

# Counter-Islamophobia Kit

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**Workstream 2: Dominant Counter-Narratives to Islamophobia – Hungary**

**Dr Zsuzsanna Vidra**

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**Working Paper 12**

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Countering Islamophobia through the Development of Best Practice in the use of Counter-Narratives in EU Member States.

**CIK Project (Counter Islamophobia Kit)**

Dr Zsuzsanna Vidra

Working Paper 12 - Hungary

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### **About the CIK Project**

The *Countering Islamophobia through the Development of Best Practice in the use of Counter-Narratives in EU Member States* (Counter Islamophobia Kit, CIK) project addresses the need for a deeper understanding and awareness of the range and operation of counter-narratives to anti-Muslim hatred across the EU, and the extent to which these counter-narratives impact and engage with those hostile narratives. It is led by Professor Ian Law and a research team based at the Centre for Ethnicity and Racism Studies, School of Sociology and Social Policy, University of Leeds, UK. This international project also includes research teams from the Islamic Human Rights Commission, based in London, and universities in Leeds, Athens, Liège, Budapest, Prague and Lisbon/Coimbra. This project runs from January 2017 - December 2018.

### **About the Paper**

This paper is an output from the second workstream of the project which was concerned to describe and explain the discursive contents and forms that Muslim hatred takes in the eight states considered in the framework of this project: Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Portugal and United Kingdom. This output comprises eight papers on conditions in individual member states and a comparative overview paper containing Key Messages. In addition this phase also includes assessment of various legal and policy interventions through which the European human rights law apparatus has attempted to conceptually analyse and legally address the multi-faceted phenomenon of Islamophobia. The second workstream examines the operation of identified counter-narratives in a selected range of discursive environments and their impact and influence on public opinion and specific audiences including media and local decision-makers. The third workstream will be producing a transferable EU toolkit of best practice in the use of counter-narratives to anti-Muslim hatred. Finally, the key messages, findings and toolkits will be disseminated to policy makers, professionals and practitioners both across the EU and to member/regional audiences using a range of mediums and activities.

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## **1. Introduction**

The aim of our report is to identify counter-narratives to Islamophobia in Hungary. Firstly, we give a brief overview of the main narratives of Islamophobia identified in our previous report. Following this, we present the political context in which these narratives are created and we provide a conceptual framework for the interpretation of the counter-narratives. Then based on secondary literature we specify the main actors and their activities during the refugee crisis relevant in the counter-narratives of Islamophobia. Then we present our research findings that are based on analysing particular media and political texts and interviews with stakeholders. In the methodology section it is described how the text corpuses were chosen and what sampling methods were used and how the analysis was done. In the next section, we give a detailed account of the counter-frames identified in the different text corpuses, then based on the frequency counting of the appearance of frames, we make a ranking of narratives in the three text corpuses keeping in mind the limitations of this method. At the end, using the conceptual framework we introduced, we make an attempt to interpret these frames as to their content and effectiveness in deconstructing and countering Islamophobic narratives.

## **2. Background: the formation of counter-narratives to Muslim hatred**

In our report on the major narratives of Islamophobia in Hungary we concluded that Islamophobia had been generated by the populist, self-declared illiberal national conservative government (Szalai and Göbl, 2015; Brubaker, 2017), the Fidesz-KDNP coalition, starting at the outset of the refugee crisis in 2015. Anti-migrant and Islamophobic narratives served the purpose of mobilizing political support for the government while monopolizing xenophobic discourse and pushing the second strongest party, the far-right Jobbik, aside. We asserted that the sudden upsurge of Islamophobia in Hungary has to be understood and interpreted in the framework of the populist regime and the migration crisis.

It was stated in the report that the populist rhetoric dominating the political and media landscape formulated the theme of the 2015-2016 refugee crises primarily as a security issue. Based on the literature (Haraszti, 2015; Szalai and Göbl, 2015; Pall and Sayfo, 2016; Győri, 2016; Sereghy, 2016, 2017; Brubaker, 2017) we identified two main frames within which the crisis had been discussed: the 'physical security' (securitisation) and 'symbolic security' (identity issues). Then we conducted a qualitative frame analysis using a newspaper closely tied to the government as a source for media and political narratives. Our frame analysis revealed that the physical security frame that explicitly associated migration with terrorism did not always make the link between terrorism and Islam. In our sample, this association was most apparent in the media texts and less visible in the political ones. The symbolic security frame, on the other hand, had explicit references to Islam and Muslims. It essentialised the religion and the culture and labelled it radical, aggressive and incompatible with European Christian norms and values. Within this frame, the Islamisation of Europe was described by allocating a special position to Hungary to defend the continent – its identity and civilisation – from this alleged disaster.

### **Conceptualising the political context of counter-narratives**

In order to give an account of the counter-narratives that appeared and how effective these were, the political and the media power relations in this illiberal populist environment needs to be outlined. The political aim of the governing coalition has been to weaken democratic institutions (Szalai and Göbl, 2015; Urbán, 2016) and marginalize political opponents (Mudde, 2016). It has also achieved significant media control and, with regulations, a strong right-wing media dominance (Kiss, 2016; Sereghy, 2016). Thus, with a few exceptions, the media echo government narratives on migration (Kiss, 2016; Bernáth

and Messing, 2015, 2016). This process can be understood as an example of a global phenomenon that is labelled by Mudde (2016) as the ‘populist Zeitgeist’ which has taken hold in liberal democracies.

The Fidesz party has always applied a war-rhetoric, even when in opposition, wherein the country is divided into enemies and friends. There are constantly new wars to fight and new enemies to beat. The refugee crisis was also staged as a warlike situation with various enemies: refugees labelled as illegal migrants, Europe and the EU as well as the Chancellor of Germany, and the eternal enemies, the leftist liberals, who now engaged in helping migrants. The rhetoric has always been the same, the enemies are the enemies of the nation who are essentially the non-Hungarians. This war-rhetoric and the political strategy of fearmongering and constant enemy creation is primarily part of the illiberal and populist political practice. In the concrete situation of the crisis this can also be seen as the strategy of securitizing the migration/refugee problem. Politicians and political actors opting for adopting the securitising strategy hope to achieve political benefit through the successful mitigation of the constructed threat (Szalai and Göbl, 2015).

Another aspect of this strategy is how issues related to migration and refugees are being politicised. Politicisation can mean “categories (...) used to qualify migrants in the receiving countries. (...) A common one is economic, family and humanitarian migration. (...) Often a fourth category is used: “unauthorised” or “illegal”, or more recently “irregular” migration” (Szalai and Göbl, 2015: 8). “The current politicization of migration in Hungary is part of a wider political spectacle—the creation and circulation of symbols in the political process (Edelman, 1988)—wherein the conditions of belonging are contested” (Szalai and Göbl, 2015: 17). In Hungary the politicisation of the refugee issue is about the question of who is Hungarian and who is not, who belongs here and who the enemies are. It is all the more important as historically the conservative understanding of the Hungarian national identity is based on ethnic homogeneity and ‘Hungarianess’ is constructed as a linguistically and culturally isolated entity. It is an important component of this identity that it always had to be defended against foreign invasions, Hungarians always had to fight for their survival (Sereghy, 2016). In this context, the politicization of the refugee/migration problem is easily formulated as a question of life and death in the time of (a new) foreign invasion (of refugees and migrants).

Counter-narratives should be analysed in the light of the strategies used by the populist, illiberal elite of Hungary. On the one hand, it should be revealed what agents are engaged in creating counter-narratives of securitisation, and how they construct these narratives. Or, what narratives of desecuritisation can be identified in the otherwise restricted political and media sphere left for the opposition actors of the government. On the other hand, besides the strategies of desecuritisation, it should also be analysed how the politicization of the refugee/migration issue is addressed, or, if depoliticisation is employed, and “conditions of belonging” targeted in these counter-narratives (Szalai and Göbl, 2015).

Finally, to understand the larger picture about how populism – and along that the anti-refugee/migrant and anti-Muslim rhetoric – can be confronted, it should also be addressed whether repoliticisation of the migration issues is being done. As Mudde (2016) claims “to stem the populist tide, establishment politicians will have to heed the call to repoliticise the crucial issues of the twenty-first century, such as immigration, neoliberal economics, and European integration, bringing them back into the electoral realm and offering coherent and consistent alternatives to the often short-sighted and simplistic offerings of the populists” (Mudde, 2016: 30).

### **Actors adopting counter-narratives during the refugee crisis**

All democratic opposition parties – the MSZP (Hungarian Socialist Party), the LMP (Politics can be Different, greens), the DK (Democratic Coalition), the PM (Dialogue), the Együtt (Together) – criticized

the government for its anti-refugee policies and the campaigns accompanying these measures. Besides these political parties, NGOs created counter strategies and narratives against the government hate campaigns as well. They accused the government of fearmongering and incitement of xenophobia in order to squeeze the second strongest party, the far-right Jobbik, out of the political competition in the migration/refugee question and mobilize the population (Juhász et al., 2015).

While all these parties condemned the official government narrative, the biggest left-wing party, the MSZP, on occasion, had an ambiguous attitude during the crisis and the campaigns. As they probably assumed that voters of the party might agree with the anti-refugee messages, the MSZP in 2015 took a “positive neutrality” stance, whereby they “neither openly endorsed nor clearly condemned Fidesz’s policies in this context” (Győri 2015: 24). Smaller parties were more explicit – especially the DK and the Együtt – in their rejection of the government narratives. Concerning voters, their ranking in the opinion polls did not change, so their supporters probably agreed with their position (Győri, 2015).

Although it is hard to determine the extent to which a counter-campaign is effective, it is definitely not the utterances of these political parties that made any impact on changing the overwhelming government narratives. On the one hand, the spoof party, the Hungarian Two-Tailed Dog Party, and the Vastagbőr political blog organized a counter-campaign by raising money from citizens to post billboards with similar design to that of the government ones with anti-refugee messages. Their billboards mocked the government messages in many ways. For example, the anti-refugee billboards said in Hungarian: “If you come to Hungary, you must respect our culture”, “If you come to Hungary, you must respect our laws”, “If you come to Hungary, you mustn’t take the Hungarians’ jobs”. In the counter-campaign, billboards had the following messages in English: “Sorry about our Prime Minister”, “Come to Hungary, we’ve got jobs in London”, “I have survived the Hungarian anti-immigration campaign” (Juhász et al., 2015; Szalai and Göbl, 2015; Kiss, 2016). Another counter-campaign was initiated by the UNHCR whereby they posted billboards with pictures of refugees and migrants who have successfully integrated into the Hungarian society (Szalai and Göbl, 2015).

Human rights NGOs, social groups and movements active in helping refugees during the crisis, also formulated counter-narratives and protested against the dominant hate campaign. Some of them wrote an open letter to the Parliament condemning the xenophobic rhetoric and pointing out that most people arriving are refugees forced to leave their countries and not “economic/rent-seeking” migrants as the government claimed. (Juhász et al., 2015; Győri, 2015)

As Szalai and Göbl (2015) said, the counter-campaign of the Two Tailed Dog Party was not doing any reframing of the dominantly securitarian narrative of the government. The UNHCR campaign, on the other hand, offered a somewhat more elaborated reframing by problematizing “the undifferentiated, xenophobic treatment of migrants” and highlighting “the importance of assisting refugees” (Szalai and Göbl, 2015: 26). The counter-narrative of other actors – democratic opposition parties and NGOs, social movements – adopted in opposition to the government’s subsequent anti-refugee, anti-Muslim campaign was an “extreme desecuritisation frame”, a humanitarian one that aimed to „reject any security implications migration might have” (Szalai and Göbl, 2015: 24). The government reflecting on this dominant counter-narrative claimed that volunteers helping refugees and migrants disregarded threats of terrorism and as such they were enemies of the country.

In our paper we aim to systematically map counter-narratives of Islamophobia related to the refugee crisis by analysing media and opposition political parties’ texts as well as interviews with stakeholders (NGOs as well as Muslim individuals). At the end, we analyse whether any of the reframing strategies described earlier – namely desecuritisation, depoliticisation and repoliticisation – could be identified in the counter-narratives.



### **3. Methodology**

To identify the main narratives of Islamophobia in Hungary we applied frame analysis (Entman, 1993; Nickels, 2007; Carvalho, 2008; Ibrahim, 2010; Boydston et. al., 2013). Based on the literature about the political contextualisation of Islamophobia, we concluded that physical securitisation and identity threat were the two main frames within which the narratives were formulated. In this new phase of the analysis, we continue using the same methodology conducting frame analysis of the counter-narratives.

There are several different corpuses collected for identifying and analysing counter frames. First, we have collected articles from the most popular left-wing opposition news portal, Index ([www.index.hu](http://www.index.hu)). This news portal is the one that most eloquently formulated counter positions to the government hate campaigns (Kiss, 2016). The timeframe was the same as for the first phase of the project, from January 2015 till December 2016. We applied a keyword search with the words “Muszlim” and “Iszlám” which resulted in 45 articles. Then in each article, topics were coded. The topics were generated from the text applying an inductive approach. The coding of topics was a circular process, coming back and forth and refining topic codes as we progressed in the coding of the corpus. In the end, 41 topic codes were identified. In the next phase we looked for typical patterns of how topics appeared together, what groups of topics we found. Based on these groups, we identified frames. That is to say, a frame is the representation of a typical pattern of topics that go together. Finally, eight frames were identified.

The next corpus we analysed was the on-line publications of democratic opposition parties concerning the topic of Islam. We collected all the publications that appeared on the party websites using keyword search for “Iszlám” and “Muszlim” in the same time period (January 2015-December 2016). Surprisingly, we got a very low number of publications: MSZP – 8, DK – 12, Együtt – 13, PM – 10 and LMP – 4 (47 in total). We applied the same coding and frame analysis as to the media corpus.

Finally, we conducted 17 in-depth semi-structured interviews with stakeholders whom we identified as important in generating counter-narratives. Interviews were conducted with representatives of organisations working on intercultural and/or interreligious dialogue (4 organisations from Budapest), Muslim civil and religious organisations and individuals (2 religious organisations from Budapest, 1 from the countryside, 2 Muslim individuals from the countryside), representatives of migrant and refugee aid organisations (6 respondents from 2 organisations in the countryside and 1 in Budapest) and local political actors active in helping refugees (2 politicians from the countryside) The same coding and frame analysis was done with the interviews with the aim of gaining further insight into each of the frames.

### **4. Categorical list of most dominant counter-narratives to Muslim hatred**

#### **Analysis of counter narratives of media and opposition political parties**

In the following we present first the results of the frame analysis of media and the political narratives and we give an in-depth description of each of the frames. We identified eight frames: Humanitarian Frame (HF), Anti-terrorism (ATF), Migration and Refugee Policy (MRPF), Critical (CF), Tolerance (TF), Islam and Muslims in Hungary and Europe (IMHEF), Gender (GF) and Muslim Refugees (MRF).

## Humanitarian Frame (HF)

### Media narratives

The humanitarian frame focuses on various aspects of the situation of the refugee or migrant. Firstly, it emphasizes that refugees or migrants are human beings, individuals with a human face and that many of the asylum seekers are actually fleeing from civil war and more specifically, the ISIS. The HF also puts emphasis on how asylum seekers are received in Hungary, the difficulties they encounter upon arriving in the country and how badly they are treated by the authorities.

The two men escaping from ISIS met near Harkov, in Ukraine. (...) In the Debrecen refugee camp, they told us about dictatorship, intimidation and the death of their loved ones. (...) Their hopes soon died when arriving to Hungary where their minibus was stopped by the border guards and they were threatened with a taser. (2)

It is also an important aspect of the HF that many of the refugees arrive from countries that are regarded as safe countries. This is to directly respond to the government rhetoric and policy that calls 'economic migrants', and as such bogus asylum seekers, those who come not from war zones but countries labelled as 'safe'.

Ramil was already born in Turkey, two years ago. His physiotherapist dad was helping out in a refugee camp nursing patients as he didn't have anything better to do. The family only received bed and food for this. Now, that his wife is pregnant, they had to start a normal life somewhere, but it was not possible in Turkey. "They let us live but we had no help." – explaining why these people labelled as "economic/rent seeking" migrants who lost their homes, left from the place where their lives were not in direct danger. (9)

Criticising the government's political stance on the refugee crisis (including its policies that criminalize all migrants) is a general topic within the HF as well as pointing to the xenophobic and fearmongering nature of the political rhetoric used by the government and those in support of its politics.

The reporter was curious why families escaping real danger – men being slaughtered and women trafficked and sold to ISIS as sex slaves – had to be taken into custody. The Prime Minister, Mr Orbán, when questioned, did not seem to become sentimental. "Illegal border-crossing is not a forgivable sin but a violation of the most serious laws of a country". (5)

In fact, Hungarian Catholics are similarly divided on the refugee question like the general population. There are priests who preach from the pulpit to help refugees and there are others who write posts like "we are not responsible for them". (11)

In the HF we also find reflection on the accusation that those "helping the migrants" see only the vulnerable families whereas many of the migrants are not so innocent and needy. In fact, the HF differentiates between migrants according to their country of origin and does not hide or make it a taboo that among the crowd of people there are some commit crimes.

All the officers in a police station were murdered, only he could escape. He could not go back to his family. Among the Syrians, there were intelligent families and people. People from black Africa were very neat and clean, they came from about ten countries. But they were people who took advantage of the situation. We learn this lesson from our bad experiences. For example, that we had to separate Syrians from the Pakistanis and the Bangladeshis. That there were little thieves among the Afghans, who stole even the food from each other although

there was enough for everybody. – As one of our readers reported. (17)

#### Political narratives

The HF appears only marginally in political texts, the Együtt party using this frame also clarifies the difference between a refugee and a migrant.

Refugees, deliberately misinterpreted as migrants, have no intention to settle in our country at all. But we have to help the refugees this is our human responsibility. They are human beings, not criminals and the majority of them are children and women and men fleeing from the terror of ISIS. (Együtt)

#### **Anti-terrorism Frame (ATF)**

##### Media narratives

The anti-terrorism frame is mainly concerned with the idea that Islam should not be identified with terrorism as well as the majority of Muslims oppose terrorism, are not radical and in fact are often victims of radical Islam.

The international coalition has to work to make the world understand what they do and why and why the organisation (ISIS) has to be defeated. One the one hand, people have to be enlightened that Islam as a religion is utterly incompatible with mass murder and terror attacks – emphasized the head of army. Religious Muslims are also outraged by the fact that the terrorist group calls itself Islamic State. (8)

In the ATF, so-called Islamic terrorism in Europe is explained as being a consequence of second and third generation migrant youth feeling socially excluded and as such an easy prey for being recruited by terrorist groups. In contrast to what the government rhetoric claims, it is not the newly arriving migrants and asylum seekers who are the most likely terrorists. It is also explained that the kind of anti-migrant, Islamophobic rhetoric that dominates in Europe is harmful as it creates an atmosphere within which lots of young people of Muslim and migrant backgrounds are already feeling lost and may be further pushed towards radicalisation. This results in blurring the line between the radical and the non-radical Muslims.

You can say that if there are no Muslim migrants then there is no Islamist terrorism in Europe. But the scenario of terrorist attacks is not that someone arrives today and tomorrow he throws a bomb. The strengthening of the ISIS, the spread of radical thoughts among the second-generation Muslim youth born in Europe who feel socially excluded are the easiest target of terrorist organisations. And the hundreds of thousands of people are fleeing from this fanaticism and chaos that attracts European born Muslims to terrorism. This campaign conflates these different people. (32)

Hungary staged a court trial against some asylum seekers who got into a fight with the police in 2015 when they tried to cross the border. In the fight, some were throwing stones and other violent acts happened. An Iraqi and nine Syrian citizens were accused of illegal border crossing and got prison sentence or were expelled from the country. Another Syrian man, who was seen as the leader during the clash with the police, was accused of terrorism and sentenced to 10 years in prison by the Court of First Instance. In the meanwhile, civil rights advocates were trying to argue that these atrocities had nothing to do with terrorism. In the ATF, it is emphasized that these people had fled from real terrorism and that instead of getting protection, were abused by the authorities and became enemies of the state.

The 24-year-old Ali was fleeing from ISIS and wanted to go to Norway to his aunt but he was caught by the security system of the EU. He has been waiting for a year in a dirty refugee camp to have his case processed by the court. (...) Although it was already declared in the first decision that because of the sufferings he went through he is entitled to refugee status, the court still has not ruled on his case. This is how the process of granting asylum works today in Hungary. (...) His brother was kidnapped and he was about to be drafted by ISIS. (30)

In contrast, the ATF claims that the government has no real capacity to counter terrorism as it lacks expertise.

The Prime Minister promised more money for counter-terrorist actions. But there are some basic problems. In the Intelligence Agency many experts think that the Commandos of the TEK (the special anti-terrorist unit established by the government) who are socialised in gyms have no clue about intelligence and anti-terrorism. And because Hungarian intelligence watches passively the actions of the Russians, Western intelligence agencies avoid sharing information with them that makes anti-terrorist actions even more difficult. The police and army patrols in the streets are useless and cannot be effective against such threats. (26)

#### Political narratives

Concerning party politics and rhetoric of political parties, we found that the ATF is the most dominant one in the analysed political webpage publications. Additional topics to the media ones appear as well. Politicians emphasise that we should not be threatened by terrorists because their aim is to destabilise Europe. More than that, hate campaigns (criticising the government) go hand in hand with what the terrorists want as more young people will feel alienated.

They are claiming that the West should give up its values, such as tolerance, freedom rights, openness. As a result of this, we can expect not less but more terrorists and terrorist attacks. Muslims having grievances, feeling socially excluded provide an ideal ground for recruitment for ISIS and similar organizations. More terror attacks lead to more fear that politicians similar to Orbán and Trump will interpret as a confirmation of their preaching and will use them to instigate more hatred. (Együtt)

The government instead of giving real answers to the crisis uses a xenophobic campaign and criminalizes refugees who flee from the same terror as they are being accused of.

The terrorist attacks raise fear in all of us. It is easy to put the blame on immigrants, refugees, the Islam, Schengen and the whole of the EU. But these are not real answers. These are the tools of the far-right, of the fear and the hatred. This a deceitful and dangerous game since the real answers are not that simple. We should not listen to our instinctive fears and should not create enemies. Fear has never been a good advisor. (DK)

It is also said that national security risks should be assessed but not by identifying all asylum seekers and migrants as terrorists.

Islam and terrorism cannot be associated with one another. People should not be judged by their religion but by assessing who constitutes a national security risk for Hungary and for Europe. (...) According to left wing parties, terrorism and the refugee crisis is a serious challenge for Hungary and for Europe. The two should be strictly separated and find answers that comply with the rule of law. (MSZP)

Concerning what these parties think about how terrorism should be fought against differs from one another (some support participation in military actions against ISIS, others don't, some would take more severe security measures at the expense of civil freedoms, others wouldn't). Nonetheless, the main political points in the ATF are very similar: common European answers and actions are needed, Hungary cannot act on its own, the government should take real measures in line with its European counterparts.

We have to fight the terror of radical Islam but this shouldn't be done alone but in international co-operation together with our allies. (Együtt)

### **Migration and Refugee Policy Frame (MRPF)**

#### Media narratives

The migration and refugee policy frame explicitly criticises the government's policies designed to address the refugee crisis. Among other things, the xenophobic (anti-migrant, anti-multiculturalism and anti-Islam) campaigns, as well as the erection of the barbed wire fence are mentioned. It is said that while the current situation needs political answers which Europe is trying to give, Hungary by opting for nondemocratic means, is not helping the process.

Letting tens of thousands of refugees go to the West, Europe and Hungary only won a little bit of time. Europe and the developed world had been closed in the last decades and now it is faced with the question what its moral obligation should be. (...) It is also clear that Hungary besides ringing the alarm bells did not want to or could not do anything. It has rather been preoccupied with how refugees could be associated with illegal and economic migrants. (...) Hungary, for the time being, is isolating itself from the countries searching for solution. (...) Within Hungary, the government can be successful with a brutally aggressive hate campaign. The government not only found a topic through which it can increase its popularity using people's hate attitudes but also managed to depict a question in black and white. We are not looking for solutions, there is no discussion about what should be done here and in Europe, what about migration on the long run, or what should we do to handle the refugee crisis. There is no debate, no communication, only declaring that it's none of our business except for protecting our borders. (13)

These pseudo solutions dear to the far-right (fence, border guards hunting for illegal migrants) can be used for communication purposes but their effectiveness is highly questionable. The erection of the wire fence is almost finished, but the refugees keep coming with the same numbers as before. Even if we have a double or triple fence, it might not be enough as people smugglers would find a way anyway. (15)

In the MRPF the often deliberately conflated terms – migrant and asylum seeker, refugees – are defined and it is explained that they require different policies. It is the migration policy where states have the right to regulate whom they want to take in whereas in refugee policies it is the international regulations which have to be complied with.

He said several times that the concepts of refugees and economic migrants don't contradict one another. We cannot deny any humans the desire to leave their home country and go to a new one, but we can still have consensus in a given country that sorry people, it's too much for us. We understand, but we will decide whom we let in under what criteria. (18)

Finally, in the MRPF we find reference to the information war carried out by Russia concerning the

refugee crisis. Russia spreads fake news and information on Facebook and various websites on the refugee crisis as well as nourishes the conspiracy theory dear to the government rhetoric, namely that it is George Soros who is behind the influx of migrants.

The Political Capital [a Hungarian think tank] published an analysis with well-supported examples on how the disinformation campaign of the Kremlin is present in the Hungarian government media. After the annexation of Crimea and the military offensive in Eastern Ukraine, the Russian propaganda grew strong in Central and Eastern Europe. The Kremlin is keen on using conspiracy theory for its geopolitical purposes. It spreads easily digestible anti-Western narratives dear to Moscow. (...) The conspiracy theories about the role of George Soros in international migration are closely linked in the Hungarian and Russian official communication. The official Russian Today quotes Orbán who says that “the invasion is generated by the smugglers” on the one hand, and on the other hand “by the activists who are undertaking activities which weaken the nation state”, a stance supported by Soros. The Fidesz communication spread in the government media on this theory accuses Soros of settling several millions of migrants (in Hungary and Europe) and helping them illegally and creating the refugee quota system that Merkel supports. (31)

#### Political narratives

Opposition political parties use the MRPF the second most often after the ATF. In addition to the topics used in the media, they also talk about how Hungary violates international laws on asylum seeking by its measures.

If Fidesz accepts the deal of the Jobbik, it means that Hungary will breach all international agreements and laws, since every refugee arriving in our country has the right to seek asylum status regardless of the fence or border guards. (DK)

While the difference between asylum seeking and migration policy is clarified, certain parties urge not only for the enforcement of asylum laws but also for an effective migration policy that the country is also in urgent need to have.

A long-term well-designed and well implemented migration strategy could determinant whether or not the younger generations now in their 20s and 30s will have a pension in the future. (Együtt)

The migration and the refugee questions are not directly linked. (...) Migration is different in that the EU and its member states can decide if they let legal migrants from third countries into the EU or not. This question, regarding the demographic challenges of Europe, is one of the most important questions of the day. However, answers to this question should be sought together, with responsibility, based on facts and not on the fears and prejudices of citizens. (PM)

#### Critical Frame (CF)

##### Media narratives

The critical frame creates a position between the humanitarian approach (supported by NGOs, as well as critiques of the government’s refugee policies) and the security argument (put forward by the government as the main issue in the refugee crisis). The CF emphasises that the two stances should not be seen as being in opposition as both have legitimacy in how to understand and solve the crisis.

It’s a very bad direction that they are instigating hatred in the society. It’s not going to solve

anything. If we generate conflicts, then we have to resolve them. It is similarly wrong what the other side is pushing that there are only victims, vulnerable people and pregnant women fleeing death and dying sick people among the hundreds of thousands of refugees. Everyone is repeating only half of the story. First, we should investigate that these people got proper refugee protection on the way, and if yes, then we can decide if we want to deal with these people or not. It's not always necessary to refer to humanitarian principles, it's legitimate to talk about the need of manpower or the demographic situation. In the Hungarian and European public discourse, the most pressing question is definitely the clash between the humanitarian and the security policy principles. It is a real danger that among the hundreds of thousands of people arriving here, there are some who want to do harm to their environments inspired by some political or religious radicalism. This is a real risk we have to deal with. This is the task of a well-functioning national security service. (18)

The CF also sees the current situation in a wider context identifying various factors such as the huge global regional inequalities that are behind the trends of global migration.

What is happening now, is not only about Syria, Europe or the ISIS, but the social consequences of the enormous economic gaps among the global regions. (19)

#### Political narratives

The CF is used by two of the opposition parties (in the analysed corpus). It is emphasized that helping refugees and securing borders are the 'real politik' answers to the crisis. It should not be denied that migration may pose a security risk and it requires a political answer whilst also respecting the humanitarian and legal requirements of helping refugees.

Some uses the anti-democratic statement disrespectful of political diversity that those who are more sensitive towards refugees are in fact naïve, denying reality and think of everybody as racist and surely do not understand this last phase of the dusk of Europe and want to Islamize everybody. (...) It's a popular Fidesz lie that the naive supporters of the refugee quota don't know reality at all and want to have open borders. And that supporting the refugee quota is in essential contrast with adequate border protection. No, the Schengen borders have to be protected. Smugglers have to be persecuted. Economic migration above the refugee quotas should be prevented. For that, we need strong border protection. There is no question about that. (Együtt)

We cannot contrast humanitarian and security aspects. We are part of a global crisis and while addressing its consequences with humanitarian means we also have to ensure the security of the Hungarian people. (...) The vice president of Fidesz will not stop the Islamisation of Europe if it keeps refugees in inhuman conditions at the railway station. (LMP)

The LMP refuses both extremist views on the migration crisis. So, the LMP's stance is that it is not acceptable that migrants cross the border without control, neither is that individuals with legal papers could not enter the country. (LMP)

#### **Tolerance Frame (TF)**

##### Media narratives

The tolerance frame focuses primarily on prescribing a multicultural model of societal coexistence of people and religions based on mutual acceptance and tolerance. The most striking point is that the TF in the media appears as a criticism of government rhetoric, blaming it for promoting a non-tolerant

model. That is to say that the TF is always presented as a mere ideal, something that the country doesn't have.

The Prime Minister declared at several occasions that Hungarians have the right to decide if they want to live with Muslims. His answer of course, is no. In Fidesz they even talk about European caliphate. (14)

Migrants living in Hungary talked about their integration, how it is like to live as a refugee, activist, and they criticised the anti-Islam rhetoric. If we speak about either Christianity or the Islam, we have to see the complexity of the religion. Any society that is based on hatred is going in the wrong direction. (39)

Students should learn about today's Islamic world and its past, and the importance and problems of cultural diversity, the differences and similarities of cultures, and the major causes of migration in different times and places. (20)

#### Political narratives

The TF is the third most frequent narrative in the analysed political corpus. Political parties are explicit about their societal vision. It is about a democratic society based on tolerance where individual rights and human dignity are respected, it is open and inclusive, and trust and cooperation are the basic norms. Parties criticize the official government policies as well as the far-right as they promote a vision they consider destructive.

He (party's leader) said that there is an important cultural dividing line: firstly, are we humans or religious people? He thinks of himself primarily as human, then as a democrat, and finally as Hungarian. (DK)

We have two choices today. One, is national selfishness, exclusion and self-exclusion, the lack of solidarity and trust where fences and the fear of the other divide nations and people from each other. The other is tolerance of each other, acceptance, inclusion, trust and cooperation, the notion of the multicultural Europe. This is the road Europe has been taking. We should not let it go. (DK)

He (the party leader) emphasised that we have to fight terrorists and not to reconcile with them. The aim of ISIS by the Brussels attack was to destruct everything that Europe means: freedom, democracy and respect to one another. (DK)

We believe that a diverse community with different cultural customs and traditions strengthen and move Hungary ahead. (PM)

Instead of the instigations of Jobbik and the provocative country defence action plan of Fidesz we need an "ethnic peace plan". Instead of the fight of civilizations, we need sober and wise thoughts and consolation. (MSZP)

PM thinks it is a false and outrageous claim that we are facing a war of value systems, cultures or religions. (PM)

#### **Islam and Muslims in Hungary and Europe Frame (IMHEF)**

##### Media narratives

The Islam and Muslims in Hungary and Europe frame targets the issue of social integration of



immigrants of Muslim background, and makes explicit claims that inequality and social exclusion are the basic factors behind radicalization. It is also important that “Islam in Europe” is not a homogeneous social phenomenon, there are substantial differences between countries, state policies and Muslim communities, all contributing to what social model each country has.

We speak much less about another problem, the radicalisation potential. If integration does not work on the long run, there are not enough jobs, wealth, prospects then even the moderates can easily be radicalised. Anyone who is dissatisfied will find an ideology, be it communism, radical Islam, fundamental Christianity, anarchism, anything, how to subvert the current system. (18)

While the older generation [at the conference] was talking about a homogeneous, religious Islam community and an impotent liberal Europe, OS [a presenter] pointed out how divided Muslim communities are. Divisions are based not only on the obvious Shi’ite and Sunni divide, but also on ethnic ones. He thinks we cannot talk about European Islam. Sometimes ethnic background is more important (...), on other occasions the same ethnic group is divided by religious cleavages. It’s also important what the host country is like. In Belgium, for example, radical preachers are rather free to pursue their activities, some of them don’t even speak any European languages. In France, it’s demanded that Imams active in Mosques be educated in France<sup>1</sup>. (27)

#### Political narratives

Political parties also use this frame, however, compared to the ATF, the MRPF and the TF, this is much less frequent.

He thinks that what happens is not that we become Islamized but Muslims coming here become Europeanized. He referred to data according to which only 20% of third generation Muslims attend Mosques and they have fewer children. He also thinks there is not much difference between a third generation Muslim and a European man. (DK)

#### **Gender Frame (GF)**

##### Media narratives

The gender frame addresses the stereotype and prejudice about violence against women allegedly inherent in Islam. It is highlighted that there are no grounds for this accusation in Islam or the Sharia law but it is certain radical groups – such as ISIS – that commit the deeds which are then generalized and applied to the whole religion.

In Syria and Iraq and the territories occupied by the ISIS, sexual harassment, sex slavery and forced marriage are very common. Almost all women suffer from these crimes. Their situation cannot be explained by the male-centred so-called Islamic religious laws. If it was for that, women would have migrated from the Middle East a long time ago. And the situation is not solved when they arrive in Europe as refugees. (22)

In lots of Muslim communities, it’s a shame not only for the woman but for the whole family if she is violated. In contrast to prejudices, Islam as a religion is not anti-women, the Sharia clearly prohibits violence against women. But according to the Sharia law, the accusation of sexual violence has to be proved by four men or admitted by the perpetrator. (...) In some extreme cases victims might be disowned by the family, blamed for what had happened saying

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<sup>1</sup> This claim is from the interview and reflects the personal opinion of the respondent.

that it blemished family honour. It's far from being a Middle Eastern cultural tradition as blaming the victim is present in Europe as well, especially in more traditional rural communities. (23)

Also related to the above stereotype, and also connected to the case of the Cologne incidents, the frame tackles the question of the differences in certain gendered behaviours. It is said that there is a cultural difference in how Europeans and those coming from Muslim countries regard their own and others' gender roles, including dressing. It emphasizes that because of the different traditions, there is a potential cultural clash. Nonetheless, it is explained in terms of cultural shock, cultural accommodation rather than the stereotypical 'Muslim men as a sexual predator' figure.

Hosseini felt ashamed when he first saw a woman in bikinis. Maryam is not being stoned any more if she is not wearing a headscarf. Refugees arriving in Europe are shocked by the local culture, both men and women can get confused when they have to change their old habits with new ones. With adequate information provided, they are saying that even the sexual harassment case in Cologne could have been avoided. (24)

"What should men say?" They are literally shocked. They never bathed together with women in swimming costume. "This behaviour sexually excites an Afghan, an Iranian or an Arab man. It may mean nothing to a Hungarian or a European but it's a provocation to us. (...) This is when an intercultural mediator has the job to explain how things work in Hungary. There are cultural differences. If someone says that it's good that the refugees came and everything is solved and there are no conflicts, he is crazy. There are lots of them." (24)

### **Muslim Refugees Frame (MRF)**

#### Media narratives

The Muslim refugees frame makes explicit reference to the background of refugees and promotes cultural and religious tolerance. Refugees should be treated fairly not only as human beings but also as people belonging to specific religions and cultures with specific norms.

The organizers specially emphasized that donators should not bring milk, jam, and sandwiches made of pork with respect to Muslim refugees. (10)

"We found this (headscarf) hanging on a fence". They don't know anything about its owner, but it is very typical that refugees tried to protect themselves from the barbed wire with clothes, sleeping bags. A headscarf so important in Islam raises several questions according to researchers. What the lack of the headscarf could mean to its owner in the crisis situation, as not wearing it has the meaning of being naked. (34)

### **Interviews**

Through interviewing organisations dealing with intercultural and interreligious dialogue, Muslim communities and individuals, and grass-roots migrant/refugee aid organizations our aim was to reveal what frames they used in their narrations about the reception of Islam and Muslims in Hungary as well as to see whether these frames are constructed similarly or differently from the ones used in the analysed media and political publications. We applied the same frame analysis method to the interviews as to the media and political texts: first the topics were coded, partly by using the same code system as previously, partly by identifying new ones. Then based on the group of topics found in

the interviews frames were identified. In the following, we present what frames were found, and how some of the old topics with new meanings modified the content of the frames.

### **Tolerance Frame (TF)**

While in the media and political texts the TF is mainly about the absence of multiculturalism and the criticism of the government propaganda that instigates hatred towards (Muslim) migrants, in the interviews the frame is constructed somewhat differently. For organisations working on intercultural, interreligious dialogue the most important issue is how to promote peaceful cohabitation of cultures and religions.

We are aiming to build inter-personal relationships because prejudices work on the group level, so it is important to deepen personal relationships, at least to start to do it. To get to know each other, to talk. (Interreligious organisation 1)

We have Christian, Jewish friends, we organize common events, prayers. Once even a bishop participated. (Interreligious organisation 2)

While it is their mission, they see all sorts of challenges to realize their goals. They also criticize the government's anti-migrant rhetoric as being xenophobic and having negative effect on the society and eventually on their work.

What I find appalling is that the government propaganda trickles down to the local level, breaches personal relationships. One of my girlfriends sent me a text message when I dated a Muslim guy asking if I was still alive or chopped up by the jihadist. I thought it was offensive and I was outraged by that. (Interreligious organisation 1)

For Muslim organisations the most important issue is xenophobia and the hate campaigns of the government affecting their community.

People who pose questions are prejudiced and the media as well, they use stereotypes. I have friends from sports circles and when they start asking questions they have all kinds of prejudices. There is no point in arguing with them. (Muslim religious organisation 1)

My daughter is called Fatima<sup>2</sup>, and when they hear her name they ask if she is Arab or Muslim. The reactions are hard to handle. She says she is Hungarian, she was born here, the only difference among us is religion, but there are other religions as well, Christian, Jewish. But the problem is that they don't accept this answer. (Muslim religious organisation 1)

The Hungarian Muslim community is small, invisible, and nobody noticed them before. Due to the government's Eastern Opening politics, lots of students come from Middle-Eastern countries. The East had a positive connotation. Soon it turned out that this double speech, being Islamophobic and xenophobic while supporting the Eastern opening, cannot go hand in hand. By now, the situation got much worse in everyday interactions, Muslims are verbally abused, the hate campaigns have trickled down to that level. (Muslim religious organisation 2)

They also formulate how they could combat the hostile environment they have been living in recently. Their perspectives are rather negative:

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<sup>2</sup> Her father is Algerian and her mother is Hungarian.

We find it utterly unnecessary to protest against this. It makes no sense. We are very pessimistic about the future what is yet to come in Hungary, this is not the end of the hate campaigns. (Muslim religious organisation 2)

Migrant and refugee aid organizations and political actors active in helping refugees also emphasised the negative impact of the xenophobic campaigns. They also strongly criticised the government, a position deriving from the active role they took during the refugee crisis that went in direct opposition to the government policies.

It is a very controversial issue as the town is full of foreign students, half of them are Arabs. I told policemen that it is amazing that there are no atrocities but they said that in fact there are, just we don't hear about them. They are constantly harassed, insulted in bars. It has been especially going on since the migration crisis due to the hate campaigns. (Politician 1)

It is very hard to communicate messages to the people as the government has a monopoly in almost all media. We can use our own channels, social media. We can refute propaganda by facts. These can respond to the fears of people. Unfortunately, Hungarians have this (xenophobia), for example peaceful villages hate each other, people are full of animosity. This is an emotional attitude that is hard to change. (Politician 2)

I went to X<sup>3</sup>, where people shouted at us what bastards we were, that we wanted to Islamise the country, that we were nasty liberals, cosmopolites for whom national, Christian values were not important, that we were irresponsible. Some more decent people would accept the humanitarian approach but even they would say that there are these strong, young men who are terrorists. They considered us idiots who by their humanitarianism would induce threat in the country. (Migrant and refugee aid organisation 1)

### **Islam and Muslims in Hungary and Europe Frame (IMHEF)**

The IMHEF appeared in the narratives of Muslim individuals (some of them were representatives of organizations). On the one hand, the sociological background of the failure of integration of Muslim immigrants (youth) and its connection to terrorism is explained.

They are second and third generation kids. They don't speak Arabic, they don't know much about the religion, only through others. They face an identity crisis. (...) Terrorism should not be linked to the recent refugee crisis, the perpetrators are second and third generation immigrants. This is typical of people with closed thinking, fundamentalism that is trying to take roots in Europe. These youngsters, many of them Muslim, are approached and recruited, they are unemployed. These kids are deceived. (Interreligious organisation 3)

It is then expressed that living peacefully in Hungary as a Muslim is only possible if Muslims hide their identity.

Very few people from my environment know that I am Muslim. I would not say it just to anybody. Lately I have been even more cautious not to let anybody know about it. (Interreligious organisation 1)

One of the interviewees when asked about anti-Muslim sentiments in his town and about the influence of media propaganda on people, avoided any direct or explicit answers. Instead, he stated that

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<sup>3</sup> Village where they planned to establish a refugee camp.

Humanity is the most important factor for me, ethnicity or ethnic belonging is second. I appreciate the fact that people and ethnicities influence each other, they learn a lot from each other as I did when I came to Hungary. I also believe in active citizenship, a true, real citizen is the one who acts something for his country. (Muslim individual 1)

Besides concealment, there is a strong emphasis put on how Muslims should integrate: work hard to be accepted and conform to local rules and norms.

I am not expecting anything from the society, Muslims should do something, they have to be successful. Successful people are accepted. If a Muslim makes a small mistake, everybody is immediately watching him, if the same is done by a Hungarian, it's ok. We have to be on the alert all the time, we always have to behave in a respectful way. (Muslim religious organisation 1)

If someone comes to Europe, he has to learn that there are specific norms and laws. Muslims must do more and they should not expect the other to be open. Muslims in Hungary are not yet prepared for that. Maybe the second generation will be able to make itself accepted by Hungarians. They will know how to live in Hungary and how to defend themselves. (Muslim religious organisation 1)

Local Muslims should integrate. Migrants should know the national holidays. (Interreligious organisation 3)

### **Humanitarian Frame (HF)**

The humanitarian frame is mainly used by organisations and political actors who took active part in helping refugees arriving during the months of the refugee crisis. When talking about their work, they described their mission as being neutral in terms of political affiliation, cultural or religious background.

We set our basic principles at the beginning. It was political neutrality, as we suspected that we would be stigmatized anyway. We sent politicians away. We did not have an open anti-government rhetoric in any issues. We also said that we would be neutral concerning religious affiliations. There were people coming from different religions but we wanted to keep it at a distance as well. (Migrant and refugee aid organisation 2)

Volunteers joining the grass-roots aid organisations were also emphasizing that they focused solely on the human aspect of the crisis:

I had not been interested in politics. I did not read newspapers. I saw human beings who were in need of help. That was my motivation.  
(Migrant and refugee aid organisation 3)

Aid organisations and volunteers also put emphasis on the rise of solidarity of the population that went against the dominant government hate campaigns. Despite the powerful anti-migrant/refugee rhetoric of the government, they saw how people representing very different social positions would come and help the refugees.

I saw in my town how people reacted to the refugee crisis. They helped, they showed that we

are all humans, so not everything is black and white. (Muslim religious organisation 1)

I believe it was an action generated by the government. Refugees were sent from Szeged<sup>4</sup> to Pécs to get to Debrecen. They were transported across the whole country so that everybody should see them. It was obvious that it was all done with a deliberate purpose. But they were mistaken because it created solidarity, people brought money, and all kinds of things. A colleague brought fruit every morning from his garden. After two months they (the government) stopped transporting them here as it didn't have the desired reactions. (Politician 1)

Policemen and border guards were first hostile with the volunteers but then they realized that it's good for them so finally we were on good terms with them. (Politician 1)

These organisations and activists thus represented counter-actions against the dominant hate narratives. Nonetheless, some issues from the anti-migrant narratives caused concerns among the volunteers as well. One of these issues was terrorism, that helping refugees equated to supporting terrorists. Meaning that some who came originally to help human beings got scared that through their activities they contribute to the rise of terrorist attacks.

There was a volunteer who left after the Paris attacks. He wrote us that he was sorry for helping us. But it was an exception and not the rule. We told him that we are doing crisis intervention and not "digging the grave of Europe". But we couldn't convince him. (Migrant and refugee aid organisation 2)

### **Muslim Refugees Frame (MRF)**

Neutrality in the cultural and religious sense was emphasized by aid organisations, mainly in terms of not making any distinction between people on any grounds. However, on occasion this neutrality had to be re-interpreted as aid workers were exposed to cultural differences mainly in eating habits and gender relationships. In certain aspects it was easy to adapt to these differences – avoid giving food made of pork to Muslims, or provide separate spaces for men and women, etc. However, in certain situations the tension between the neutrality vision and the cultural differences experienced through these encounters, did raise concerns in aid workers. Some became irritated by this:

It was Ramadan when they arrived and they said they are not eating pate, only jam sandwich and fruits. We told them that then you should stay hungry, we can't do anything about it. When the sun went down, they started picking from the assortment we had. Someone asked why they didn't eat beef sandwich and they said that in Europe, they always add some pork to everything. There are huge cultural differences even in everyday practices. Some volunteers were angry because of their behaviour. (Politician 1)

Some cultural differences became apparent. Muslim society, gender relations. We didn't really see religious practices. We made a praying room, we put up signs in several languages, but hardly anyone used it. We didn't see people praying. (Migrant and refugee aid organisation 2)

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<sup>4</sup> Szeged is a big city close to the Southern border of the country where most of the refugees crossed the border during the month of the crisis. Pécs is situated in a distant region where no border crossing was taking place.

They are coming here, so I think they should adapt to local norms and not vice versa. But we didn't have alcohol! It was very important for several reasons. Not because of drunkenness, but we thought it would have been too provocative, and also the right-wing would see and comment on it that these volunteers are there to party and drink at night. (Migrant and refugee aid organisation 2)

### **Migration and Refugee Policy Frame (MRPF)**

The migration and refugee policy frame is concerned with the criticism of the government's handling of the refugee crisis which aimed to instigate hatred towards the refugees:

They came from the Szeged region, and how they got here? They were bussed here by the authorities. And why? To demonstrate to the population that they are here, they are everywhere in the country. But it had a counter effect in our town, people showed solidarity with the refugees. But I might be wrong as I don't see the whole population. (Migrant and refugee aid organisation 4)

It is also underlined that migration and asylum seeking are not the same, as it is deliberately mixed in the government rhetoric.

Refugees and immigrants should be distinguished, but we cannot have a rational discussion about that. The Hungarian public had become mad by the campaigns but the European is becoming mad as well. The terrorist attacks had a negative impact on that. (Politician 1)

The MRPF is similarly constructed in the media as in the interviews. Interviewees gave their personal accounts on how the hate campaigns affected their lives:

The police came several times to our mosque with a fake reason to see if we were not hiding anybody (illegal migrants). (Muslim religious organisation 2)

### **Gender Frame (GF)**

In some cases, cultural differences had a more direct gender aspect. On the one hand, similarly to the Muslim refugee frame, cultural encounters generated issues around the perceptions of gender roles manifested in how men and women communicate and how certain gender related questions are treated differently in Europe.

A young female volunteer went to a group of Muslim men sitting on a bench, she wanted to help but they would not talk to her because she was a woman, she wasn't seen as an equal partner. There had been several thousands of refugees passing through, and it was only one case. This girl got very upset, it was a bad experience for her. (Migrant and refugee aid organisation 2)

It was very hot, most volunteers were young women, and in the wooden house, it was extremely hot. So, they were wearing clothes that was not covering much of their body. Someone among the volunteers raised this issue saying that it is disrespectful towards Muslim men. (Migrant and refugee aid organisation 2)

Women's issues, menstruation, pregnancy, sexual diseases etc. are taboo in these cultures. We tried to address this as well, we were distributing sanitary towels but nobody ever took

one. There was a Muslim girl among the volunteers, with headscarf, so she could persuade refugee women to use them. (Migrant and refugee aid organisation 2)

The impact of the Islamophobic campaigns impacted Muslim women as well. Hiding Muslim identity, as we have seen in the IMHEF, also appeared in relation to women as well. Muslim women often choose to take off their headscarves to avoid abuse or offences from non-Muslims.

Muslim women say that it's very hard for them, because of their headscarf. One woman says she always takes off her headscarf when she goes teaching. If someone is dark skinned, it is even harder. (Interreligious organisation 1)

### **Critical Frame (CF)**

The critical frame in the media and political texts is criticising both the security and the humanitarian approaches for being biased and one-sided. This frame was found only in a few interviews emphasizing that security issues and humanitarian issues should be both on the agenda for political actors.

The Socialist Party has to keep the balance. Today if a political force says openly that everybody [all refugees] should be accepted, it's a political suicide. The government is always stronger in the field of security. The governing party communicates this effectively. But we also have security proposals. We handle the issue of keeping the balance by dividing the roles, we have politicians who deal with security issues, and others who deal with humanitarian topics, mainly women. How are these two linked in people's heads? This is a good question. (Politician 2)

### **Anti-terrorism Frame (ATF)**

The anti-terrorism frame came up in the interviews as a threat to Muslim individuals who are exposed to abuses from the majority society. They are often identified in their everyday interactions as terrorists.

ISIS and terrorism are the result of wars, they are not part of the religion. The daughter of a friend of mine was asked in a bus 'when you are going to blow yourself up'? Anyone who knows Islam, would not identify aggression and terrorism with the religion. (Interreligious organisation 2)

Identifying Islam with terrorism is said to be a general phenomenon, often heard in various public discourses.

Lately because of the migration crisis Islamophobia has increased. We had a round-table organized about Islamophobia. One of the presenters said that if somebody says that Islam has nothing to do with terrorism then it is a lie. I think this statement represents what we mean by Islamophobia. (Interreligious organisation 2)

## **5. Ranking of counter-narratives/counter-frames**

Based on a simple frequency counting, we provide ranking of narratives (frames) in media and political texts while keeping in mind that ours is a qualitative analysis using a rather limited sample. Therefore,



the ranking deduced from our data is not generalisable, nonetheless, is a good indication of the tendencies of how counter-narratives are constructed. We also looked at the frequency of topics and frames used in the interviews by counting how many times each was mentioned and then we added up these numbers. The results of this counting should also be regarded with caution. Interviews have complex and often circular or repetitive narratives. Therefore, counting topics and frames only gives us an indication as to which are the more or less important or dominant ones. The numbers presented here therefore should be seen as proxies to weigh topics and frames in connection to one another.

In the analysed media the most frequent frame is the humanitarian, then the anti-terrorism, the migration/refugee policy, the critical, the tolerance, the Islam/Muslims in Hungary and Europe, the gender and the Muslim refugees frame. The political narratives have a different ranking, starting with anti-terrorism, migration/refugee policy, tolerance, the Islam/Muslims in Hungary and Europe, the critical, the humanitarian, the gender and the Muslim refugee frame.

The most frequently used frame in the interviews is the tolerance frame. The second most frequently used one is the Islam/Muslim in Hungary/Europe frame and the third most frequently mentioned one is the humanitarian frame. The Muslim refugees frame and the migration and refugee policy frame were also found in some of the interviews, however, with a much lower frequency than the first three. The critical frame appeared only a few times.

Summary table of counter frames in index.hu (45 articles)

Counter frames	Humanitarian	Anti-terrorism	Migration/refugee policy	Critical	Tolerance	Islam/Muslims in Hungary and Europe	Gender	Muslim migrants/refugees
Index.hu	12	9	5	2	9	4	3	2

Summary table of counter frames mentioned by opposition parties on their websites

Party/out of publications	Anti-terrorism	Migration/refugee policy	Tolerance	Critical	Islam/Muslim in Hungary/Europe	Humanitarian	Gender	Muslim refugees
DK (12)	6	6	4		2			
MSZP (8)	6	1	2					
Együtt (13)	3	3	1	5		2		
PM (10)		4	2					
LMP (4)	2	1	1	3				
<b>Total (47)</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>		

Counter frames used by interviewees

	TF	IMHEF	HF	MRF	MRPF	GF	CF	ATF
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Organizations working on intercultural, interreligious dialogue								
Interreligious organisation 1	8	2				2		
Interreligious organisation 2	10							1
Interreligious organisation 3	4	4			1			
Interreligious organisation 4		5			3		2	
Muslim organizations/Muslim individuals								
Muslim religious organisation 1	7	3	1					
Muslim religious organisation 2	10		1		1			
Muslim religious organisation 3	8							
Muslim individual 1		4						
Muslim individual 2		2						
Migrant/refugee aid organizations/political actors								
Politician 1	2		7	2	5			
Politician 2	6	1					1	
Migrant and refugee aid organisation 1	3		1	1	1			
Migrant and refugee aid organisation 2	3	1	2	4		3		
Migrant and refugee aid organisation 3	2		1					
Migrant and refugee aid organisation 4	2			1	1			
Migrant and refugee aid organisation 5			3	1				
Migrant and refugee aid organisation 6		1	1	1				
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>

Summary table of counter frames in the media, the political and the interview data

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
Ranking of counter frames used by <b>opposition political parties</b>	Anti-terrorism	Migration/refugee policy	Tolerance	Critical	Islam/Muslim in Hungary/Europe Humanitarian	
Ranking of counter frames in <b>media</b>	Humanitarian	Anti-terrorism Tolerance	Migration/refugee policy	Islam/Muslim in Hungary/Europe	Gender	Critical Muslim refugees
Ranking of counter frames in <b>interviews</b>	Tolerance	Islam/Muslim in	Humanitarian	Muslim migrants/	Migration/refugee policy	Critical

		Hungary/Eu rope		refugees		
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## 6. Conclusions

In our paper we aimed to reveal which counter-narratives to Islamophobia are present in Hungary. In our previous research report we analysed dominant narratives of Islamophobia in the context of the populist and illiberal political environment where anti-migrant and accompanying anti-Muslim narratives are used by the government and its allies, as well as the populist far-right, in media and politics. The frame analysis of some selected media texts revealed that Islamophobia, as it appears in media and politics, is mainly concerned with two aspects of security, the physical and the symbolic. In this current report our objective was to see what counter-narratives could be identified, and also how they are related to the dominant Islamophobic narratives. The Islamophobic narratives first and foremost used the securitising strategy when talking about migration and the refugee crisis. Besides securitisation, the narratives also politicised the migration/refugee question by framing it as a question of belonging: who constitutes our national and cultural entity and who is an enemy (Szalai-Göbl, 2015). While using frame analysis of selected media and political texts as well as interviews with stakeholders, we also intended to interpret counter-frames as to how they desecuritize or depoliticise the migration question and whether they re-politicise (Mudde, 2016) the topic and thus offer an effective reframing of the dominant narratives.

Through our frame analysis of articles in an opposition news portal ([index.hu](http://index.hu)), texts published by democratic opposition parties on their websites as well as interviews with organizations and NGOs dealing with intercultural dialogue, or active in helping migrants and refugees and Muslim organizations and individuals, we identified eight counter-frames: humanitarian, anti-terrorism, migration and refugee policy, critical, tolerance, Islam and Muslims in Hungary and Europe, gender and Muslim refugees.

The humanitarian frame in the media sees the individual human being behind the politicised refugee and migrant, who actually tries to save his life and flee from civil wars and ISIS and who only finds himself abused by authorities when arriving in a safe country. They might come from countries labelled as 'safe' by government politicians, the frame shows how unsafe these countries are in reality. While doing so, the humanitarian frame always highlights the negative aspects of government policies and its xenophobic features concerning the refugee crisis. In the meanwhile, the humanitarian frame also speaks about the human weaknesses of refugees thus avoid picturing them only as a homogenous vulnerable group. While the humanitarian frame is the most dominant frame in the analysed news portal, this is the least frequently used one in the democratic opposition political parties' rhetoric. Concerning interviews, what constitutes a major difference between the humanitarian frame in the media and in the narrative of our respondents is that the media frame highlights that refugees are escaping civil wars and ISIS while aid organisations and workers did not ask or enquire about who came from where and for what reason, whether they really had to flee from dangerous and life-threatening situations or not. They limited their focus on one dimension of the people coming here, their need for help for subsistence, health and other physical needs. They did see the individual but deliberately without their other more complex aspects (of country of origin, religion, culture, status or situation, etc.). Their neutrality was based on focusing on that one dimension of human need.

The anti-terrorism frame's most important issue is to differentiate between radical and non-radical Islam and emphasise that the majority of Muslims are not terrorists but many of them are rather

victims of that terrorism. It equally points out that it is the second or third generation socially excluded Muslim youth who easily fall prey of radicalised groups while the stigmatising anti-Islamist rhetoric and the conflation of radical and non-radical Muslims may contribute to their radicalisation. The anti-terrorism frame's government critique concerns the state's incapacity of implementing substantive anti-terrorism measures and its controversial deed of accusing asylum seekers of terrorist acts. The anti-terrorism frame is the most dominant frame in the rhetoric of the opposition political parties, which is constructed very much the same way as the media frame, containing a few additional components such as the assertion that hate campaigns that conflate (Muslim) migrants with terrorists is a security risk for the country. Hungary should instead work together for a real solution with its European allies. In the interviews, the anti-terrorism frame was mentioned in relation to how Muslim individuals are associated with terrorism in their everyday interpersonal interactions as a result of the hate campaigns and the hostile environment.

As for the migration and refugee policy frame, its main message in the media and political texts is that refugee and migration policies are two different things that are deliberately confused by the government allowing for blaming refugees for illegally entering the country as economic migrants. This terminology blurring is one of the main strategies of the anti-migrant, anti-Islam government rhetoric that is being reinforced by the Russian information war launched at the outset of the refugee crisis in Eastern Europe. The disentanglement of the two policies highlight how Hungary by the way of its handling of refugees and migrants breaks international laws while it also points to the need of a real migration policy. The migration and refugee policy frame in the interviews has similar content to how it is constructed in the media and political texts. However, here we get insight into how the hate campaigns impact negatively the life of Muslim individuals.

The critical frame in the media and political texts is an in-between stance that not only criticises the exclusivity of the humanitarian and the security stances, but emphasises that no real solution is possible without taking both into account. This frame was used only in a very few cases in our interviews.

In the media and in political sources the tolerance frame is a vision of an ideal society that is currently under attack by the political regime which is with its hate campaigns and anti-refugee policies building a society that is closed, non-tolerant and exclusive of any kind of difference. In the interviews we could see that the tolerance frame is mainly about respondents expressing their frustration and negative views about the political hate campaigns and xenophobic rhetoric having negative impacts on Muslims living in the country. Talking about promoting alternative rhetoric and strategies to combat this tendency is seen mostly either as a futile effort or only as a goal to be achieved in the far future.

The Islam and Muslims in Hungary and Europe frame is the deconstruction of one of the most often used Islamophobic claims about the Islamization of Europe. It puts the emphasis on social integration and asserts that failures of social integration of immigrants are the causes behind the phenomena that is labelled as Islamization. Comparing the content of the Islam and Muslims in Hungary and Europe frame in the media and political publications to that one in the interviews, we found important differences. While the previous is a deconstruction of the Islamization of Europe narrative pointing to social exclusion and discrimination as being the major factor in the failures of the integration of Muslims, the (Muslim) interviewees talked about how Muslims should behave to achieve successful integration. While in the media/political narrative it is the society's responsibility, in the interviews it is seen as the responsibility of Muslims (a view expressed by Muslims). Needless to say, that it is a case of avoiding stigma and discrimination by minority members through becoming invisible, hiding identity and well-behaving.

The gender frame deconstructs the stereotypes and prejudices of Islamophobic narratives about

sexual violence being an essential attribute of Islam. The difference in gender roles is explained in terms of culture shock and cultural accommodation rather than in essentialising these differences. It is used in the media but not in the political sources. Regarding the lack of mention of this frame in the analysed political texts could be that political narratives focus mainly on politics and policies (anti-terrorism, migration and refugee policies) and much less on any other dimension of the question. Regarding our interviews, on the one hand cultural encounters are mentioned where gender role differences are not problematised but seen as natural. On the other hand, the negative experiences of Muslim women are mentioned as being exposed to abuse due to the visibility of their religious belonging and often choosing to take off their headscarves.

The Muslim refugee frame is a reflection and response to the Islamophobic narrative that attributes negative cultural traits to Muslim refugees, most often identifying them as potential terrorists. In the interviews, the Muslim refugee frame is a reflection on cultural encounters, a recognition of cultural and/or religious differences. The reactions are the result of the tension between the neutrality of the humanitarian approach and the reality of these encounters.

### **Interpreting the counter-frames**

So, the counter-frames of Islamophobia could be interpreted as representing counter narratives to the securitization and politicization of the anti-migrant and refugee rhetoric pushed by the government. Desecuritisation is understood as a narrative aiming to deconstruct and argue against the framing of the refugee crisis as a primarily security question, whereas depoliticisation is seen as addressing issues of conditions of belonging and identity. We argued that the anti-migrant, anti-Muslim narratives are to be understood as the results of the illiberal populist political environment of Hungary, and as such, it would be useful to also explore if any aspects of the migration issue is repoliticised, offering alternatives to simplistic explanations (Mudde, 2016), in the identified frames.

The main narrative of Islamophobia is framed in the security narrative, therefore desecuritisation should be seen as the main strategy of creating counter-narratives. Regarding the content of the frames identified in the different data sources, it is the anti-terrorism frame that directly addresses the main security issue, terrorism. The way it deconstructs the security theme is by highlighting the difference between radical and non-radical Islam. Another frame that puts security and terrorism in the focus is the critical frame. It claims that it is essential to strike the balance between the security risks and humanitarian aspects of the migration, refugee question. The frame of Islam and Muslims in Hungary and Europe also deals with an aspect of terrorism, the radicalisation of Muslim youth. It emphasizes that the failure of social integration is to be blamed for radicalization, so it is the host society that needs to take effective measures to integrate these populations. The migration and refugee policy frame also directly focuses on security by clarifying that illegal migration is different from asylum seeking and that migration can also be legal and well-regulated by the state. To some extent, the humanitarian frame also reflects security concerns by giving a human face to refugees and distinguishing them from terrorists. The Muslim refugee frame and the gender frame are both concerned with deconstructing stereotypes concerning the figure of the “threatening” Muslim.

The question of belonging and identity is addressed from a specific aspect in the tolerance frame. The way it sees an ideal society is in opposition to how it is framed in the anti-migrant and anti-Islam narrative. It expands the notion of national identity and belonging to other cultures and religions bond together through tolerance. The frame can be understood as a way of depoliticising the migrant/refugee question.

As an overall assessment of the counter-frames regarding how they tackle issues of the migration questions and related Islamophobia and eventually how effective they might be, the concept of

repoliticisation could be used. As previously stated, it refers to what arguments, narratives or frames are formulated to give alternatives to simplistic explanations. All counter-frames we identified could be seen as countering some aspect of security of the anti-migrant and anti-Muslim narrative. Can they be regarded as providing alternatives to framing migration and Muslims as a physical and a symbolic, identity threat? They definitely represent alternative views and formulations, however, they could all be characterised as providing complex explanations of the issues they tackle. E.g. seeing the humans, individuals behind the threatening figures of migrant/terrorist/Muslim, understanding complex social processes such as social integration and exclusion, and recognising the difference between legal and illegal migration processes. Also accepting that national belonging could be based on difference instead of similarities, is in direct opposition to what the populist narrative is about. In brief, counter-frames could be bases for the formulation of effective narratives, however, it is a question how they could help repoliticise complex issues.

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