Media monitoring with Meltwater

Method breakdown

In order to find out the answer to my question "Where does the coverage around the "twin transition" come from, between 2019 and 2023?" I used a media scanning tool called Meltwater . The tool allows for media monitoring, while controlling for the type of news outlets to be included in the search. For this monitoring exercise, I looked at 2 types of news searches. The first is a general news search using the "News" category, with data sources as defined below. The second search is a narrowed search, created to look only at the coverage of a selection of outlets from a selection of countries.

The "general News" search: As explained on Meltwater's website, News is copyrighted content from news sources such as The New York Times, BBC, CNN, local newspapers, and online journals. Content posted on television networks' websites is also classified as News. Over 3 million traditional media articles are crawled through Meltwater's news sources daily. This search was particularly useful when analysing the volume and timing of coverage.

EU Public Affairs Top Online News – custom category: In order to curate the most relevant news outlets for the EU Public debate, I use a custom category. This include selected *online* **outlets** and news agencies from *relevant* **Member States** and **English speaking countries**, as well as online outlets dedicated specifically to **EU Affairs**. As this was a custom-made criteria of media screening, I will detail in a few paragraphs the choices I made when defining it. This search was particularly useful when analysing the key disseminators and their message.

For the purpose of this exercise, I will not look into social media content, blogs, forums, comments, broadcast, podcast or any other data source types except the ones mentioned above.

"custom category"

Focus countries

By combining the biggest 10 EU Member States (Wikipedia) with Thomson Reuters Digital News Report 2023, I have inferred in **Annex 1** below the 5 main EU Member States from which online press can have the most influence in driving public narrative around any topic. The inference is based on the country's weight according to its size, percentage of people using online news as a source of news, interest in news and overall trust in news. As a result, the countries in the focus of my media research are **Germany, France, Italy, Spain and Poland.**

More, based on a study around Brussels' news corps, journalists' answers showed that "the most important agenda setting media for Brussels journalists are media stemming from English-speaking countries". As such, I chose to complement my focus on the 5 EU Member States (Annex 1) with the top English-language speaking countries **UK and the US.**

Focus outlets

In order to identify the specific online news outlets to monitor, I choose to pick the top online brands for each country in focus, as identified by the Thomson Reuters Digital News Report 2023. The **top online news outlets from the selected countries** are identified in (**Annex 2) and (Annex 3)**.

The Brussels media landscape has been identified in 2020 to contain over 21% journalists working for **news agencies** in 2020. For this reason, I chose to identify and monitor also the **news agencies** from UK, US, Germany, France, Italy, Spain and Poland. **(Annex 4)**

Finally, it is worth looking at topic-specific outlets, such as those primarily providing **coverage for EU affairs and business/economics.** A study looking at the coverage of EU affairs shows outlets dedicated primarily to the EU and national news media reporting in other EU languages have a strong positive effect on the coverage of EU affairs. For this reason, I will also monitor for outlets such as Politico Europe, Euractiv, EUObserver and Euronews, Deutsche Welle and France24. In the same time, media analysts at Britopian identify top business media outlets as: USA Today, Associated Press, Reuters, Bloomberg, Business Insider, New York Times, CNBC, the Wall Street Journal, and Business Insider, Harvard Business Review, Fortune, the Economist, Entrepreneur, Money, Fast Company and Inc.

As a result of the scoping done above, the Boolean search incorporates the news agencies and the top online news outlets from UK, US, Germany, France, Italy, Spain and Poland, as well as the biggest outlets covering EU affairs and business/economics. The final custom search is available in Annex 5.

Limitations of the method are linked both to the tool, as well as to myself as a tool user. First, the tool relies heavily on automated content tagging and is prone to error. As I looked through results, I had to tweak and iterate on my search criteria in order to exclude topics related to the vaccine and the "green digital" vaccine passport. More, the focus on monitoring online media alone excludes the importance of mediums such as print media and social media in shaping public narrative. My positionality as a researcher affects the result of this research too. I make curatorial decisions as Brussels-based white female researcher, entrenched in the so called "Brussels bubble" of the "twin transition" topic. While this positionality has an effect on the broader research as a whole that I address in coming episodes, the impact on the media scanning analysis is also noteworthy. This includes the exclusion of in depth analysis of national coverage in countries with an important weight in the "twin transition" debate such as Germany. Finally, the media scanning exercise did not cover 2024 as a year en course, ignoring important ongoing developments around the topic.