

Kicking Refugees was Just the Beginning: The European Refugee Crisis, How the Open Society Foundation used qualitative social media research in defence of human rights

Daniel Fazekas, Balazs Denes

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This paper describes research by the Open Society Foundation (OSF), a global human rights organisation, into public opinion in Hungary during the refugee crisis of 2015, when the Hungarian government adopted a hard-line stance against refugees.

- The research methodology focused on qualitative data on the open web: a six-stage process involved social media scraping technology followed by human interpretation of the resulting data.
- The findings indicated the Hungarian government's anti-refugee campaign influenced public attitudes towards refugees as intended, with online conversations clustered around security, cultural differences, the rule of law and the economy.
- OSF used these insights to complement its understanding of the Hungarian government's anti-refugee campaign; this led to a reshaping of its own regional advocacy strategy in Hungary and neighbouring countries.

Introduction

Open Society Foundation (OSF), a global human rights organisation and its founder, George Soros, are actively engaged in shaping NGOs', governmental and international organizations' answer to the European refugee crisis towards an outcome in line with the organisation's values. The case discussed in this paper was a research project conducted in Hungary during the height of the refugee crisis in August-September 2015.

Hungary's role in the European refugee crisis was pivotal, as the country was the entry point of over a one million refugees who arrived via the 'Balkan Route' into the European Union (EU).

In substance, this research illuminates the development of the online public discourse on refugees in Hungary

before and during the height of the refugee crisis in 2015 - exploring the impact of a government sponsored anti-refugee campaign on the public discourse. The paper aims to prove that the employed qualitative methodology for open web analysis, delivers a grounded, real and actionable breed of insight.

Due to subject of study any statement or argument of this paper is automatically also a political one - inherently exposed to the claim of bias. The authors of this paper aim to provide an objective, researcher's perspective, on the social, political environment the research was situated in, but acknowledge their own liberal, humanist and pluralistic values.

The refugee crisis in the Hungarian context

The 2015 refugee crisis was the largest migration of dislocated people in Europe since WWII. A global view suggested that the European refugee crisis was one thing, in reality the meaning of and response to the crisis was unique to each country. As the crisis unfolded over 2015, an international humanitarian disaster seen in the news quickly became a crisis down the street. In fact, the crisis became the most pressing issue across European countries that fell in the path of the migrant routes.

The Hungarian government's anti-refugee stance was well documented by international media and the subject of numerous public objections and protests of inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations (See referenced English-language articles for details). Powerful images became associated with

Hungary's anti-refugee policy, which were the razor-wire fence erected along the Hungarian-Serbian border, scenes from the refuge transit zone at Keleti railway station in Budapest, and a Hungarian journalist kicking running refugees. These images only tell a fraction of the story; some more background is necessary.

Geo-politically, Hungary sits at the eastern flank of the European Union, is a member of NATO and is part of the European free travel Schengen visa zone. Passing through Greece, Macedonia and Serbia, it was Hungary where refugees entered the EU. According to the rule of law, it should have been at that border where refugees are registered and processed in line with the international treaties regulating refugee laws and the Dublin regulations that detail the lawful processing of refugees within the EU.

Politically, the landscape in Hungary in 2014-2015 was contentious. The Hungarian government under Prime Minister Viktor Orban was one year into its second term. Since assuming power in 2010 the government has followed a self-professed illiberal philosophy: changing the constitution, electoral and media laws; most laws were aimed to remove independence and increase centralisation of political power. PM Orban's policies were criticised by the US and EU governments. They were characterized as authoritarian, backsliding on democracy and dangerous. This sentiment was likely best captured by Paul Krugman as early as 2012, in a blog post in the *New York Times* on "Why Hungary Matters":

So if you believe in democracy and peace, you have a stake in that idea's success — which is why all of Europe's current troubles are a tragedy for all of us. And now we have a nation in the heart of Europe, a member of the EU, a nation that emerged from dictatorship, which is at the very least backsliding on democracy. This is terrible — and terribly important. If you can't see this, there's something very wrong with your priorities. (Krugmann, 2012)

The months before the refugee crisis became the focus of attention, the Orban administration was under pressure domestically. The government's approval ratings were dropping. Negative headlines, such as below,

put the administration on the defence:

- Massive street-protests erupted, forcing the government to nix plans of an Internet tax.
- The US issued travel bans against six individuals due corruption allegations, including the head of the Hungarian tax authority.
- A conflict between a key oligarch, who owned a 'government friendly' media empire, and PM Orban played out in the public's view.

This downward trend was interrupted abruptly in early January 2015. The terrorist attack on the Charlie Hebdo headquarters in Paris, France on January 7th 2015 had a profound effect on Hungarian aspect of the refugee crisis. In fact, the client determined that it was the events around the Charlie Hebdo attack that marked the beginning of the refugee crisis in Hungary. Jan-Werner Muller, the Princeton University political scientist, summarized the how the refugee crisis unfolded in Hungary after the Paris terrorist attacks:

In a 2014 survey, only 3 percent of Hungarians identified immigration as among the two most important issues facing the country (unemployment and the general economic situation were seen as the real problems). In early 2015, Orban set out to change this perception. While other leaders, after the Charlie Hebdo massacre, linked arms in the streets of Paris and called for tolerance, Orban used his stage in France to tell Hungarian state television that "recent events" should lead Europe to restrict immigration, especially of those with "different cultural characteristics." In May, the government mailed out questionnaires to 8 million citizens for a "national consultation" on what it called "Immigration and Terrorism." The survey contained questions such as "Did you know that economic migrants cross the Hungarian border illegally, and that recently the number of immigrants in Hungary has increased twentyfold?" It also encouraged citizens to agree with the opinion that "mismanagement of the immigration question by Brussels may have something to do with increased terrorism."

A month later, billboards with stern warnings went up: "If you come to Hungary, don't take Hungarians' jobs!" or "If you come to Hungary, you have to obey our laws!" These government-sponsored ads were all in Hungarian and thus obviously aimed at a domestic audience—it is unlikely that migrants had picked up one of the world's most notoriously difficult languages en route. (Muller, 2015)

It was this narrative framing and campaign style communication of the refugee crisis described by Jan-Werner Muller that is at the core of this case study research objective. As Muller describes, the Orban administration launched a national consultation on migration and terrorism (see appendix for consultation survey) and publicised the consultation with a nation-wide billboard campaign with three core messages:

- Protection of Hungarian Jobs
- Protection of law and order
- Protection of Hungarian culture

Figure 1. Government sponsored billboard: If you come to Hungary you have to respect our culture-national consultation of immigration and terrorism



The commercial ATL-like elements of the campaign were amplified via biased reporting in the state-run and government-friendly media, as well as, through the government and party communication (parliament, speeches, press conferences etc.).

The Hungarian government's anti-refugee campaign received wide international coverage. The campaign was understood to stir hate, xenophobia and fear. PM Orban received numerous requests from international organisations, North American and European government officials to tone down the anti-refugee rhetoric. Much less was known about how the Hungarian population received and responded to the campaign.

Open society foundation's objectives

The client operates as human rights donor organization. The global organization spends close to \$200M annually in Europe to fund civic initiatives and non-governmental organisations to expand and protect civic and human rights. In Hungary, OSF supports over 80 grantee organisations, on a wide range of human rights issues related to its mission. Through its network program OSF also facilitates an exchange of information across Europe.

It was the impact above-described anti-refugee campaign that was at the centre of OSF insight needs. OSF had access to up-to-date survey data on the government's approval rating, support of the government's refugee policy from national representative surveys. The client needed to gain a qualitative understanding of how the campaign affected opinions to explain the measured public opinions. The sought for insights were needed for a variety of reasons and were anchored in the below research objectives:

- Enable circle of supported NGOs in understanding the opinion landscape in Hungary
- Contribute insight to the internal think tank operations
- Evaluate counter communication opportunities
- Evaluate priorities for upcoming programming of OSF's operational and donor activities
- Leveraging research results in international advocacy activities

Based on the above research objectives, the Bakamo.Social recommended a qualitative social media research approach to deliver the required insight. Together with the client Bakamo.Social developed and agreed on the following research questions for the open web study to cover:

- How did the open web discussions from January till moment of commission in September 2015 evolve? What were the themes, topics, and conversation triggers that drove the conversation? What were people talking about when discussing the refugee crisis?

- How were the campaign messages received and interpreted by Hungarian open web users? What was the relation between the public discourse and the campaign messages; can causality be established?
- Did the government campaign messages tap into an existing anti-refugee sentiment or did the campaign cause that?
- How did open web users talk about organisations helping refugees? What was the perception of humanitarian organisations?

Bakamo.Social educated the client on the approach and analysis process involved with Deep.Scape, Bakamo.Social's qualitative research approach to the open web. OSF selected the approach, because it promised to deliver an understanding grounded in broad basis of thousands of individual opinions, which were not influenced by the research approach chosen.

Research approach and fieldwork

Bakamo.Social uses its Deep.Scape methodology to conduct qualitative open web research. The approach combines the utilisation of generic social media scraping technology with an intense human effort to operate the technology and interpret the captured open web data. The approach's central thesis is that it is humans who understand humans.

The Deep.Scape research methodology is grounded in the social theory set out by Niklas Luhmann's Systems Theory. The core concept of the social theory, as it affects qualitative research, is to observe people's natural communication and utilize an applied form of objective hermeneutics for its interpretation. Please see the appendix for a more detailed discussion of the social theory foundation of the Deep.Scape methodology. This paper introduces the research approach combined with its application to the OSF study.

Step One: Scope and keywords

The scope of human social behaviour analysed by the Deep.Scape methodology is the human communication taking place in the open web. The open web concept is broader than social media, as it aims to encompass all venues where user generated content congregates. These venues are the mainstream social networks (Facebook, Twitter, and specialised ones), publishing platforms (Wordpress, blogs, wikis, news, etc.) and discussion sites (forums, comments, recommendations, etc.). Open web discussions are not private conversations; the data is the communication imprint of the openly accessible communities on the Internet.

Deep.Scape looks at the open web as a source of qualitative data, because: a) it looks at a natural, unprompted conversation; and b) the method of data gathering does not influence the data itself. Technologies used passively collect the organic conversations, as they are part of the public domain.

Using the above thinking, the researchers first defined a keyword strategy to triangulate the naturally occurring conversations on the refugee topic: the keyword grid should capture conversations about the refugees and the refugee crisis in Hungary. To create a keyword grid requires knowledge of the people's language around the refugee topic.

A team of analysts was deployed to collect words and phrases that people use when the refugee topic is mentioned. The language around refugees was multifaceted, for example the word 'refugee' has a polarizing meaning, and is thus avoided by some: 'synonyms' like economic migrant or illegal border-crosser were included ensure all perspectives are captured. In total the team identified 1275 keywords and their semantic

combinations, to cover the language, the grammar, and the misspellings.

Step Two: Data capture and processing

This step is about using the keywords to extract the raw data topic from the used social media-scraping tool. A query containing the identified keywords was set up in the Radian6 platform. The query was adjusted by the analyst to account for non-relevant conversations, such as Hungarians who have taken refuge from the Hungarian economy or PM Orban's politics in Western Europe. With the keyword set up complete the data extraction starts.

As per the research scope, conversations that took place between 1.1.2015 and 8.09.2015 were selected and extracted, resulting in a data set of 11,3421 authentic individual opinions on the refugee topic. Additionally, the time frame of 1.9.2014 to 31.12.2014 was captured but raw data was not exported. The downloaded data was processed by the analyst and prepared for the next research phase. The data was formatted, irrelevant data fields removed, and reading sets of randomly selected samples prepared.

Step Three: Naive reading and discovery

This phase's goal is to build a ground up awareness of the different contexts, conversation triggers emerging in the conversation. The large volume of content requires a large team of readers in addition to the assigned researchers and a team of analysts. The analysts read 35,000 randomly selected posts. The researchers explored the discussion by looking at the discernable opinion communities and read 25,000 posts. In total more than half of the entire conversation was read and understood by humans.

The naive reading uses standardized instructions, annotation system and processes to collate the team's analysis effort. The methodology uses, among other debriefing tools, a constant chat group among the members of reading team to identify new aspects of the conversation and share thoughts. The naive reading and discovery phase lasted for five days with a team of 10 people reading.

Step Four: Conversation landscape and hypothesis

This step delivers a meaning-driven taxonomy of the refugee discussion and identified areas of further interest. The knowledge, annotations, verbatims, and visual art efacts collected during the naive reading phase are analysed by the researchers who then sort them into triggers, topic groups and conversation drivers. This is a hierarchical taxonomy, where a conversation driver might cover several topic groups and each topic group may cover multiple conversation triggers. The clustering dovetails the content and the intentions beneath it to yield a deeply grounded and very detailed map of the refugee discussions.

Building on the awareness of the thematic clustering of the refugee conversation, the researchers identified emergent argumentation patterns. To deepen the understanding around these patterns and learn about the prevalence of the thematic clusters a code frame was designed. The team decided that more information is needed about the media sources cited by users, the individual politicians mentioned, the type of foreign examples mentioned, or who/what the users blamed for the crisis. In total 13 qualitative dimensions were added to the refugee study code frame.

The team also identified unexpected vocabulary in the conversation. These words and phrases were either connected to government communication buzz words or could be tied to specific theme clusters. Very focused semantic keyword grids were compiled to be used on the refugee topic data set.

Step Five: Coding and measuring

This step allows the qualitatively captured thematic clustering to be quantified and adds density to the subsequent analysis. The small sample size grants an indicative view on distribution of the thematic clusters, a margin of error of 4.5 and 95% confidence level. More importantly, it delivers deep insight into the communication behaviour exhibited by users contributing to the refugee discussion.

Using a Bakamo.Social trained freelance coder team a sample of 500 randomly selected opinions were coded against the code frame. Due to the open-ended dimensions of the code frame, on average the coding of one opinion took 18 minutes. Industry standard quality assurance measures were used to ensure consistency and precision.

Utilizing the focused semantic keyword grids the full raw data of the refugee conversation was probed. This analysis allowed for changes in the thematic clusters to be traced over the course of the observed nine-month time period. Moreover, the big data investigation enabled study to test hypotheses around the spreading of specific vocabulary. The analysis was done using Radian6 analysis tools. Insights from this analysis are not based on a sample, but the entire open web conversation as it is captured by the Radian6 platform.

Step Six: Analysis and reporting

This step collates the collected information, identifies human insights, and adds the qualitative interpretation layer to the data. The analysis uses the understanding gained through the naive reading exercise and deepens the comprehension of the conversation with analysis of the coded data. The large team of analysts and coders contribute to the analysis by active participation in a debriefing workshop.

The reporting aims to retain the richness of the data, while making the information easily accessible for the client. Bakamo.Social developed reporting templates, such as the Talk Driver used for the refugee study, for a cascading zoom to expose the wealth of meaning behind thematic clusters. Figures 2-6 demonstrate the framework. One of the identified thematic clusters was "Cultural Differences". The first slide provides a concise summary of the user generated content and discusses how this theme relates to government anti-refugee campaign.

Figure 2. Introduction to the conversation driver of cultural differences



Figure 3 shows the topic groups underneath the umbrella phrase of 'cultural differences'. In this case the analysis identified four discernable topic groups.

Figure 3. Topic groups in the public discussions on cultural differences

Cultural differences: 'they must respect our culture'

Judeo-Christian origins	The conversation is characterized by a fierce debates if the migrants are a threat to the religious traditions of Hungary. Agitated and aggressive posts exclaim the idea of Islam having a rapidly growing threatening the thousand years old European heritage.
European and Hungarian values	Users anticipate that the migrants will not respect centuries old European and Hungarian values. These concepts are often repeated, but remain by and large abstract.
Customs and ways of living	Users fear migrants' customs and habits. They think migrants will never adapt – or might not even want to - to their new surroundings. Eventually they will force their ways on their vulnerable Hungarian people.
Ethnic comparisons	As proof points to the challenges of migrant integration, users sound their disappointment with the assimilation of the Roma population, who have been here for hundreds of years, into Hungarian culture. The contempt users feel towards Roma is projected on the migrants. In conversations users equate the two groups and even borrow the word gypsy to refer to migrants.

Figure 4 lays out the conversation triggers behind each of the four topic groups. These triggers are the actual ideas people discuss.

Figure 4. Conversation triggers of cultural differences discussions

Cultural differences: driven by fears



Judeo-Christian origins <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Islamization – In a few generations, Christianity will be replaced by Islam as Europe's dominant religion. ▪ Mosques at every corner – Churches will be replaced by mosques, they will be everywhere as so many people will need a place to pray. ▪ Forced conversion – Hungarians and Europeans will be forced to adopt Islamic faith. 	European and Hungarian values <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implementation of Sharia – Based on their fear of being outnumbered, users assume that immigrants will force Sharia law upon Europeans. ▪ Male dominance – Women will lose their social equality and will be forced to live under the surveillance of Islamic men. ▪ Freedom of opinion – Freedom of speech will be lost and content not in line will be punished, as it happened with Charlie Hebdo. ▪ Intolerance – Islam is seen as intolerant culture and Europeans will suffer the consequences.
Customs and ways of living <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Children and reproduction – Muslim immigrants produce many children and will outnumber the declining indigenous European population. The children will not attend school, but will loiter around and cause trouble. ▪ Language barriers – Migrants will never learn the language making integration impossible. ▪ Inequality in the family – Women of the family are treated as property and forced to cover themselves. ▪ Personal space – Migrants are accused of being unclean and not respecting their surroundings and neighborhoods. 	Ethnic comparisons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Migrants = Gypsies – Based on general intolerance users equate migrants to Hungarian Roma, who still cause a number of problems, even though they have been living here for centuries. ▪ Migrants = Africans – To many users all migrants are simply "Africans", which to them means an inferior race.

Figure 5 provides an example of the actual consumer language underlying the triggers presented in figure 4..

Figure 5. Consumer language behind a conversation trigger



User quotes – threats to Hungarian lifestyle

Customs and ways of living

Inequality in the family

„En eldöntöttem, ha a feleségemre, csak egy sanda pillantást is vet egy ilyen, vagy úgy gondolja itt is lehet a nőekkel azt amit odahaza, hát rövid úton vissza küldöm a természet körforgásába.”

"I have decided that if one of these even looks at my wife or thinks that they can do to women what they do at home, then well I will quickly send him back to the circle of life"

Personal space

"Na, most mész a picsába! Én éltém közöttük (mellettük) több mint egy évig, nekem te ne magyarázz. Ezek (sic) olyanok mint az állatok, mocskosak, patkányok közt, házon belül is nyitott csatornák közt (hogy értsd, a szar szabadon folydogál az épületen belül, majd egyszer csak kiesik a házból a szabadba) élnek."

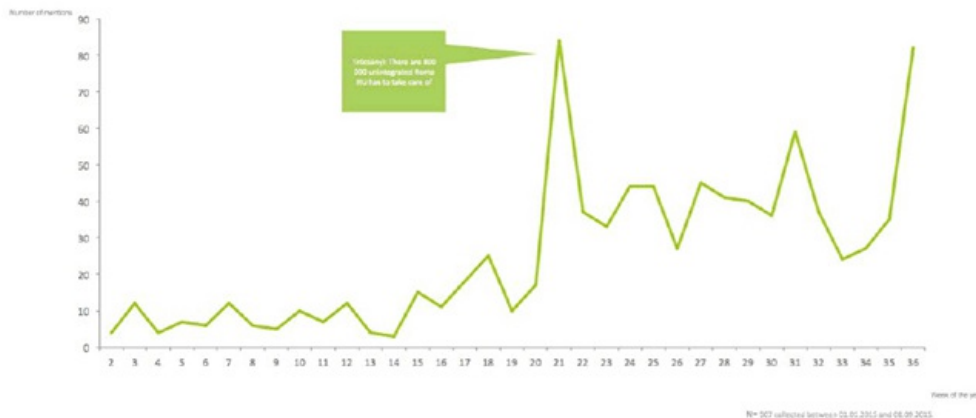
"Now you go to fucking hell! I lived with (next to them) for over a year so do not argue with me. These are like animals, they are filthy, and live amongst the rats and open sewers (just so you understand: shit flows freely in the building until it just falls out onto the street.)"

Additionally, the report made use of the insights found through the analysis done with thematically focused keyword grids. These helped to explore the dynamics of the conversations and trace the spread of vocabulary.

Figure 6. Rise of roma hate speech due to government officials' remarks



Buzzword penetration – Gypry – Cigány



Findings

The study introduced OSF to a wealth of information on the opinions, attitudes and actual content people discussed in connection with the refugee crisis during the first nine months of 2015. The research showed that the government sponsored anti-refugee campaign was successful.

The study looked at the overall trend and dynamics of the conversation. It found that prior to the terrorist attack on Charlie Hebdo in January 2015 no significant organic conversation of the refugee topic took place. The conversation grew over time - as the refugee crisis and the government campaign intensified. Moreover, the investigation showed that measured conversation spikes were caused by discussions about the government's communication.

The analysis identified seven distinct thematic clusters of the conversation, which could be divided into two groups. The first group consisted of thematic clusters about the refugees - their characteristics and behaviour. The second group of thematic clusters was made up of conversations about the handling of the refugee crisis - not about refugees themselves.

The four thematic clusters that discussed the characteristics of refugees emerging from the conversation were:

- Security
- Cultural Differences
- Rule of Law
- Economic Impact

The found themes were in line with the four core messages of the anti-refugee campaign and the National Consultation on Migration and Terrorism. The campaign set the agenda and people populated these threads with their own perspective and opinions.

The content of the thematic clusters brought an emotionally charged conversation to light. Here the 'Cultural Differences' cluster is exemplified, as it was the largest theme representing close to a third of the entire refugee conversation. The cluster was made up of four topic groups:

- Judeo-Christian origins
- European and Hungarian values
- Customs and ways of living
- Ethnic comparisons

Going to a deeper layer, the study cast light on the triggers of the above topic groups. For the 'Judeo-Christian origins' three triggers were found:

- Islamisation - the expectation that within generations Islam will be Europe's dominant religion
- Mosques at every corner - Muslim places of worship will pop up everywhere, replacing the Christian churches
- Forced conversion - Hungarians and Europeans will be forced to adopt the Islamic faith

For the 'European and Hungarian Values' the below four triggers emerged:

- Implementation of Sharia - Due to a fear of being outnumbered, users assume that immigrants will force Sharia law upon Europeans
- Male dominance - Women will lose their social equality and will be forced to live under the surveillance of Islamic men
- Freedom of opinion - Freedom of speech will be lost and content not in line will be punished, as it happened with Charlie Hebdo
- Intolerance - Islam is seen as intolerant culture in general and Europeans will suffer the consequences

The content generated by people participating in the refugee conversation were overwhelmingly fear motivated. Like above, the fear that the familiar way of life is going to change because of the refugees. Users fused the themes, suggested by the campaign, with their own knowledge, fears and expectations. The anti-refugee campaign was abstract and void of details, it was left to people to contribute meaningful interpretations. This pattern was found across all four refugee-focused thematic clusters.

A good example of the process whereby people make sense of the anti-refugee campaign is around triggers

talking about women. Emerging across different theme clusters, the pattern is that 'our women' need to be defended against 'those men'. The attitude and language clearly indicate that the opinions are those of males. In the context of the refugee topic, this chauvinist attitude is reframed and cast in a benevolent, patriotic light. In a similar fashion, entrenched racist, xenophobic and antisemitic stereotypes were frequently repurposed to make sense of the danger posed by the refugees.

The qualitative analysis of conversations on the characteristic of refugees allowed the study to determine that the anti-refugee campaign successfully stirred the discussion along the four intended themes: rule of law, terrorism, economy and culture.

Insights from the big data analytics component of the study helped to reinforce the qualitatively gained understanding. Analysis of the thematic keyword grids showed that the distribution and dynamics of the different thematic clusters correlated with the campaign communication. Moreover, searches using special vocabulary - buzzwords created by the anti-refugee campaign - indicated that a wide audience incorporated the vocabulary into their own language.

An unexpected insight was found via the special vocabulary exercise. During the naive reading phase the team discovered that the word *gypsy* (derogatory term for Roma people) appeared to spread through the conversations. Hungarians do harbour racist stereotypes against Roma, but a connection between the minority and the refugees was unknown. The conversations were hateful, racist expressions equating the Roma's perceived characteristics (e.g. lazy, stupid, dirty, criminal) with refugees on the one hand; and on the other hand questioned the right of 'Roma-refugees' to reside in Hungary. The vocabulary keyword search revealed that Roma-associations sprung up five-fold the day the government minister of justice explained during a press conference that the reason Hungary is unwilling to take in any refugees is because the country already houses 800,000 Roma.

The thematic clusters on the handling of the refugee crisis helped in answering the research on the perception of government and civic actors. Three clusters were identified:

- Role of the Hungarian government
- Foreign powers
- Role of religious and civic organisations

Conversations on the Hungarian government were extremely polarized along partisan lines. Supporters were proud of the government's strong and decisive stance; happy that Hungary dared to stand up and protect its people. On the opposing side, users saw the refugee-policy as part of PM Orban's authoritarian take-down of a democratic society and highlighted the humanitarian fallout of the government's hard line.

Humanitarian organisations were mostly seen critical and playing an adversary role. Users disliked that organisations provided assistance to refugees, arguing that if help is granted only more will come. Users questioned the organisations' intentions and their right to support refugees. Barely any positive opinions were found in the open web. A deeper analysis revealed that while several tens of thousands of Hungarian citizens - opposing the government's stance - were actively involved in feeding, housing and supporting the arriving refugees, their social communication was not in the open web. Organisations, such as MigSzol (solidarity with migrants) had their supporters and activists join closed groups on Facebook and made use of email newsletters. Thus their opinions were not accessible to the general public nor formed part of this study's basis. This finding was an important learning to OSF, as due to the closed-ness of humanitarian groups, no positive narrative on refugees became prevalent.

The impact of the refugee study was multifaceted. It delivered against the stated research objectives and also affected concrete change in how OSF supports human rights advocacy in Hungary and the region. Overall, the client was shocked and frightened by the research's findings. OSF did not expect for the anti-refugee campaign to resonate to this extent -and people's opinions to be this intertwined with the campaign messages. The absence of positive, pro-refugee, opinions further worsened the picture. The below highlights three areas the research affected change in.

Impact

OSF used the insights delivered by the open web study to complement its understanding of the Hungarian government's anti-refugee campaign. The client decided that it was too late to actively engage in pro-refugee advocacy or counter-campaign communication in Hungary. Instead, it applied the study's findings to reshape its regional strategy and launch an advocacy approach covering the V4 EU countries (Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary).

The study caused OSF to extend its Roma capacity and constituency-building program donor activity. In response to the unexpected threat posed by hate speech in connection with the refugee topic on the Roma minority, OSF decided to fund Roma organizations.

A few months after delivery of the report, OSF and its founder and figurehead George Soros became the target of the Hungarian government's communication. Spokespersons, the state-run and government-friendly media outlets accused OSF and Soros to have caused the refugee crisis and having a vested interest in the failure of anti-refugee governments. Colourful and verbose attack waves were launched. OSF decided - based on the learnings from the refugee study - that the attacks must not go unanswered. To this end, OSF created Hungarian language content and launched a pro-active counter communication strategy.

Conclusion

To conclude this paper, we believe qualitative analysis of open web big data will increasingly contribute to the field of market and opinion research.

A qualitative approach to the organic conversations playing out across the internet grants a new perspective on people's lives, without asking or interacting with people, their views and opinions they have chosen to publish. On a theoretical level, the data collected is not perturbed by the act of observation. On a practical level, these views and opinions are unfiltered. This is the added value of the deep.scape methodology: to bypass the social normativity of research. Insights are directly relevant, as they are not the result of a research setup, but are part of the everyday reality created by people on the internet.

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The authors

Daniel Fazekas is CEO, [Bakamo.Social](#), Hungary.

Balazs Denes is Director, European Civil Liberties Project, Open Society Foundations, Hungary.

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ESOMAR

Eurocenter 2, 11th floor, Barbara Strozilaan 384, 1083 HN Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Tel: +31 20 664 2141, Fax: +31 20 664 2922

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