EU news and the missing human face

A content analysis of EU news coverage from 2001-2010

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Abstract

When the European Commission in February 2006 launched a new communication strategy, it was acknowledging that there is a knowledge and information gap between EU and its citizens. With the communication policy the European Commission tried to take measures to reach out to the public in the member states. One way to do so was to work with media. In the European communication policy the European Commission sat two goals for the work with the media; promote more human interest stories in the EU News and to assist the need for EU news to be reported in a national, regional or local dimension.

The aim of this study is to see whether or not the European Commission’s communication policy had been able to reach their goals regarding media by answering the question: How is the communication policy reflected in media coverage?

This study sets out to investigate if there have been a development in the EU news coverage over a period of time of 10 years. Looking for changes over time in two aspects of the EU coverage; the use of human interest frame and reporting in a national, regional or local dimension, is the way to find an answer to the posed question.

The overall finding of this study is that there has been no significant development neither toward an increased use of human interest frame, or toward an increased use of national dimension in the reporting of EU news. In fact, the most significant changes found in Danish media are that the frequency of the use of human interest frame and national dimension decreased in the period following the launch of the communication policy. In British media is found a slight increase in the use of human interest frame, an increase that could not be explained by other factors coded in the analysis. The increase is, however, not in the use of full-scale human face but merely an increase in one or few of the various elements that a human interest frame consists of.

Based on this study’s findings my conclusion is that the European Commission’s communication policy has not been reflected at all in the European print media’s coverage of EU news in the five year period following the launch of the communication policy.
Chapter 1: Introduction

In May and June 2005 the French and the Dutch citizens pulled the brake on the European integration locomotive by rejecting the “Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe”, also known as the European Constitution, in national held referenda. This was seen as signs of the EU citizens’ dissatisfaction with the European project which have been perceived as a centralist and elitist political club.

These referenda results have brought new life to the debate on the European Union’s democratic deficit; a debate which entails the concepts of interrelated deficits such as the information deficit, understood as the lack of knowledge about EU policies in national public spheres (Thiel 2008, 343), and the communication deficit defined as “insufficient and ineffective provision of information as well as lack of transparency in the policy-making processes” (Thiel 2008, 343).

These events displaying public dissatisfaction and the ongoing debate on the democratic deficits made the new commission in 2004 reconsider its communicative strategies and prior to the 2005 referenda the European Commission had made communication with the citizens a top priority thus a few months after the French and the Dutch rejection of the European Constitution, the Commission initiated the communicative improvements by launching an Action Plan, which resulted in the White Paper on European Union’s communication policy launched in February 2006.

Focus on the strategy towards media

The European Commission has with the new communication strategy acknowledged that there is a communication and information gap between the EU institutions and the citizens. Thus with the 2005 action plan and 2006 white paper the Commission has redefined the communication strategy using communicative efforts aimed more directly the citizens. One of the ways the EU Commission will reach the citizens is by working with ‘the key players in any EU communication policy’ (European Commission; 2006, p.8-9) – the media. The European Commission has two goals regarding the media:
1. Giving Europe a human face; in other words change the way EU news are framed to help citizens understand the relevance of EU affairs.

2. Assisting the need to get national, regional and local dimensions in the political debate thus in the media coverage of EU affairs.

In this paper I will examine to what extent these new goals are reflected in media coverage.

**Previous work on EU’s communication policy anno 2006**

Though already 5 years in play, not many scholars have examined what effects this Communication policy has had on media coverage. Other areas of the communication strategy have been examined however. Studies have been made on the content of the communication strategy. Others critically review it in the light of the debate on the European Public sphere.

Asimina Michailidou examine the EU communication strategy in relation to civil society organizations by critically reviewing the documents on the EU institutions documents on information and communication strategies to see if the Constitutional Treaty has influenced the strategies. Michailidou detects in addition a shift in the ‘post-constitutional’ communication strategy going from one-way to a two-way communication strategy with emphasis on communication instead of information.

“Part of the new strategy is to encourage two-way communication, in order to obtain regular feedback from citizens and collective actors. However, it is not always clear how this particular strand of the strategy is going to be implemented. (Michailidou 2007; p.31)

Mark Thiel has analyzed the European Communication policy and finds a mismatch between the theoretical concepts of trans-national communication and EU’s communicative approach towards the national public spheres. Thiel finds no empirical evidence of an existing European public sphere beyond the Europeanized national public spheres; however he finds that European issues are
primarily covered by national media, as opposed to a pan-European media, thus colored by national considerations. (Thiel 2008; p.347)

When studying the EU’s Communication policy Thiel acknowledges that there are improvements of the strategy such as “listening to the citizens’ needs” and the effort to debate improvements of EU, he is, however, primarily skeptical and critical of the communication strategy:

“…future efforts need […] to actively localize the EU’s policy efforts through the national mass media, which so far has been largely left out of the picture. The communication strategy in its current form, largely based on elites and the Internet as medium, is not suited for reaching the wide audience needed in order to retain, and possibly regain, public support.” (Thiel 2008; p.350)

Thiel suggests a more clearly defined strategy that approaches the national media more actively, seen in the light of the fact that 40% of EU citizens get their EU information from print media, while 70% get it from television news and only 22% from the Internet.

Moreover Bijsmans and Altides analyze the level of information on the policy issues, the policy process and the actors involved in both media coverage and the Commission communication by doing a comparative content analysis on the communication the Commission sends out and the media coverage in two German and two Dutch newspapers. The analysis shows that the Commission and the media emphasize different aspects of the European political process. The media is not as detailed about the policy process as the Commission is in its communication output. Moreover the scholars conclude:

“The lack of references to European citizens’ interests in the media further complicates the Commission’s attempts to prove its legitimacy and the legitimacy of its policies.” (Bijsmans and Altides 2007; p.337)
Research question

As Bijsmanns and Altides state, there is not much knowledge on what EU institutions communicate and how it is reflected in the media (Bijsmanns and Altides 2007; p.325). I find it puzzling how little is known about how these new communicative strategies are reflected in the media. The aim of the policy’s plan is to enhance the work with the media in all dimensions; European, national, regional and local, to get their information across to the EU citizens – without losing too much in transmission - to increase the knowledge of the EU affairs in order for the citizens to actively take part in the debate.

Thus the aim of this study is to assess the effectiveness of EU’s communication strategy towards media. In other words this study examines to what extent the communication policy is reflected in the framing of EU affairs in media coverage. This paper will do so by answering the following question:

RQ: How is the change in the European Commission’s communication policy anno 2006 reflected in media coverage?

Study outline

The following study is divided into three parts, the first focusing on theory and methodology. In chapter 2 I introduce the theoretical framework within which I will discuss the findings of my study. The third chapter describes the methodology and research design. Here I will define the independent and dependent variables of this paper as well as presenting my hypothesis, introduce the codebook and how I will code my variables in the analysis and define my case selection.

The second part is dedicated to the content analysis, which I outline the result of in two chapters. In the first I will focus on the results regarding human interest frame in EU news. I will analyze articles from a Danish newspaper and a British and compare the findings. In the other part I will focus on the results regarding in what ‘dimension’ EU news is reported in. In the third and final part of this study I will discuss the findings from the selected cases and conclude how the European Commission’s communication policy anno 2006 is reflected in the print media’s coverage of EU affairs.
Chapter 2: The theoretical concept of framing

What defines a human interest frame and how it differs from other frames used in media coverage of EU affairs will be the primarily target of this chapter. First, however, I will outline the overall concept of framing.

Although studies and research have been conducted on the theoretically concept of framing over the last three decades there is not one singular definition of framing – or for that matter news frames. However there is some level of agreement on how to distinct between framing and frames.

In the eye of Reese (2001) framing is all about the way interests, communicators, sources, and culture combine to yield coherent ways of understanding the world, which are developed using all of the available verbal and visual symbolic resource. (Reese et al 2001, p. 11)

Framing is by other scholars perceived as a process, that - as Entman notes - includes several ‘locations’ such as the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the culture. Communicators make ((un)-conscious judgments on what to express and how to express something. The text contains frames that are expressed in the presence or absence of certain words, phrases, images, and sources. The receiver’s thinking, interpretation, and evaluations are influenced by these frames [...]. Finally, the broader culture is the ‘stock of commonly evoked frames’ which are exhibited in the discourse and thinking of social groups. (de Vreese, 2003, p. 24)

In order to answer the research question of this study the theoretical focus is on only one of the four locations; namely the text and more specifically news frames.

Summing up the large variety of definitions the general view of what a frame or news frame is portrays it as a way of organizing the issue/story line of the text by emphasizing some elements of the topic over others in order to promote a way to understand the issue/problem of the text.

Frames have been defined as ‘persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of selection emphasis and exclusion by which symbol-handlers routinely organize discourse’, and as ‘interpretive packages’ where the core is ‘a central organizing idea, or frame, for making sense of events suggesting what is at issue.’ (Gitlin 1980; Gamson & Modigliani (1989) in de Vreese 2003, p.26)
De Vreese offers that ‘the concept of news framing takes as a starting point that news media can portray the same topic in very different ways by emphasizing certain aspects of an issue at the expense of others. Based on a conceptualization of a news frame as consisting ‘of specific elements, also called the framing devices […] which define the news frame as distinct from other elements in the news […] while other elements may be referred to as core news facts’ (De Vreese & Kandyla, 2009 p. 459)

Reese offers this definition of what framing is:

“Frames are organizing principles that are socially shared and persistent over time, that work symbolically to meaningfully structure the social world. (Reese et al. 2001, p.11)

One of the more widely accepted definitions is offered by Entman (1993):

To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating context, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described. (Entman, 1993, p. 52, original italic)

This definition Entman has elaborated on:

Framing entails selecting and highlighting some facets of events or issues, and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation, and/or solution. The words and images that make up the frame can be distinguished from the rest of the news by their capacity to stimulate support of or opposition to the sides in a political conflict. (Entman, 2003, p. 417, original italic)
In other words by emphasizing certain aspects of an issue, news frames may influence and shape the opinions of the audience. As Reese (2001) puts it, frames has the power to *actively to bring otherwise amorphous reality into a meaningful structure, making it more than the simple inclusion and exclusion of information.*

Further research into framing has shown that depending on which aspects that are emphasized, a news frame can not only appear as opinion-shaping, certain news frames also appeal more to the audience than others, and might make them more interested in an issue, event, or problem.

**Issue-specific vs. generic news frames**

A news frame, however, is not just a news frame. In spite of the similar definitions on what constitutes a news frame, some scholars argue that a typology of news frames is in place. De Vreese among others suggests a distinction between two types of news frames; *issue-specific news frames* and *generic news frames.*

*Issue-specific news frames*, or thematic news frames, are distinguished by pertaining to specific topics or specific news events. This approach makes it easier to go into details with the event or issue that is under investigation. However, this approach - with the high degree of specificity - makes it difficult to compare and generalize, which in the end makes it hard for theory-building. (De Vreese, 2003 pp.28-29)

*Generic news frames*, on the other hand, are general and not tied to a specific issue. Studies that have used the generic news frames tend to fall into two categories; those who study coverage of political news, and those who link news frames to more general features of news coverage. The latter group has identified a handful of frames that occur commonly in the news. Neuman et al identified *human impact, powerlessness, economics, moral values* and *conflict.* (De Vreese 2003, pp.30-31)

Semetko & Valkenburg (2000) has elaborated on this and other theoretical work and identified the five most common news frames as *attribution of responsibility, conflict, economic consequences, human interest* and *morality frames.*
The human interest frame

In short this generic news frame is known as the news frame that gives the news a human example or human face which the audience can relate to and identify with. A couple of scholars have done great work to identify generic news frames. Neuman et al called one frame human impact and they defined it as a frame that focus on descriptions of individuals and groups affected by an issue. (De Vreese 2003, p.31)

Semetko & Valkenburg, who renamed the frame human interest frame, have found that the human interest frame is one of the five most common frames in media’s EU coverage; the other four frames being attribution of responsibility, conflict, economic consequences, and morality. This particular generic frame is described as a frame that ‘brings a human face or an emotional angle to the presentation of an event, issue, or problem.’ (Semetko & Valkenburg 2000, p.95)

In Bennett’s study of political communication he refers to the human interest frame as ‘personalization’ of the news and calls it ‘an invitation to take the news personally’ because they can find a range of private, emotional meanings in them.’ (Bennett 2007, p.40) Bennett also point out the fine line between human interest frames done right, and human interest frames gone bad:

“If there is a single most important flaw in the American news style, it is the overwhelming tendency to downplay the big social, economic, or political picture in favor of the human trials, tragedies, and triumphs that sit at the surface of the event. […] The tendency to personalize news would be less worrisome if human interest angles were used to hook audience into more serious analysis of issues and problems. Almost all great literature and theater, from the Greek dramas to the modern day, uses strong characters to promote audience identifications and reactions in order to draw people into thinking about larger moral and social issues. American news often stops at the character development stage, however, and leaves the larger lessons and social significance, if there is any, to the imagination of the audience. As a result, the main problem with personalized news is that the focus on personal concerns is seldom linked to more in-depth analysis. “(Bennett 2007, p.41)
This dilemma of the human interest frames ability to either work as a hook to catch the attention of the audience and get them to take interest in the underlying event, or issue, or to just trivialize the event or issue is also a concern of Fine & White. They operate with a fine line between human interest stories, which gather and engage the audience, and ‘tabloidization’, which relies heavily on the celebrity culture:

“By human interest, we refer to media stories that focus on the predicaments and circumstances of particular, but previously unknown, individuals in which the events are presented as irrelevant to public policy. Although all domains, including politics, international relations (including war reports), economics, entertainment, and sports, potentially involve human interest, the archetypal human interest story involves an individual or group previously unknown to the media audience who must face adversity. (Fine & White, 2002: p.58-59)

Human interest stories operate through four interlinked processes, Fine & White argue; 1) media placement, 2) identification, 3) narrative arc, and 4) discursive space. (Fine & White, 2002: p.57). First and foremost, in the process of creating human interest frame stories the media gatekeepers – that is the editorial staff – need to have an open door so to speak, meaning resources to report the human interest story. Second, identification needs to be in place. The setting and the personae are equally important in this part of the process, because the audience / public need to be able to identify with both the human face or human example and the world (s)he lives. An intriguing setting and a great cast is, however, not nearly enough. The narrative arc: a movement in the events over time plays an important role in the process of building a human interest frame. As the raisin in the end of the process, is the discursive space; the story must provide a moral about social life and individuals must find some domain in which they can participate. (Fine & White, 2002: p.60-74)

Common for the above mentioned researchers is that they agree that the advantage of human interest frame is the ability to give the news a human face, something the reader / audience / public can relate to and identify with. Fine & White even argue that human interest stories can create civic
identification which serves as building blocks for a communal concern that is the basis in a public sphere. (Fine & White, 2002: p.76)

There is, however, as several researchers argue, a backside to the medal. Bennett warns against ‘personalization’ of news without a link to larger moral and social issues. Fine & White, too, note, that there is a paradox with human interest stories:

“It is profound in creating social linkages, a demos, but directs attention from other stories and other solutions that might improve the life chances of these very people. It is in its ability to foster identification that the human interest story gains significance as it erases politics and policy. In this, identification is consistent with political passivity.” (Fine & White, 2002: p.77)

As noted above Fine & White state that all domains, including politics, international relations and economics, potentially involve human interest, however, they define human interest stories within the domain of politics as political scandals such as former president Clinton’s affair with Monica Lewinsky. They see true human interest stories as dramas /crime involving ordinary people, e.g. stories of mine workers trapped in a mine, or child abductions. Those kinds of stories fit all four stages in their building-process of a human interest frame. Other researchers, however, such as Semetko & Valkenburg, see differently on the matter of human interest frame and political issues, hence their studies where they have found human interest frame to be the fourth most used news frame when reporting EU news. In the study they define the five most common generic frames, and ways to detect frame elements in a content analysis.

**Human interest frame elements**

As mentioned in above Entman suggests that frames are ‘expressed in the presence or absence of certain words, phrases, images, and sources.’ In other words frames are constructed by different elements or variables that combined make up a frame. On the same note Semetko & Valkenburg (2000) set up five variables for their content analysis in their study. When investigating articles for
human interest news frame they suggest asking five questions regarding five different elements of a human interest news frame; 1) Does the story provide a human example or ‘human face’ on the issue? 2) Does the story employ adjectives that generate feelings of outrage, empathy-caring, sympathy, or compassion? 3) Does the story emphasize how individuals and groups are affected by the issue/problem? 4) Does the story go into the private or personal lives of the actors? 5) Does the story contain visual information that might generate feelings of outrage, empathy-caring, sympathy, or compassion?

In sum, even though there is not one final definition of what constitutes framing or a news frame several scholars have over the past three decades studied the concept, in order to provide a picture of the field of framing and frame analysis. This picture – or collage – consists of the distinction between framing as a process, and frames as a part of this process.

Framing is a process consisting of frame-building (the interaction between elites and media and other factors influencing the building of news frames) and frame-setting (audience frames, or the interaction between media and audience). Another way of putting it is, that framing consist of four stages: the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the culture. The news frames, which are a part of the frame-building process, can be divided into two categories; issue-specific news frames and generic news frames. In this study the focus is on the frame-building part of the framing process, and more specifically the generic news frame; Human interest frame.

This frame goes under several names and descriptions by the various researchers, who have investigated this frame One thing these description have in common is, however, that human interest frame provide the issue, or event reported on a human face / angle and/ or emotions that serve the purpose of creating identification among the audience in order to make them take an interest in the larger issue behind the story told by one from the public sphere. Some scholars see human interest frame as being capable of creating identification for a whole civic society, thus providing the basis for a public sphere.

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1 Of these five components I included only four in my content analysis because I have excluded any visual information and only focused on the written information – the texts.
Chapter 3: Research design and methodology

In the following chapter focus will be on the research design of this paper. I will define the dependent variable: Media content: National media’s coverage of EU affairs in daily papers. Hereafter I will define the independent variable of this research: The EU’s communication policy anno 2006.

I will present the hypothesis of this study and the codebook which will be the guideline for how I analyze the content of the articles I select. Last but not least I will explain my case selection.

The dependent variable: Media content on EU affairs

With the above mentioned research question in mind the dependent variable of this study will be media content on EU affairs. The reason I choose this as the dependent variable of this study is my wish to examine whether the media content has changed since the European Commission launched and effectuated its communication policy.

Since the focus is to explain whether the EU communication policy is reflected in the media content, I operationalize this variable in the study by defining media content as national print media’s coverage of EU affairs. What I will be looking for is how the EU is framed since one of the above mentioned goals of the EU communication policy is to promote a human interest frame of EU affairs news stories. I will also look at on what level the news stories are written in order to investigate the second goal of the communication policy regarding assisting the need to get more national, regional and local dimension in the political debate.

The independent variable: EU’s Communication strategy anno 2006

Since the goal of this study is to examine whether or not media content on EU affairs has changed in the period from 2006-2010 compared to the period from 2001-2005, the independent variable of this study will be the EU’s communication policy from February 2006. Because the goal is to examine if there has been a change in media content on EU affairs, this study will be executed as a
comparative study of the way media was framing EU affairs in articles from before the new communication policy was launched and the way media is framing EU affairs after the launch of the new communicative strategies.

**Hypothesis**

The hypothesis of this study is: If EU’s communication policy has succeeded to promote the goals of *giving EU a more human face* and *assisting a more regional, local and national dimension* in the EU news; the framing of EU affairs will have changed in the media coverage.

**Codebook**

In this study I will conduct a deductive content analysis in order to answer the above mentioned research question and see whether the goal of giving EU news a more human face thus promoting the human interest frame as well as the goal of assisting a more national, regional and local political debate via the media is reflected in the media content. In order to do so I will here define the coding variables and design of the content analysis.

**Coding variables**

The codebook for the content analysis (appendix a) contains 13 variables including two variables which merely functions as identification of the various articles.

I have listed four questions you can answer yes, or no to which will identify whether a human interest frame element has been used or not. These variables are inspired primarily by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000), who used them in their extensive study on framing European politics. (Semetko and Valkenburg 2000; p. 100)

Moreover I have included a variable regarding where the story takes place (variable 9, appendix a) in order to establish whether the news story takes place predominantly on a national, regional, local or European level or in another country. This variable will help me see whether there has been a
change regarding the goal of assisting in a more national, regional and local dimension of the EU political debate.

The variable regarding the tone of the article will give me an idea whether the media included in the analysis are predominately critical / con, pro or neutral towards EU. The last three variables (variable 11-13, appendix a) are variables which give a broader picture of the articles. These variables are inspired by various content analyses that don’t focus on a specific frame. Identifying the primary story topic, the occasion of the article and the genre of the article doesn’t say much about neither a human interest frame nor the national, regional or local dimension, however it will give us an idea about what topics, occasions and genres are primarily used and whether some topics, occasions and genres are combined more often with a human interest frame than others. The variable regarding the use of source I have included because identifying the source is also an indicator of whether or not a human interest frame is used, or whether the EU news is predominantly reported in a national, regional, local or European dimension.

**Intercoder reliability**

I have tested the reproducibility, also known as intercoder reliability, of the study’s data by having a second observer code 30 articles, approximately 5% of the sample. As Krippendorff (2004) states, determining how large a sample needs to be is not simple. Even though the sample was selected randomly the sample of units that was picked out for intercoder reliability the various categories were represented including the more rare occurrences of human interest frame elements (Krippendorff, 2004, p.238-39)

Because of the many different values in the content analysis I have calculated an intercoder reliability score for each area of the analysis; human interest frame, dimension, topic, and genre. Human interest frame scored .83 using Krippendorff’s $a$-agreement method. (Krippendorff, 2004: pp.221-227)² The intercoder reliability score for dimension was .86; the score for genre was .82; and the score for topics was .80. With these scores the data of this study did not obtain *perfect agreement* it did obtain a reliable agreement, as Krippendorff (2004) suggests on to rely on variables with the reliability above .80. (Krippendorff, 2004: p. 241)

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² See Intercoder reliability calculations and scores, appendix b
Case selection

A random selection of articles from print media from two European countries is the foundation of this content analysis. However, the newspapers and the country from where they are published are not chosen randomly.

I analyze print media from Denmark and The United Kingdom (UK) because I wish to examine articles from two countries where the citizens have very different opinions on EU. The United Kingdom (UK) and Denmark are typically seen as both being EU skeptic countries. However, according to the Euro barometer’s public opinion surveys the Danish citizens have changed their minds regarding EU over the last decade. In the period this research cover – from 2001 to 2010 – a higher percentage of Danes thinks that EU is a good thing than the average EU citizens whereas the percentage of British citizens that think EU is a good thing is much lower than the average. In other words, the Danes have become pro EU whereas the UK citizens are still not in favor of EU. (European Commission, Eurobarometer, 2011 & 2010-2001)

I have selected a media from both a pro EU country and a EU-skeptic country because it will be interesting to see whether there are differences in the way EU affairs are covered and moreover whether or not the tendencies of human interest angle is higher in a media from a pro-EU country than in a media from a EU-skeptic country. Analyzing and comparing print media from two countries that have the same opinion on EU would give a one-sided picture of the media coverage, which is why it is important to include countries with different opinions on EU to get a more balanced picture of the media coverage.

The papers I will select articles from are the Danish daily Politiken and the British daily The Guardian. It would have preferable to include more than one paper from each country to get a broader and more accurate picture of the media coverage of EU affairs. Although I acknowledge that selecting one newspaper per country might not provide the fully accurate picture of the coverage of EU news in that country, I believe that this approach is sufficient to consider the over-time changes and that one paper provides a satisfactory proxy for the general media landscape in the country. Furthermore I have selected newspapers, which are known as quality papers and know to act as agenda-setters to other news media (see for a similar argument on news coverage and support for European integration Vliegenthart et al, 2008).

I will analyze articles from two time periods – the first period is from January 2001 till the end of 2005, and the second period is from 2006 to the end of 2010. This timeframe is chosen because I
want to look at the five years the communication policy has been in play – that is the second period. In order to see if there has been any change after the launch of the communication policy, I find it relevant and necessary to analyze the articles published in the period just before the EU Commissions communicative changes and compare it to the second period. Since Politiken has published nearly 10,000 articles about “EU” and The Guardian has published about 6300 articles about “European community / EU” in this timeframe, I have randomly selected a sample of articles. Using a random integer generator (from random.org) I have randomly selected 25 days a year and analyzed articles from these days. I have set up three criteria that the articles included in the analysis meet; 1) the topic has to be directly related to EU affairs, 2) the article must be over 100 words and 3) the articles must be written by editorial staff because it is the frames made by the editorial staff that are the focus of this study and not the frames that are formed by those who express their opinion directly in their letters-to-the-editor. These criteria eliminate articles where EU is mentioned even though the topic is not EU affairs, the short notices and letters-to- the editor.

**Measurement of human interest frame**

A test analysis showed that an article can contain either just a single human interest frame element or several or all four human interest elements; in other words human interest frame elements can be used in higher or lesser degrees – the level of how high or low a human interest frame is, varies accordingly to how many elements an article contains. The matrix illustrates how the human interest frame elements in four articles from the sample of 611 articles were coded; 1 meaning yes for presence in the article:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Human face</th>
<th>Adjectives</th>
<th>Emphasis</th>
<th>Private sphere</th>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
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</tbody>
</table>
In order to answer the research question of this study thoroughly, I will not only establish whether or not Danish and British media were giving EU news a human face, I will also establish what degree of human interest frame is commonly used. Thus a form of measurement is needed. In this study I operate with four degrees; full-scale, high-scale, medium-scale or low-scale human interest frame. The matrix shows articles of low-scale (only one frame element), medium-scale (two elements), high-scale (three elements) and full-scale (all four elements), and the higher or fuller the scale of elements, the more human interest is present in the articles.
Chapter 4: Results – human interest frame

The first goal of this study is to establish whether there has been a change towards more use of the human interest frame in print media since the European Commission launched its communication policy, which has set a goal of promoting the human interest angle in EU news.

In order to establish whether there has been changes, I have conducted the content analysis in two parts; prior and post the European Commission’s launch of communication policy. The results of the first part of the content analysis give a view of how EU reporting in print media was in the two selected EU member states prior to the launch of European Commission’s communication policy. However, the results do not answer the question for this study. The results of the second part of the content analysis will, however, give a view of how EU reporting has been in the five-year period post communication policy and whether it has changed since the launch of the policy thus providing data that can help answering this study’s research question. The results of the content analysis will be outlined first individually, and then compared in this and the following chapters. In this chapter I will outline the results of the content analysis regarding human interest frame.

From the first period I have analyzed a sample of 385 articles, which is the amount of articles that was published on the random 25 days and fit my criteria. Of this sample 255 articles were published in Politiken, and 130 articles in the Guardian. In other words, Politiken published in average two articles a day on EU affairs whereas The Guardian only published one article a day.

The results for the second period are based on the analysis of a sample of 226 articles, which were published on the 25 random days I have selected samples from and fit my criteria. Of these articles 138 were from Politiken, and 88 from The Guardian. The difference in the quantity of EU news reported in the Danish and the British daily remains the same, however there has been a notably decline in articles on EU affairs in both newspapers. In other words, Politiken went from an average of two articles a day to an average of one article a day, and the Guardian’s average of one article a day also declined to less than one article a day.

Human interest in Danish EU news reporting prior communication policy

The human interest frame elements occasionally appeared in the Danish media coverage prior to the launch of the communication policy. 255 articles were analyzed and out of this sample 210 were
found to be without any of the four human interest elements. Of the 45 articles containing human interest frame elements, only 9 articles had two or more of the human interest variables. Three articles had three of the human interest variables whereas only two articles had all four elements. As figure 1 show reporting EU news using the full-scale, high-scale and medium-scale human interest frame was rarely in this period whereas the low-scale human interest frame was more common.

**Fig. 1: Human interest frame elements in Danish media 2001-2005**

The most used human interest variables in Danish media coverage on EU affairs were *emphasis on how a group / individual is affected (by the issue/problem)* and *adjectives that generate feelings*.

As shown in table 1 these elements were typically used in articles about business and economy, agriculture and environment & traffic, which are topic categories covering issues such as business, economy, agricultural products, in other words what we eat, and environment including use of chemicals in our daily life. These issues can and do have an impact on the citizens’ lives. *Adjectives that generate feelings of outrage, sympathy, empathy-caring or compassion* was also used in
articles on topics such as EU affairs and welfare & social topics\(^3\) whereas *emphasis on how a group or individual will be affected* was also used in articles on the topics agriculture and environment & traffic.\(^4\)

Table 1: Top 5 topics of articles containing human interest frame, Politiken 2001-2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>No. of articles w/ human face</th>
<th>No. of articles w/adjectives</th>
<th>No. of articles w/emphasis</th>
<th>No. of articles w/private life</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment &amp; traffic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare &amp; social politics</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU affairs</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{\ast}\) The topics used in the content analysis. See a more detailed explanation of what topic the topic categories include in the codebook, appendix A.

The readers of Politiken were once and awhile introduced to a *“human face”* that has had personal experience with, or was affected by the topic of the story, and rarely the reader was taken *into the private or personal life* of the actor in the article. These human interest frame elements were primarily used in articles on EU affairs which cover articles related to issues related to non-political areas e.g. the enlargement, the bureaucracy of EU, the democracy and more. Two out of the four articles including *into the private or personal life* variable and one third of the articles including the variable *human face* were related to EU affairs, or more specifically to the enlargement process.

\(^3\) EU affairs (bureaucracy, democracy, institutions, enlargement, treaty negotiations, EU treaty, meetings within EU or with EU and other countries, non-political EU affairs), welfare & social politics (children, elder, health, law and order, violence, crime) Codebook, appendix A

\(^4\) Agriculture (CAP, farm produce (wine, wheat, meat, fish, poultry, diary)), Environment & traffic (CO\(_2\), climate, energy, chemicals, traffic (road and air)) Codebook, appendix A
These three articles including the human interest frame elements were feature articles related to the EU enlargement; either the occasion for writing the article, or the topic itself was related to the EU enlargement. In these articles the reporter wrote about issues regarding the new member states or EU’s new neighbors. In other words, in this period Politiken incorporated a fully human interest frame to introduce the readers to some of the issues and problems of enlarging EU by giving the new member states faces. The articles containing low-, medium- or high-scale human interest frame were primarily on topics from the categories economy, agriculture and environment as table 1 shows.

**Human interest elements and use of genre**

The study also showed that the various human interest frame elements were used differently. The elements of *human face* and *into the private or personal life* were only used in feature or background articles, portraits and interviews, whereas the other two elements were also used in news articles. As table 2 show particularly the variable of *emphasis on how a group or individual will be affected* was used in news articles. The study shows that 22 out of the 36 times this frame element was found it was used in a news article. The study also showed that out of the sample of 255 articles from Danish media prior to the launch of the communication policy the vast majority - 63 % articles – was news stories. The second and third most used article genre was feature / background articles and short news.
Table 2: Human interest frame and genre of articles, Politiken 2001-2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Articles w/ human face</th>
<th>Articles w/adjectives</th>
<th>Articles w/emphasis</th>
<th>Articles w/private life</th>
<th>Total no of articles / %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>News</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>161 / 63 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature / background</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>41 / 16 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News analysis</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10 / 4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portrait</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4 / 2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10 / 4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editorial / commentary</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11 / 4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short news</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16 / 6 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Total number of articles and what percentage each genre make out of the total analyzed sample.

**Human interest in British EU news reporting prior communication policy**

In the period from January 2001 to December 2005 the human interest frame element were very rarely used in the British media coverage on EU affairs. Of the 130 articles included in the analysis there was found human interest frame elements in only five of them. As fig. 2 show the human interest frame elements that was primarily used, was the element *human face*. The elements *emphasis on how a group or individual will be affected and into the private or personal life* were both used twice, whereas the element of *adjectives that generate feelings* was not used once. In the majority of the articles where human interest frame elements was found the human interest frame elements were used solo. Only in one article two variables appear at the same time. In other words, human interest frame was used in neither full-scale nor high-scale, but in low-scale very rarely.

**Fig. 2: Human interest frame elements in British media, 2001-2005**
In the British media the human interest elements was primarily used in articles on topics that go into the categories welfare & social politics and value-based political issues, and also economy, EU affairs, as table 3 shows. With such a low frequency in the use of human interest frame variables I cannot argue that the study shows a reliable pattern of when and how the frame elements are used.

Value-based political subjects (e.g. immigrants, refugees, minorities, integration, third world aid, art, culture, entertainment, monarchy, sport, religion) – Codebook, appendix a.
Table 3: Top 4 topics of articles containing human interest frame, The Guardian 2001-2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>No. of articles w/ human face</th>
<th>No. of articles w/adjectives</th>
<th>No. of articles w/emphasis</th>
<th>No. of articles w/private life</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare &amp; social politics</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value-based political issues</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU affairs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The topics used in the content analysis. See a more detailed explanation of what topic the topic categories include in the codebook, appendix a.*

**Human interest elements and use of genre**

The infrequency of human interest elements in British media’s EU news coverage in this period does not tell much about what genres human interest frame elements were typically used in. The study, however, shows that like in Danish media the human interest frame elements were used in news and background / feature articles. In two of the five cases human interest frame elements were used in news article, in other two cases the frame was used in feature / background articles. In one case it was used in a commentary / editorial, as table 3a shows.

**An occasionally glimpse of a human face**

In sum, the first part of the content analyses in this study shows that human interest frame were used occasionally in the Danish and British media coverage of EU affairs in the period prior to the launch of the communication policy. In Politiken human interest frame elements were found in about one out of six articles which is a more frequent use of the frame variables than in the British media coverage where only about 4% of the articles contained human interest variables. The analyses also found a difference in the way the various elements, which human interest frame consist of, was used. In only one of the 385 Danish and 130 British articles was all four human interest frame variables found, and in only four of the sample were three variables found in the
same article. In other words, when Danish and British media do use a human interest frame, they
tend to use one or two elements of the human interest frame, and rarely Danish media use a full-
scale, or high-scale, human interest frame. In Danish media coverage of EU news the human
interest frame variables used most were *adjectives that generate feelings* and *emphasis on how a
group or individual is affected by the issue/problem*, whereas *human face* and *into the actor’s
private life* are variables primarily used in the British EU media coverage.

In spite of the differences in use of human interest frame there are similarities between the two
countries’ media coverage. Both in Danish and British media the human interest frame is used in
articles about EU affairs and economy, primarily, but also articles on welfare & social politics and
value-based political subjects. Another similarity is the genre. The human interest frame is used
primarily in news and feature / background stories in both Danish and British media and
occasionally in commentary/editorials, portraits and interviews.

Table 3a: Human interest frame and genre of articles, The Guardian 2001-2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Articles w/ human face</th>
<th>Articles w/ adjectives</th>
<th>Articles w/ emphasis</th>
<th>Articles w/ private life</th>
<th>Total no of articles / %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>News</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>97 / 75 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature / background</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10 / 8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News analysis</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 / 0.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portrait</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editorial / commentary</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14 / 11 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short news</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7 / 5 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Total number of articles and what percentage each genre make out of the total analyzed sample.
Human interest frame in Danish EU news post communication policy

The human interest frame was not a common frame used in Politiken’s coverage of EU news in the period from 2006 to 2010. In fact the frame was only used in 10 of the 138 articles analyzed from this period. As figure 3 shows the most common human interest frame elements were human example or “human face” and emphasis on how group/individual is affected, whereas the other two variables were only used once or twice. Figure 3 also shows that in only one of the 138 articles the human interest frame element into private/personal life of an actor was found, and in that one article all four human interest variables were found (see coding sheet Politiken 2006-2010, appendix d). This one article, which was a feature article published together with a news article on EU’s lack of rules and directives on the gun market in EU, used all four of the human interest variables included in this study to tell the story of the man who sold a gun to a young man who kills a little girl and now he wants more gun control. In other words the topic is law & order thus part of the category welfare & social politics.

Fig. 3: Human interest frame in Politiken 2006-2010

![Graph showing human interest frame in Politiken 2006-2010](image)
Human interest and the topics

The element *adjectives that generate feelings* was used only two times in the 138 articles, and it was used in articles on welfare & social politics and EU affairs.

In six of the ten articles where human interest elements were found, only one element was used. As figure 3 shows it was typically the elements *human face* and *emphasis on how group/individual is affected* that appeared solo in the articles, whereas the other two elements only appeared together with other elements. The *human face* was primarily used in articles on topics that go into the category of welfare & social politic and value-based political issues\(^6\), but also in articles on EU affairs, agriculture and economy\(^7\). The element *emphasis on how group/individual is affected* was primarily used in articles on economy and on value-based political subjects; however it is also used in articles on welfare & social politics and agriculture, as shown in table 4.

Table 4: Top 5 topics of articles containing human interest frame, Politiken 2006-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics(^a)</th>
<th>No.of articles w/ human face</th>
<th>No. of articles w/adjectives</th>
<th>No. of articles w/emphasis</th>
<th>No. of articles w/private life</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare &amp; social politics</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value-based political issues</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU affairs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) The topics used in the content analysis. See a more detailed explanation of what topic the topic categories include.

\(^6\) welfare & social politics (children, elder, health, law and order, violence, crime)

value-based political subjects (e.g. immigrants, refugees, minorities, integration, third world aid, art, culture, entertainment, monarchy, sport, religion) – Codebook, appendix a.

\(^7\) Agriculture (CAP, farm produce (wine, wheat, meat, fish, poultry, diary)) EU affairs (bureaucracy, democracy, institutions, enlargement, treaty negotiations, EU treaty, meetings within EU or with EU and other countries, non-political EU affairs) economy (unemployment, labor politics, taxes, subsidies, business community, fiscal problems, Euro, fraud with EU funds)
Human interest elements and the use of genre

The human interest variables primarily appeared in feature/background articles, however three of the seven human face variables were found in news articles. Human face, adjectives that generate feelings and emphasis on how group/individual is affected variables were also found in interview articles. On one occasion emphasis on how group/individual is affected was found in a news analysis, as table 4a shows. There was, however, found no human interest variables in short news and editorials / commentaries in Danish print media post communication policy.

Table 4a: Human interest frame and genre of articles, Politiken 2006-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Articles w/ human face</th>
<th>Articles w/adjectives</th>
<th>Articles w/emphasis</th>
<th>Articles w/private life</th>
<th>Total no of articles / %a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>News</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>59 / 43 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature / background</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>37 / 27 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News analysis</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20 / 14 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portrait</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 / 0,5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5 / 4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editorial / commentary</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4 / 3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short news</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12 / 8,5 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Total number of articles and what percentage each genre make out of the total analyzed sample.

Human interest frame in British EU reporting post Communication policy

The use of human interest frame is slightly more used in the British media than in the Danish in this period, and significantly more used in British media this period than before the launch of the European Commission’s communication policy. One or more of the human interest frame elements
were used in 11 of the 88 articles randomly selected from primo January 2006 to end of December 2010. As in the Danish media it was in particular the variables human face and emphasis on how group/individual is affected that are used in the articles with human interest frame, whereas the two other variables rarely are used. As figure 4 shows there was found no full-scale human interest frame, there was, however, found one high-scale human interest frame.

**Figure 4: Human interest frame elements in British media, 2006-2010**

As table 5 shows the most used frame element emphasis on how group/individual is affected was primarily used in articles on topics that fit in the categories economy and welfare & social politics. The human face variable was equally used in articles on topics such as welfare & social politics, foreign policy and agriculture.

The two times the variable into private/personal life of an actor was used it is in articles on topics such as economy and EU affairs. The variable adjectives that generate feelings was found once in an article on foreign policy.

---

8 I refer to the categories in the codebook, appendix a as in the previous notes.  
9 Ibid.
Table 5: Top 4 topics of articles containing human interest frame, The Guardian 2006-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>No. of articles w/ human face</th>
<th>No. of articles w/adjectives</th>
<th>No. of articles w/emphasis</th>
<th>No. of articles w/private life</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Policy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare &amp; social politics</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU affairs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The topics used in the content analysis. See a more detailed explanation of what topic the topic categories include in the codebook, appendix a.

**Human interest frame and genre**

The human interest variables are in this period used primarily in news articles and feature/background articles. *Human face* appears more often in a feature/background article, however in two out of six cases the variable is found in a news article. The news genre is where the majority of *emphasis on how group/individual is affected* was found however the rest of the variables of this category were found in feature/background articles. Human interest variables were also found in one commentary/editorial and in an interview.
Table 5a Human interest frame and genre of articles, The Guardian 2006-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Articles w/human face</th>
<th>Articles w/adjectives</th>
<th>Articles w/emphasis</th>
<th>Articles w/private life</th>
<th>Total no of articles / %&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>News</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>56 / 64 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature / background</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14 / 16 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News analysis</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portrait</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 / 1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editorial / commentary</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5 / 6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short news</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11 / 12 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannot be defined</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 / 1 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup> Total number of articles and what percentage each genre make out of the total analyzed sample.

**A rare glimpse of a human face**

In sum, in this period both Danish and British media use occasionally human interest frame in the coverage of EU news, however the human interest frame variables are only used in 10 out of 138 Danish articles on EU affairs, whereas the frame variables are found in 11 out of 88 British articles. In other words, the British media tend to use the frame variables slightly more frequent than the Danish media in this period.

In both Danish and British media there were only found one or two variables in the majority of articles that contained human interest frame variables. In the analysis of Danish media only one article containing all four variables was found, and only one article in British media contained three variables. In other words, when Danish and British media occasionally use the human interest
frame, they only use one or two of the variables. On rare occasions the Danish media use a full-scale human interest scale, and British media use a nearly full-scale frame.

The human interest frame variables found to be the most common in both Danish and British media are emphasis on how group/individual is affected and human face. These variables appear solo in 6 out 10 Danish articles, and 6 out of 11 British articles. The two most used frame variables appeared in Danish media primarily in articles on welfare & social politics, value-based political subjects, economy and EU affairs, whereas they appeared primarily in British articles on welfare & social politics, environment and foreign policy.

Where the Danish and British media resemble each other in regards to which human interest frame variables are used more and in which topic categories human interest variables were found, the two media differ slightly in what genre the variables were found.

In Danish media the variables were primarily found in feature/background articles, however in three of the ten articles human face was found in a news article and in one occasion in a news analysis. The human interest frame variable was also primarily found in feature / background articles in British media, however in five of the 11 articles, where human interest frame variables were found, were news articles.
Chapter 5: Results – the dimension

The second goal of this study is to establish whether there has been a change towards a more, national, regional or local dimension in the reporting of EU news. Aside from giving EU news a human face the European Commission wants to assist the need to get a national, regional and local dimension into the reporting of EU affairs. The first part of this analysis gives us a picture of in what dimension the media report EU news in Denmark and Britain prior the Communication policy. This second part of the analysis will outline another aspect of the picture of media coverage of EU news in Danish and British print media. It give an idea of on what level EU news primarily was reported post communication policy thus help find the answer to the question this study set out to answer; namely how EU’s communication policy is reflected in the media coverage of EU affairs.

The dimension in Danish EU reporting, 2001-2005

The content analysis showed that Politiken’s coverage of EU affairs was rather balanced between the national, regional and local dimension and the European dimension tending to lean more towards the national dimension. Of the sample analyzed 43 % articles were reported in a national dimension, as table 7 shows, whereas 40 % were reported in a European dimension. Add to this the articles reported in a sub-European dimension and the balance tips over toward a European dimension.

Not surprisingly topics related to national EU affairs10 were reported in a national dimension; however 13% of the national dimension articles were in fact about EU affairs which make this topic the most dominating topic among the articles reported in a national dimension. Other topics which were reported in a national dimension are agriculture, economy, environment & traffic and welfare & social political subjects. ( see coding sheet, appendix b)

The articles reported in a European or sub-European dimension tended to be about EU affairs such as enlargement or EU summits, however, the topics national EU affairs, agriculture, economy and

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10 National EU affairs (EU affairs that has to do with one member state’s national affairs, such as referenda, opt outs, public opinion on EU and the nation’s membership of EU) Codebook, appendix a
foreign policy\textsuperscript{11} were also reported in a European or sub-European dimension. Of the 17 articles which were reported in a non-European dimension, 9 were related to the topic EU affairs and in 6 cases related to the topic of foreign policy.

Table 6: The dimension in EU reporting, Politiken 2001-2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number, topic and genre</th>
<th>National\textsuperscript{b}</th>
<th>European</th>
<th>Sub-European\textsuperscript{c}</th>
<th>Non- EU\textsuperscript{d}</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No.of articles\textsuperscript{a}</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of articles</td>
<td>43 %</td>
<td>40 %</td>
<td>10 %</td>
<td>7 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Top 5 topics
| Economy | 18 | 20 | 2 | 1 |
| Agriculture | 15 | 11 | 1 | 0 |
| Environment | 19 | 9 | 1 | 0 |
| EU affairs | 18 | 40 | 13 | 9 |
| National EU affairs | 21 | 1 | 7 | 0 |

\textsuperscript{a} No. of articles that included a given dimension level code \textsuperscript{b} National is short for national, regional and local dimension. \textsuperscript{c} The sub-European dimension is all other EU member states, and the present 27 member states are included in this category also in the period prior to May 1\textsuperscript{st}, 2004 and January 1\textsuperscript{st}, 2007. \textsuperscript{d} The non-European dimension is all other nations and/or other international organizations.

Genre and dimension in Danish EU coverage

Figure 5 shows that the three most used genres when reporting both on a national, European, sub-European and non-European level were news, background/feature, and surprisingly short news were found to be the third most used genre when reporting in a national, regional or local, or European level.

\textsuperscript{11} Foreign policy (defense, conflict and/or war in other countries, terrorism, relations with non-EU nations) Codebook, appendix a
The dimension in British EU reporting, 2001-2005

Where the dimension in Danish EU reporting tended to be more national than European it looks a bit different in British EU reporting as table 7 shows. Nearly half of the media coverage of EU news is reported from a European dimension and only about one third is from a national, regional and local level.

The study also show that there is no doubt that no matter on what level the British media reports EU news, topics related to economy and to EU affairs are the most dominating topics. Of the national dimension articles 37% were about economy, whereas one fourth of the European level articles were about economy and one third about EU affairs.

As figure 6 shows the genre which was predominantly used when covering EU news in any of the four dimensions was the news genre. The figure also shows that when covering EU news in a national or European dimension, the British media tended to favor editorials/commentaries over background / feature stories.
Table 7: The dimension in EU reporting, The Guardian 2001-2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number, topic and genre</th>
<th>National(^b)</th>
<th>European</th>
<th>Sub-European(^c)</th>
<th>Non- EU(^d)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No.of articles(^a)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of articles</td>
<td>33 %</td>
<td>44 %</td>
<td>12 %</td>
<td>11 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Top 5 topics*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>National(^b)</th>
<th>European</th>
<th>Sub-European(^c)</th>
<th>Non- EU(^d)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign policy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU affairs</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) No. of articles that included a given dimension level code  
\(^b\) National is short for *national, regional and local dimension*  
\(^c\) The sub-European dimension is all other EU member states, and the present 27 member states are included in this category also in the period prior to May 1\(^{st}\), 2004 and January 1\(^{st}\), 2007.  
\(^d\) The non-European dimension is all other nations and/or other international organizations.
A tendency toward European dimension

Regarding the dimension in which the EU news was reported in Danish and British media prior to the launch of the European Commission’s communication policy, Danish media reported almost equally in a national dimension and a European although the scale tended to weigh slightly more towards the national dimension. Out of the 255 articles analyzed 109 were reported in a national dimension, whereas 102 were in a European. However, if the 27 articles reported in a sub-EU dimension are added to the European dimension the balance tip toward the European dimension.

In British media the situation was slightly different. Here nearly half of the EU news was reported in a European dimension and one third in a national dimension. Of the 130 analyzed articles 43 were reported in a national dimension, whereas 57 were in a European level. Add to that the 16 articles reported in a sub-European dimension and the 14 articles in a non-European dimension and the balance weigh heavily toward the non-national dimension.

The topics reported in the two countries differ slightly as Danish media tended to report more on national EU affairs, than British media did, whereas British media reported more on foreign policy than Danish media. When reporting in a national dimension Danish media the majority of articles
reported on national EU affairs, a great deal of EU news was, however, also reported on topics such as EU affairs, environment & traffic, economy and agriculture. In British media articles reported in a national dimension were predominantly on topics regarding economy, and a lesser amount of articles were on EU affairs and agriculture.

When reporting on EU news in a European dimension topics were related to EU affairs in the majority of articles in both Danish and British media, and a great deal of articles was reported on topics related to economy.

The dimension in Danish EU reporting, 2006-2010

In this period nearly half of the articles were found to be reported on a European level. Only about 1/3 was reported on a national, regional or local level as table 8 shows, while 25 % of the articles on EU were reported from the perspective of another EU member state, the sub-European dimension, or from a non-EU member state, or international organization, the non-European dimension. Compared to

The vast majority of articles reported in a European dimension were about a topic that fit in the category EU affairs; 36% of the European dimension articles were regarding EU bureaucracy or democracy, EU summit, minister council, negotiations or enlargement. Economy, foreign policy and environment were other topic categories that were reported frequently in a European dimension. The majority – 28% - of articles reported in a national, regional or local dimension was about economy; however topic categories such as EU affairs, value-based political subjects and environment were also frequently reported in a national dimension.

EU news reported on another level than national or European were primarily about topics such as foreign policy and EU affairs, if it is on a state level outside of EU. If the EU news are reported on another EU member state level the topics tend to be EU affairs, economy, welfare & social politics and national EU affairs In order words, no matter which dimension the EU news were reported in the dominating topics were the same; economy, EU affairs, environment and foreign policy.

\[12\] Categories from Codebook, appendix a

\[13\] National EU affairs reported on another EU member state level refers to national affairs in the EU member state the topic is about and not the national affairs in the country of the media’s origin.
Table 8: The dimension in EU reporting, Politiken 2006-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number, topic and genre</th>
<th>National</th>
<th>European</th>
<th>Sub-European</th>
<th>Non-EU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of articles(^a)</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of articles</td>
<td>29 %</td>
<td>46 %</td>
<td>17 %</td>
<td>8 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Top 5 topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>National</th>
<th>European</th>
<th>Sub-European</th>
<th>Non-EU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign policy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value-based issues</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU affairs</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) No. of articles that included a given dimension level code \(^b\) National is short for national, regional and local dimension. \(^c\) The sub-European dimension is all other EU member states, and the present 27 member states are included in this category also in the period prior to May 1\(^{st}\), 2004 and January 1\(^{st}\), 2007. 
\(^d\) The non-European dimension is all other nations and/or other international organizations.

Genre and dimension

One of the noticeable changes in Danish EU news coverage in the period following the launch of the communication policy was the increase of news analyses. Thus this genre was in the top 3 articles reported in a national, regional or local, and European dimension. As fig. 7 shows this genre was primarily used to report EU news in a European dimension, whereas EU affairs reported in a national, regional, or local dimension was still – just as the period prior the launch of the communication policy – primarily reported as a news article.
The dimension in British EU reporting, 2006-2010

As in Danish media nearly half of the EU news in British media was found to be reported on a European level – 44% of the EU news articles were reported from Brussels or an EU institution.

One third of the EU news was reported on a national, regional or local level, whereas a small part was reported on a sub-European level, or level of another EU member state, and 15% on a non-EU level.

The content analysis found that EU news reported on this level was primarily about four topic categories; economy, EU affairs, environment and foreign policy; half of the 39 articles were on economy and EU affairs.

EU news on a national level was found to be on primarily three topics; economy, environment and welfare & social politics, however several articles were about topics such as value-based political subjects, EU affairs and national EU affairs.

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14 Categories, see codebook, appendix a
The content analysis also found that the few articles reported on a sub-European level was primarily about topics that fit the categories economy, environment and EU affairs, whereas the EU news reported on a non-EU level were primarily about topics such as EU affairs and foreign policy.

Table 9: The dimension in EU reporting, The Guardian 2006-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number, topic and genre</th>
<th>Nationalb</th>
<th>European</th>
<th>Sub-Europeanc</th>
<th>Non-EUd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No.of articlesa</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of articles</td>
<td>32 %</td>
<td>44 %</td>
<td>9 %</td>
<td>15 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Top 5 topics

- **Economy**: 7, 12, 3, 1
- **Environment**: 6, 5, 2, 2
- **Foreign policy**: 1, 8, 1, 4
- **Welfare & social issues**: 5, 2, 0, 0
- **EU affairs**: 3, 9, 2, 5

a No. of articles that included a given dimension level code b National is short for national, regional and local dimension. c The sub-European dimension is all other EU member states, and the present 27 member states are included in this category also in the period prior to May 1st, 2004 and January 1st, 2007.

d The non-European dimension is all other nations and/or other international organizations.

Genre and dimension in British media

The study found a status-quo in the use of genres to report on EU news in British media post-launch of the communication; News, background/feature and editorials were the top three genres. Fig. 8 shows the relation between the various dimensions and the use of genres. News articles were found to be just as predominantly a genre as in Danish media and in British media prior to the
launch of the policy. The figure also shows that the British media still favor editorials / commentaries over background / feature articles when covering EU news in either national or European dimension.

**Fig.8: Genre and dimension, The Guardian 2006-2010**

![Chart showing genre and dimension]

**EU news in European dimension**

In the post communication policy period the dimension in which the EU news is reported tended to favor the European dimension in both Danish and British media. Of the 138 Danish articles analyzed 64 of them – or 46% - were reported on a European level and only 40 of the articles - 29% - on a national, regional or local level. EU news in British media is also primarily reported in a European dimension, the percentage of British articles on a European level, however, was slightly lower than Danish media and a little bit higher percentage of articles was reported in a national dimension. In other words and numbers; 39 of the 88 analyzed British articles on EU news – 44% - was reported on a European level, whereas 28 articles - 32% - were reported in a national dimension. The sub-European and non-European dimensions differed in the media coverage in the two countries. In Danish media the percentage of EU news reported on a sub-European\(^{15}\) level was

\(^{15}\) By sub-European I refer to all other member states but the national state of the media analyzed
higher than the percentage of EU news reported on a non-EU level, whereas it is the other way around in British media.

The topics that were reported in national dimension in Danish media had changed noticeably over time. Prior to the launch of the communication policy the majority of articles were regarding national EU affairs whereas post the communication policy economy was the topic reported on the most. In British media economy was also found to be the most reported topic in national dimension articles, as well as in European dimension articles. Next to economy, EU affairs, foreign policy and environment & traffic were topics favored in European dimension. The same topics were favored in Danish media when reporting in European dimension.

There was found a change over the time in the use of genre when reporting in European dimension. This was found in Danish media, which next after news and background/feature articles favored news analysis as the genre to report EU news on. Whereas in British media the three main genres used when reporting on EU news were the same post as prior to the launch of the European Commission’s communication policy; news, background/feature, or editorials / commentaries.
Chapter 6: Discussion

The aim of this study and the content analyses was to find out how the European Commission’s communication policy, launched February 2006, is reflected in the print media. In order to establish how the communication policy is reflected, I conducted a content analysis focusing on the communication policy’s two main goals regarding media; give EU a human face in news coverage and assist in promoting national, regional and/or local dimension in EU news coverage. In this chapter I will sum up, compare and discuss the results of this study.

EU’s missing human face

This study showed that the human interest frame was only occasionally used in the Danish and British print media in the period 2001 – 2010. This period covers the five years prior the European Commission launched a new communication policy, which set two goals for promoting an EU coverage which could assist to improve the public opinion, and the five years following the launch. Human interest frame elements were, however, used occasionally in both Danish and British print media. The study also showed that the elements were often appearing solo or in pairs, rarely in high-scale and full-scale.

Prior to the launch of the communication policy the Danish media used human interest frame elements occasionally; in 18% of the analyzed articles contained human interest frame elements. Out of the 45 articles half contained two or more human interest frame elements. Post launch of the communication policy the study showed that the frequency of articles containing human interest frame elements dropped noticeably. Only 7% of the analyzed articles contained human interest frame elements, and out of these 10 articles, more than half contained one human interest frame article. In this period only one of 138 articles used a full-scale human interest frame. This tendency to use human interest frame elements more infrequently was, however, not found in the British media.

British media did only rarely use the human interest frame elements, and no full-scale or high-scale use of the elements was found prior the launch of the communication policy. In other words was the human interest frame very uncommon in British media coverage prior to the launch of the
communication policy. The study showed, however, that post launch of the communication policy a higher frequency of human interest frame elements were found in British media. The frequency increased from 4% of the analyzed articles containing human interest variables to 13%. Of the 11 articles from the post communication policy period containing frame elements, one article was found to contain a high-scale human interest frame.

In other words, that in the vast majority of the EU coverage in Danish and British media EU news did not have a human face. That is Danish and British print media did not use human interest frame in the EU news on a regular basis. EU news did occasionally contain human interest frame in low-scale or medium-scale.

It is worth noting, however, that prior to the launch of the communication policy Danish media did in fact occasionally use human interest frame elements, whereas the human interest frame elements became more rarely used in the post communication policy period.

The tendencies regarding the use of human interest frame in British media was found to be going the opposite direction than the tendencies in Danish media. Where British media was found to use only a few human interest frame elements on rare occasions in its EU coverage in the prior communication policy period, the human interest frame was interestingly used more frequently in the period following the launch of the European Commission’s communication policy. The British media did not only increase the use of low scale human interest frame, the study found that in 9% of the articles containing frame element there had been used high-scale human interest frame. The increasing use of human interest frame elements in British media post launch, however, did not exceed the use of human interest frame elements in Danish media prior to the launch.

The study does not thoroughly explain these tendencies in Danish and British media, the changes in topics, however, and the use of genre in EU news coverage adds a possible explanation to the overall picture of the use of human interest frame in Danish and British print media prior and post launch of the European Commission’s communication policy.

**Does the topic affect the use of human interest frame?**

The study showed that the topics where human interest frame elements appeared in Danish media’s coverage of EU news changed from being primarily economy, agriculture and environmental, as
well as welfare & social politics, value-based subjects and EU affairs to primarily welfare & social and value-based issues, as well as economy and agriculture issues. In other words, Danish media went from using human interest frame elements to a large range of topics to narrow it down by a couple of topics.

In the same period British media primarily used human interest frame elements in articles on welfare & social political issues, and value-based political subjects, as well as economy issues in the first period, and in second period human interest frame elements were primarily used in articles on economy issues, foreign policy and welfare & social issues. In other words, the British media covered the same topics but increased the use of human interest frame elements, whereas Danish media covered all most the same topics but decreased the use of human interest elements.

Based on this result of the study I argue that the topics and the small changes there have been from one period to the other, are not the reason why there is a decrease in the use of human interest frame elements in Danish media, while there at the same time is an increase in British media.
Does genre affect the use of human interest frame?

Another factor which could play an explanatory role is the genre of the articles. This study shows that in both Danish and British media feature/background articles are most likely to contain human interest frame elements, however, the frequency of human interest frame elements in news articles are almost as high. This is common both prior and post the communication policy. Interviews and portraits are also genres that occasionally contain human interest frame elements. The study also revealed that in general there were noticeably changes in the use of genres. In the years post the communication policy Danish media decreased the number of news articles – from 63% to 43% of the Danish sample – and increased the number of feature/background articles and news analysis articles – from 16% to 27% and from 4% to 14% respectively. Since the study has shown that news analysis very rarely contains human interest frame elements, it could serve as an explanation for the tendencies of decreasing use of human interest frame in Danish media, adding the fact that news articles, which in the period prior to the communication policy contained nearly half of the human interest frame elements found in the sample, have decreased.

On the other hand, the number of feature/background articles, that generally contains more human interest frame elements, has increased after the launch of the communication policy. These changes revealed in the study could serve as part of the explanation, they do not, however, deliver the full
explanation for the tendency of decreasing use of human interest frame elements in Danish EU news coverage.

In British print media’s EU coverage there were also found changes in the use of genre. In both periods human interest frame elements were predominately used in news, and from the period prior to the period post communication policy the total of news articles decreased from 75% of the sample to 64% of the sample. The number of editorials / commentaries also decreased from 14% of the sample to 8%. In the genres feature / background there was found a noticeable increase – this genre was found in 8% of the sample prior to the launch of the communication policy and in 16% post launch. Additionally there was found a minor increase of interviews. These changes in the use of genre could explain the slight increase in the use of human interest frame elements because, as this study has shown, feature / background articles, news and interview articles tend to contain more human interest frame elements than editorials / commentaries.

Another change found in the relation between the use of genre and use of human interest frame elements, however, is that human interest frame elements were found in feature / background articles in the post communication policy period whereas none were found in this genre prior to the launch of the policy. This indicates that the way to go about writing this genre of articles has changed in favor of a more frequent use of human interest frame elements for some reason. One explanation could be exterior inspiration to the framing process in form of European Commission promoting the human angle / human interest frame in EU news. This study does not find any direct proves for this being the only, liable explanation; the tendency to increasingly use human interest frame elements does, however, imply a reflection of the European Commission’s communication policy.

**EU news in European dimension**

The study showed that the majority of EU news was reported in a European dimension, but a substantial part of the EU coverage was reported in a national, regional or local dimension, especially in the Danish media. In the period prior to the communication policy the national dimension was used a few times more than the European dimension in the Danish media. This preference of using the national dimension in reporting EU news had changed in the period post communication policy; the study showed a decrease in reporting in a national dimension from 43% to 29% of the articles, whereas there was found an increase of use of the European, the sub-
European and the non-European dimension. In British media the study showed status quo in the use of national and European dimension in the two periods. Both prior and post the communication policy the majority of EU news was reported in European dimension – 44% of both samples, whereas one third was reported in a national dimension. The only change in what dimension EU news was reported was found in the other two dimension categories. Here there was a decrease of news reported in a sub-European dimension, whereas there was an increase in the non-European dimension.

In other words, the study showed that in both Danish and British media EU news is predominantly reported in a European dimension in the period following the launch of the European Commission’s communication policy. In both Danish and British media there was a decrease of articles reported in national dimension, which is the opposite of what the European Commission wants to promote with the communication policy’s goal to assist the need for national, regional, local dimension in the EU debate thus in the coverage of EU news.

**Does the topic affect the use of dimension?**

The topics reported in national dimension did not vary much from the topics reported in EU news in a European dimension. As the figures show EU affairs was the number one topic reported in a European dimension in Danish media prior to the launch of the European Commission’s communication policy. In British media EU affairs was reported slightly more than topics on economy. What the figures doesn’t show, since they show a top 4 of the most used topics in each dimension, is that in the period prior to the communication policy, where the majority of articles were reported in a national dimension, these articles were primarily about topics on national EU affairs. This category was, however, not used much in British media, which tended to write primarily about economy and EU affairs. Worth noting is, however, that there was found a decrease in EU news regarding national EU affairs in the post period and Danish media published most articles on that subject category. This was not the only change in the reported EU news topics. The study also found that the top five topics reported in the national dimension prior to the communication policy differ slightly from the top five topics post the communication policy. In the latter the topics agriculture and national EU affairs were taken over by the topics foreign policy and value-based political issues. The noticeable decrease in reporting on the topic national EU affairs could most likely be one explanation why Danish media has gone from tending to report EU news
on a national level to reporting the majority of the EU news on a European level, since national EU affairs typically were reported in a national dimension.

In British media the EU coverage was nearly status quo, however, one topic – agriculture – was reported less post communication policy, whereas value-based political issues were reported more than prior to the launch of the communication policy.

The changes in the relation between the topics reported and what dimension the EU news was reported in imply that there could be a connection between topics and the choice of level; EU affairs were primarily reported in a European dimension, whereas national EU affairs were predominately reported in a national dimension. In other words, when the media for some reason, which this study does not give the answer to, decrease the quantity of the topic which was predominantly reported in a national dimension, the result of this study could be conditioned by it.

In regards to the communication policy’s goal of assisting more national, regional and local dimension in the coverage of EU news the result of this study show that both the Danish and the British media have moved further from this goal since the launch of the policy.

**Fig. 11: Topics and dimension in Danish & British media 2001-2005**
Does the genre affect the dimension?

This study showed that over time there was not only a limited change in the dimension in which EU news is reported in British media. There was in fact also found status quo in the genre used to report EU news. The status quo in the use of genre could be the reason why there was a status quo in the dimension British media typically reported EU news in. In Danish media there was over time not only found decrease in reporting in a national dimension, but also changes in which genres were used the most when reporting in European dimension. In the first period, where a slim majority of articles were reported in national dimension, news, background/feature articles and short news were the most used genres, whereas news, background/feature articles and news analysis were the most used genres, and reporting in national dimension decreased significantly – from 43 % of the first period’s sample to 29 % of the second period’s sample. This change also implies that the dimension, in which EU news is reported, is conditioned by the choice of genre. However, this study did not find other results which can back up these assumptions.
One thing the study did find was, that both media went in the opposite direction than the Communication policy’s goal of assisting the need to more national, regional and local dimension in the EU coverage.

**Exterior perspectives on EU’s missing face**

The low frequency of human interest frame in Danish and British media is not only conditioned by the use of genre and topic. The result could be conditioned by the type of media the sample was taken from. As mentioned in chapter 2, Semetko & Valkenburg (2000) found that the human interest frame was one of the five most common generic news frames in the coverage of EU news. In the same study they found that human interest frame was typically used in ‘softer’ TV news programs and ‘sensationalist’, tabloid print media, whereas the more serious newspapers and ‘harder’ TV news programs had a more frequent use of the attribution of responsibility frame and the conflict frame. (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 106). Their study also showed that there was a tendency for television news to use human interest frame more frequently than print media news.

In line with Semetko & Valkenburg (2000) I have found, that broadsheet print media does not use human interest frame much.

Had the content analysis included television news, the result might have been different, as Semetko & Valkenburg (2000)’s findings imply. It would have been preferable to include television news coverage of EU affairs; however the resources for this study are limited, so the focus is on agenda-setting print media because they too are the targets of the European Commission’s communication policy.

Additionally to the findings similar to Semetko & Valkenburg (2000)’s regarding the frequency of human interest frame in the more serious print media, I did not find any significant evolvement in the use of human interest frame over time. Semetko & Valkenburg (2000)’s findings offer a very plausible explanation to why this study did not find a high frequency in the use of human interest frame. The latter finding, regarding development over time in the use of human interest frame, is, however, far more relevant for this study since the purpose was to investigate whether there has
been a development over time in the five years after the European Commission launched their communication policy in February 2006.\textsuperscript{16}

The fact that I found no development in the use of human interest frame in spite of the European Commission’s goal to promote this frame in EU news coverage can be seen to be in line with Thiel (2008)’s arguments and critique, mentioned in chapter 1, of the communication policy. His critique is based on his analysis of the communication policy itself, and he points out that the policy needs to \textit{actively localize the efforts through the national mass media, which so far has been largely left out of the picture}. The communication policy’s two goals in regard to media; giving EU news a human face and assisting in reporting EU news in a national dimension, are on paper directed at the national mass media. Thiel (2008), however, argue that in the policy’s current form \textit{largely based on elites and the Internet as medium}, is not suited for reaching the wide audience, which is needed in order to bridge the information gap between the EU and the citizens of EU.

In this study I have found that the goals and ideas in the whitepaper do not seem to have transcended to the print media in two of the 27 EU member states.

\textsuperscript{16} Whitepaper on Communication policy was from February 2006
Chapter 7: Conclusion

This study set out to investigate if there has been a development in the EU news coverage over a period of time of 10 years. The particular points of interest in this research were the two goals the European Commission set in their communication policy for the Commission’s work with the media; promote giving EU news a human face and assist the need for EU debate, thus EU news coverage, in a national, regional and local dimension. The European Commission had acknowledged that there was a gap between the EU and the citizen’s in the member states, also the Commission had acknowledged that the way to reach the citizens were through media. However, although already five years in play only a few researchers had looked into what effect this communication policy has had on the coverage of EU news in the national media. Thus, this study set out to investigate this by finding the answer to the question:

How is the communication policy reflected in media coverage?

Looking for changes over time in two aspects of the EU coverage; the use of human interest frame and reporting in a national, regional or local dimension, was the way to find an answer to the posed question.

The overall finding of this study is that there had been no significant development neither toward an increased use of human interest frame, or in an increased use of national dimension in the reporting of EU news. In fact, the most significant changes found in Danish media were that the frequency of human interest frame and in national dimension decreased in the period following the launch of the communication policy. In British media was found a slight increase in the use of human interest frame, an increase that could not be explained by other factors coded in the analysis. The increase was, however, not in the use of full-scale human face but merely an increase in one or few of the various elements that a human interest frame consists of.

Aspects such as what genres were predominantly used in EU news coverage and what topics were reported on were analyzed as to see whether there was a connection between the use of human interest frame or reporting in national dimension and these aspects of an article. This analysis found that changes in the top five topics and genres used in Danish media could explain the decreasing use of human frame elements. However, the slight increase in use of one or few human interest frames in British media post communication policy could not be explained by changes in what topics were reported on or in what dimension the EU news was presented.
This increase could be conditioned by exterior inspiration, such as European Commission’s communication policy; however, the study does not give a final and sufficient explanation for this increase. Moreover, even though there was a noticeable increase in the use of frame elements, the overall picture of the low frequency of human interest frame in Danish and British broadsheet newspapers did not change. British media went from almost no human interest frames at all to rarely using one to three of the four human interest elements, which were coded in the content analysis. One could argue, that the slight increase in British media towards using more human interest frame elements in EU news reports was a reflection of the European Commission’s goal of promoting this news frames in the media. The increase is, however, rather small and opposite the tendency in Danish media, and the study does not provide substantial evidence for me to conclude that it is a reflection. On the other hand that it could be a reflection of the Commission’s strategy towards promoting a certain way of covering EU news cannot be ruled out based on this study.

In sum, based on this study’s findings the answer to the research question is that the overall impression is, that the European Commission’s communication policy has not been reflected in the European print media’s coverage of EU news in the five year period following the launch of the communication policy.

**Further study on the subject**

This study has answered the question I set out to explore; however, it leaves on the other hand a bunch of unanswered questions behind which could be interesting for other studies.

As mentioned in the conclusion the small changes in British media towards a higher frequency in using the human interest frame could not substantially be explained in this study, but it leaves one wondering whether there is in fact a tendency toward more human interest frame in British media.

With Semetko & Valkenburg (2000)’s study in mind a similar study including TV news and print media news would possibly give a slightly different picture of today’s EU news coverage.

Another way to go about a study of the impact of the European Commission’s communication policy is to study what the European Commission has in fact done to promote the human face – the human interest frame – and to assist the need for national dimension in the EU news coverage.
Bibliography


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