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The Social Construction of Terrorism: The Role of Discourse

(Master's Thesis)

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Declaration

I hereby declare that I wrote this master's thesis on my own and properly cited all sources used.

Prague, June 28, 2018

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Signature

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List of abbreviations

EU	European Union
CoS	Copenhagen school
CTS	Critical terrorism studies
IR	International relations

Introduction

Since 2015, the so-called refugee crisis (sometimes also referred to as the European migrant crisis) has been one of the dominant topics in the public discourse in most of the EU countries. The year 2015 was critical, as more than one million people fled mostly from war-affected countries to the EU, with Germany as the main destination, followed by other (mostly Western) European countries. Given the fact that the situation was unprecedented, it created a sense of uncertainty among EU citizens, for whom, generally, mass media served as the primary source of information. Thus, especially at the beginning of the crisis in 2015, the media played a prominent role in shaping people's understanding of what was happening and what the causes and potential consequences were. Using constructivist terminology, the media participated in the social construction of shared understandings of the refugee crisis and refugees.

Along with that, there was an increase in the number of jihadist terrorist attacks in 2015 (from 4 in 2014 to 17 in 2015) and especially in their scale and number of casualties (from 4 in 2014 to 150 in 2015). The biggest terrorist attacks that year included the Charlie Hebdo attacks on 7-9 January in Paris and the series of coordinated attacks on 13-14 November also in Paris – the deadliest attack in Europe in a decade. Moreover, it was discovered that two of the perpetrators of the November terrorist attacks entered the EU among the large number of refugees from Syria. Consequently, the jihadist terrorism on the soil of the EU started to be increasingly associated with the refugee crisis, in particular with Muslim refugees. Against this backdrop, fear and perception of Muslim refugees as a threat increased across Europe, which can be demonstrated by the upsurge in popularity of anti-immigration and anti-Islam political parties in many EU countries.

As the title of the thesis indicates, “terrorism” is regarded as a social construction, as it only acquires meaning through our interpretations; the same applies to “refugees”. These interpretations determine our responses and, ultimately, state policies. Given their prominent role in public discourse, the media are believed to play a key role in shaping interpretations, especially in times of crises. Among others, this assumption is supported by mass communication theories, specifically by agenda-setting theory expanded by the second level, according to which media have an impact on *which* issues the audience regards as important and *how* they think about the issues. This is based on the fact that by selecting which stories they publish, the media actually indicate which issues are of greater importance (the first level

of agenda-setting). Similarly, as they decide which aspects of the issue they mention and which they omit (the second level of agenda-setting), they have the power to influence the interpretations of the issue by the audience. According to securitization theory, any issue may become a threat if the audience accepts it as such. The process of securitization starts with the securitization move, which occurs, simply put, when the securitizing actor presents an issue as a threat. Combining the mass communication theories and securitization, I assume that mass media played a vital role in constructing the refugees as a threat.

Broadly speaking, the main aim of the thesis is to examine the role of mass media in the securitization process, concentrating on the extent to which refugees were presented as a threat in the Czech and Austrian media following the terrorist attacks that took place in Paris on November 13, 2015. I chose this incident in order to explore the impact of a terrorist attack conducted by Islamist terrorists on the securitization of refugees from Muslim-majority countries. There are several reasons for choosing this particular incident. First, it occurred in the year when the refugee crisis was reaching its peak, being a dominant issue on the public agenda. Second, it was the terrorist attack with the most casualties since the refugee crisis began in 2015, having great potential to cause fear among citizens. Third, as mentioned above, some of its perpetrators came with the refugees from Syria.

These two countries were not chosen by accident; there are many similarities between them, including geographical proximity, centuries of interconnected cultural, political and economic development and, most importantly for this thesis, the fact that in neither of these two countries has occurred any terrorist attack conducted by Islamist terrorists. More recently, Austria has become more restrictive with regard to immigration and asylum policies, moving closer to the policies of the Czech Republic; furthermore, both the Czech Republic and Austria have criticized the refugee quota agreed on by the majority in the European Parliament and Council and have called for a more restrictive policy towards refugees.

However, there are also significant differences, the most striking of which – with regard to the refugee situation – being the fact that Austria was highly affected by the refugee influx, becoming both a transit country and final destination. As a result, Austria was one of the EU member states that received the highest number of asylum applications per capita, while the Czech Republic was the opposite in this respect. Moreover, the stance of the majority of Czech society towards refugees has been very negative from the beginning, perceiving them as a threat in large, while Austrians showed a more welcoming approach in 2015. As evident from public discourse, the attitude of Czech society was, to a great extent, a result of a

negative perception of Islam. As the media both affect and reflect the attitudes of citizens, I assume that the degree of securitization in the media was higher in the Czech Republic than in Austria (see the hypotheses below).

As the online media, together with the TV, are the most important news sources for both Czechs and Austrians, I decided to analyse three news portals in each country. The news sites were chosen according to their popularity and comparability between the two countries. With regard to the Czech news, the portals *iDnes.cz*, *Novinky.cz* and *ČT24.cz* will be analysed, while the analysed Austrian news sites include *news.ORF.at*, *derStandard.at* and *Kurier.at*. Given their popularity, I believe that these news portals represent the dominant media discourse in the respective countries.

In light of the above-stated arguments, I set two hypotheses:

- 1) *The degree of securitization in the online media was higher in the Czech Republic than in Austria, both before the November terrorist attack and after.*
- 2) *The degree of securitization in the online media was higher both in the Czech Republic and Austria after the November terrorist attack than before.*

The thesis is divided into three chapters – theoretical framework, methodology and the practical application.

The aim of the theoretical chapter is to choose appropriate theoretical approaches for the analysis and to capture connections between them. The broad theoretical perspective is *social constructivism*, present in every other theory on which this thesis draws. It is also vital to scrutinize *securitization theory*, as it explains the process of how migration or refugees may be constructed as a threat, which is the subject of the analysis. Furthermore, as the content analysis uses the framework of *agenda-setting* theory to explore the role of mass media in the securitization process, the focus is also on this theory. Finally, *terrorism* is studied through the constructivist lens, as this thesis analyses the effect of a jihadist terrorist attack on the securitization of refugees.

The second chapter examines how content analysis lends itself to securitization studies and illuminates the exact methods of how the analysis was conducted in the thesis. More precisely, the chapter thoroughly explains how the degree of securitization is measured and compared. The goal of the chapter is to propose a tool that quantifies the degree of securitization in order to interpret the results of the analysis more accurately. Accordingly, the

securitization index is created, which enables a more precise comparison between individual states and time periods by expressing the presence of securitization in numbers.

The third chapter reveals the findings of the analysis and, by interpreting them, it concludes whether the hypotheses were proved or disproved. Furthermore, by putting the results into context, it outlines possible reasons behind them.

In order to achieve the main goal of the thesis, I use following scientific methods. The empirical part represents a case study of the Czech and Austrian media which are analysed by means of content analysis. The first methodological step of the analysis is collection and observation of raw qualitative data, followed by their coding into a quantitative dataset for subsequent statistical processing. In this step, the data are synthesized using elements of descriptive statistics. Finally, the output enables comparison of observed datasets leading to inductive conclusions of the study. Despite belonging rather to marginal methods in studying securitization, the quantitative content analysis appears to be the most appropriate method to compare the degree of securitization in media in different time periods and different countries.

Consequently, as the thesis tests the causality between a jihadist terrorist attack and the securitization of migration from Muslim-majority countries in media discourse, it aspires to enable prediction of an analogical development if another attack occurs. Moreover, it contributes to securitization studies by exploring the potential of the content analysis method and demonstrating its advantages in examining the securitization move. Another contribution of the thesis lies in the securitization index, which can be, with some alterations, used for the purposes of other studies examining the presence of securitization in the media, seeking to quantify this extent.

The main limitation of the thesis is that the extent of the causality between terrorism and the securitization of migration in the media cannot be determined accurately, as there are other numerous factors influencing the latter, which cannot be eliminated. Furthermore, the thesis analyses only the securitization move, i.e. presenting refugees as a threat in the mass media, while the measure of the success and the real effect of the securitization move on the audience is beyond the scope of this thesis.

1 Theoretical framework

First of all, it is necessary to lay out the theoretical framework that the research will build upon in this thesis. As stated in the name of the thesis, social constructivism is the basic theoretical background being used. Constructivism is threaded through all the approaches and theories applied in this thesis. Moreover, the terms “terrorism”, the “refugee crisis” or “refugees” are not perceived as objective realities but as social constructions, meaning that they only acquire the meaning that is assigned to them. The meaning differs depending on many aspects, such as cultural or historical context, experience, values, etc. It is also believed that language has a prominent role in constructing these meanings. This will be explained in more detail in the following subchapters.

While social constructivism is perceived in this thesis as a broad theoretical perspective, the theory of securitization is directly applied when conducting content analysis of the media. Thus, the assumptions and significance of the theory will be explained in depth.

As the research deals with the securitization of refugees in mass media, the focus is also on mass communication theory, particularly on the agenda-setting theory expanded by second-level agenda-setting, which incorporates framing (McCombs, Shaw, Weaver 1997). Moreover, it will be examined how securitization and these mass communication theories are interrelated and how the latter can enrich securitization research.

Last but not least, since the aim of this thesis is to examine the impact of the chosen terrorist attack on the securitization of refugees, the last subchapter will concentrate on terrorism, showing how social constructivism lends itself to terrorism studies and explaining why I assume that the November terrorist attack resulted in a rising perception of refugees as a threat.

Before embarking on the examination of individual theories, it is necessary to define the terms “refugee” and “migrant” and clarify how these terms are used in this thesis in order to avoid misinterpretations. Oxford English Dictionary defines “refugee” as follows: “A person who has been forced to leave their country in order to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster” (2018a). At the same time, “migrant” is defined as “a person who moves from one place to another, especially in order to find work or better living conditions” (2018b). Therefore, it can be said that all refugees can be simultaneously regarded as migrants according to these definitions. The influx included both people who were forced to leave their countries for acute reasons related to conflict and violence (especially from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan) and

people who sought better living conditions in general. The proportion of refugees among the migrant population has been part of public debate. Therefore, when speaking about the influx, it would be correct to say “refugees and other migrants” or simply “migrants”, which, however, does not imply that many of them were refugees at the same time. For simplicity, if either of the terms is used in this thesis, it refers to both refugees and other migrants, specifically the ones who were coming to the EU in 2015 mainly from the Middle East, Northern Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa, the majority of whom were Muslims (Pew Research 2017).

1.1 Constructivist lens

Social constructivism in international relations developed mainly in the 1990s, in the context of the failure of neorealism, neoliberalism and other rationalist theories to predict and explain the end of the Cold War (Wendt 1999, p. 4). The constructivist approach was introduced to the international relations (IR) discipline in 1989 by Nicolas Onuf in his work *World of Our Making* (Onuf 1989) and was further developed by Alexander Wendt, Peter Katzenstein, Friedrich Kratochwil and other IR theorists. Before elaborating more on social constructivism as a theory of IR, there will first be a description of when and how social constructivism in social sciences emerged in order to better comprehend the core arguments and ideas.

1.1.1 Social construction in sociology

The term social constructivism had been used mainly in sociology before; above all, the term was popularized in 1966 by sociology scholars Berger and Luckmann in the book *The Social Construction of Reality*. As the title indicates, the authors’ main point was that “reality” is socially constructed – there is no objective reality, as everybody’s reality as well as knowledge are different. As they put it, “What is 'real' to a Tibetan monk may not be 'real' to an American businessman. The 'knowledge' of the criminal differs from the 'knowledge' of the criminologist” (Berger, Luckmann 1966, pp. 14–15). In other words, our perception of reality is based on our life experiences and beliefs; however, this perception is perpetually changing when interacting with other members of society, while the reality of other people changes through interaction with us as well. These conceptions and beliefs become institutionalized and are then taken as an objective reality by the society members. Therefore, human reality is said to be socially constructed (Berger, Luckmann 1966, pp. 210–211).

The authors put emphasis on the significance of language, as it is the main tool of constructing reality. However, it also simplifies reality because it typifies our unique

experiences, putting them into categories, which can be understood by anyone, making them less personal and more universal. In addition, even if we use the same word, the meaning may differ substantially for different people (Berger, Luckmann 1966, pp. 51–55). To connect it with the thesis topic, the term “terrorism” (or “refugee”) may mean completely different things, depending on the context, personal experiences or knowledge of the people who use or hear these terms, and other circumstances. This idea will be further developed in the subchapter examining terrorism as a social construction.

1.1.2 Social constructivism in international relations theory

As was the case with the (sociological) assumption of the social construction of relations between individuals and their differing “realities”, which are constantly being changed through interaction, the main presumption of social constructivism in IR is that international relations are socially constructed. Unlike (neo)realism, (neo)liberalism and other comprehensive IR theories, constructivism does not claim there are some generally valid (natural) rules, independent of location and historical context, explaining why states behave in a certain way (Lasan 2012, p. 42). The relations between states are said to be determined by the beliefs and expectations that they have about each other, not by given natural interests (or by the anarchical structure, as is the case with neorealist theory) that they would have prior to the social interaction (Wendt 1999, pp. 19–20).

In this manner, emphasizing the social ontology,¹ social constructivists challenged the rationalist ontology, based on assumptions shared by both neorealism and neoliberalism dominating in the 1980s. According to these assumptions, political actors (particularly states, as state-centrism dominated) were said to be self-interested and rational, always seeking the most effective way to realize and maximize their interests, which are given prior to social interaction. Therefore, social interaction was not regarded as important in determining the interests, as these are exogenous (Burchill et al., 2005, p 192).

These assumptions were rejected by the constructivists, along with the emphasis on materialism. Consequently, constructivists claim that normative structures and ideas are as important as material structures. As Wendt argues, “material resources only acquire meaning for human action through the structure of shared knowledge in which they are embedded” (Wendt 1995, p. 73). As an example he states that five North Korean nuclear weapons are much more threatening to the United States than five hundred British nuclear weapons, as

¹ Ontology is concerned with the nature and relations of being, asking questions such as “what is” (Oxford Dictionaries 2018c).

“British are friends of the United States and the North Koreans are not, and amity or enmity is a function of shared understandings” (Wendt 1995, p. 73). Thus, solely material capabilities do not explain much.

Furthermore, identity is one of the core terms of constructivism in IR. According to Wendt, an identity is a set of expectations and understandings that the actors have about themselves within a specific, socially constructed context. Moreover, actors also hold expectations about each other, ascribing identities to each other, which may differ from the identity which the state ascribes to itself; for instance, a state may see itself as “a leader of the free world”, but another state may perceive it as “an imperial power” (Wendt 1992, pp. 395–400). Interests are not exogenically given, but rather based on identities, which are perpetually mutually constituted through interaction and may change over time, as it happened between the USA and the Soviet Union in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Thus, even if the material capabilities remain the same, a change in relations between two states is possible if there is a change in perceptions. As Wendt puts it, “people act toward objects, including other actors, on the basis of the meanings that the objects have for them. States act differently toward enemies than they do toward friends because enemies are threatening and friends are not” (Wendt 1992, pp. 396–397).

Unlike neo-realists, most constructivists do not seek to formulate a comprehensive theory of international relations and consider social constructivism to be rather an analytical framework. Paradoxically, the most famous social constructivist scholar, Alexander Wendt, is an exception to this rule, as he has attempted to formulate a social theory of international relations (Burchill et al., 2005, p. 202). On the contrary, Onuf argues that social constructivism is a way of studying (any kind of) social relations rather than an IR theory as such (Kubáľková, Onuf, Kowert 1998, p. 58). This approach is also adopted in this thesis.

1.1.3 Conventional and critical constructivism and the role of language

It is important to mention that social constructivism in IR is not a homogenous theoretical perspective, as there are (sometimes substantial) differences between individual constructivist positions. While the assumptions of social ontology are widely shared by constructivists, there are mainly epistemological² differences among constructivists scholars. Generally, a distinction between two major groups of constructivists is made by scholars – “conventional”

² Epistemology can be defined as “the study or a theory of the nature and grounds of knowledge.” The answers to the following questions may enable us to find out more about the specific epistemological framework are: “What is knowledge?” “How do we know what we know?” (Auerswald 1985)

and “critical” constructivists, with the main point of disagreement lying in epistemology. Conventional constructivists, such as A. Wendt, use positivist epistemology, which rests on the assumption that there is objective knowledge about the social world that may be discovered by means of conventional scientific methods such as empiricism, hypothesis testing and causality. Accordingly, as labelled by Emanuel Adler (Adler 1997, p. 331), this type of constructivism is called a “middle ground” between rationalism and poststructuralist theories, as it combines social ontology with positivist epistemology, the latter also being endorsed by rationalism. As there are no substantial epistemological and methodological differences between conventional constructivism and rationalism, constructivists could embark on a debate with rationalists and gained considerable legitimacy in the discipline (Dunne, Kurki, Smith 2013, p. 193).

On the other hand, critical constructivists refuse the positivist epistemology, criticizing it as inconsistent with the social ontology. Critical constructivists argue that there is no objective knowledge and that the observer and the actor can never be separated, meaning that the scholar also participates in the constitution and reproduction of the social entities they observe (Hopf 1998, p. 184). Emphasizing the role of language and discourse in the construction of the social world, constructivists claim that language does not simply label objects (that are assumed to exist independently of meaning by positivists); on the contrary, objects gain meaning through language (Dunne, Kurki, Smith 2013, p. 194). Nevertheless, not every scholar may be easily put into one of these two groups, as the distinction is not always so clear.

As this thesis primarily deals with the role of discourse in the process of securitization of refugees or, in other words, the construction of refugees as a threat, the most relevant constructivist authors for the thesis are the ones stressing the importance of language and discourse.

One of these scholars is Nicholas Onuf, for whom language is central to his analysis because it enables people to construct their worlds. As he puts it, “talking is undoubtedly the most important way that we go about making the world what it is” (Kubáľková, Onuf, Kowert 1998, p. 59). Drawing on Austin’s speech-act theory (Austin 1975), Onuf holds that “saying is doing”, defining a speech-act as speaking in a way that gets someone else to act. According to him, language does not merely describe reality, but it creates reality: “People use words to represent deeds” but also “they can use words, and words alone, to perform deeds” (Onuf 1989, p. 82). To give a clear example, if somebody declares war, it has far-reaching

consequences, comparable to the actual deeds. Moreover, Onuf claims that a repeated speech act turns into convention, which is close to becoming a rule. If we have always done something (a convention), it might make agents believe they should do something (a rule) (Kubáľková, Onuf, Kowert 1998, p. 67).

As will be described in the following chapter, securitization draws to a great extent on constructivist approaches. Moreover, the notion of speech-acts is central to securitization theory as well (Dunn Cavelty, Mauer 2010, pp. 56–60).

1.2 Securitization

Traditionally, security studies were dominated by realist and neo-realist approaches, which, broadly speaking, understood security in terms of military issues and use of force, while the main referent object was the state. However, after the end of the Cold War, this military-political approach was challenged by new security concepts, which widened the number of security sectors as well as deepened the levels of analysis. Being still relevant today, the security model introduced by the Copenhagen school (CoS) has been one of the most cited and prominent ones (Craciun 2012). According to the Copenhagen school, not only the political and military sectors should be the focus of security studies, but also economic, environmental and societal sectors, while the levels of analysis include international systems (which encompass the whole planet today), international subsystems (international organizations), units (states, corporations), subunits (bureaucracies, lobbies), and individuals (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998, pp. 5–7).

1.2.1 Securitization process

As stated above, securitization is a crucial theory for this thesis. According to the authors of the concept, any public issue may be placed (and also moved) on an imaginary spectrum ranging from *nonpoliticized* through *politicized* to *securitized* (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998, p. 23). Since I will use this scale in the practical part of this thesis in order to create the securitization index, I deem it important to explain what exactly these terms mean. A nonpoliticized issue is not an issue of public debate and the state does not deal with it. If an issue is politicized, it is “part of public policy, requiring government decision and resources allocations or, more rarely, some other form of communal governance”. Finally, a securitized issue is “presented as an existential threat, requiring emergency measures and justifying actions outside the normal bounds of political procedure” (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998, p. 23). Securitization can be therefore understood as an extreme form of politicization.

Accordingly, it is irrelevant whether the threat really exists or not – it is only important that the issue is presented as such, and the state acts accordingly (Buzan, Waever, Wilde 1998, pp. 23–24). In other words, a security threat is treated as a social construction, as any issue may be constructed as a threat through the process of securitization.

For example, the environment did not use to be an issue of a broader public debate until 1960s – 1970s. Since then, it has moved from this category towards politicization and, arguably, towards securitization (especially climate change). Not only do the topics that become politicized or securitized change over time, but the level of politicization or securitization also varies from region to region or from state to state. If I use again the example with climate change, the degree of securitization varies; for instance, for small island states it represents a more imminent threat than for states that are affected by it to a lesser extent. Another example is securitization of culture – during the Cold war, culture was highly securitized in USSR, whereas in other countries, such as the UK, it was not (Buzan, Waever, Wilde 1998, p. 24).

According to the CoS, there are several types of units involved in the securitization process. First, there is the *referent object*, which is something that is claimed to be existentially threatened and that has a “legitimate claim to survival” (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998, p. 36). Traditionally, the state (or the nation) has served as a referent object; however, there is a wide range of possible referent objects, including a civilization, cultural identity or the whole mankind (such as in the case of securitization of environment or the possible annihilation of mankind by nuclear weapons). The authors also stress the importance of the size of the referent objects, distinguishing between micro level (individuals or small groups), middle-level (states, nations) or system-level (mankind), claiming that the middle-level units are most likely to become the referent objects, as they have a stronger sense of collective identity than the system-level units, while attracting enough attention needed for the issue to be securitized, unlike small groups or individuals, which are less likely to establish a wide security legitimacy (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998, p. 36).

The second unit, which is an indispensable part of the securitization process, is the *securitizing actor* – an individual or a group of individuals who designates the referent object as existentially threatened. Presenting an issue as a threat is the *securitization move*. As the authors note, it is not always easy to identify the securitizing actors (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998, p. 40). However, it is not common that the securitizing actor would be the referent object at the same time; for instance, a political leader, who securitizes immigration, does not

claim that it is an existential threat only to himself, but rather to the whole state, the values of the state, the civilization, etc. Although he is part of the state, he is not the main object threatened. Accordingly, it is not usually the state that could be designated as the securitizing actor but rather someone who acts on behalf of the state, such as political leaders, governments or movements. (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998, pp. 40–41). Media also play a significant role in the securitizing process, as they contribute in defining certain issues and situations (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998, p. 126). The role of the media will be discussed at length later.

The answer to the question of who or what the referent object is and who the securitizing actor is varies depending on the security sector (mentioned above); nevertheless, they often overlap. For example, the typical referent object in the societal sector is the identity of a larger group (i.e. the nation, race, class, religion), in the military and political sectors it is the state, but it can also be the nation or, for example, religion (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998, pp. 52, 126, 145). On the other hand, in the environmental sector, the whole of mankind or the environment itself are usually presented as being threatened (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998, p. 76).

According to Buzan et al., the most typical threats to the identity and societal security can be migration (as a result of a changing composition of the population), horizontal competition (there is an influence from a neighbouring culture viewed as a threat to the identity), or vertical competition (losing the identity as a consequence of being a part of an integration project, such as the EU) (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998, p. 121).

Third, there are *functional actors*. These are actors who neither securitize the issue, nor are they the ones who are presented as being threatened, but they still significantly contribute to the securitization process. For instance, a polluting company plays a central role in the securitization of environment, although it is neither of the previously mentioned actors (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998, p. 36).

Fourth, the *audience* judges the securitization move and eventually decides whether the topic will be securitized since the securitization process can only be completed if the securitizing actor convinces the audience about the urgency of the threat. For instance, if the securitization move is performed by the government (on the state level), the audience is likely to be the population (public) of the respective state (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998, p. 41). Especially in modern liberal democracies, if the audience does not perceive the issue as a threat, the

potential extraordinary measures taken by the government would not be justified and would backfire. Therefore, it is crucial not only to concentrate on the securitization move itself because the fact that an issue is presented as an existential threat does not mean it will be accepted and perceived as such by the audience.

One of the key terms in the securitization theory is *speech-act*. As already mentioned, this term was popularized by J. L. Austin and the idea behind it is that “to say something is to do something” (Austin 1975, p. 12). When applied to the securitization theory, the securitizing actor uses the speech-act to move a certain issue into the security area; in other words, by uttering security the actor securitizes the issue. (Wæver 1995, p. 55). Accordingly, security is not treated as an objective reality but rather as an outcome of the social process of securitization, where the speech-act plays the key role. Securitization theory does not focus on the objective ground of discourse and does not deal with the question whether something is objectively a security threat. To put it another way, the authors’ intentions are not to decide what is a real threat and whether it should be securitized, but to show the issues that arise from securitization (Buzan, Wæver, Wilde 1998, pp. 39–40).

The Copenhagen school views securitization mainly as negative and undesirable, leading to manipulation and disproportionate reactions. Thus, the solution should lie in the reverse process, in “desecuritization”; in other words, moving the issue off the security area, making it, again, a subject of ordinary politics, which enables deliberation and discussions (Williams 2003, p. 523). However, it should be noted that, despite being depicted as the ideal solution to securitization, the process of desecuritization has not been elaborated thoroughly by the Copenhagen school, which has been one of the reasons for criticism of the securitization theory (Aradau 2004).

Williams (Williams 2003, p.512) widens the concept of securitization with the argument that not only speech-acts are important, but also visual images, connected a the television broadcast, have an increasingly significant impact on what the audience perceives as a threat, and therefore are an important part of the whole process. As he argues, it is too narrow to focus only on the linguistic part of communication; for instance, it is not possible to comprehend the securitization after September 11 without understanding the role that the extraordinary and repeated images played (Williams 2003, p. 512). In other words, tragic vivid images of destruction and casualties have a significant impact on people’s (audience’s) emotions and perceptions, as they provoke fear, anxiety, and anger. As a result, they are more susceptible to accept or even support and require extraordinary measures, leading to

a successful securitization of terrorism. Another example is the role of images in the securitization of migration. Seeing “nightly images of shadowy figures attempting to jump on trains through the Channel Tunnel between France and the UK, for example, or of lines of “asylum seekers” waiting to be picked up for a day’s illicit labour” is very likely to contribute to the perception of immigration as a threat (Williams 2003, p. 526). In my analysis, I will also focus on photos included in the articles.

The focus of my research is on the presentation of refugees as a threat in media discourse, which is, using the terminology of the CoS, the securitization move. The measure of the of this securitization move and its real effect on the audience is beyond the scope of this thesis, as will be explained in the chapter devoted to methodology. The aim is rather to discover the securitization move, which has the potential to contribute to alter the perceptions of the “audience” about refugees, thinking of them in terms of threats and, therefore, requiring stricter policies. Drawing on the above-mentioned scale with the category “nonpoliticized” on one side and “securitized” on the other, I will try to compare the extent of securitization in Czech and Austrian media before and after the terrorist attack conducted on November 13, 2015 in Paris. In pursuit of this goal, I will use content analysis, which will make it possible to measure this extent, place it on the scale, and compare it. Moreover, using Williams’ widened concept of securitization, I will analyse not only politicization/securitization present in the text, but also in the photos that are attached to the news articles. The detailed explanation of the methodology and discussion about methods used to study securitization follows in the second chapter.

1.2.2 Criticism

In order to understand the limits or controversies regarding securitization theory, I deem it necessary to mention some of the main types of criticism levelled against securitization theory.

Much of the criticism has stemmed either from the insufficient specification of desecuritization (Aradau 2004) or from the absence of moral or ethical goals of the theory (Floyd 2007, p. 335). Floyd also argues that the analyst should explore not only how the actors securitize, but also why, as they, according to her, may also have positive intentions, resulting in a positive outcome. In other words, securitization does not have to be necessarily bad, and desecuritization necessarily good (Floyd 2007, pp. 335–337). As an example of positive securitization, she mentions the securitization of deforestation in Brazil after 1988,

which led to positive outcomes that would not have been possible if the issue had been “merely politicized”. Desecuritization may be, on the other hand, negative, as desecuritization does not always mean that the issue is moved to the political sphere, but even beyond, meaning that the issue is not discussed at all, the environment being a case in point (Floyd 2007, pp. 344–347).

Another argument with regard to criticism against the CoS, brought up by Aradau and Floyd as well as by Jef Huysmans (whom both Aradau and Floyd cited), is that the analyst himself performs a speech act when writing about securitization. As a result, if the issue presented by them becomes widely recognised as a security issue, they may themselves contribute to the securitization of a certain issue or area (Huysmans 1999, p. 5; Floyd 2007, p. 338; Aradau 2004). However, other analysts, such as Rita Taureck (2006), dismiss some of the criticism, claiming that it has never been the intention of the securitization theory to set some ethic goals and the objective of the analyst using securitization theory is not to say what security should or should not be, as it is not a political statement, but a theoretical tool that helps the analyst to discover when securitization is used by a securitizing actor. She partly accepts the criticism that the analyst performs a speech act himself when writing about securitization; however, she argues that it does not change the political act of securitization that the analyst seeks to uncover, meaning that it is irrelevant whether the analyst considers the act (securitization/desecuritization) positive or negative (Taureck 2006). As a researcher analysing securitization, I identify myself with Taureck’s argument.

1.3 Mass communication theory

Mass media undoubtedly play a significant role in modern societies. Owing to the media, people are able to learn about issues outside their immediate life space but also about issues they are involved in or about events they witnessed in order to get an explanation of what actually happened. Moreover, media also serve as an important source of information not only to citizens, but also to politicians, influencing the political agenda (Moy, Tewksbury, Rinke 2016, p. 1).

There are a few mass communication theories relevant to this research, most notably *agenda-setting* and *framing*. Both of them share several assumptions, such as that mass media both reflect and constitute the reality and that media have a significant impact on people’s attitude, cognition and behaviour (Moy, Tewksbury, Rinke 2016, p. 1). While agenda-setting theory focuses on the ability of media to show and persuade people which issues are important by

means of selecting what to report about and to which frequency, framing relates to the way of how journalists present the issue, what aspects of it they choose to mention, how they define the problem etc. (Scheufele, Tewksbury 2007, p. 11). Nevertheless, McCombs, Shaw and Weaver (1997) treat framing as an extension of agenda setting, calling it a “second-level agenda setting” The thesis builds on this approach.

Accordingly, this subchapter explores the original agenda-setting theory and its above-mentioned extension. Afterwards it will be explained how mass communication theory lends itself to securitization.

1.3.1 Agenda-setting theory

"The press may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about." (Cohen 1963, p. 13)

Some of the core ideas on which the concept of *agenda-setting* is based were outlined already in 1922 by Walter Lippmann. In his book, *Public Opinion*, he argued that what we know about public affairs is mostly based on what the media decide to tell us, as this world is for most citizens “out of reach“ (Lippmann 1922, p. 29). Since then, the concept of *agenda-setting* has been analysed in many works. The most famous authors dealing with this theory are M. E. McCombs and D. L. Shaw, who pointed out that not only do media provide factual information to the public, but they also show how much importance is to be attached to certain issues; in other words, if a certain issue is on the news every day, people are more likely to start perceiving it as an important issue (McCombs, Shaw 1972, p. 1). Moreover, even when there are various topics mentioned in the newspaper or television, the emphasis put on them differs – some of them are on the front page, having more room and being described more in detail, others are just shortly mentioned (McCombs 2002, p. 1).

There have been numerous studies analysing the agenda-setting function of media. For example, Wayne et al. analysed how US citizens were more likely to regard the nations that received more media coverage as more vital to the US interests (Wanta et al., 2004), while Kwansah-Aidoo (2003) showed that agenda-setting theory did not apply only to Western societies, but also to societies where media are not so widespread, such as in Ghana. A large number of other studies have proved that the correlation between the media coverage and the perception of the issue is important (Barnes et al., 2008; Wolfe et al., 2013; Wu, Coleman 2009).

To put it another way, the coverage in media is not a direct reflection of reality, as it is often perceived, but it is the output after the media filtered the information; in this way, media shape reality.

1.3.2 Second-level agenda-setting

As mentioned above, the second-level agenda-setting expands the original concept, drawing on the framing theory. According to this concept, not only do media affect *what* the public thinks about, but also *how* they think about it. As the authors put it, it deals with “the specific attributes of a topic and how this agenda of attributes also influences public opinion”. These attributes represent the way an issue is covered in the media, which affects both the way people think about the issue and the salience of the issue on the public agenda. Accordingly, whereas the first level of the agenda-setting is related to the salience of the issue or topic, the second level examines the salience of the attributes of the issue or topic (McCombs, Shaw, Weaver 1997). In other words, the second level focuses on what aspects of the issue are presented by the media as more important, which makes certain aspects more salient.

According to the authors, these attributes are perspectives or *frames* that journalists employ and that have impact on how the issue is perceived and which aspects of it are perceived as important by the public. As framing focuses on the particular ways of how the issues are presented, the second level of the agenda-setting incorporates framing into the agenda-setting concept (McCombs, Shaw, Weaver 1997).

It should also be pointed out that both levels of agenda-setting have a close relationship to social constructivism, as they examine the process and consequences of construction of certain issues and their attributes as more salient than others and how any issue may be transformed into a problem, becoming part of the public and political agendas.

1.3.3 Securitization and agenda-setting

Agenda-setting theory may serve as a useful tool to examine how media contribute to the construction of certain issues as threats. As is claimed in the concept of the first level of agenda-setting, the more often a certain topic appears in the news, the more importance is attributed to it and the more likely the public will perceive it as more important and more urgent. However, solely frequent appearances in the media does not make the issue securitized even though it is a vital aspect of it. The securitization move does not result merely from the salience of the issue, but also from the salience of the attributes or, in other words, from the way the issue is presented in the media. Translated into the language of

securitization, if the media frame an issue in such a way that it is presented as a threat (e.g. by means of choosing to write about certain aspects of the topic, using certain words and metaphors, selecting certain photos etc.) while it appears in the news with great frequency, it is very likely that we are witnessing a securitization move.

Combining the theories of agenda-setting (and framing, here treated as the second-level agenda-setting) and securitization is not a new concept, as is obvious from works of a number of scholars. For instance, Eriksson (Eriksson 1999, p. 1) pointed out that agenda-setting is a good tool to explain why some issues become classified as security issues, whereas others are not, while emphasizing the increasing role of the media in the security agenda-setting process. Moreover, he suggested that securitization is a form of framing, namely framing an issue as a security threat (Eriksson 1999, p. 5). Other authors (Dunn Cavelty 2007; Balzacq 2010) have combined these theories as well.

It should also be noted that securitization is not always the intention of the media. The motives behind the securitization move are often connected to the effort of the media to attract attention and readership in the pursuit of profits. The set of news values, defined by T. Harcup and D. O'Neill (2001) (who updated the original set of news values by J. Galtung and M. Ruge), can help us understand which aspects increase the readership of the news. They defined ten news values, claiming that the news must include at least one of them in order to attract attention. As far as securitization is concerned, I consider important mentioning values such as bad news, magnitude or surprise. Accordingly, stories that include a conflict, a tragedy or another negative element, appealing to people's emotions, attract more attention. Similarly, news including elements of magnitude, such as high numbers, importance or significant consequences will attract a broader readership.

I will give an example in order to clarify how this is related to securitization. When speaking about securitization of refugees, media may tend to pick stories that are surprising or shocking (e.g. a repulsive criminal act conducted by a refugee), negative (such as criminality, negative consequences for the state/society etc.) or that include the element of magnitude (significant numbers of refugees), which contribute to securitization, while the purpose is mainly to attract attention.

Nevertheless, the purpose of the thesis is not to analyse the motives or awareness of the media of conducting the securitization move but to reveal and characterise the securitization move

itself. The chapter devoted to methodology will illuminate how I employ the agenda-setting and securitization theories in the analysis of the securitization move in the media.

1.4 Terrorism through constructivist lens

In the analysis, the November 2015 terrorist attack represents an independent variable, while its impact on the securitization of refugees in the media (dependent variable) is analysed. The assumption that the act intensified securitization stems from the fact that the refugee crisis and terrorism have been linked together in public discourse, implying that terrorist and refugee populations overlap and that these two issues are closely interconnected (Schmid 2016, p. 49). Politicians across Europe (along with the media) have repeatedly linked the two issues together, such as Czech president Miloš Zeman (ČT24 2015), Slovak prime minister Robert Fico (iDnes 2016), Hungarian president Viktor Orbán, or numerous anti-immigration parties (and not only them) (Beck 2017, pp. 3–4).

It has been pointed out before how low the probability of being killed by a terrorist attack is in Europe or the United States and various comparisons with other causes of death have been made to put it into perspective. For instance, Alex Nowrasteh, an analyst of immigration policy at the Cato institute, conducted analysis where he discovered that the annual chance of being killed in a terrorist attack in the United States from 2001 to 2017 was 1 in 1.6 million per year, while in Europe the chances were much lower (for example, in Germany it was 1 in 23.2 million per year) (Nowrasteh 2017). Yet terrorism is perceived as one of the biggest threats to Western civilization by many states.

As rationalist theories, such as neorealism or neoliberalism, do not offer much in explaining why terrorism provokes such reactions and why it is perceived as such a great threat, social constructivism appears to be a more appropriate approach. As Philip Jenkins argues, saying that terrorism is a social construction does not mean that the problem does not exist; what it means is that terrorism means different things for different states and individuals, depending on the interpretation, which is constructed through social, cultural, and political factors. Nevertheless, it is the interpretation that determines how we respond to the issue and what policies are carried out by the state (Jenkins 2003, p. 14). In other words, terrorism “is not a given in the real world”, as it is an interpretation of events and their presumed causes, while this interpretation “is not an unbiased attempt to depict truth” (Spaaij 2012, p. 15). Terrorism does not exist independently of our perceptions and interpretations.

One of the arguments supporting the notion of terrorism as a social construction is the fact that there is no one single definition of terrorism; on the contrary, the definitions differ from state to state and from agency to agency, depending on how it is constructed. This is further illustrated by the fact no unequivocal UN definition of terrorism exists, as there is no political agreement on it (Grozdanova 2014, pp. 306–307).

1.4.1 Role of discourse in the construction of terrorism

Numerous scholars have pointed out the role of discourse in constructing terrorism, most notably Richard Jackson (2005; 2016) or Alexander Spencer (2010), but also Nicholas Onuf has made a contribution to the debate (2009). R. Jackson and A. Spencer also adhere to Critical Terrorism Studies (CTS), which is one of the most popular alternative approaches to the mainstream terrorism studies. CTS scholars have made significant contribution in promoting the concept of terrorism as a social construction, while analysing discourse through which terrorism is said to be constructed; thus, I deem it necessary to briefly introduce this approach (Spencer 2010, p. 71–72).

CTS emerged mainly to challenge the hegemonic state-centric and problem-solving terrorism studies. Criticizing dominant counter-terrorism policies, CTS scholars understand terrorism as a social construction (ontological position) and do not take existing terrorism knowledge for granted, as they understand knowledge as constructed through language and inter-subjective practices (constructivist epistemological position). Thus, they hold that terrorism knowledge always reflects the socio-cultural context and is never neutral or objective. The goal is to deconstruct dominant knowledge and discourse about terrorism and to show alternatives (Jackson 2007). In addition, adhering to post-positivist constructivist epistemology, CTS scholars claim it is necessary for the researcher always to be aware of their own role in producing knowledge and not to present their conclusions as objective truth, as they are always their interpretations. Even if we draw on primary data, we have to interpret it, let alone if we draw on secondary data – in this case, the conclusions are interpretations of interpretations (Spencer 2010, p. 72). This epistemological position is shared by critical social constructivists, as described in the first subchapter. CTS emphasizes a multidisciplinary approach and is normative, as one of its aims is to bring about a positive social change (Jackson 2007).

In his book *Writing the War on Terrorism: Language, Politics and Counter-terrorism* (which had been written before the CTS was introduced but shares many of its assumptions), Jackson

scrutinizes public discourse of the “war on terrorism” after 9/11, arguing that this discourse was crucial to justify and normalize the America counter-terrorism campaign. He goes as far as saying that in order to justify the war it was necessary to construct a whole new language, making a new and unquestioned reality where state violence becomes normal and reasonable. In this new social reality, terrorists threaten to destroy everything that citizens take for granted, such as democracy, their way of life, or their freedom. Moreover, such discourse marginalizes any alternative discourses and creates the impression that this is the only possible way of reacting to the issue (Jackson 2005, pp. 1–2).

Spencer has also analysed how terrorism is constructed through discourse. Among others, he conducted a metaphor analysis, where he concluded that metaphors often construct terrorism “as a war, a crime, an uncivilised evil and a disease”, which frames terrorism in a specific way, making certain policies, such as military response, acceptable, while excluding others, such as negotiations (Spencer 2012).

1.4.2 Terrorism and the refugee crisis

Terrorism is constructed through discourse and the reactions to it are not reactions to the terrorism itself but rather to the interpretations of it. As stated above, public discourse about terrorism has been blended with the discourse about (Muslim) refugees/migrants to a great extent within the EU, as refugees/migrants coming to Europe have been perceived as potential terrorists. As was the case with the narrative of the terrorist living “out there” and craving to destroy the citizens’ way of life (during the War on Terror, as described by Jackson), a new narrative of a terrorist living “within the state” has emerged. According to this narrative, nurtured by the aforementioned actors across Europe, Muslim refugees/immigrants (especially those coming from Middle Eastern countries associated with terrorism) *might* be susceptible to radicalization and, therefore, they should be perceived as a potential threat, until proven otherwise (Fitzgerald 2017).

Owing to this narrative about terrorist/refugee, I assume that the chosen terrorist attack has intensified securitization of refugees in public discourse. In order to support this argument, I will conduct a content analysis of the selected online media in the Czech Republic and Austria and examine if and how the degree of securitization in the media changed.

2 Methodology

Methodology is crucial when doing any research, with securitization being a case in point; as Balzacq argues (2010, p. 38), “...no research can attend to substantive questions only through gut feeling”. There are various methods of researching securitization process, each of them having some advantages but also limitations. Balzacq (2010) mentions the four most frequent and suitable techniques: discourse analysis, ethnographic research, process-tracing, and content analysis. Choice of the method depends on what the aim of the research is and what part of securitization is analysed: the referent object, the speech act, the threat, the audience, the success of the securitization move, etc. Moreover, the methods may be combined in order to reach more accurate results (Shipoli 2018, pp. 79–80).

Even though the discourse analysis is by far the most widely used method, preferred also by the members of the Copenhagen school, content analysis may also be very useful when examining the securitization process. The purpose of this chapter is to illuminate how content analysis lends itself to the research of securitization and to explain in detail the methods used to answer the research questions.

2.1 Quantitative content analysis

Content analysis is one of the most popular instrument of analysing the media content. It enables the researcher to examine a large number of articles and emphasizes the measurement of the variables. Consequently, it is supposed to ensure high objectivity of the results, which are independent of the researcher and which should be reached by any other researcher when using the same method. Moreover, as the results are in the form of statistical data, they can be easily transformed into clear tables and graphs (Trampota, Vojtěchovská 2010, p. 103).

The method is highly structured and every step is defined by explicitly formulated rules. The (media) content analysis generally unfolds in following steps (Trampota, Vojtěchovská 2010, pp. 103–107): *First*, research question(s) and/or hypotheses are set. *Second*, the population or the universe of texts is defined – if the media is analysed, as it is the case in this thesis, it means that in this step the researcher chooses the particular media which are to be analysed according to the research question. *Third*, as it is often not feasible to analyse all the relevant texts, a representative sample is chosen together with the reference period. *Fourth*, a unit of analysis is determined, which is the smallest unit to be measured. Examples of such a unit may be an entire article, a cartoon, a paragraph, a sentence or even a word. For instance, if we

want to find out how many articles a day are devoted to a particular topic in the chosen newspaper, the unit of analysis is an article. On the other hand, if the aim of the research is to examine how often a certain word appears in a particular context or a particular type of articles, the unit of analysis is a word.

The *fifth* step is the essence of a content analysis. The researched variables are set according to the research question and content categories of each of the variables are created. In order to better illustrate what is meant by that, I will use an instance from this thesis. As I study the securitization of refugees, one of the variables is “framing”, while the categories are: tragic event, humanitarian issue, threat/security risk, etc. Each unit of analysis (which is a sentence or a paragraph in this respect) must fall within just one of these categories within a qualitative variable. The categories must be exhaustive in order to be able to unequivocally classify each unit and to reach as objective results as possible. These variables and categories may be created before research is conducted (based on a theoretical or rational deliberation or on an existing study that researched the same topic) or after a preliminary sample is analysed. However, these two approaches are often used simultaneously, as is the case with this research, meaning that preliminary categories are set, which are then altered based on the preparatory analysis. A set of all variables and their categories is called a codebook, which may also contain description of individual variables and categories or instructions for other potential researchers. To every category within a variable, a number (a code) is assigned (see the codebook in the appendix). When doing the same research according to the codebook, any other researcher should reach very similar results.

Sixth, coding is conducted, which represents the research itself. Every text (in this thesis every article) from the chosen representative sample is analysed and each unit of analysis is coded according to the codebook. The data may be recorded by means of statistical programmes or a spreadsheet, such as Microsoft Excel. According to the code assigned in the codebook, each unit is classified under one of the codes within a variable. *Seventh*, all the data recorded is evaluated by means of a statistical programme or a spreadsheet and analysed by the researcher. *Eighth*, the data is interpreted (using charts and graphs), conclusions are drawn, while hypotheses are proved or disproved. Moreover, in order to reach as objective results as possible, more coders (i.e. the one who codes the units) may engage in the research.

Naturally, there are some limitations when using this method. According to critics, content analysis only provides with hard data but does not give the explanation behind it, as it often disregards the context, treating the texts as independent entities. Moreover, despite the fact

that it is supposed to be objective, the variables are categorised by the researcher, based on their subjective opinions. As a variety of pieces of information are put into a few categories, it necessarily simplifies the reality (Trampota, Vojtěchovská 2010, p. 102). However, these drawbacks may be minimized by various means, such as by thorough preparation of the codebook (including consulting it with other scholars), creating more categories in order to be able to classify the data from the texts as accurately as possible or by explaining the data by taking the context into account.

2.2 Conducting the content analysis

I chose the quantitative content analysis for various reasons. As mentioned above, it is possible to analyse a substantial number of articles using this method and thus to understand general patterns and achieve objective and clear results. These patterns may then be scrutinized by means of qualitative methods. Moreover, this method is most suitable when the aim is to compare various referent periods or media discourse in different states. This is achieved through creating the same qualitative variables and content categories for each period and each state, which provides with a clear comparison. In my research, I will compare two periods (a month before the terrorist attack and a month after the terrorist attack) and two countries (the Czech Republic and Austria). Third, as this thesis aims to explain *the degree* to which refugees are securitized in the media, a quantitative method is more relevant because of the use of statistical data from which this extent can be calculated (Balzacq 2010, p. 51).

When conducting the research, I proceeded according to the steps outlined above.

2.2.1 Research questions and hypotheses

As outlined in the introduction, the aim of the research is to examine the extent of securitization of refugees in online media in the Czech Republic and Austria before and after the terrorist attack that was conducted in Paris on November 13, 2015. More precisely, the referent period is divided into two periods – first, from October 13 to November 13 (31 days), second, from November 14 to December 15 (also 31 days) (2015).

The focus is on the securitization move itself, while its success – direct impact on the audience – is beyond the scope of this research. Since there are many factors that shape the citizens' opinions, it is difficult to accurately measure to what extent the media were successful in convincing the audience about the urgency of a threat. However, it will be analysed whether and to what extent the political preferences of citizens were changing in

favour of anti-immigration parties in the period starting with the influx of refugees, while assuming that media discourse played some role in this process (drawing on securitization and agenda-setting theories).

I remind the reader that two hypotheses were set:

- 1) *The degree of securitization in the online media was higher in the Czech Republic than in Austria, both before the November terrorist attack and after.*
- 2) *The degree of securitization in the online media was higher both in the Czech Republic and Austria after the November terrorist attack than before.*

As the research focuses on discourse in two periods and two countries, there will be four separated sets of data (further referred to as *groups*), each of which will be analysed and measured individually and then compared in order to prove or disprove the hypotheses.

- 1) Before the attack in the Czech media (X);
- 2) after the attack in the Czech media (x);
- 3) before the attack in the Austrian media (Y);
- 4) after the attack in the Austrian media (y).

Consequently, the hypotheses may be illustrated mathematically by the following scheme:

- 1) $X > Y, x > y$;
- 2) $x > X, y > Y$.

In order to measure the extent of securitization, the *Securitization index* was created. The calculation of the index will be explained in subchapter 2.2.4.

2.2.2 Choice of the analysed media

I decided to focus fully on online media outlets. The importance and influence of online media has been growing steadily in recent years in both the Czech Republic and Austria. According to the Digital News Report 2017 by Reuters Institute, within which news consumption in 36 countries was researched, the majority of people in both Austria and the Czech Republic reach the news mostly online (including social media, where there are, however, often references to online media outlets). The TV is another very important media outlet in Austria and the Czech Republic, having extensive influence as well, especially on older generations. Another media outlet, printed newspapers, is, according to the report, less influencing than online media or the TV; however, in Austria they still have a significant impact, whereas in the Czech Republic the influence is substantially lower than the influence of the TV or online media (Newman et al., 2017, pp. 58–59, 62–63). Given the importance of

online media, I decided to analyse only this outlet, as I believe they represent the dominant media discourse on refugees.

With regard to the particular news websites, I chose *iDnes.cz*, *Novinky.cz* and *ČT24.cz* in the Czech Republic and *news.ORF.at*, *DerStandard.at* and *Kurier.at* in Austria. These news portals were chosen mainly due to the fact that they are among the most popular and influential ones (Newman et al., 2017, pp. 58–59, 62–63); therefore, I believe to capture the dominant discourse by analysing them. *ČT24.cz* and *news.ORF.at* are both news websites that are owned by a public broadcaster (ČT 2018; ORF 2018). *IDnes.cz* and *Derstandard.at* are both regarded quality news outlets, while being popular in the respective countries. Finally, *Novinky.cz* and *Kurier.at* represent media that have stronger tendencies to tabloidization than the others (Fitzgerald 2017).

For both Czech and Austrian news, only news stories were included, excluding articles from the opinion, interview or commentary sections.

Relevant articles in the Czech news websites were reached through the media online database AnopressIT. The topic selection turned out to be the most suitable way of searching for the articles, as it is possible to reach all articles dealing with the topic “refugees” in this manner. The reason is that when I searched on the basis of the keyword occurrence (*refugees* [*uprchlíci* or *běženci* in Czech] OR *asylum* [*azyl* in Czech]), I discovered that there were many irrelevant articles, which only included one of the keywords, but they did not deal with the migrant crisis or the refugee situation as their main topic. Next, I picked samples by means of systematic random sampling. More specifically, I analysed every third news item found in the first period on *iDnes.cz* (arranged according to the date, so that the whole period is represented proportionally); accordingly, the total number of articles in the dataset was 39. I proceeded in the same way with other news sites, choosing every *n*’th article from the list according to the total number of news items found, as I aimed at reaching a similar number of analysed items.

Austrian news items were searched for through the Austrian online media database APA-DeFacto, which belongs to the Austrian national news agency APA. As there was no possibility of searching for the articles by means of main topics as was the case with the Czech database, I searched for the articles on the basis of the keyword occurrence (refugees OR asylum [*Flüchtlinge* OR *Asyl*]). To further sort out irrelevant articles, at least one of the two key words must have been included at least twice in the news story. Nevertheless, there

were still many irrelevant articles included, such as the ones that dealt with refugees in history (for instance, during and after World War II) and not with the analysed situation, or other irrelevant topics. Moreover, there were other irrelevant items found, such as commentaries, interviews or opinions. Therefore, it was necessary to select out manually the irrelevant items to achieve the real number of relevant articles, from which I selected the analysed items randomly, similarly as in the case of the Czech news sites.

In total, I analysed 414 articles ($n = 414$): 39 in each Czech and Austrian news portal for the period October 13 – November 13 and 30 in each news portal for the period November 13 – December 15. The reason for the different number of analysed articles before and after the attack is that in the first period there were more relevant articles written, as the number of asylum seekers coming to Europe reached its peak in September and October 2015 and was decreasing in the following months (Eurostat 2016). Table 1 shows the number of articles included in the datasets in specific groups.

n = 414	First period	Second period
Czech news sites	117 (39+39+39)	90 (30+30+30)
Austrian news sites	117 (39+39+39)	90 (30+30+30)

Table 1: Number of analysed articles. Source: own processing.

The unit of analysis was a sentence or a paragraph in an article containing information related to the content categories (see the following chapter or the codebook for the particular content categories).

2.2.3 Codebook

This subchapter explains the researched variables and the content categories that they include and what they mean. The whole codebook is attached in the appendix.

As explained before, the theory of the two levels of agenda-setting provide a good framework for analysing securitization in the media. The first level represents the salience of the issue, which means, for this research, the frequency of published articles about the migration crisis and refugees in individual news portals. If news stories about refugees are published frequently, the perception of the issue as urgent by the audience is likely to increase. The second level represents the salience of the attributes, or, in other words, which aspects of the issue are stressed or how the issue is framed.

In order to analyse the salience of the attributes and, consequently, the presence of securitization, five variables were chosen – four nominal and one dichotomous. The variables were based on two studies that also analysed securitization of refugees in the media (Tkaczyk 2017; Chouliaraki, Zaborowski 2017). The content categories of the nominal variables were, to a certain extent, adopted from the studies; however, some of the categories were changed or deleted after conducting an initial study (which involved three articles from both periods and both states), or in the process of conducting the content analysis, as there were some categories that were not present in the articles and, therefore, redundant. Another reason was that some units of analysis could fall within more categories, as some of the categories were similar; thus, some categories were merged. Other categories included in the mentioned studies were irrelevant to my research.

The researched variables include:

- 1) actors quoted;
- 2) personalization;
- 3) framing;
- 4) presented measures;
- 5) visual presentation.

Unlike the first two variables (“actors quoted” and “personalization”), “framing, “presented measures” and “visual presentation” are the basis for the creation of the securitization index. This will be explained in subchapter 2.2.4.

For an illustration of the two levels of agenda-setting and the researched variables, see Diagram 1 (variables that are the basis for the securitization index have a red background).

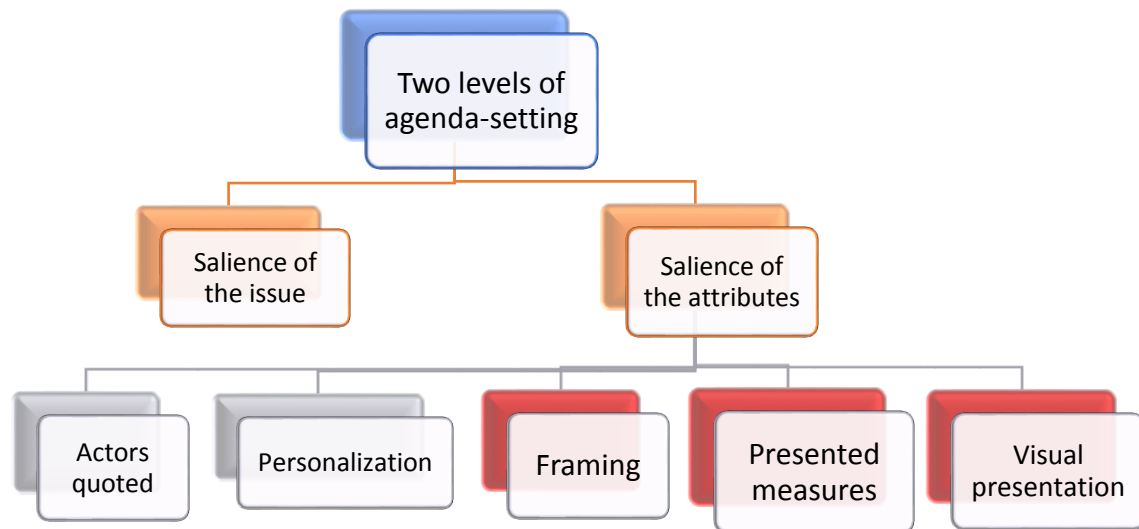


Diagram 1: Researched variables. Source: own processing.

The first nominal variable, “actors quoted”, includes everyone “who speaks” in the articles. There are twelve categories within the variable, including politicians, refugees, NGOs, security forces, etc. (for all the categories, see the codebook in the appendix). This enables us to discover who actually shapes the discourse and whose opinions are perceived as important. Furthermore, this variable provides information about how much space was given to refugees in the articles that focus on them, illustrating the dichotomy “us” versus “them”. This can be understood as a part of the “othering” process, which is the process of constructing “the self/in-group” as opposed to “the other/out-group”, where the former is supposed to have some desirable characteristics that the latter is supposed to lack (Brons 2015, p. 70). In this research, the features of the “othering” process do not have to be necessarily connected to depicting refugees as a threat, but also as victims, or the ones who need help. However, if most of the articles are found to portray the refugees as aliens, who may potentially threaten our values, “othering” can be understood as a part of the securitization process (Gaufman 2017, p. 20). Either way, the marginalization of the refugees’ voice suggests misrecognizing them as political actors who have the right to speak for themselves (Chouliaraki, Zaborowski 2017, pp. 620–622).

The next variable is “personalization” and it is a dichotomous variable, meaning that it includes only two categories – in this case “yes” or “no”. This variable expresses whether refugees are referred to as individual human beings or rather as something abstract and impersonal. In the case of the former, there is a higher chance that the reader will identify themselves with the story of the refugees, which strengthens the humanitarian frame. On the

other hand, low level of personalization strengthens the threat construction (Tkaczyk 2017, p. 99).

Each category within the following variables can be put into one of the three groups that represent the imaginary “securitization scale” – non-securitization, politicization or securitization (see subchapter 1.2 for further explanation of these terms). By means of such classification, I will create the securitization index (see the following subchapter).

Another qualitative variable, “framing”, searches for the way of how the issue is presented and which aspects are emphasized in the article. The categories, which were adopted from the aforementioned study (Tkaczyk 2017, p. 102), range from humanitarian frames (“humanitarian issue”, “tragic event”) to securitization frames (“security threat”, “illegality”, “unrests”). Between these two groups there are categories related to politicization – “administrative issue” or “protests/demonstrations” (referring to the protests of European citizens, not refugees). It is important to mention that more frames could be present in the article; however, if there is one frame that is far more prevalent than the other, only the dominant category is coded. For instance, a news story that focuses on unrests at the border and the need to use force with a short reference to an injured refugee is coded as “unrests” but not as “tragic event.” On the other hand, if two frames are present to a similar extent, both are coded.

The variable “measures” includes both recommended and discussed measures as a response to the refugee crisis. The categories were based on the quoted study (Tkaczyk 2017, p. 102); nevertheless, I removed or replaced some of them after conducting the initial study. The final categories include “help to migrants” and “humanitarian aid to the Middle East” at the “humanitarian” end of the scale, while “border controls/border wall”, “the deployment of force/military” and “the detention of migrants” occupy the position on the other side, implying securitization. In between there are “integration programmes”, “EU policy”, “deportations” and “other policy changes”. EU policy mostly refers to suggested common EU measures, such as the EU-Turkey refugee deal or relocation quotas. The same rules as in the previous variable apply to this one – more measures may be present in an article while taking into account the salience.

Finally, as suggested by Williams (2003) (see subchapter 1.2.1), who pointed out role of images in the securitization process, the last variable is “visual presentation.” Drawing on the above-mentioned study (Tkaczyk 2017, p. 104), the categories related to securitization

include “migrants in proximity of barriers and fences” and “uniformed officials or military technique,” categories between securitization and non-securitization (understood as politicization) are “politicians” and “demonstrations,” and the category “other photos of refugees” falls into “non-securitization.” Relevant photos are only photos related to the topic; for example, if a news story that included only a photo of the map of Europe with routes used by refugees, the variable “visual presentation” was not coded and this article was not included in the final average value of this variable.

By means of coding the specific categories that were present in the articles, I calculated the number of articles in which each category was present and expressed it as a percentage. This reveals the most prevalent categories in each news outlet and, consequently, in the specific four groups (two states in two periods). The results will be depicted graphically (see subchapter 3.2), illustrating the way of portraying the migrant crisis and refugees.

Apart from these five researched variables, there are three identification variables in the codebook – the name of the article, the name of the news site and the date of publishing.

2.2.4 Securitization index

Parallel with analysing the presence of the categories, I created the securitization index. The index expresses and quantifies the degree of securitization in the media, making it easier to compare this degree between the individual groups. The index is comprised of the following variables – “framing,” “measures” and “visual presentation”. The reason for choosing these particular variables is that it is possible to place each of the categories they include on the “securitization scale”, classifying them as “nonpoliticized”, “politicised” or “securitized”, as described in the previous subchapter. I did not include the variable “actors quoted”, as it is not possible to classify each actor like that; for instance, citizens, media, experts and other actors cannot be decidedly classified neither as “non-politicization” nor as “politicization” without knowing what exactly they said in the articles. Moreover, I did not include “personalization”, because even if refugees are not personalized in the news stories, it does not reflect the same extent of securitization as, for instance, when refugees are framed as a security threat. Therefore, without being included in the index, the results of these two variables will further illustrate the way of portraying refugees by the individual media in the referent period and state and will support or challenge the conclusions resulting from the securitization index.

To be able to create the index, I assigned a value to each of the category according to its placement on the securitization scale – non-politicization – 1, politicization – 2, and

securitization – 3. In this manner, the degree of securitization lies within the scale ranging from 1 to 3. Accordingly, one of these quantitative values is assigned to each category. Table 2 shows the classification of the categories.

	Non-politicization (1)	Politicization (2)	Securitization (3)
Framing	- tragic event - humanitarian issue	- administrative issue - protests	- threat, security risk - illegality - unrests
Measures	- help to migrants - humanitarian aid to the Middle East	- integration programmes - EU policy - deportations - other policy changes	- border controls - deployment of force/military - detention of refugees
Visual presentation	- other photos of refugees	- politicians - protests	- uniformed officials or military technique - refugees in proximity of barriers and fences

Table 2: Classification of content categories. Source: own processing, Tkaczyk (2017, p. 104).

Table 3 serves for illustration of how the coding was conducted and how the calculation of the securitization index unfolded (the complete coding sheet with all primary data is attached to the thesis in digital form). The table shows coding of three articles, including only two of the five researched variables – framing and presented measures, both of which are the basis for the creation of the securitization index. In the codebook (see the appendix), a number was assigned to each category (the coloured numbers) and to each article (as can be seen in the first column); therefore, the articles and the categories are represented by numbers in the table. Moreover, for clarity, I used three colours for the qualitative values assigned to the categories – green for non-politicization (1), blue for politicization (2) and red for securitization (3). If the category was present in the analysed news story, it was coded as “1”, if not, it was coded as “0”. The numbers in the green cells represent the total amount of the categories present in the dataset (here the dataset includes only three news stories, but in reality, it was 39 or 30, depending on the period). It should also be noted that the following table demonstrates both coding the categories and creating the securitization index, as both processes were parallel.

No.	Medium	Date	A Framing								B Measures									
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Ø	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Ø
1.	Novinky	14.11.	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3
2.	Novinky	15.11.	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	2.5
3.	Novinky	16.11.	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	2
In total			0	1	1	0	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	1	0	2	1	0	2.5

Table 3: Coding sheet. Source: own processing.

The analysis and the creation of the index unfolded as follows:

First, I coded the categories that were present in the article.

Second, in the case of the three variables used for the calculation of the securitization index, I calculated the weighted mean of each of them, representing the degree of securitization within the variable in the particular article, which is shown in Table 3 in the yellow columns. To use an example from Table 3, when analysing the second news story, the degree of securitization in the variable “measures” is 2.5, as a politicization category (2) was present once and a securitization category (3) as well.³

Third, after analysing all articles from the dataset of the particular news site and the specific period (39 articles per news portal in the first period and 30 articles per news portal in the second period), the mean degree of securitization within each variable across the considered articles (in the given period and news site) was calculated, as shown in the orange cells in Table 3. In this fashion, as depicted in Table 4, there are three values for each news site in each group, illustrating the degree of securitization in the areas of framing (A), presented measures (B) and visual presentation (C). For illustration, Table 4 shows these values in the first group – Czech news sites in the first period.

Fourth, within each group, I calculated the average degree of securitization of all three news sites within each of the three variables. As a result, I received the degrees of securitization in framing, measures and visual presentation for each group, which could be easily compared. These values of the securitization index are shown in Table 4 in the yellow cells.

³ The exact calculation is: $(1*2+1*3)/2$

<u>CZ 1st period</u>	A	B	C	
Idnes	2,04	2,24	1,96	
Novinky	2,19	2,32	2,13	
ČT24	1,9	2,06	1,82	
In total	2,04	2,21	1,97	2,07

Table 4: Securitization index of each variable in the Czech news sites in the first period. Source: own processing.

After analysing all the articles, coding their content, I compared the values of every variable in order to see the differences in the extent of securitization in the individual areas. Moreover, it is possible to find the average degree of securitization across variables within a given dataset (i.e. merging “framing,” “presented measures” and “visual presentation” into one index in each group), getting the final securitization index (the value in the orange cell in Table 4). The advantage is that it is practical, as the four final values can be easily compared, concluding in which of these groups the overall securitization is more present. On the other hand, it should be noted that this overall index is not entirely accurate, as it is based on the assumption that every variable has the same weight. Nevertheless, as I will compare not only the overall indices, but also the indices of each variable, the conclusions will not be based only on the overall index.

Naturally, the index has some disadvantages, some of which are connected to the drawbacks of content analysis in general. First, the extent of presence of individual categories often differs among the articles, while the categories can be coded only as “1” (present) or “0” (not present), which does not reflect the extent of the presence. However, as already mentioned, there are often more categories (for instance, more frames) present in a news story and if, for example, the “security threat” frame is far stronger than the other frames, only this frame was coded, meaning that the value of the “framing” variable was 3. Nevertheless, if not only this frame was present, but also the “administrative issue” frame to a similar extent, both were coded, resulting in the final value 2.5.

Second, as the value of every category is only 1, 2 or 3, it necessarily simplifies the reality; for instance, it is difficult to determine whether the two categories “threat” and “unrests” both express the same degree of securitization. Nevertheless, since the same rules apply to every news site in both countries and periods, this does not impede the possibility of comparison between them.

Overall, as is the case with every index, it is a simplification of reality. However, I assume that for the purposes of this thesis it is sufficiently informative, and it is a very useful tool enabling a clear comparison between the states and periods.

Moreover, the conclusions will not be based only on the securitization index, but also on the results of the content analysis in general, i.e. the presence of individual categories. These results will be further used to support or, as the case may be, cast doubt upon, the conclusions resulting from the securitization index.

2.2.5 Obstacles

Two issues occurred when conducting the content analysis. First, it was not possible to reach all the relevant articles by the Austrian *ORF*, as they were not included in the database and I needed to search in the archive on their website. However, as it is by far the most important online news source in Austria (Newman et al. 2017, pp. 56–57), I decided to search for the news stories directly in the archives of the news site on the basis of keywords occurrence. Even though part of the relevant articles is not available any more, the dataset was sufficient for the analysis. Thus, with regard to the salience of the issue, I draw on the number of published articles in the other two Austrian news portals.

Second, the majority of the relevant news stories on *derStandard.at* did not include any photos, as either there has never been one, or it was not available any more. Therefore, the variable “visual presentation” is not included in this news portal. Nevertheless, *ORF* and *Kurier* provide with a sufficient sample with regard to this variable; as the values of the variable were similar, I assume that *der Standard* would not differ much in this respect.

Despite these obstacles, I hold that the results provide representative information about the presence of securitization in the Austrian media that can be compared with the Czech media.

3 Securitization of refugees: comparison of the Czech Republic and Austria

3.1 Background

Starting with the year 2014, the number of refugees and migrants coming to Europe particularly from the Middle East, Northern Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa began to rise significantly. In the first six months of 2015, there was an 83% rise of refugees and migrants attempting to enter the EU compared to the same period in 2014, reaching 137,000. Throughout 2015, the number was rising exponentially, reaching the peak of almost 221,500 people coming through the Mediterranean Sea in a single month in October 2015 (UNHCR 2018). In total, the number of Mediterranean Sea arrivals exceeded one million in 2015 and the amount of asylum applications in the EU member states reached as much as 1.3 million (Connor 2016, p. 4), being the largest influx of refugees since World War II. Along with that, the death toll was on the rise as well during 2015, nearing 3,800, as most of the migrants underwent the dangerous journey through the Mediterranean Sea (UNHCR 2018).

Such a situation emerged against the backdrop of the ongoing Syrian civil war, the war in Afghanistan and the war in Iraq connected to the rise of the so-called Islamic state in Syria and Iraq. Consequently, the Syrian nationals comprised by far the biggest group of refugees (almost 30% of all asylum applications in 2015), followed by Afghan (15%) and Iraqi (10%) nationals. Nevertheless, people from other states from the Middle East and North Africa region and Sub-Saharan Africa were forced to leave their countries or decided to seek a better life in Europe, including Eritreans, Pakistanis or Nigerians. Apart from that, asylum seekers from Kosovo and Albania comprised together 10% of all the asylum applications (Connor 2016, p. 15).

Given the inability of European states to deal with the rapid increase in the numbers of incoming people and the high death toll, the situation started to be soon designated as a crisis in public discourse (Greussing, Boomgaarden 2017, pp. 1749–1750). Moreover, the sense of insecurity in the EU member states rose throughout 2015 as a consequence of this influx. A rising number of people started to perceive it as a threat to their cultural identity, sparking protests across the EU (such as protests of the Pegida movement in Germany) and resulting in an upsurge in popularity of anti-immigration parties and movements (Postelnicescu 2016). Moreover, the rising number of jihadist terrorist attacks and their victims was strengthening

this sense of insecurity and fear, including the Charlie Hebdo attacks on January 7-9 in Paris and the series of coordinated attacks on November 13-14 conducted in Paris as well. The latter was the deadliest jihadist terrorist attack on European soil since the terrorist attack in Spain in 2004, while two of the perpetrators of the November attack came to the EU among refugees. As mentioned in the subchapter 1.3, especially in the wake of this attack, the perception of refugees as potential terrorists (i.e. as a threat) became more present in public discourse (Fitzgerald 2017).

During the whole the crisis, mass media played a central role in explaining the events and shaping the understanding of European citizens by framing the events. Building on the agenda-setting and securitization theories, I assume that mass media contributed significantly to the construction of refugees/migrants as a threat. Before presenting and analysing the results of the content analysis, it is necessary to outline the position and situation with regard to the refugee crisis in 2015 in the countries that will be compared, i.e. the Czech Republic and Austria, to put the media discourse in the context.

3.1.1 Situation in the Czech Republic and Austria

The extent to which the refugee crisis affected the two countries differed substantially. Austria became one of the key transit countries for migrants coming through the Western Balkans to Germany and Scandinavia. Moreover, Austria was not only a transit country but it also turned out to be one of the most desired final destinations, with more than 88,000 asylum applications in 2015, becoming one of the EU member states with the highest number of refugees per capita (BM.I 2018; Eurostat 2016). Austrian policy was shifting through 2015 – first, it was marked by solidarity with refugees, particularly after Hungary applied its harsh immigration policies, embodied by completing the construction of the barrier on the borders with Serbia and Croatia, which aimed at a complete stop of refugees coming to the country. Second, with the growing influx of migrants coming through Austria and problems accompanied with that, Austrian policy started to change in October, as the Austrian government sought to diminish the number of incoming people. This manifested itself in an introduction of border controls and, ultimately, in the construction of a border barrier (Greussing, Boomgaarden 2017, pp. 1753–1754).

On the other hand, the Czech Republic was directly affected only minimally by the influx. It was neither a transit country nor a final destination; in fact, the number of asylum applications in the Czech Republic was one of the lowest within the EU, having received less than 1,250

first-time applications, most of which were from Ukrainian citizens (Eurostat 2016; Ministry of Interior 2015). Yet, the refugee crisis was the dominant issue in the media and in political discourse, particularly in the second half of the year. According to the surveys conducted by the Public Opinion Research Center (CVVM), 50% of the respondents were decisively against accepting refugees from war-torn countries in September 2015, while in December 2015 the proportion rose to 60%. Moreover, 80% of the population perceived refugees as a threat to Czech security and 89% as a threat to European security in October 2015 (including both answers “yes” and “rather yes”) (Červenka 2018). The Czech Republic criticized the German “welcoming policy” and rejected the relocation quotas, which were approved by the majority of states, outvoting the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Romania in the Council (with Finland abstaining) (Šabić 2017). One of the most outspoken opponents of accepting refugees was the Czech president Miloš Zeman, who repeatedly depicted refugees as a threat, among others by calling the refugee influx an “organized invasion” (Klang 2015) or speaking about terrorists coming with refugees to Europe (Beck 2017, pp. 3–4).

As the Czech Republic was not directly affected by the influx, the vast majority of citizens received information about refugees and about the crisis via mass media or from politicians; nevertheless, political discourse is as well transmitted to the citizens by the media, meaning that media discourse encompasses also the dominant political discourse. On the other hand, since Austria was affected by the influx to a great extent, its citizens had the chance to experience the situation personally, not only through the media, which is not to say that mass media did not play an important role in constructing the issue.

3.2 Results of the analysis

This subchapter is organized as follows: first, salience of the issue (the first level of the agenda-building) is analysed, expressed by the frequency of published articles dealing with the topic of the refugee crisis. Second, the presence of individual categories of each researched variable, sorted according to the state and period, is shown in graphs and analysed. Third, the final values of the securitization index are compared and scrutinized. Finally, the last subchapter summarizes the results and discusses the possible causes behind them.

3.2.1 Salience of the issue

The number of articles dealing with the migrant crisis was considerably higher in the first period (before the November terrorist attack), which can be explained by the fact that, as mentioned in the subchapter 3.1, the number of migrants coming to Europe was reaching its

peak in October 2015 and the situation was most critical in Central Europe (especially in Austria) and Germany; as a result, the death toll was higher as well, which was also highly publicized.

With regard to the first period in the analysed Czech news portals, the highest number of articles dealing with the topic was recorded on *Novinky.cz*, a news site with a stronger tendency to tabloidization than the other two portals – 144 articles (on average, almost 5 articles a day). At the same time, *ČT24.cz* included 122 news stories and *iDnes.cz* 114.

In the second period, the number of relevant articles on *Novinky.cz* was 103 (more than 3 articles a day on average), *ČT24.cz* published 99 news stories and *iDnes.cz* 65. Despite the fact that the number of incoming migrants to Europe was decreasing and, once again, the Czech Republic was not affected directly, the salience was considerable.

As far as the Austrian news portals are concerned, only the number of articles of *derStandard.at* and *Kurier.at* is considered because, as aforementioned, only part of the articles published on *news.ORF.at* could be reached. In the analysed Austrian news sites, more articles with regard to the refugee situation were published than in the Czech ones. This comes as no surprise – Austria was substantially more affected by the migration crisis than the Czech Republic and, since it was one of the main final destinations, many articles discussed integration programmes and other measures of domestic policy. *DerStandard.at* published 235 relevant articles (approximately 7.5 articles a day on average) and *Kurier.at* 202 articles in the first period. In the second period, the number of relevant articles reached 181 (slightly less than 6 articles a day on average) on *derStandard.at* and 165 on *Kurier.at*.

Table 3 shows the number of relevant news stories in all portals within each group on average.

	October 13 – November 13	November 14 – December 15
Czech news portals	127	89
Austrian news portals	219	173

Table 5: Number of relevant articles on average. Source: own processing.

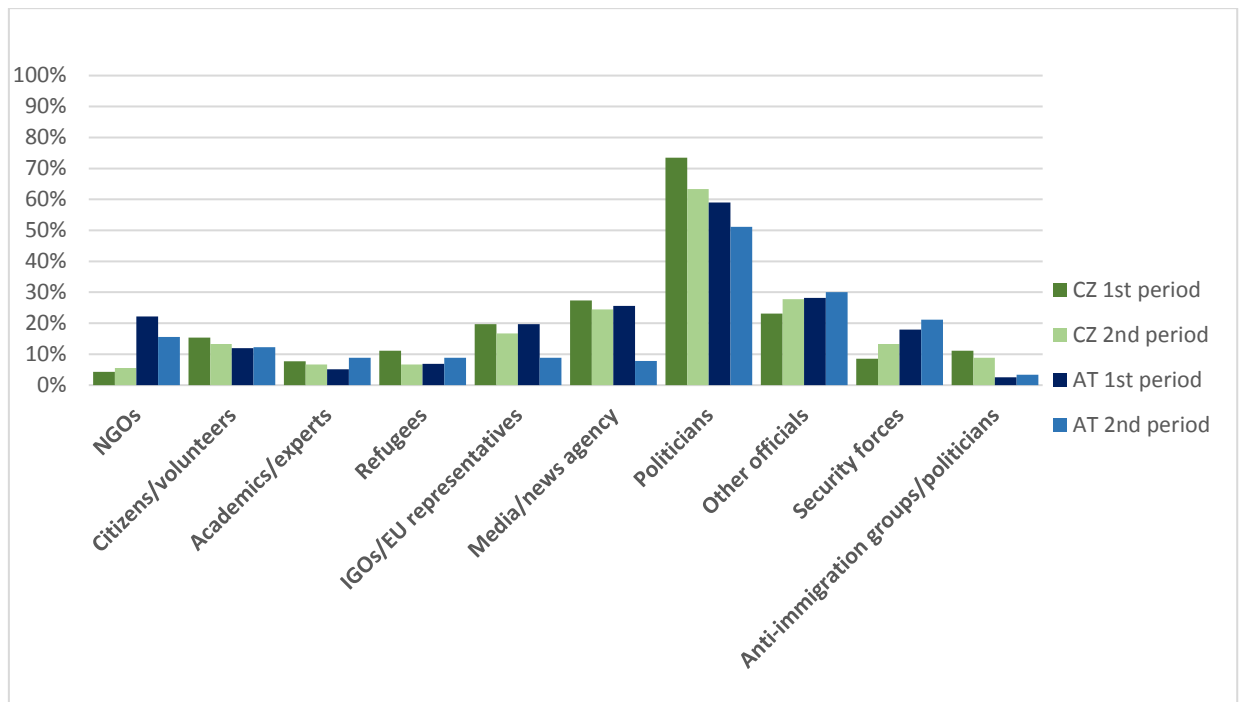
This illustrates the very high salience that was attributed to the topic in both Czech and Austrian media; nevertheless, in Austria it is connected to the need for managing the influx and integrating the refugees, whereas the Czech Republic was barely affected and the role of mass media in constructing people's understandings of the situation was, therefore, more vital. Drawing on the first level of agenda-building theory, people tend to perceive an issue as

important when it appears in the news frequently, which is certainly the case of the refugee crisis in both countries. Moreover, if the issue is portrayed as a threat, the audience is more likely to perceive it as such if the salience of the issue is high. Since it is not possible to determine the degree of securitization by analysing the salience of the issue alone, the following subchapters illuminate the salience of the attributes and, more precisely, the presence of securitization in the analysed articles.

3.2.2 Actors quoted and personalization

The answer to the question of “who speaks” in the news stories is clear – it is mainly politicians and other officials in all four groups, shaping the dominant discourse. The quotes from politicians were present in 74% of the articles in the Czech media in the first period, decreasing to 63% in the second period; nevertheless, it should be noted that at the same time, the percentage of quotes from other officials increased. In Austria, the voice of politicians also dominated the media, although being lower than in the Czech media – it was present in 59 % of the news stories in the first period and in 51 % in the second period, while the quotes from other officials slightly increased at the same time.

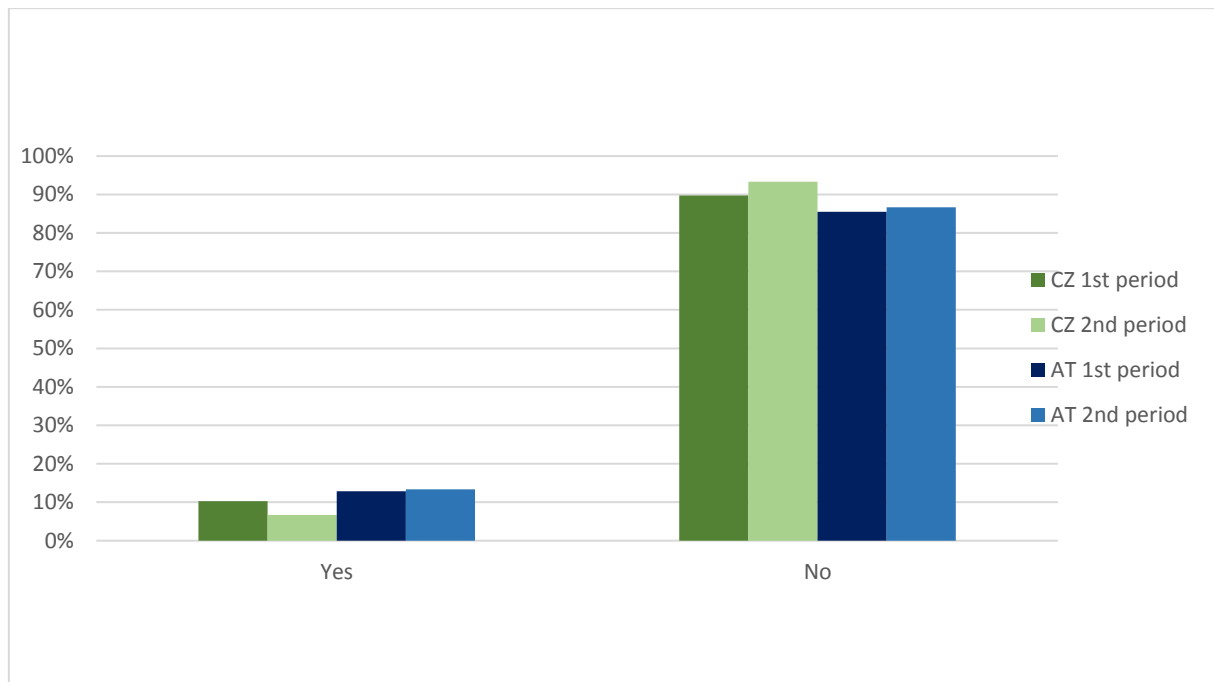
On the other hand, refugees were quoted only in a very small percentage of the news stories. This reflects the gap between “us” and “them”, which may have further strengthened the perception of refugees as a threat, as explained in the subchapter 2.2.3. In the first period (before the terrorist attack) in the Czech media, refugees were quoted in 11% of the articles while in the second period it even decreased (7%). In Austria, the figure was even lower in the first period (7%), increasing to 9% in the second period. It may be surprising that the highest percentage of the refugee quotes was in the first period in the Czech news stories (although only slightly); however, this can be explained by the fact that at that time, one of the often discussed topics was the detention centre in Bělá-Jezová, criticized for bad conditions and the articles covering this issue often included comments of the refugees who were detained there (*Reuters: Česká republika zachází s uprchlíky drsně – Novinky.cz* 2015). Moreover, as the differences between the groups amount to only a few percentage points (pp), they do not represent any significant changes, while it is important to also consider the presence of the statistical error.



Graph 1: Actors quoted. Source: own processing.

Furthermore, not only the voice of refugees, but also the voices of citizens or volunteers were marginalized. This shows that ordinary citizens had almost no power to shape the discourse while the politicians spoke on their behalf. Another interesting finding is that the NGOs were quoted considerably more in Austrian news than in Czech news (probably at the expense of the voice of politicians), which demonstrates the different extent to which their opinions are taken into account in the respective countries. Furthermore, even though the “migration crisis” is a very complex issue, understanding of which requires thorough knowledge of the context, academics or experts were quoted only sporadically in all groups.

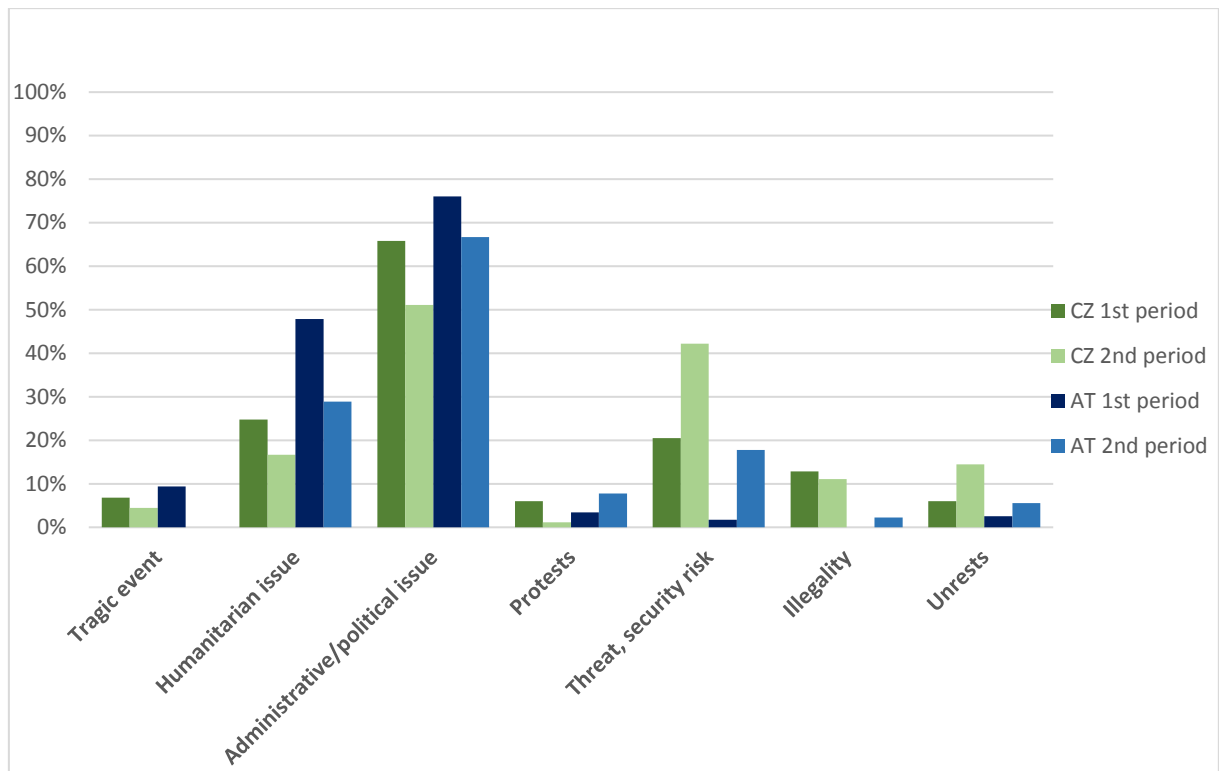
As far as personalization is concerned, the result was similar in all groups, reaching only from 7% to 13%. The level of personalization was slightly lower in the Czech news stories, even decreasing by 3 percent points in the period after the terrorist attack, while in Austrian media it amounted to 13% in both periods. In the majority of articles, refugees were expressed in terms of numbers and quantity, portrayed as an “anonymous mass” and not as individual human beings, which is the basis for alienation and may strengthen the threat perception. As the level of personalization was already very low in the first period, there was not much room for a decrease after the attack.



Graph 2: Personalization. Source: own processing.

3.2.3 Framing

As is clear from Graph 3, there were big differences in framing between the individual periods and between the states. However, it can be said that the frame “administrative issue” was prevalent in all groups, although it decreased after the terrorist attack in both states – in the Czech Republic from 66% to 51% and in Austria from 76% to 67%. As will be analysed in the following paragraphs, this drop occurred against the backdrop of rising presence of the frame “threat”. The frame “administrative issue” was more prevalent in Austria, most probably due to the fact that the Austrian government had to deal with the influx and with integration of refugees, which was not the case of the Czech Republic; therefore, many news stories in Austrian media discussed the state policies.



Graph 3: Framing. Source: own processing.

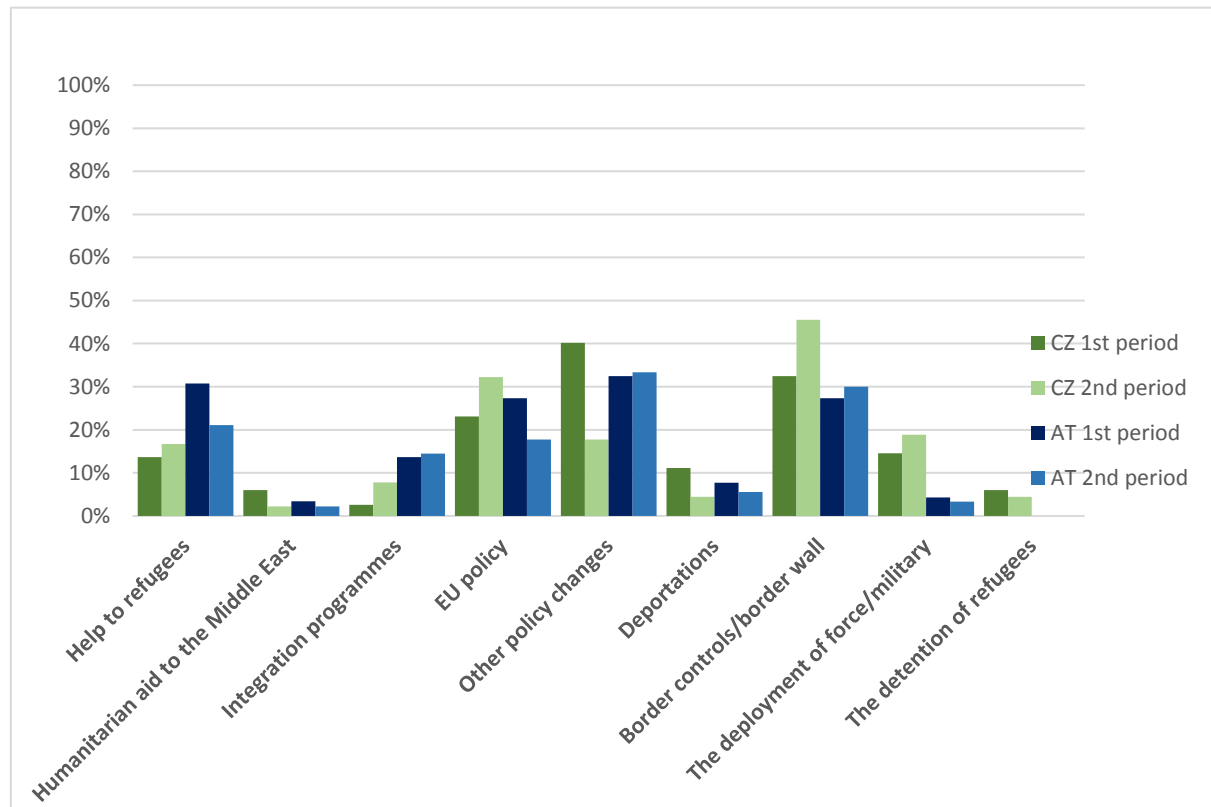
At the same time, the frame “humanitarian issue” was present only in 25% articles in the Czech media, compared to 48% in Austrian news stories. After the terrorist attack, there was a drop in both states – to 17% in the Czech media and to 29% in the Austrian media.

Another striking shift can be observed in the “threat” frame – while in the Czech media it was present in 21% of the articles in the first period, in Austrian articles it was almost not present at all. In the wake of the terrorist attack, there was a sharp increase of the presence of the “threat” frame in both Czech and Austrian media, growing by 21 percentage points in the former and by 16 percentage points in the latter. I would also like to point out the noticeably stronger presence of the frame “illegality” in the Czech media – it was also much more common to designate the refugees as “illegal migrants” in the Czech discourse than in the Austrian discourse.

To summarize, the results clearly illustrate the different perceptions of the issue in Czech and Austrian media discourse (and political discourse, which is included in the media discourse) as well as the shift in perceptions after the terrorist attack had been conducted, as the issue was framed more as a security problem and less as a humanitarian issue. The securitization frames evidently increased in both countries in the wake of the attack.

3.2.4 Presented measures

As opposed to the “framing” variable, there was no discussed measure that would dominate all the groups. Nevertheless, when putting all the political measures together (integration programmes, EU policy, deportations and other policy changes), we can see that this type of measures prevailed.



Graph 4: Presented measures. Source: own processing.

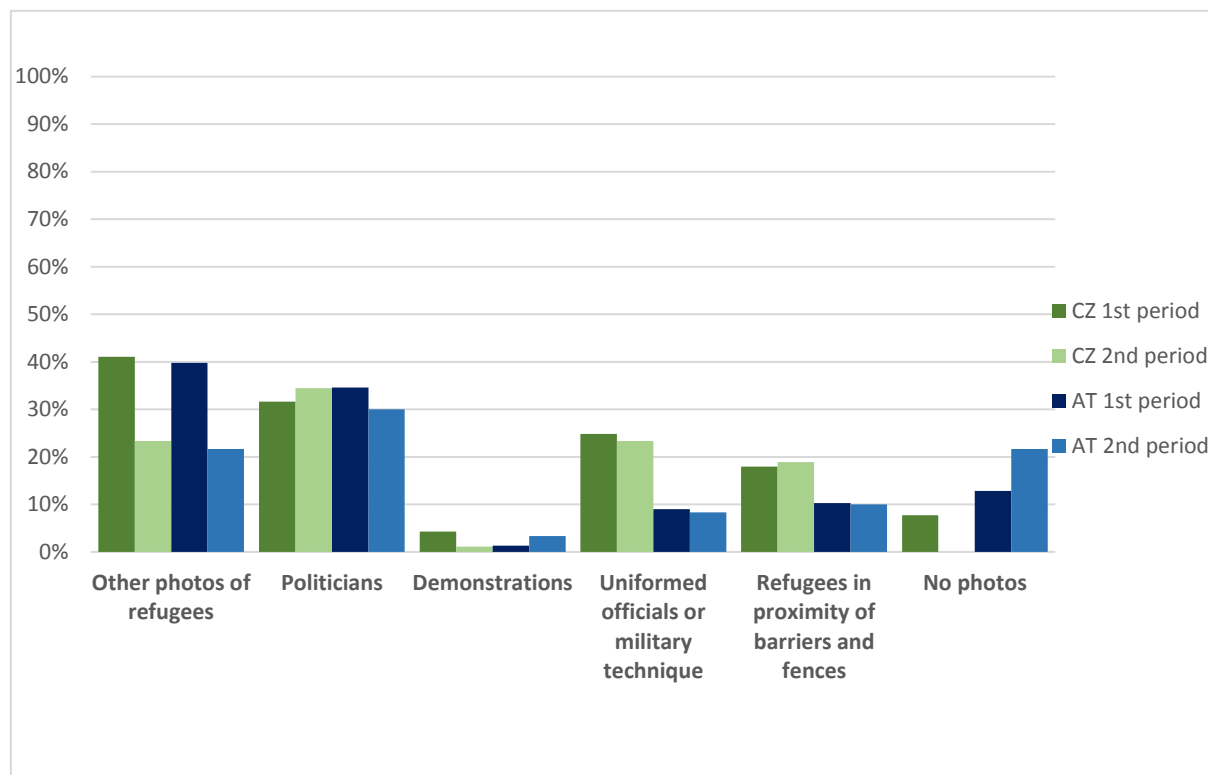
When comparing the Czech and Austrian media discourse, it is obvious that security measures were more present in Czech news stories, while mounting in the second period. Especially border controls were discussed most frequently from all the measures in the wake of the terrorist attack (in 46% of the news stories). Moreover, while the deployment of force or military was barely presented in Austrian news, in the dataset of the Czech media it accounted for 15% of the articles in the first period and 19% in the second period. Border controls were also among the frequently discussed measures in Austria, mostly owing to the fact that the border fence and other forms of managing the influx were an important topic on the agenda, particularly in the second period.

Help to refugees was considerably more discussed in Austrian news in the first period (31 % as opposed to 14 % in the Czech news), dropping to 21 % in the second period, which can be

explained by Austrian struggle to find political solutions to the crisis and ways of integrating the refugees.

3.2.5 Visual presentation

First of all, it should be reminded that *derStandard.at* was not included in coding this variable; thus, as far as “visual presentation” is concerned, the dataset of the Austrian media contained 78 (39+39) articles in the first period and 60 (30+30) articles in the second period.



Graph 5: Visual presentation. Source: own processing.

In the Czech media, the tendency to securitize refugees in the photos was considerably higher than in Austrian media in both periods: 25% of the articles included photos depicting refugees together with uniformed officials or military technique in the first period (23% in the second) and 18% refugees in proximity of barriers or fences (19% in the second period). In Austria, the percentage ranged from 8% to 10% for both categories and periods, showing no significant differences.

The non-securitization category “other photos of refugees” prevailed in the first period in both states, reaching approximately 40%, while dropping to 23% in the Czech Republic and 22% in Austria. One of the reasons for that is the rise of photos that did not fall within any of the categories and, therefore, are not included here. Moreover, in the case of Austria, we can see an increase in the share of articles with no photos at all at the same time.

Apart from that, the percentage of articles involving politicians remain similar in all groups (from 30% to 35%), which goes in line with the dominance of political frames and political measures discussed.

3.2.6 Securitization index

As is evident from the graphs, categories connected to securitization were more present in the Czech media in both periods than in the Austrian media. Moreover, especially in the case of framing, it can be assumed that the degree of securitization was stronger in the second period in both countries. The securitization index provides with a more precise answer to whether and to what extent this statement is true.

As a reminder, the value of the securitization index lies in the interval $<1;3>$, while 1 stands for the absence of securitization and 3 for the maximum extent of securitization. The letters A, B and C represent the three variables: framing, presented measures and visual presentation respectively. The figures in the non-coloured cells represent the averaged values of the individual variables of all the articles in the respective datasets. The values in the yellow cells are the averaged values of the specific variables of all three news sites, representing the degree of securitization within each variable. These can be compared with other final values of the variables in other groups. Finally, the figures in orange cells constitute the final securitization indices in every group.

CZ 1st period	A	B	C	
Idnes	2.04	2.24	1.96	
Novinky	2.19	2.32	2.13	
ČT24	1.9	2.06	1.82	
In total	2.04	2.21	1.97	2.07

CZ 2nd period	A	B	C	
Idnes	2.48	2.48	2.23	
Novinky	2.51	2.48	2.3	
ČT24	2.12	2.11	2	
In total	2.37	2.36	2.17	2.3

AT 1st period	A	B	C	
ORF	1.68	2.02	1.7	
Standard	1.54	1.81		
Kurier	1.74	2	1.82	
In total	1.65	1.94	1.76	1.79

AT 2nd period	A	B	C	
ORF	1.88	2	1.91	
Standard	2	2.13		
Kurier	2.02	2.06	1.98	
In total	1.96	2.06	1.94	1.99

Table 6: Securitization index. Source: own processing.

As is clear from the tables, values of all variables were higher in the Czech media in both periods; in the case of framing, the difference was substantial, comprising 0.39 in the first period and 0.41 in the second period. This illustrates the significantly higher degree of

securitization of refugees in the Czech media both before and after the terrorist attack, while in the second period, the difference was even bigger for all variables.

Furthermore, the value of all variables increased both in Czech and Austrian media in the second period, demonstrating an increase in the degree of securitization after the terrorist attack. This rise was, again, particularly significant in framing, value of which rose by 0.33 in the Czech media and by 0.31 in the Austrian media. This is to be assigned to the terrorist attack to a large extent, since it was an often-discussed topic in the analysed articles and in the political discourse as well, especially in the Czech media (see the following subchapter).

Provided that all the variables have similar weight, the mean of their values within each group comprises the final securitization index. The overall degree of securitization was higher in the Czech media in both periods (with the difference of 0.28 in the first period and 0.31 in the second period) and in both countries, the degree of securitization was higher in the period following the November terrorist attack (by 0.23 in the Czech media and by 0.2 in the Austrian media. In this case, the comparison of the final securitization indices leads to the same conclusions as the comparison of the securitization indices for each variable.

3.3 Discussion

Both the securitization index and the analysis of the presence of individual categories suggest that securitization of refugees in the analysed news sites was indeed more present in the Czech Republic than in Austria in both periods, which proves the first hypothesis.

The second hypothesis was proven as well – the degree of securitization of refugees increased considerably in the news portals after the November terrorist attack, which was expressed by the securitization index and supported by the graphs, indicating a higher number of securitization categories, most notably in the “framing” variable.

Furthermore, as the salience of the issue indicates, the topic was covered frequently in both periods and states, suggesting a sense of urgency. However, the number of articles dealing with the refugee situation was higher in the Austrian news portals in both time periods, while the second period saw a decrease in the number of relevant articles in both states. This fact may seem to contradict the conclusions; nevertheless, when the context is taken into account (as explained in subchapter 3.2.1), the reasons behind that are clear. The fact that news stories about refugees were published more frequently in Austria does not influence the way refugees were portrayed in the articles, i.e. to what extent they were presented as a threat. Despite

representing the basis for securitization in the media, the salience of the issue does not say much about the actual securitization. Thus, I consider the results of the analysis of the salience of the attributes more informative with regard to the degree of securitization.

Since the chosen news portals are among the most popular news sources in the respective countries and represent different types of media (public or private, quality press or tendency to tabloidization), the analysis reflected the dominant media discourse in the countries. Furthermore, since the media discourse also incorporates the political discourse (which manifested itself in the high number of the quotes from politicians); therefore, the conclusions illustrate not only the media discourse, but also, to a great extent, the political discourse

The first hypothesis was based on the assumption that Austrians have considerably more experience with refugees than Czechs and, generally, with immigration and integration of people with different cultural backgrounds. Austria has been a destination for a large number of immigrants from various countries, particularly since the 1960s (Diendorfer, Reitmair-Juárez 2016, pp. 2–3). Consequently, 15% of the Austrian population have foreign citizenship and more than 22% have a migration background (e.g. one of their parents comes from a foreign country) (Statistik Austria 2017, p. 23,25,27). Islam, which is the dominant religion of the refugees and is broadly discussed as part of the refugee crisis, is the religion to which 8% of the population adhere in Austria (Goujon, Jurasszovich, Potančoková 2017, p. 31). On the other hand, the Czech Republic is ethnically and culturally more homogenous and Islam is barely present, (approximately 0.2% of the population in 2016) (Pew Research 2017). As was evident from the articles, Islam (and Islamism) was one of the main sources of insecurity and fear in the discourse. Therefore, I assume that these differences constitute an important factor influencing the degree of securitization. Naturally, these explanations are not exhaustive, as there are numerous factors that might have had impact on securitization in the media discourse, including historical, cultural, political and other.

The second hypothesis was based on the fact that the jihadist terrorist attack sparked fear of other potential attacks within the European populations, which was supposed to be connected to the influx of refugees from Muslim-majority countries, as these two issues were put together in the public discourse. Naturally, the terrorist attack was not the only cause of the rising securitization of refugees in the media discourse; however, no other events or changes were as radical as this one and, therefore, did not have the potential to shift the discourse on such a large scale in both Austria and the Czech Republic. This assumption is supported by

the fact that many of the news stories discussed terrorism together with the topic of refugees, including securitization frames directly connected to terrorism.

Conclusion

This thesis dealt with the process of media discourse constructing the refugees coming to the EU in 2015 with the aim of analysing the degree of securitization before and after the November 2015 terrorist attack in Paris. In this manner, I attempted to evaluate the effect of this attack on the extent to which refugees were presented as a threat in the online media in the Czech Republic and Austria, while also concentrating on the difference between the situations in these states. The combination of securitization theory and the two levels of agenda-setting, both connected to social constructivism, provided the basic theoretical framework for the analysis.

Quantitative content analysis turned out to be the most suitable method to measure this extent. The reason is that it enables comparison between the individual states and time periods by means of examining the presence of the same elements (categories) in the articles; in this manner, the extent of the presence of securitization categories can be discovered. As the content analysis does not consider the context, treating the texts as independent entities, I also analysed the background of the migrant crisis in the Czech Republic and Austria across the researched time periods, seeking to clarify the reasons behind the particular ways of reporting.

Apart from that, I created the *securitization index*, which represents the quantification of the degree of securitization. Owing to the quantification, it is possible to compare this degree between large sets of data and draw conclusions more accurately than through solely qualitative interpretation of the results. Nevertheless, it is also suitable to consider the qualitative interpretation, as it depicts the degree of the presence of individual securitization categories across articles. Therefore, the index and the qualitative interpretation are complementary.

The first hypothesis stated that *the degree of securitization in the online media was higher in the Czech Republic than in Austria, both before the November terrorist attack and after*. This hypothesis was proven, as the securitization index was considerably higher in the analysed Czech news sites than in Austrian ones in all researched variables (framing, presented measures and visual presentation) in both periods. Apart from that, the results of the analysis suggested that the threat and illegality frames were far more prevalent in the Czech media, while the humanitarian frame was more present in the Austrian media. Along with that, discussed measures in analysed Czech articles were more prone to be connected with security, including, in particular, border controls and the deployment of force or military. At the same

time, the Czech news stories more often included photos of refugees in proximity of fences or uniformed officials than Austrian articles. However, the biggest salience was given to the political aspects, as political frames and measures prevailed in both countries.

The second hypothesis, asserting that *the degree of securitization in the online media was higher both in the Czech Republic and Austria after the November terrorist attack than before*, was proven as well. This conclusion is based on both the comparison of the securitization indices and on the analysis of the presence of securitization categories in individual states and periods. It was discovered that after the attack, there was a rapid increase in framing of the reported events as a threat or security risk in both the Czech Republic (by 21 percentage points) and Austria (by 16 percentage points), while the percentage of articles defining the issue as a humanitarian problem dropped significantly. At the same time, the references to security measures, most notably border controls, rose after the November attack in both states. The percentage of photos suggesting securitization did not change much in the second period; nevertheless, as the number of nonpoliticising images of refugees dropped considerably, the securitization index increased after the November terrorist attack.

It should be noted that the different extent of securitization across the time periods and states is not only connected to the events the media decided to report on, but also to the political discourse, as it has a substantial influence on the media discourse. This was unequivocally confirmed in the analysis by the fact that the vast majority of articles included quotes from politicians and other officials. At the same time, the voices of refugees were barely present, illustrating the gap between “us” and “them”, which is a basis for alienation. Moreover, the analysis discovered that the voices of EU citizens were marginalized as well, with politicians speaking on their behalf. Finally, academics or experts, who could provide more thorough information about the context of the crisis, were cited only sporadically as well. In this manner, it was mostly politicians who shaped the discourse.

At the same time, the level of personalization of refugees in the articles was very low in both states, as they were mostly referred to as in terms of quantity rather than as individual human beings, making it more difficult for the reader to identify themselves with the stories of refugees and understand their situation.

The high salience of the issue, expressed in the frequency with which the media reported on events connected to the topic, suggests a sense of urgency attributed to the migrant crisis. Drawing on the agenda-setting theory, this influences the perception of the audience, which is

more likely to perceive the issue as important. The results of the analysis suggest that the Austrian media published more articles about refugees than the Czech media, while there was a decrease in the second period in both states. This is a reflection of the different situations in the Czech Republic and Austria, as the former was not directly affected by the influx of refugees, while the latter was both one of the main transit countries and final destinations. The decline in the number of articles in the second period can be attributed to the diminishing number of refugees coming to Europe, as it reached its peak in September and October 2015. Most importantly, salience of the issue does not capture the way of reporting on the events and does not say anything about the degree of securitization present in the articles.

The results suggest a causality between the November terrorist attack and the securitization of refugees in the media discourse; however, the extent of the causality could not be determined precisely due to the presence of extraneous factors. Therefore, I would recommend conducting a similar research analysing the effect of other terrorist attacks in order to further validate the results of this thesis and to determine its external validity. Another limitation lies in the fact that this thesis only dealt with the presence of the securitization move, while it was not analysed to what extent it was accepted by the audience, indicating the success of securitization. Even though polls suggest that, especially in the Czech Republic, antipathy against and fear of refugees rose in 2015, it would require additional research to determine more accurately the degree to which this was the result of securitization in media discourse.

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List of Appendices

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Appendix 1: Codebook

Identification variables

Number of the articles (according to the list of articles)

Medium

Medium CZ

- Idnes (= *idnes.cz*)
- Novinky (= *novinky.cz*)
- ČT24 (= *ct24.cz*)

Medium AT

- Standard (= *derstandard.at*)
- Kurier (= *kurier.at*)
- ORF (= *news.orf.at*)

Date (for example: 1.11. = November 1, 2015 etc.)

Researched variables

Actors quoted

1. NGOs
2. Citizens/Volunteers
3. Academicians/experts
4. Refugees
5. IGOs/EU representatives
6. Media/news agency
7. Politicians
8. Other officials
9. Security forces
10. Anti-immigration groups/politicians

Personalization

1. Yes
2. No

Note: **Green:** Nonpoliticized (1); **Blue:** Politicized (2); **Red:** Securitized (3)

A Framing

1. Tragic event
2. Humanitarian issue
3. Administrative/political issue
4. Protests
5. Threat, security risk
6. Illegality
7. Unrests

B Measures

1. Help to refugees
2. Humanitarian aid to the Middle East
3. Integration programmes
4. EU policy
5. Policy changes
6. Deportations
7. Border controls/border wall
8. The deployment of force/military
9. The detention of refugees

C Visual presentation

1. Other photos of refugees
2. Politicians
3. Demonstrations
4. Uniformed officials or military technique
5. Refugees in proximity of barriers and fences
6. No photos

Appendix 2: Dataset

The dataset, i.e. the list of analysed articles with dates and links, is attached in digital form.

Appendix 3: Coding sheet

The coding sheet is attached in digital form.