their platforms to denounce gender-based killings and highlight structural failures that enable such violence. Social media is employed as a tool for political mobilisation, drawing attention to the lack of effective state action and calling for systemic change. Posts often link femicide to broader debates on women's and human rights, particularly emphasising the vulnerabilities of migrantised women and sex workers. Protest-oriented campaigns, symbolic actions and references to transnational feminist movements, such as “Ni Una Menos”, portray femicide as a global issue, not just a national crisis, and as part of the wider struggle against patriarchal violence. There is a strong focus on intersectionality, portraying women as active agents of resistance who demand justice and accountability from state institutions, rather than passive victims.

The **Italian** case, however, reveals a very different pattern. Here, civil society actors have institutionalised the memory of femicide through highly ritualised digital commemorations, such as regularly scheduled memorial posts, the use of standardised visual symbols, and coordinated hashtag campaigns. Visual memorials, often minimalist in design, are consistently posted to commemorate murdered women and children. This practice transforms social media into spaces for mourning and collective remembrance that also serve as political indictments of systemic violence. Other initiatives complement this solemn form of activism with podcasts, storytelling and community events that give voice to survivors of trafficking, domestic violence and forced prostitution. Italian organisations also highlight intersectional dimensions by addressing the experiences of migrantised women and publishing content in multiple languages, thus making the movement more accessible to marginalised groups. Overall, the Italian approach combines commemoration, education and intersectionality, presenting femicide as a personal tragedy and a political emergency demanding systemic reform.

In **Belgium**, the discourse is less frequent, but it is framed with a strong legal and structural emphasis. Civil society activity is closely linked to recent legislative progress, as Belgium became the first European country to adopt a law explicitly defining and addressing femicide and gender-related killings. Posts often explain the legal framework, discuss its implementation and highlight institutional shortcomings, such as under-resourced judicial systems and gaps in victim support. The tone is educational and analytical, clarifying concepts such as the distinction between “femicide” and “feminicide”, and connecting the debate to related forms of gender-based violence, including online misogyny, sexual violence in conflict and the precarious conditions of sex workers. Women are depicted not only as victims, but also as agents of change who can gain empowerment through structural reforms such as the decriminalisation of sex

work and improved labour rights. Thus, the Belgian debate reflects a legal-political orientation, with CSOs acting as knowledge brokers and advocates who push for systemic solutions rather than focusing primarily on symbolic protest or commemorative action. Finally, the social media accounts selected may not have focused on this topic sufficiently, while it could have been part of the discourses of traditional media, such as HLN, that are also present on Instagram, which we did not consider in our analysis.

In contrast, the **Dutch** context demonstrates the relative marginality of femicide in the social media discourses of the selected CSOs. Although awareness-raising and mobilisation are present regarding other issues, such as unpaid care work, racism and citizenship, femicide itself was not a prominent topic on CSO social media accounts in 2024, unlike 2025. Civil society actors tend to use their platforms for professionalised campaigns or organisational updates, but violence against women rarely features as a sustained theme. Where gender is addressed, it is often in relation to labour, diversity, or broader feminist issues rather than being explicitly framed through the lens of femicide. The absence of femicide in prominent debates indicates differences in national priority-setting, as well as the dominance of alternative advocacy themes that overshadow this specific issue.

Polish CSOs address femicide primarily through a political, legal and rights-based lens, emphasising institutional shortcomings and advocating for structural change. The communication emphasises that femicide is the result of systemic negligence by the state, including inadequate legal protections, ineffective risk assessment mechanisms, under-trained judicial personnel, and insufficient recognition of gender-motivated killings. Advocacy efforts employ data, trial monitoring, legal proposals and international comparisons to demonstrate the extent and causes of violence. Rather than portraying women as passive victims, the messaging emphasises their agency through strategic litigation, family mobilisation, community monitoring and public campaigning. Empowerment is associated with justice-seeking, legal action and collective advocacy, rather than with individual resilience narratives. While the debate occasionally references intersections such as socio-economic precarity and rural isolation, migrantised and minority women are underrepresented, revealing a partial rather than comprehensive intersectional approach. The discourse is strongly watchdog-oriented, holding the media and state institutions accountable for their terminology and responses. Calls for precise legal terminology, such as kobietobójstwo, are tied to efforts to secure the legal classification and public recognition of femicide. Statistical evidence and normative arguments rooted in women's and human rights are used to counter opposition framings that dismiss femicide as exaggerated or foreign. Compared to other contexts, the tone is more confrontational and state-focused, prioritising institutional responsibility, legislative change, and public accountability over symbolic remembrance or service-based messaging.

In Spain, in the five organisations analysed, femicide is addressed within a broader framework of gender-based violence, with greater emphasis on prevention and community awareness than on highlighting individual cases. Rather than focusing communication on specific femicides or legislative failures, organisations use social media to promote structural critique through education, raising awareness of rights and providing services. Adopting a transformative and pedagogical perspective, they frame violence as being rooted in patriarchal power. The content emphasises co-education, collective empowerment and feminist cultural change in schools and communities. Alongside this, a strong service-oriented strand highlights the provision of legal advice, psychological support and multilingual assistance, particularly for migrantised and undocumented women. Institutional responsibility is most explicitly

invoked in relation to forced marriage, which is presented as a severe human rights violation requiring tailored protocols and state action. However, the tone is more ethical and social than political, avoiding confrontation with state actors and focusing on the right to live free from violence. Women are either portrayed as agents of change through education or as empowered recipients of specialised support rather than passive victims. Testimonies from relatives or survivors are rare, reflecting a focus on prevention, support and raising awareness rather than commemoration or protest. Intersectional factors, such as migration status and economic vulnerability, are addressed through the language of access to services. Overall, rather than being isolated as an explicit category, femicide is understood within a comprehensive, human rights-based vision of gender-based violence, where change is pursued through empowerment, pedagogy, and support systems rather than public denunciation.

IV.4. ISLAMOPHOBIA

The theme of islamophobia occupies a complex and inconsistent position in communication within civil society across Europe. While it is widely recognised as a form of discrimination related to migration, gender and race, the extent to which it is addressed and the manner in which it is approached differ considerably between countries. A comparison of Austria, Italy, Belgium, Netherlands Poland and Spain highlights these differences, showing how islamophobia is either framed as a marginal issue, as part of broader anti-racist struggles or as a central point of mobilisation.

In **Austria**, for example, islamophobia only emerges at the margins of civil society debate. Of the organisations examined, only one explicitly addressed anti-Muslim racism in its public communications, posting modestly over the year. The tone was largely policy-oriented and informational, drawing on human rights frameworks to highlight issues such as religious freedom in workplaces and schools, as well as discriminatory law enforcement practices. Intersectionality was a recurring concept, acknowledging how the experiences of Muslim communities are shaped by factors such as gender, race, and class that overlap. However, the content often relied on third-party studies and institutional language, creating the impression that the affected communities were being spoken about rather than spoken to. The absence of direct contributions from Muslim women and men limited the degree of empowerment conveyed. Unlike other debates, islamophobia in Austria was not linked to global movements or wider transnational struggles. It remained anchored within the national political and legal context.

The **Italian** landscape reveals a more explicitly political engagement with islamophobia and racism, albeit fragmented. While not every organisation addressed the topic, those that did adopted different strategies. Some embedded islamophobia within a broader critique of institutional racism, highlighting discrimination in areas such as housing, the labour market, and media representation. These posts addressed the stigmatisation of Palestinians in Western media and the need to confront far-right hate groups, thus situating Islamophobia within a wider spectrum of racial injustice. Others took a more community-oriented approach, using social media to document intercultural events, collaborative dinners and school projects designed to promote inclusion and everyday dialogue. Here, islamophobia was less an abstract policy issue and more an aspect of lived experience, addressed through visibility, interaction and local community building. At the same time, certain organisations remained largely silent on the issue, focusing their advocacy on gender-based violence or other feminist concerns instead. Overall, the Italian case illustrates a dual approach: critical, intersectional analyses of systemic racism on the one hand, and

pragmatic, community-based inclusion practices that imply rather than directly name islamophobia on the other.

In **Belgium,** the fight against islamophobia has become a more visible and deliberate component of communication by the selected CSOs. Organisations address it through socio-cultural initiatives and direct policy critique. Public events such as Ramadan gatherings and iftar celebrations are prominently featured and framed as opportunities for intercultural connection and solidarity, and potential interreligious activities (e.g., with Catholics during Easter). Food and festivities are used as tools for inclusion, with slogans encouraging people to “take a seat at the table” and embrace cultural exchange. This soft-power approach challenges stereotypes by presenting Muslim traditions in a positive light and positioning them as a source of community strength rather than division. Conversely, more overtly political messaging denounces discriminatory laws and policies, such as bans on religious symbols, and encourages petitions, demonstrations and activism. Posts in this vein highlight the specific vulnerabilities of Muslim women, who often experience dual discrimination based on gender and religion, and emphasise the urgent need for systemic reform. Thus, Belgian civil society combines cultural celebration with political critique, situating islamophobia in both the everyday lives of communities and the structural inequalities produced by state policies. This follows upon high levels of structural islamophobia in Belgium, also in traditional media discourses, which leave no other choice than to respond via social media accounts and CSOs.

In the **Netherlands**, on social media, the selected civil society actors combine professionalised campaign strategies with grassroots activism. One strand of communication focuses strongly on representation, particularly that of Muslim women in the media, and on ongoing debates around the hijab. Posts emphasise women's agency by sharing direct quotes from Muslim women about their experiences of discrimination, thereby challenging portrayals of passivity. This approach frames empowerment in terms of visibility and voice, positioning women as active participants in the debate. Another approach is more explicitly activist, critiquing government scapegoating politics and connecting islamophobia to broader issues such as racism, solidarity with Palestine/Gaza, and anti-fascism. In this context, social media is used to mobilise citizens to attend demonstrations, challenge discriminatory narratives and recognise their potential as agents of change. Intersectionality is referenced explicitly, emphasising how religion, gender, race and other identity markers intersect to shape experiences of discrimination.

In **Poland**, the social media accounts under study should be situated in a highly polarised society, where rights-based counter-narratives from feminist and anti-discrimination groups, contrast with far-right, nationalist sentiment online. Content is circulated that portrays Muslims, especially women, as cultural threats or demographic dangers, or as passive figures in need of control or rescue. Islam is often depicted in securitised, conspiratorial, and moralistic terms, with anti-Muslim rhetoric frequently merging with misogyny and nationalism. Despite Muslims making up less than 0.1% of the population, the digital debate portrays Islam as an existential threat to Polish identity, exploiting fears surrounding gender norms, religion, and migration. Against this backdrop, civil society actors intervene through documentation, legal advocacy, and public awareness efforts. They present islamophobia as a human rights violation associated with hate speech, institutional negligence, and shortcomings in state protection. Their messaging stresses the accountability of political elites and the media in fuelling moral panic and calls for the enforcement of anti-discrimination laws and improved reporting mechanisms.

However, representation of Muslim voices, particularly those of Muslim women, is scarce. While some initiatives share mediated testimonies, Muslim women are rarely the narrators of their own experiences, which reinforces a pattern of symbolic rather than participatory visibility. Intersectionality is mainly acknowledged when far-right rhetoric mobilises gendered and racialised fears, such as claims that Muslim men threaten Polish women or that Muslim women are instruments of demographic conquest. Yet positive, self-represented intersectional perspectives remain largely absent. Civil society communication seeks to counteract stigmatisation by reframing Muslims as individuals with rights and presenting Polish society as being bound by ethical obligations and European standards. The emphasis is on legal protection, anti-racist education, and public solidarity, rather than on rhetoric about cultural integration. islamophobia is thus portrayed as a national and transnational phenomenon, shaped by global far-right currents, but sustained locally through “Islamophobia without Muslims”, where fear relies on symbols rather than contact.

In **Spain**, among the organisations analysed, islamophobia is not considered a distinct issue, but rather forms part of a broader context of structural racism, hate speech, and the experiences of migrant and racialised communities. Rather than denouncing specific incidents or individuals, communication from civil society focuses on counter-narratives that emphasise empowerment, creativity, and collective agency, particularly among young people and migrantised women. First-person testimonies are occasionally featured, though representation is often mediated rather than directly voiced, portraying Muslims as active subjects rather than passive victims. However, by subsuming islamophobia under broader categories such as xenophobia or racism, the intersection of gender, migration and religion is acknowledged, yet the specific targeting of Muslim women can be obscured. Responsibility is presented in social and educational terms rather than political or legal ones, emphasising the roles of teachers, communities, and cultural initiatives in countering hate. The absence of explicit denunciation or institutional critique reflects a strategic approach that prioritises safety, emotional well-being, and collective visibility over direct confrontation. Even organisations led by Muslim or racialised individuals tend to reference islamophobia only indirectly, favouring creative, community-based approaches over political advocacy. Consequently, social media is primarily used as a space for inclusion, storytelling and cultural resistance, positioning islamophobia within a human rights discourse without isolating it as a central or explicitly named issue.

IV.5. PAID DOMESTIC WORK

Paid domestic work occupies an ambivalent position within the communication of European civil society. Despite being central to the lives of many migrantised women, it often remains less visible than debates such as those surrounding abortion or femicide. When it does appear, however, the framing consistently draws attention to structural inequalities, gendered divisions of labour and the undervaluation of care work.

In **Austria**, paid domestic work was present in the debate, though its visibility among published posts remained rather moderate. Posts tended to be concentrated around symbolic dates such as “International Women’s Day” and “Labour Day”, as well as salary transparency campaigns. The dominant framing was policy advocacy, calling for structural reforms to improve wages, working conditions and the recognition of undervalued sectors such as cleaning and care work. Although migrantised women were referenced implicitly through hashtags and inclusive terminology, their direct voices remained largely absent. The

representation was collective, portraying women as political actors making demands rather than as victims of exploitation. Some actors acknowledged intersectionality more explicitly, particularly in linking migration status, gender, and precarious labour. However, there was still little testimonial content. Responsibility was placed squarely on state institutions and employers, with civil society organisations (CSOs) positioning themselves as advocates and facilitators rather than service providers. The debate leaned towards women's rights within the context of national politics, rarely connecting to global frameworks such as the ILO Convention on Domestic Workers. Overall, Austrian civil society framed paid domestic work as a structural injustice requiring systemic reform, but the voices of the workers themselves were not widely included.

Even though the sector constitutes a critical component of the national care economy, references to paid domestic work remained limited among the social media outputs of the observed **Italian** CSOs. The few posts that did appear often highlighted the precarious conditions of live-in caregivers (*badanti*), pointing to their double vulnerability in losing both employment and housing upon the death of an employer. These contributions offered a strong critique of the structural issues surrounding domestic work, situating it at the intersection of gendered care economies and restrictive immigration regimes. Other content was service-oriented, offering job search support and information events, reflecting a community-based rather than political approach. The lack of discussion of this issue in much of Italian CSO communication highlights a gap: while informal and precarious work is central to the experiences of many migrantised women, it has not been systematically addressed in social media advocacy. However, when it was acknowledged, the framing was powerful, portraying domestic work as an arena of structural neglect requiring political recognition and protective infrastructure.

When it comes to paid domestic work, **Belgium** demonstrates a more consistent and intersectional engagement with the theme. Here, civil society actors actively foregrounded the childcare, caregiving and cleaning sectors, critiquing discriminatory labour practices, underfunded care systems and the chronic undervaluation of women's work. Posts have challenged childcare legislation in the Constitutional Court, called for the recognition of foreign qualifications and denounced exploitative labour practices in service voucher schemes. Communication consistently emphasised that migrantised women are disproportionately funnelled into low-paid domestic roles, regardless of their skills or aspirations. Although the direct voices of workers were not featured prominently, the posts highlighted structural discrimination and intersectional barriers, calling for systemic reforms. Women were portrayed as active subjects facing regulatory and structural obstacles, rather than passive victims. Responsibility was explicitly attributed to policymakers and economic systems, and the messaging blended women's rights with human rights discourse, presenting care work as a matter of both gender justice and social rights. Consequently, Belgian civil society positioned itself as a policy advocate and reformist actor with a clear structural focus on domestic labour. Remarkably, while in traditional media, the neewspapers mainly focused on the political reform of the services cheques system and how it should be subsidized, as well as who pays for these cheques, this debate was largely absent on social media.

In the **Netherlands**, paid domestic work was a key theme in the communications of the selected CSOs, particularly in relation to gender imbalances in unpaid care work and poor conditions in the care, cleaning and childcare sectors. Posts frequently emphasised the high cost of childcare, linking it to restricted labour market opportunities for women and entrenched gender roles. The framing combined

empowerment and structural critique: women were portrayed as both active agents demanding change and passive victims of systemic inequities. Intersectionality was only sporadically addressed, with migrantised women being largely absent from the debate. Both employers and government institutions were held responsible, with explicit calls for policy action to improve childcare affordability and labour conditions in care sectors. The tone was factual and data-driven, often using statistics to raise awareness and mobilise audiences. The framing relied heavily on women's rights, portraying domestic work as part of broader patriarchal inequalities, though there was little linkage to transnational movements. Consequently, Dutch civil society played an active role in shaping public discourse on care economies, albeit with limited inclusion of migrant perspectives.

For the **Spanish** CSOs examined, discussions of domestic and care work are framed through the lenses of feminism and social justice, emphasizing issues of precarity, racialization, and the pivotal role of migrant women in the sector. However, the level and tone of political engagement varies significantly among different stakeholders. Some organisations address the issue through awareness-raising, education and creative empowerment, while others, especially worker-led collectives, adopt an overtly political stance that foregrounds labour rights, structural exploitation and legal accountability. Rather than being depicted as passive victims, migrantised women are portrayed as collective agents of change who organise, strike and create narratives of resistance through artistic and community-based initiatives. Educational approaches emphasise cultural transformation, participatory methodologies, and reflection on global care chains. In contrast, grassroots organisations led by domestic and care workers frame the struggle in terms of systemic violence, class, gender, and immigration status. They openly identify those responsible, denounce exclusions from social protections, and demand the repeal of restrictive immigration laws and full inclusion in labour and social security frameworks. Both approaches operate within human rights and feminist justice discourses but differ in their tone. Some organisations adopt indirect, culturally rooted strategies centred on community building and intersectional awareness, while others foreground direct political confrontation, first-person testimonies, and mobilisation against institutional neglect. Across the board, the debate rejects victimising stereotypes and highlights the structural conditions that shape feminised and racialised labour. However, the extent to which institutions are publicly denounced and held accountable varies, reflecting the different organisational identities, risk assessments and communication strategies of advocacy groups working in the field of domestic and care work in Spain.

In **Poland**, the social media output of analysed organizations shows an increased visibility of paid domestic and care work. This is driven by unions, migrant worker collectives, and advocacy organisations that contest the informality and gendered and racialised exploitation of the sector. IsThe debate is primarily shaped by the presence of Ukrainian migrantised women, who are portrayed as both precarious workers and organised agents demanding labour rights and legal recognition. Social media posts highlight protests, unionisation efforts and creative acts of resistance, such as performances in front of parliament that symbolically redefine domestic workers as political actors rather than invisible helpers. Intersectionality is central to this narrative: gender, migration status and class are presented as mutually reinforcing factors that perpetuate informality, low pay and weak protections. Advocacy efforts call for the professionalisation and legal recognition of domestic and care work. They push for employment contracts, inclusion in social security schemes, and compliance with international labour standards. Responsibility is explicitly attributed to lawmakers and state institutions that maintain restrictive immigration laws and

weak labour inspection systems. Public narratives that treat care as an unpaid familial duty are also criticised for masking structural exploitation. Although migrantised women are highly visible in these debates, their voices are often still mediated through unions, NGOs and journalists rather than expressed directly. At the same time, however, employers, policymakers and private households remain largely absent from the discourse, as do male carers and non-European migrants. The discourse positions domestic and care work as a human and women's rights issue, linking economic justice with feminist and anti-racist critique, and connecting local struggles with transnational movements and ILO standards.

V. COMPARISON ACROSS CSOS AND HOT DEBATES

Analysing the social media engagement of the selected CSOs across the five debates revealed substantial variation in thematic emphasis and communicative strategies. Rather than comparing national debates, the analysis focuses on how the organisations in question articulate these topics within their own digital channels. While many of the analysed CSOs operate within feminist, human rights and anti-racist frameworks, their online practices reflect their distinct institutional identities, target audiences and perceptions of risk. Social media primarily functions as a tool for education, raising awareness, and increasing community visibility.

Femicide and **gender-based violence** dominate the digital landscape, emerging as the most consistently addressed topic across countries. Most organisations approach the issue through raising awareness and promoting prevention rather than engaging in direct political confrontation. Messages emphasise solidarity, remembrance, and empowerment, often framed in terms of universal rights and collective responsibility. Visual and textual content commonly includes commemorative campaigns and educational posts that encourage recognition of structural violence without naming specific institutional actors. Although the language used is ethically sound and empathetic, it tends to depoliticise femicide by embedding it within broader categories of gender-based violence. Intersectionality is often acknowledged rhetorically, but rarely explored in depth, and the experiences of minority and migrantised women receive limited visibility. In contrast, debates around **citizenship and rights** are some of the most dynamic and diverse, reflecting how migration, youth participation and inclusion are framed as cornerstones of democratic engagement. Communication strategies range from educational initiatives that promote civic awareness to participatory and creative projects that foreground the voices of migrants and young people. Posts often celebrate diversity, solidarity and local community building, while avoiding overtly confrontational language. However, some organisations adopt a more assertive stance, explicitly linking systemic exclusion to legal and policy shortcomings.

Although **islamophobia** is less frequently addressed, it is embedded in broader discussions of racism and structural discrimination. Few organisations engage with the topic explicitly, and even fewer include direct testimonies from Muslim communities. Where it does appear, islamophobia is treated as part of a wider matrix of hate speech and xenophobia. The tone tends to be educational, seeking to counteract misinformation and stereotypes through cultural awareness, data or creative expression. Openly denouncing political or media figures is rare, reflecting the sensitivity of the topic in public discourse. The lack of first-person accounts from Muslims highlights a structural limitation within digital advocacy, where representation is often mediated by allies rather than by the communities themselves. The debate on **abortion** shows the sharpest national variation and the lowest overall visibility. In most cases, the topic

is approached through a health- and service-oriented lens, focusing on access to reproductive healthcare, family planning and the provision of information, rather than open political mobilisation. Where abortion is publicly debated, posts tend to adopt a rights-based or empowerment approach, portraying women as autonomous decision-makers and rejecting moralistic and religious narratives. However, engagement levels tend to be low, suggesting that abortion remains a sensitive and occasionally depoliticised subject within digital spaces. Few organisations sustain continuous discourse beyond key awareness dates such as Safe Abortion Day, indicating a cautious, non-confrontational communication style aimed at preserving accessibility and safety for beneficiaries.

Finally, **paid domestic work** emerges as the most explicitly political and worker-led debate in the dataset. Organisations addressing this topic foreground collective agency, labour rights and intersectionality, centring migrantised women as active agents demanding structural reform. Posts highlight precarious conditions, legal exclusions and the systemic undervaluing of feminised labour, linking these issues to broader struggles for social justice and gender equality. The communication style is participatory and mobilising, making strong use of visual storytelling and artistic protest. This debate also sees the most explicit calls for accountability, naming discriminatory laws, employers and policy gaps. However, despite its depth and clarity, the topic remains marginal in terms of volume, reflecting the continued invisibility of migrant labour and the broader societal undervaluation of care work.

VI. CSOS CHALLENGES AND NEEDS USING SOCIAL MEDIA

CSOs in the analysed countries face multiple structural, ethical and strategic challenges that hinder their effectiveness in digital advocacy. Although social media has become an essential tool for raising awareness and mobilising communities, most CSOs find it difficult to maintain consistent, impactful and ethically sound communication practices. The following points summarise the key barriers and gaps identified through the analysis.

- **Limited time and expertise**: Many CSOs lack dedicated communication staff or trained social media professionals. Digital outreach is often managed by team members who have many other responsibilities, which can lead to irregular posting, limited planning and content that is either low quality or repetitive.
- **Ethical and safety concerns**: Organisations working with migrantised women, survivors of violence or minors tend to avoid direct testimonies and identifiable images in order to protect the safety of their participants. While this cautious approach is ethically necessary, it often reduces emotional engagement and the visibility of personal stories.
- **Low visibility due to algorithms**: Rights-based and educational content tends to underperform on platforms that reward provocative, visually appealing, or entertaining material. Consequently, informative or advocacy-oriented posts frequently receive minimal interaction, despite high posting frequency.
- **Digital backlash and politicisation**: Topics such as gender equality, reproductive rights and migration are frequently targeted by online harassment and political attacks. Conservative and

far-right actors weaponise these debates, creating a hostile environment that pressures CSOs towards self-censorship and undermines public trust.

- **Resource asymmetry and burnout**: Grassroots and migrant-led organisations often have minimal funding and rely on volunteers, which limits their capacity for sustained communication. Larger CSOs may be more stable, but they tend to produce less innovative, but more institutional content that fails to generate engagement.

- **Fragmented communication**: Despite shared goals, coordination between CSOs is weak. Campaigns are often developed independently, with little cross-promotion or collective messaging, which reduces their overall reach and algorithmic visibility.

- **Unequal digital literacy and support networks**: Some organisations benefit from supportive local networks that enable open debate and reduce the fear of backlash. Others lack training on emerging platforms or opportunities for peer collaboration. This uneven access hinders innovation and outreach to younger or more diverse audiences.

Discussions with the CSOs and the accompanying cross-country analysis identified several key needs and priorities for strengthening the digital presence, visibility, and advocacy capacity. These reflect both the strategic ambitions and the structural limitations of organisations operating in increasingly polarised environments.

- **Dedicated communication capacity**: As already mentioned in the section before, many CSOs lack staff responsible for communications and social media management. Appointing a dedicated communications officer would professionalise outreach, ensure continuity and enable consistent, strategic messaging.

- **Targeted training and capacity building:** Organisations identified a strong need for training in feminist and anti-racist communication strategies, digital storytelling and the creation of audiovisual content. They also viewed practical workshops on social media planning, analytics, and ethical communication as essential for strengthening in-house expertise.

- **Strategic communication planning**: CSOs want to move beyond one-off commemorative posts and adopt sustained mid-term campaigns that are aligned with their advocacy goals. They require support to develop content calendars, visual strategies and communication frameworks that balance activism with safety and consistency.

- **Ethical and value-based communication**: Protecting participants from overexposure is a top priority. Organisations are seeking clear ethical guidelines on consent, anonymisation and storytelling, in order to preserve participants' dignity while maintaining political substance. They are also exploring collective formats that minimise personal risk.

- **Youth engagement and creative participation**: Many CSOs aim to involve younger generations more directly in creating and curating digital content. Youth participation is seen as vital for revitalising feminist and anti-racist activism, experimenting with new formats and ensuring continuity of advocacy across generations.

- **Stronger alliances, peer learning and cross-border collaboration**: Building collaborative networks among CSOs is crucial to amplifying their digital reach and resilience. Peer exchanges, joint campaigns and regional or EU-wide learning opportunities could enhance coherence and collective visibility across sectors.
- **Long-term financial and technical support**: Sustainable funding for communication activities is still limited. Organisations have called for dedicated resources to hire staff, access professional equipment and produce high-quality digital content. Funders are encouraged to recognise the importance of communication in advocacy work.

CONCLUSION

Traditional Media Analysis: Summary and Conclusions

Across the six national contexts, the traditional media analysis shows that the five selected debates, “Abortion”, “Citizenship and Rights”, “Femicide”, “Islamophobia”, and “Paid Domestic Work”, are mediated through distinct political, institutional and cultural lenses. While each debate carries different levels of salience across countries, a consistent finding is the strong editorial polarisation between progressive and conservative outlets. Progressive sources tend to contextualise gendered and racialised inequalities, anchor issues in structural analysis, and engage rights-based or feminist perspectives. Conservative outlets more often frame debates through legality, institutional governance, moral positioning or concerns around social order. These contrasting framings influence not only which aspects of the debates become visible, but also which actors are recognised as legitimate commentators.

A second pattern concerns the visibility of migrantised women. Their perspectives appear selectively and unevenly, with some notable exceptions in particular outlets or feature pieces. In most countries, traditional media continue to privilege institutional voices of politicians, experts, or public authorities over those directly affected by the issues under discussion. This tendency produces a mediated landscape in which migrantised women’s experiences are referenced, summarised or represented indirectly, rather than articulated through first-person accounts. While progressive newspapers occasionally highlight intersectional inequalities or link national debates to broader transnational struggles, such perspectives remain limited overall and are largely absent in conservative reporting.

The comparative review across debates also reveals a pattern of individualised framing. Topics such as femicide or islamophobia are frequently covered through episodic reporting, focusing on specific events, individual cases or isolated controversies. Only a smaller set of outlets consistently embed these debates in discussions of structural gender inequality, systemic discrimination or institutional shortcomings. As a result, media narratives can oscillate between moments of heightened attention triggered by incidents and long periods of silence. Issues like paid domestic work and certain aspects of citizenship receive limited sustained coverage, despite their significance for migrantised women’s economic and social rights.

Finally, CSOs appear in traditional media with varying degrees of prominence. In some contexts, they are cited as service providers or technical experts, while in others they remain marginal or invisible. Only a few outlets, particularly those with progressive orientations, consistently acknowledge the advocacy role of CSOs or position them as actors shaping public debate. Overall, the traditional media analysis highlights the ongoing selectivity of mediated empowerment narratives and the uneven representation of civil society and marginalised groups across European media landscapes.

Social Media Analysis: Summary and Conclusions

The social media analysis offers a fundamentally different picture, shaped by the methodological decision to focus on CSOs’ self-representation rather than on general online debates. This approach reveals communication practices that reflect organisational priorities, capacities and constraints rather than editorial selection. Across the six countries, CSOs’ engagement with the five debates is intentional but

selective. Many organisations communicate relatively infrequently on broad political or normative aspects of the debates; instead, they prioritise concrete information about services, events, awareness campaigns and project activities. This functional communication reflects the practical realities of CSO work and the need to maintain trust with beneficiaries, funding bodies, and local communities.

At the same time, CSOs do use their platforms to articulate feminist, rights-based and community-centred framings of the five debates particularly in contexts where such narratives receive limited attention in traditional media. Their posts sometimes offer more explicit and values-oriented interpretations of issues such as gender-based violence or racism, and can introduce intersectional and inclusion-focused perspectives. However, these interventions are shaped by the constraints of organisational capacity, and by the political and digital climates in which CSOs operate.

The cross-country comparison shows that CSO communication is influenced by both national context and the transnational nature of social media. Unlike traditional media, social media spaces are not neatly contained within national boundaries, which means CSOs' posts could potentially circulate alongside content from other regions and linguistic spheres. Despite this, the analysis highlights that CSOs' posts are generally tied to local priorities, responding to national policies, community needs or specific incidents rather than to wider international debate cycles. This grounded but selective engagement provides insight into how empowerment discourses are shaped in more grassroots-oriented digital environments, where organisations communicate on their own terms, albeit within structural constraints.

The social media findings demonstrate that CSO communication operates as a complementary yet distinct layer of public debate. It emphasises practical support, localised challenges, and targeted advocacy more prominently than abstract ideological positioning. This underscores the importance of understanding CSO communication as a situated practice shaped by organisational mandates, limited resources and the need to remain responsive to their communities.

Comparative Reflections Between Traditional Media and CSO Social Media Communication

Although the traditional media analysis and the social media analysis examine fundamentally different communicative environments, placing them side by side reveals several shared dynamics as well as important divergences. Both strands work with the same five debates and thematic categories, which enables a meaningful, though cautious, comparison. However, the nature of public discourse differs substantially depending on whether attention is shaped by *mainstream journalistic approaches* or by CSOs' own communication practices.

Traditional media position the five debates within broader public and political agendas that are filtered through national media structures and editorial orientations. The analyses across countries show clear patterns of ideological differentiation: progressive newspapers tend to highlight structural inequalities, gendered power dynamics and rights-based interpretations, whereas conservative newspapers often focus on legality, security, political conflict or moral framing. In this environment, the voices of migrantised women are present but generally limited, with some notable exceptions in specific outlets or in isolated feature stories. In most cases, institutional actors, political leaders and experts dominate the coverage, shaping which interpretations of empowerment gain visibility.

By contrast, the social media analysis centres on CSOs' self-representation, where communication is shaped by organisational priorities, capacities and constraints rather than editorial decisions. Because CSOs control the framing, timing and tone of their messages, their social media content tends to foreground feminist, rights-based or community-focused narratives that often receive less sustained attention in traditional media. At the same time, it is important to note that CSOs frequently use their social media channels for *functional communication*, such as announcing services, events, workshops, fundraising initiatives or awareness campaigns. This means that their engagement with the five debates is often selective and embedded within the practical demands of their work. As a result, their posts may focus more on concrete support structures and less on broad political or ideological commentary on current events. It also means, that the engagement with the different debates is not equally intensive, but rather linked to the concrete activities and profile of each of the CSOs.

Taken together, these two analyses show that traditional media and CSO social media operate with distinct logics of visibility, voice and purpose. Traditional media frame the debates as part of national political discourse, often reproducing established hierarchies of who is authorised to speak. CSO social media, meanwhile, create spaces where alternative narratives and community perspectives can surface, albeit shaped by resource limitations, safety considerations and organisational strategies. Despite the different forms and intensities of engagement, the shared thematic anchors allow us to observe how public understandings of gender empowerment and inclusion emerge from the interaction between mediated representation and CSO-led communication, revealing overlapping yet distinct pathways through which empowerment becomes visible, contested or sidelined across contemporary European media landscapes.

CSOs' Challenges in Traditional and Social Media

Across both parts of the analysis, the report identifies a series of recurring challenges that shape how CSOs engage with media environments. In traditional media, CSOs often struggle with limited visibility, editorial gatekeeping and the tendency of news outlets to prioritise institutional or political voices. Their perspectives are included selectively, which can reinforce power asymmetries between civil society and more established authorities. In some contexts, CSOs face difficulties gaining access to media coverage unless they are reacting to major incidents or are invited as service providers rather than as actors with political or structural insight.

On social media, CSOs confront a different but equally significant set of obstacles. Many operate with restricted financial and human resources, making it difficult to maintain regular posting or to develop sophisticated communication strategies. Rights-based or educational content often performs poorly within algorithmic systems that reward entertainment or conflict, limiting the visibility of posts that prioritise empowerment or structural critique. Organisations working with migrantised women, survivors of violence or minors must also navigate ethical concerns, including consent, anonymity and the risk of exposing individuals to harm. These constraints can discourage the use of personal stories or testimonies, even when such narratives could strengthen advocacy.

Moreover, the political environment in several countries heightens the risks associated with public communication. Debates on gender equality, abortion, Islamophobia or migration are often targeted by online harassment, disinformation or coordinated attacks, which can pressure organisations toward

caution or self-censorship. Finally, the lack of coordinated communication strategies across CSOs weakens their collective presence, limiting the reach of their messages and reducing the potential for shared advocacy. Taken together, these challenges highlight the need for stronger material, strategic and ethical support to enable CSOs to participate more confidently and visibly across both media spheres.

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