Security, Safety and its Price: A Comparative Analysis of Media Discourse on Security

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Abstract

New technologies represent opportunities (to ensure safety) and threats (to privacy and freedom), and also emphasize key tensions - between security and freedom/privacy and between security and its various costs (economic, health, public support, etc.). The dilemma of our times, for civil society, governments, the media, and individual citizens, is the level of safety we desire and at what price. In this process, the role of the media surpasses that of an intermediary and is important in the following five ways: first, in the provision of information – from the government, whistle-blowers, or the opinions of stakeholders; second, in the formation of opinion and education, explaining (in more or less balanced and/or biased terms) the meaning and significance of the information provided; third, in acting as an arena for various information and opinions, the media constitutes an opinion-formation platform in which political discourses are created; fourth, considering the tensions governments are facing - balancing between domestic and international obligations, needing to inform the public and keeping secrets, security and freedom, security and costs - the media also plays the role of a watchdog; and fifth, due the growing tension between security and freedom, the critical media also serves as a channel for advocacy (e.g. The Guardian in the Snowden affair). The following paper provides a unique opportunity to compare media debates on three security issues (3D body scanners, Stuxnet and CCTV) in 20 major dailies from ten countries during the period from January 2010 to April 2013. Qualitative media analysis is used as a tool for obtaining data for comparative analysis of security discourses and patterns of communication, which we use to identify and compare key actors and topics of the three debates. For the purpose of this paper we will focus on the role of civil society in the three debates, identifying the key discursive interactions between the key actors within the national and transnational public spheres.

Key words: security; media; Stuxnet; CCTV; body scanner;
Introduction
Decision makers in democratic societies are increasingly facing tensions between ensuring security and the trust and satisfaction of their citizens. The recent publication of information about wide-reaching government-led surveillance in many Western countries, the reaction of the public to the information, and the reaction of governments and their actions to prosecute whistle-blowers on grounds of “threatening national security” all demonstrate that attempts to ensure more security do not necessarily result in the trust or satisfaction of citizens. The main reason is that satisfaction is not only connected to the absence of fear and feeling of safety, but also to absence of (perceived or real) far reaching security measures infringing upon privacy and the feeling of freedom.

The dilemma of our times, for governments, the media and individual citizens, is thus the question of how much safety we desire and at what price. The answer to this question differs sharply according to the political orientation of the speaker. However, since Thomas Hobbes’ *The Leviathan*, it is evident that safety and security, two essential features of the social contract, have their price; that freedom, both personal and that of a society, is a defining feature of legitimate government; and that governments are seen as legitimate if they resolve the tension between safety and freedom to the general satisfaction of the people [Hobbes 1651 (1960)]. In this dilemma, the media plays a critical role as an arena in which information is made available to the public, multiple claims and justifications are presented and discussed, and essentially opinions are formed.

The existing security in contemporary Western societies is unprecedented, yet the scale of risks (in terms of their consequences) such as nuclear radiation, global warming and terrorism, is also unparalleled. This is why security risks and safety are of such a large concern in today’s societies and have brought profound changes to the political order, shaping the perceptions, attitudes and behaviour of people, political leaders and governments (cf. Beck 2002; Inglehart 1997). The differences in perspectives on security found among contemporary Western societies are caused by cultural differences, as well as by varying degrees of medialization. Hence, analysing media has become crucial not only for understanding political communication, but also to understand which questions and topics play dominant roles in the political arena of contemporary Western societies.

This article is a theory-driven exploration of empirical findings, whose aim is to compare media debates on three security issues (3D body scanners, Stuxnet and CCTV) in 20 major dailies of 10 countries over a period of 40 months (from January 2010 to April 2013). By applying and advancing the method of qualitative media analysis, this paper presents a comparative analysis of security discourses and patterns of communication, identifying and comparing the salience and key actors of the three security debates. We proceed by first defining the role of the media in contemporary society and specific issues of media reporting on security; second, we provide a background on the media landscape and social contexts in the countries under study; third, we establish a theoretical and methodological framework for this work; fourth, we present and discuss our main findings; and fifth and finally we draw conclusions from our work.

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1 In the *Leviathan* [Hobbes 1651 (1960)], Thomas Hobbes made clear that danger and insecurity were always an essential part of human existence.

2 Denton and Woodward define political communication as a “pure discussion about the allocation of public resources (revenues), official authority (who is given the power to make legal, legislative and executive decision), and official sanctions (what the state rewards or punishes)” (1990: 14).
1. Politics in the age of mediation

Political communication encompasses (1) all forms of communication undertaken by politicians and other political actors for the purpose of achieving specific objectives, (2) communication addressed to these actors by non-politicians such as voters and newspaper columnists, and (3) communication about these actors and their activities, as contained in news reports, editorials, and other forms of media discussion of politics (McNair 2011).

There are three main elements in the process of conceiving and realizing political communication. The first is political actors – political parties, public organisations, pressure groups, terrorist organisations, governments etc. These parties appeal to the media, as participating in programs, advertising, and media is an essential part of their public relations. The second is the media, which reports on, comments on, and analyses the actions of political organisations. The third and final element is citizens, who express their opinions through the media – in polls, letters, blogs, citizen journalism, etc. The purpose of all political communication is to persuade, and the target of this persuasion – the audience - is the second key element in the political communication process without which political messages would carry no relevance. Whatever the size and nature of the audience, all political communication is intended to achieve an effect on the receivers of the message.

Terrorist organisations and acts of violence, even random violence directed towards civilians, may be viewed as a form of political communication intended to send a message to a particular constituency, and is capable of being decoded as such. Thus, in response to terrorism, the media walks a thin line between providing information on acts of violence while not actively providing a platform upon which terrorist groups may reach their goals – recognition and justification of the group’s cause. While some governments restrain the media on issues pertaining national security, authors such as Wilkinson call for self-restrain and self-regulation of media in response to terrorism (1997, cf. Papacharissi and de Fatima Oliveira 2008, Norris et al. 2003).

As McNair points out, in democratic societies, the role of the media surpasses that of an intermediary and is important in the following five ways: first, it provides information – from the government, whistle-blowers, or the opinions of stakeholders; second, it educates and helps to form opinions – explaining (in more or less balanced and/or biased terms) the meaning and significance of the information provided; third, acting as an arena of these various information and opinions, the media constitutes an opinion-formation platform in which political discourses are created; fourth, considering the tension governments are facing - balancing domestic and international obligations, the need to inform the public and the need to keep secrets, security and freedom, security and costs, etc. - the media plays the role of a watchdog; and fifth, due the growing tension between security and freedom, the critical media also serves as a channel for advocacy as the Guardian newspaper did in the Snowden affair.

For persuasion to be performed adequately, and thus the ‘public sphere’ to exist, a number of conditions have to be met. Political discourse circulated by the media must be: first, comprehensible to citizens; second, truthful insofar as it reflects the genuine and sincere intentions of speakers; third, a means of transmitting information must be accessible to those who can be influenced by it; and fourth, there must be an institutional guarantee for the public sphere to exist. In short, a democracy presumes an open state in which people are allowed to participate in decision-making and are given access to the media and other information networks through which advocacy occurs (Habermas 1996, McNair 2011).
While arguments about the precise efficacy of the media’s output continue, there is no disagreement about its central role in the political process, relaying and interpreting objective happenings in the political sphere and facilitating subjective perceptions thereof in the wider public sphere. These media ‘biases’ are of key political importance - the extent and direction of media bias varies in a modern democracy, and its existence invites researchers to view media organisations as important actors in the political process and a source of research data.

The main criticism of the media revolves around the question of manufacturing consent. The legitimacy of a liberal democratic government is founded on the consent of the governed, but consent, as Walter Lippmann observed, can be ‘manufactured’ (1946); it is defined as a ‘self-conscious’ art in which politicians combine the techniques of social psychology with the immense reach of mass media. The distinction between ‘persuasion,’ which is a universally recognized function of political actors in a democracy, and ‘manipulation,’ carrying with itself the negative connotation of propaganda and deceit, is not always an easy one to draw. Manipulation of opinion and concealment (or suppression) of inconvenient information are strategies emanating from political actors themselves, and are pursued through media institutions (McNair 2011). Further criticisms of the media include the limitations of objectivity, absence of choice and the failure of education.

To summarize, the media is a crucial and multifaceted actor in the political process, fulfilling numerous vital roles. With the growing internationalisation and transnationalisation of media, political arenas are transcending boundaries of nation states and political communication is undergoing profound changes. Comparative research can thus provide crucial insights into similarities and differences in communication patterns during times of profound change in reporting and communication.

2. Security issues and the media
Before introducing the specific issues pertaining to media reporting of security issues selected for our research, it is important to note that media content is influenced by risk but biased towards the dramatic (Wahlberg and Sjöberg 2000, Greenberg et al. 1989, Vilella-Vila and Costa-Font 2008). Indeed, a gap exists between media reporting and actual impact on public opinion (Wahlberg and Sjöberg 2000, Slone 2000). The range of arguments in the literature is wide – from the limited impact of the media (Bennett, Curran and Woollacott 1982) to more recent works highlighting the role of the media as a powerful tool capable of shaping public opinion (, McCombs 2013, Slone 2000). In our research, we accept that through their exposure to the media, citizens are involved in a “continuous learning process about public affairs”, which is significantly influenced by the intense competition among issues for placement both in the media and on the public agenda (McCombs 2013: 51-52).

Regarding the impact of the media on risk perception, Wahlberg and Sjöberg (2000) highlight four important points which are relevant to media reporting on security issues: first, media content is biased in terms of selection of issues, frequency and presentation; second, the media is one factor in risk perception and opinion formation, but other factors – especially cultural differences and individual aspects - play important roles as well; third, the availability of an issue in the media influences people’s assessment of the probability of the risk – whether or not a particular issue has the potential to affect readers’ lives; and fourth, a distinction must be made between general and personal perception of risk – the former is affected more by general reporting of the issue, the latter more by appeal to emotions, for

Scholarly attention to media reporting on security issues has grown significantly in recent years, influenced especially by the political and policy aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the USA (2001) and later attacks in Madrid (2004), London (2005) and Mumbai (2008). Papacharissi and de Fatima Oliveira review the communication research and note that “Communication researchers have since focused on public response and reaction to terrorist attack[s], definition of terrorism, policy questions, media portrayals of terrorism, and framing across different media[s] and nations.” (2008: 52). In their analysis of the US and the UK, Papacharissi and de Fatima Oliveira find a symbiotic relationship between the media and policy agenda – an alignment between media frames and corresponding policies and a two-directional relationship of influence between the media and policy agenda, the main difference being the broader policy choices presented in the British press in comparison with the US (ibid. 2008:71, cf. De Goede 2008).

Our research focuses on the role of the media in transmitting information and shaping attitudes towards security issues and security measures. Three issues were identified as transnationally salient in the current media and relevant for comparative analysis - 3D body scanners, CCTV cameras and Stuxnet. The 3D body scanner and CCTV camera issues are particularly relevant to the dilemma of security versus privacy. The airport 3D body scanner debate highlights the issues of security costs and potential health risks of security measures as factors influencing the perception and acceptance of a particular security measure. CCTV cameras are an example of a technology whose salience and social acceptance varies across different countries (Lyon 2002). Stuxnet was selected as an issue as it introduces cyber terrorism and certain vulnerabilities in critical infrastructure to the public debate (Collins and McCombie 2012). From late 2010 through the present, this topic has shown great potential in reaching both policy makers and the public, generating debate in both general and special-interest media, namely expert blogs.

The scholarly attention to the three issues varies, with CCTV cameras receiving the most attention and the relatively new issue of Stuxnet (and more generally cyber terrorism) the least. The attention to CCTV surveillance grew along with its proliferation in Western Europe (and especially in the UK) since the mid-1970s (cf. Lipper and Wilkinson 2010, Norris, Moran and Armstrong 1998, Norris and Armstrong 1999, Coleman and Sim 2002). Surveillance scholars critically highlight the mainstream portrayal of CCTV as an effective crime-prevention tool in a predominantly neo-liberal framing (Coleman and Sim 2002, Coleman 2003, Hier et al. 2007, Greenberg and Hier 2009). The media coverage of CCTV is episodic, rather than contextual, focusing on crime prevention and crime detection, hence creating a juxtaposition of ‘them vs. us’ (cf. Kroener 2013, McCahill and Finn 2010). In terms of actors, police and governments (especially local and regional) are significantly more successful in framing the coverage than experts and advocacy groups. This imbalance leads to marginalization of issues such as personal privacy at the expense of discussion on costs, efficiency and necessity of CCTV surveillance rather than privacy and civic liberties, and the need to ‘tolerate’ increasing levels of surveillance in order to obtain security and safety (Greensberg and Hier 2009: 478-480, Norris, McCahill and Wood 2002, Kroener 2013: 131).

3 According to David Lyon (2002), surveillance, as one method of ensuring security, can be placed on a spectrum that ranges between “care” and “control”. At one end “care” stands for watching over society for purpose of protection. “Control,” on the other hand, consists of scrutinizing people’s behaviour to enforce discipline and order.
Security, safety and risk are also closely intertwined in the literature on airport security (Schouten 2014, Lippert and O’Connor 2003), specifically the recent debate on increasing reliance on technology such as the 3D body scanner whilst downplaying human factors (Schouten 2014). The introduction of body scanners in the USA and other countries generated public as well as political controversies in the US and the EU.

The 3D body scanner controversy resonated with the US media and the public. Following a failed airplane attack in late 2009, US authorities were intensely reconsidering airport security measures. The new air travel regulations included the screening by ‘backscatter’ full-body scanners, which could see through passengers’ clothes, in an attempt to expose explosives. The machines became the subject of a controversy due to fears of possible health risks, as well as privacy and later on concerns of efficiency. The main debate revolved around the question of whether a potential terrorist threat in air travel justifies the intrusion of passengers’ privacy, the unpleasant experience of the screening, and/or the potential risk of developing cancer. At times, the coverage also questioned the ability of the scanners to detect a novel terrorist threat and proposed alternative security measures instead (Belakova 2013).

In the EU, Regulation EC 300/2008 included 3D body scanners among potentially permitted European airport screening technologies. However, the European Parliament was not completely satisfied with this potential introduction of 3D body scanners and so several discussions were held and new documents were proposed. Nonetheless, the failed attacks in Amsterdam and Detroit in 2009 returned the body scanner to the priority list of the political agenda on an international level. In July 2011, a resolution was passed by the European Parliament which stated that 3D body scanners should be allowed at EU airports to enhance security under the condition that risks pertaining health, dignity and privacy of passengers would be addressed accordingly. The issue of body scanners is one of the central issues of airport security, demonstrating how issues of security, safety, privacy, dignity, health risks, efficiency, and costs of security are closely interlinked. It also shows the extent to which terrorist acts (and the media reporting about them) can significantly influence political agendas and policy priorities.

CCTV cameras and 3D Body scanners are technologies used to prevent traditional crime and modern terrorism as well as to detect perpetrators. However, another area in the field of security studies, criminology, and counter-terrorism has become salient in modern security discourse – cyber-crime. Cyber-crime uses information systems and technology to commit extortion, identity theft, espionage, or even paralyze and/or destroy critical infrastructure (Collins and McCombie 2012). Though there have been many examples of these viruses in recent years, Stuxnet is not a technology that directly affects the daily life of common people. Stuxnet, the computer worm which disrupted Iranian nuclear enrichment in 2010, is the first instance of a computer network attack known to cause physical damage across international boundaries (Lindsay 2013, 365). Stuxnet as an example of a cyber threat highlights that governments are now facing amorphous security threats, which transcend the boundaries of nation states, of the private and the public, and of the civilian and the military. Growing security interdependence highlights the need for cooperation (Lewis 2002).

In response to media reports of the attack, numerous governments called for international coordination on cyber security strategies while also trying to secure an advantage in cyberspace (Farwell and Rohozinski 2011, 31). The reason why Stuxnet has shaken public views of cyber security is that it was unprecedented in its scope and effectiveness. The media
called Stuxnet “the cyber equivalent of the dropping of the atom bomb”, “a new era of warfare” (Lindsay 2013, 365), and a “revolution in cyber-attacks” (Sean and McCombie 2012, 80). It has also shown that compared to traditional military means, cyberspace carries less cost and risk in use against enemies. In response to these developments, the British Government responded with the release of the National Security Strategy (NSS) and the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) in October 2010 and devoted over £650 million to increase cyber security (Cornish et al. 2011). However, a clear roadmap that would structure best practice and transparency in cyber protection is still under development.

3. Methodology and Data

3.1. Conceptualising and operationalising political discourse

The key aspect of the conceptual framework applied here is discourse. Following the work of Chilton, discourse is understood within our work as a ‘cognitive world constructed by actors’, and as a ‘discursive process’ (Chilton 2004, for more, see Liebert et al. 2008, 12 – 14). Following Dryzek and Berejikian, discourse is also seen as ‘representing a coherent point of view,’ and analysing political discourses thus requires a deconstruction of analysed texts into components of the discourse and its re-construction into a coherent image (Dryzek and Berejikan 1993). As such, discourses are being constructed by actors in a discursive process, but discourse also defines the discursive context of an actor (Diez 1999, 603), and as such represents a constraint on actors’ agency. Therefore, discourses are created and shaped by actors, but also structure and define actors (see also Schukkin and Niemann 2012).

In this sense, comparative media analysis will reveal the explicit and implicit ontological entities of the media debates. Crucial for this analysis is not only the defining and enabling power of a discourse, but also its power to exclude and dominate actors, categories, and justifications by withholding their recognition and endorsement (Milliken 1999, 229). Parallel to Diez and his discursive construction of the European political order (1999), the comparative media analysis presented here goes beyond mere capture and description of media debates on risk and security, as it highlights the construction and shaping of the security perception by the provision of knowledge and opinion. Indeed, “‘Tracking discourse’ of selected news media illustrate[s] how the focus and content of ‘fear’ shifts over a period of time” (Altheide 1997, 647). In our analysis we focus on change of the security discourse over time (over the period of 40 month between 2010 and 2013) and across three security issues (CCTV, Stuxnet and 3D body scanner).

Following Diez, and together with Chilton, we claim that these categories are an intersection of individual and collective mental processes as well as strategic processes, and that they are closely related to social behaviour as such (2004). Therefore, these are ‘not neutral representations of an objective world’ (Habermas 1971, 1973, 1979, 1981, quoted after Chilton 2004, 42) and they are not stable, but rather dynamic categories shaping and being shaped by actors, whose are in turn delineated, shaped, and transformed by discursive context.

Adopting the empirical discourse analysis method developed by Guasti (2013; following Liebert 2006; Dryzek and Berejikan 1993; Diez 1999, 2004), we develop a novel methodological approach to analysis of security debates and the construction of security and risk perception, as well as to patterns of interaction and communication⁴. Utilizing and further

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⁴ This form of media analysis was developed and successfully applied to number of issues such as EU constitutional ratification (Rakusanova 2006; Liebert, Gattig and Evas 2013), Euroscepticism (de Wilde and Trenz 2009; de Wilde; Michailidou and Trenz 2013), EU legitimacy (Guasti 2013), and presidential speeches
developing qualitative methods of textual analysis, we are able to shed light on discursive interactions in the media, to demonstrate how the risk and security threats are framed, and to identify justifications of security measures in terms of security, freedom and costs (economic, health etc.). In order to develop a comprehensive analytical framework elaborating the structure and content of the training for the country experts, the relevant media outlets for each country (the two principle quality dailies with the highest circulation, one left-leaning and one right-leaning per country) were identified and, most importantly, junior researchers with experience in social science research and knowledge of the language and domestic context of each country were recruited and trained to use both the analytical framework and the technical tool (Atlas.ti program for qualitative analysis).

3.2. Data
The articles analysed were all drawn from the period between January 2010 and April 2013. Each article was sourced from the two most circulated quality dailies (i.e. mainstream newspapers) in the old and the new EU member states of the Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Poland, Slovakia, Spain, the UK as well as non-EU member states important in either shaping the global discussions of the selected issues (the USA) or key in providing relevant cultural diversity (Turkey and Mexico), see table 1.

Table 1. Overview of selected media.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Media</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>Mladá fronta Dnes, Právo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Süddeutsche Zeitung, Frankfurter Allgemeine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>The Telegraph, The Guardian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>La Repubblica, Il Giornale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>La Jordana, La Reforma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Gazeta Wyborcza, Rzeczpospolita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>SME, Pravda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>El Pais, La Vanguardia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>Zaman, Sozcu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SECONOMICS 2014

The twenty national newspapers provided over 2800 articles during the given period. The qualitative sample analysed by the Atlas.ti. Software included between 40 to 45 articles per country selected to fulfil the following criteria: representativeness regarding coverage over time, per newspaper and per topic. For each country, an individual selection matrix was developed for supervised selection of articles. In the comparative analysis both the proportions of coverage per topic and the total number of articles per country were considered in order to maintain representativeness and comparability cross-nationally and over time.

Security and risk were conceptualized as social phenomena and their mutual interplay was analysed vis-à-vis public opinion and attitudes. We used media salience, a term originally developed in semiotics referring to the relative prominence of a sign. In communication

(Rakusanova 2007). In the SECONOMIC project this methodology was further enhanced and proved an efficient tool for cross-national comparative media analysis.

5 As a result of technical problems it was not possible to perform an in-depth qualitative analysis of the Turkish press, but this only affected the general data.
research, salience refers to the accessibility of frames (i.e. narrative structures in which information are presented) in (mass) communication.

For the purpose of this study, salience is defined as a measure of accessibility of narrative frames present in the media – as the public perception and reception of security issues and, more specifically, of security measures; for this purpose, salience signifies the degree of acceptance (positive salience) and the degree of rejection (negative salience). Salience can be either positive or negative, and is used here as an indicator of the potential acceptance of security measures. For security measures to be accepted, the predominant direction of media salience ought to be positive. Depending on its strength and context, negative salience signifies a rejection of a security measure and a failure on the part of that security measures' proponents to effectively communicate the need for that measure. This tool enabled the generation of a unique corpus of comparative data.

For analysis, a comparative coding scheme was developed and applied during both the pre-test and the main coding period. The minimum discursive elements of a coded statement included the following: (1) actors: a determination of which actors were taking part in the communication (both in terms of origin and type) and the dominant patterns of interaction among them; (2) topics: an account of how the discussion of each topic was structured by choice of or focus on a specific subject matter; (3) argumentative strategies: a description of the ways in which statements were structured (definitive, evaluative and advocative strategies) with a focus on the positive and negative aspects of evaluative and advocative statements; and (4) motivations and justifications: an analysis of major recognized motives (providing an answer to the question of why a certain statement is used and how it is validated) brought to the fore or denied by dominant actors, with special attention paid to ideas about security, privacy, and freedom.

A further measure utilised to ensure tool validity was an intercoder reliability test; this was performed regularly throughout the pre-test and the main coding periods. In this exercise, each coder had to code an English language article, using the existing coding scheme. Results were subsequently evaluated and compared in terms of the extent to which all coders identified the same coding sequences and applied the same codes.

The intercoder reliability varied between 80 and 90%, which, from a methodological perspective, is an excellent result in international and multicultural comparative research. The results of the intercoder reliability test were extensively discussed within the SECONOMICS expert group and, when necessary, also with individual coders whose coding stood as outliers. This tool proved to be crucial in providing an understanding of the general logic of qualitative comparative analysis, giving insight into the coded material as well as the ability to fully grasp the meaning behind the individual codes.

4. Analysis
4.1. Media landscape and social context in the countries under study
The SECONOMICS media country reports clearly showed a necessity to be aware of existing ties between political actors and the media, which have important implications for any media analysis. The diversity of our sample of countries, including Central European (Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland) and Western European countries (Germany, Italy, Spain, United Kingdom) together with two overseas countries (USA and Mexico), allows us to observe some global trends, especially in terms of some major changes in ownership structures and regulatory frameworks.
The global economic downturn of the past five years has strongly hit the media sector. Profit margins are much lower than in the 1990s, and several news houses were forced to lay off investigative and international journalists as well as reduce outputs and limit the amount of overseas branches. As Hronesova, Guasti and Caulfield (2014) noted, “one of the strategies how to lower costs has become multi-skilling of staff and cutting specialist correspondents, foreign bureaux and investigative journalism, which has only reinforced the trend of journalistic dumbing down.” News coverage has focused on informative reporting rather than large investigative and analytical pieces, which are more costly and require a larger pool of staff. Media content turned towards entertainment and tabloid-style news for commercial purposes. This has led to a negative trend in the media referred to as “infotainment”, i.e. the presentation of news information in an entertaining and more appealing form (see Belakova 2013a). More importantly, media independence has suffered an increased dependency on governments and large business to support their outputs. Political and business interests have spilled over from paid advertisement sections into media content, especially in countries that were greatly hit by the crisis. On a more positive note, the latest media development has also seen a great technologisation of news reporting and a preference for online platforms due to their efficiency, accessibility and lower cost (Hronesova, Guasti and Caulfield 2014).

While stressing these underlying factors and global pressures on the media sector, our comparative study highlights important regional similarities. In the three Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries, where press freedom is generally highly ranked (in the Reporters without Borders 2013 ranking, the Czech Republic performed the best out of all analysed countries - see Table 2), latest developments have rendered the media especially vulnerable to financial pressures through business and indirect political meddling. Since the beginning of the 1990s, newspapers in the CEE region have been mostly run by large foreign media companies. However, in recent years as a consequence of the financial crunch, foreign investors left the region and local businessmen with diverse business interests (and political ambitions) bought the centralised media conglomerates. This transfer of ownership often goes hand in hand with change of editorial style - foreign owners rarely interfere with media content, whereas the local owners show tendencies to interfere with reporting. In addition, self-censorship is difficult to establish as it is driven by the fear of losing a job in very precarious economic times (see Gawrecka 2013).

In terms of regulatory frameworks, the Czech so-called Muzzle Law of 2009 undermined the constitutional right to inform and be informed and introduced strict restrictions over the freedom of speech. In 2011, only after severe criticism, the law was amended and does not currently apply to cases of high public interest (such as political corruption). In Slovakia, the media has been negatively affected by politically motivated libel lawsuits and the distribution of state advertising (Belakova 2013a). As Belakova noted, “Since by 2010 virtually every national daily had been involved in some libel case, media professionals felt that the threat of libel was shaping what was published” (Ibid.). In a similar fashion, Polish media has been politically polarised since the 1989 transformations with the occasional direct interference of major political actors as documented by Sojka (2013).

As for the Western European countries, Italian media is certainly in the most precarious situation. De Gramatica’s report clearly shows how media ownership in Italy directly determines what type of news can or cannot be published. Yet the situation is different than in Central Europe, as “the Italian media landscape breaks down into a myriad of partial, but not insignificant, holdings” (de Gramatica 2013, 10). Yet one actor dominates the Italian media
sector - the former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi. Berlusconi’s media empire has turned Italian public broadcasters into extended hands of his political interests, which was apparent during every round of elections. The newspaper Il Giornale has been especially supportive of Berlusconi’s Forza Italia. Due to these open political influences, Italian press freedom is usually assessed very poorly, which is reflected on all independent rankings.

Table 2. World Freedom of Press 2010-2014

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>10.07</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10.23</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>11.03</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>11.39</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19.93</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23.49</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20.63</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>23.75</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>45.04</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: World Press Freedom 2010, 2013, Reporters without Borders

The situation in Spain is similar, to some extent. As Pereira-Puga and Hronesova (2013) noted, “although media freedom and independence has been respected in practice since the first democratic opening in 1975, the majority of media are economically dependent on the state and close ties with some political parties indirectly influence news reporting.” Reporters without Borders have often criticized the ruling Popular Party for interfering in the appointment of editorial boards of the main Spanish media houses. Similar to the Central European situation, Spain has also undergone some serious media ownership concentration, whereby the main media houses are now in the hands of only a few holders. Post-1975 democratic era Spanish newspapers such as El Pais have a very high reputation, though, and are considered highly professional despite their clear social democratic position.

Germany and the United Kingdom present a different media landscape due to their long-standing journalistic traditions. Their media markets are also large and diverse, reaching beyond their borders. As Nitschke (2013) noted, Germany has over 300 dailies, 30 weeklies and over 10,000 magazines, including one of the most respected weeklies in the world, The Spiegel. The United Kingdom was the pioneer of journalism as we know it today. Britain was also the first country to develop a “public sphere where public opinion can be formed” (Hronesova et al. 2014). Despite high journalistic standards in both countries, there are two caveats. First, due to the stricter security measures in the first post-9/11 decade, both countries have adopted legislation curbing journalistic freedom. In the UK, journalists are not only required to reveal sources and turn over material important for state security, but the 2006 Terrorism Act criminalises speech inciting terrorist actions, which can be very precarious in certain cases. Secondly, in Germany and the United Kingdom there are established links between high politics and media owners and executives, which occasionally influence news coverage.

The British case is also interesting due to the unique self-regulatory nature of the British press. An analysis in the British national report shows that until recently, an independent
commission oversaw the regulatory structure in the UK. However, since the 2011 phone-hacking scandal at the weekly News of the World, the British government launched a public inquiry into the general regulatory framework, which is currently undergoing major reforms. The scandal uncovered an important malfunctioning of British media ownership regulations, as private media outlets have come to the hands of a few business companies with political interests. Each main daily has a somewhat different ownership structure, with The Guardian’s being the most transparent. The management of the newspaper is answerable only to its owners (Scott Trust Ltd.), and conducts and external annual audit. The newspaper also has an independent Ombudsman, who is in charge of complaints.

Unlike the direct influence affecting Italy and Spain, the US media has been assessed as one of the most politically independent and most commercial in the world (Belakova 2013b). Media freedom is one of the anchors of the US constitutional system, and courts have in the past often ensured that the media is protected from libel and defamation suits with public figures. Because the press is predominantly owned by private companies, the news sector is driven by commercial interests. This leads to a limited diversity of news as focus is primarily on newswire reports. The financial crunch in the US had a similarly serious negative impact on investigative journalism as it did in other countries. It has also led to the change of ownership structures. Previously, individual owners (mostly influential families) owned the main news outlets. In the aftermath of the financial downfall, though, large corporations and tycoons have started to bail out media outlets in financial difficulty. Most notably, Amazon founder Jeff Bozos bought Washington Post in 2013.

Lastly, the position of the media is dramatically different in Mexico. Mexico is a dangerous place to be a journalist. Due to the ongoing war between the state and drug lords, dozens of journalists get killed every year. Moreover, political censorship is omnipresent. It was especially strong during the controversial July 2012 elections, which brought the Institutional Revolutionary Party back to power (Vamberova 2013). Citing the Reporters without Borders 2013 report, Vamberova highlights the low level of journalistic freedom as well as the threats journalists are facing: “They are threatened and murdered by organized crime or corrupt officials with impunity. The resulting climate of fear leads to self-censorship and undermines freedom of information” (Vamberova 2013: 9). In terms of quality of the press, Mexico is dominated by the so called red press, i.e. “news focusing on assassinations, kidnappings, and drug crimes” (Ibid.). Mexico also faces a high concentration of media ownership in the hands of only a few influential businessmen such as Mario Vázquez Raña.

The global economic malaise of the past few years has had a clearly negative impact on the media sector in the countries of our studies. Ownership has slowly shifted into hands of businessmen and tycoons, due to ownership restrictions having relaxed limits on market shares (with the exception of the UK). The quality of available news and analyses has also suffered under financial constraints. Journalists have been faced with unprecedented financial challenges, whereby they often have had to compromise their journalistic ethics for commercial profit.

In addition, there has been a trend of political meddling in editorial policies and news content because media owners often have close ties to main political actors. There is a clear difference in terms of freedom of press and the quality of journalism across the studied countries, though. While the Central European media scores highly on media freedoms, the quality of news reporting is much lower, as informative rather than analytical pieces dominate.
On the other hand, both the United Kingdom and the United States provide investigative and analytical news reporting at the highest professional journalistic standards. Italy and Spain struggle with the influence of large business and politics over media content, but still offer diversified and quality journalistic reporting. Lastly, Mexico is a clear outlier in the set of analysed countries and was even assessed as the most dangerous country for journalists on both American continents, mainly due to the on-going cartel wars (Reporters without Borders 2013).

4.2. Media Coverage of Security Issues

Our main task was to conceptualise security and risk as a social phenomenon and to analyse their mutual interplay in public opinion and attitudes. We also sought to identify policy interactions between policy makers, industry (stakeholders), and citizens (consumers). We have used the method of comparative qualitative analysis as a tool for obtaining qualitative data for comparative analysis of risk and security discourses and patterns of communication. This tool enabled us to not only identify effective channels and patterns of communication and risk prevention for relevant target groups, but also to generate a unique corpus of comparative data on nine countries over a period of 40 months. The interim product is a corpus of more than 2800 articles related to issues of 3D body scanners, Stuxnet, and CCTV camera systems. In the following figures we offer a comparative preview of the salience of the three selected issues in the ten countries over time (table 3).

Table 3. Total number of articles identified in the selected media outlets between 2010 and 2013 (N = number of articles)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CD body scanner</th>
<th>Stuxnet</th>
<th>CCTV cameras</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL national newspaper samples</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Comparative analysis of the SECONOMICS ISASCR media sample

The corpus of articles on 3D body scanners is comprised of almost 500 articles. The issue was most salient in the US media, followed by the UK and Germany, and least salient in Turkey, Poland, and Mexico. In terms of time, 3D body scanners were most salient in 2010 (333 articles) and have gradually become less salient over time (14 articles in total for the first four months of 2013).
The corpus of articles on Stuxnet is also comprised of almost 500 individual stories. The most salient were the debates in the US media, followed by Germany, Mexico, and the UK, and least salient in Italy, Poland, and Slovakia. Stuxnet was most salient in 2012 (175 articles) and its salience remained rather stable over time, though there was a slight drop in 2013 (27 articles in total for the first four months of 2013).

The corpus of articles on CCTV cameras is significantly larger than the previous two and is comprised of almost 1900 articles. Turkey can be clearly identified as an outlier, as it contributed 1000 articles to the overall sample. The salience of CCTV cameras in Turkish media is a product of the frequent use of CCTV cameras in the country, as well as its utilization by police during investigations. Nonetheless, even excluding Turkey, CCTV cameras still remained the most salient issue.

CCTV cameras were the most salient in the Turkish media, followed by the Slovakian, Czech, and German media. It is important to note that the selection concentrated on articles referring to the use of CCTV cameras in public transport (see table 4). This restriction was applied to eliminate possible inflation of the sample by articles related to the general use of CCTV cameras in criminal investigations. The issue of CCTV cameras in public transport was least salient in the US, Italy, Poland and the UK. The salience of CCTV cameras was relatively stable over time with subtle growth in 2013 (253 articles, or 131 excluding Turkey for the first four months of 2013).

The media debates in the examined countries each prioritised a specific aspect of national security in reaction to the effect of both global events (i.e. terrorist attacks) and domestic developments (economic and political). Countries that are generally more active on the international scene and/or have had a previous experience with domestic and international terrorism are generally more exposed to (and hence concerned about) potential terrorist attacks. In these countries (the UK, the US, Spain, and Germany), security measures are high on the policy agenda, as demonstrated by the prioritisation of body scanners in airport security and intensified CCTV camera use in counter-terrorism. In countries with no real danger of a terrorist attack by (international/national) extremist groups (Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia), there is a low policy interest in advanced and costly security devices such as body scanners at airports and CCTV cameras. In general, the perception of CCTV cameras in these countries is positively, as they are seen as a crime prevention measure.

### Table 4. Comparative Assessment of the Salience of Security Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salience / Measure</th>
<th>3D Body scanners</th>
<th>Stuxnet</th>
<th>CCTV cameras</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Low salience</strong></td>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>US</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>Poland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medium Salience</strong></td>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>Spain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>Poland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expert blogs</td>
<td></td>
<td>Expert blogs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Salience</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Slovakia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>Expert blogs</td>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Comparative analysis of the SECONOMICS ISASCR media sample

Still, developments in 2013 (the Snowden affair) show that acceptance of security measures depends on their perception as legal, legitimate, and regulated by laws that maintain appropriate scrutiny. As a result, the attempts of countries to justify installation of CCTV cameras as counter-terrorism and crime prevention backfire and deteriorate public trust, as seen in the UK case study (Hronesova, Guasti, and Caulfield 2014).

4.3. Who communicates with the citizens and how

As stated above, the United States is indisputably the leading country in the debate surrounding 3D body scanners, according to the number of different actors providing statements in the press. The discussion there began after a failed terrorist attack on a Detroit-Amsterdam flight in 2009. The most influential actor providing statements in the US was the Transportation Security Administration arguing for the implementation of body scanners. Focus was also given to experts who mainly spoke about the health risks of the scanners and evaluated them negatively. The rest of the countries were reactive to the controversy in the US.

In Great Britain and Spain there is a strong voice of individual journalists in the statements. Italy stands as an exception to the other countries, as politicians there have the strongest voice in the media debate. Slovakia, Poland, the Czech Republic, Spain, and Mexico did not pay much attention to this issue, judging by the number and quality of articles published. They mostly just reprinted US or other foreign articles. Great Britain and Italy can be seen as supporters of this technology in the EU, while the rest of the examined countries evaluate it rather negatively, according to the data corpus. It is important though, to discuss this topic at the European level. The regulation of the use of 3D body scanners is now in the hands of the member states. But for better use of this device, considering its weaknesses as well as strengths, it would be helpful to settle some common criteria for the entire EU.

Stuxnet represents a special case among our three topics. It does not directly affect the public, but it can have unprecedented consequences for their lives. Therefore, it is in the people’s best interest that they are informed about these issues. It was first discussed in 2010 following the cyber-attacks on an Iranian power plant. At the beginning, it was framed almost entirely in a definitive way. The leading actors in the statements were experts and various state officials from Iran and the United States. As time passed, the debate moved from specific events to a more abstract level, discussing potential cyber war and citing a wider variety of actors who were not strictly experts. The evaluative strategies used in articles about Stuxnet were mostly negative, but we can generally say that, with the exception of the US, countries played the role of a detached observer rather than forming any significant opinion of their own about the case. The only exception was Mexico, where some articles included a fear of being similarly targeted in the future, identifying itself with the victims of the attack.

The last topic, CCTV cameras, garnered much attention in the examined countries and the roles of the debates' leaders changed completely in comparison to the other two topics. The USA, unlike in the other two cases, did not play any important role. CCTV cameras
apparently do not cause major controversies there. They attracted more attention only after the attack at the Boston Marathon in April 2013 when CCTV circuits helped to reveal the culprits. The leaders of the debate about CCTV cameras among our selected countries were Poland and Germany, though they stood on opposite sides of the debate. While Poland evaluates the use of CCTV cameras positively, viewing it as part of the country’s modernization, Germany considers the use of CCTV cameras to be negative and a threat to privacy. The main actors providing statements in the articles about CCTV cameras, apart from journalists themselves, were various state institutions. In Italy, again, we saw politicians providing the information and opinions about CCTV cameras. In Mexico the most frequent actors were private companies working on the installation of CCTV devices. The debate about CCTV cameras was mostly framed in domestic terms and was relatively distinct in each of the analysed countries. It was connected to cultural differences, the security situation in each country, and its past experience with terrorist attacks.

In Table 5 we can see the actors, i.e. those who communicated with the citizens through the media, that dominated in the examined countries. In the case of CCTV cameras, journalists dominate and were the most important actor in seven countries. In Italy, politicians’ statements prevail, which was the case for all three of our topics in Italy. Stuxnet is a topic framed mainly by experts, as they are the dominate actor in four countries. In the debate about 3D body scanners, many different actors took part in the debate and dominance is not so clear.

Table 5: Dominant actors in the analysed countries for CCTV cameras, Stuxnet, and 3D body scanners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actors</th>
<th>CCTV cameras</th>
<th>Stuxnet</th>
<th>3D body scanners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Journalists</td>
<td>Spain, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Germany, Great Britain, USA</td>
<td>Spain, Mexico, Poland</td>
<td>Spain, Poland, Czech Republic, Great Britain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experts</td>
<td></td>
<td>Italy, Germany, Great Britain, USA</td>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State institutions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mexico, Poland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politicians</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td></td>
<td>Italy, Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private company</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport Security Agency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Czech Republic, USA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Comparative analysis of the SECONOMICS ISASCR media sample
Note: More than one dominant actor in the country means that there were more actors with the same number of codes

5. Summary of Findings
The focus of the SECONOMICS project is on the definition and perception of risk and security in different settings: airport security and air travel, critical infrastructure, and urban transport. The findings of our qualitative comparative analysis of media perception of terrorism threats and security measures suggest that the way media portrays different security
risks depends on several factors. Past experience with a particular security threat, as well as the probability of the country being targeted in the future, account for the main differences in the extent of coverage dedicated to a security issue in the domestic media.

The way the public comes to understand a topic is a balance between their perception of risk and their perception of the pros and cons of a given technological measure, be it 3D body scanners, CCTV cameras, Stuxnet, or something else. Technologies viewed as intrusive receive more negative coverage, even if the risks they try to mitigate are high. This is particularly true of 3D body scanners. In these cases, alternative, less intrusive technological measures are deemed preferable by the media and, by implication, the public. Here, potential terrorist threats do not outweigh the imminent health risks and threats to privacy. But if these measures are forced onto an unwilling public, they may become seen not as a solution, but as yet another threat and are viewed negatively in the media and by the public.

We found a two-step pattern in the analysed political communication. The first step is the presentation of terrorist threats in general, and the second is the need for security measures, especially 3D body scanners and CCTV cameras. Stuxnet does not strictly fit into this framework, as it is in part presented as a security measure against the Iranian nuclear threat, but it is also framed as a cyber-terrorist threat itself, especially after it apparently mutated and attacked companies in the US and Western Europe. But Stuxnet remained an external, international issue with little relevance to the average citizen, especially in states where a terrorist attack is unlikely, such as the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and, to a lesser extent, Poland. But within this two-step pattern, coverage is dominated by the actions and opinions of different foreign states, state institutions and politicians who debate the merits of introducing various security measures and the related regulations necessary to safeguard citizens' privacy and health. In these debates, concerns of health, privacy, and dignity prevail over security risks (the probability of which is seen as low). In countries where the media is more analytical (Germany, the UK) the media also discussed other trade-offs, such as costs vs. effectiveness and privacy/freedom vs. security.

With regards to the volume of coverage, the Stuxnet attacks were in the middle. The issue was presented as foreign or technological news. In most countries, with the exception of Mexico, the analysed articles were mostly informative. As a general rule, the coverage followed international developments and information reported by foreign newspapers (mainly from the US and the UK). The overall Stuxnet debate focused on three types of security risks. The first risk was the extensive scope of Iran’s nuclear programme. This may indicate that the media believed there was a real possibility of Iran developing a nuclear weapon and using it to threaten the western world. The second risk was the deployment of new technologies in state cyber warfare. The third risk, often indirectly suggested, was the potential risk of a nuclear or other environmental catastrophe.

The use of CCTV cameras was the most salient topic in countries where the probability of terrorist attacks is perceived as low. The coverage was framed mainly in terms of the actions and opinions of municipalities, journalists, schools, and citizens in relation to the use and installation of CCTV camera systems. The evaluation of the merits of CCTV cameras and acceptance of their introduction depended primarily on the domain that was being monitored, and did not change much over time.

The second trend, found especially in Italy, is usually present in countries where the security threat is perceived as imminent and the media debate is dominated by politicians. In the
second case, the urgent need for solutions is overemphasised in order to limit (or avoid) time for reflection. The motivations driving political actors’ often emotional appeals to citizens’ inherent fears, such as those of the Lega Nord party, are political prominence of the issues and possible electoral gain. Unlike in the first trend, where terrorism is something external and not immediately threatening citizens of the country, in the second trend the world is portrayed as full of global risks, to which only modern technology, presented as an efficient solution, can provide an answer. In this over-simplified portrayal of reality, the facts are less important than emotional appeals, and renouncing privacy and intimacy for security is considered a necessity.

The coverage of Stuxnet in Mexico can be seen as falling into the second trend, as unlike any other country in the sample, the Mexican media clearly sided with Iran, denouncing the attackers (identified as the USA), and highlighting Iran’s right to sovereignty. In an interesting twist which can be explained by the complexity of the US-Mexican relations, Mexico sees itself as a possible target of similar attacks in the future.

Another good example is the coverage of CCTV cameras in Poland, where we observe an emerging debate on the need for a comprehensive law which would regulate the use of public and private monitoring systems. However, the debate is not framed in terms of public transportation security, but rather in terms of the use of CCTV systems for the monitoring of public and private spaces for the sake of security, understood as a form of crime prevention, detection and solution. Here, in some cases the acceptance of security measures is linked by country studies to post-authoritarian path-dependent trends (Poland, Spain, and Italy). However, this trend is quite the opposite in Germany, where past experiences with a totalitarian regime heighten sensitivity to trade-offs between security and privacy, human dignity and freedom.

6. Conclusions

In focusing on the role of the media in political communication, our research confirms that on transnationally salient security issues, the media fulfils both roles – that of an information transmitter and of a public opinion maker (cf. McNair 2011). Our study finds that the main factors shaping media reporting on terrorism threats and security measures are past experiences with a particular security threat as well as the probability of the country being targeted in the future (cf. Beck 2000, 2002). These factors account for the main differences in the extent of coverage dedicated to the issue in the domestic media.

The comparative media analysis presented here closes a gap in the study of security and security risks by presenting a comparison of the coverage of transnational security issues in the media outlets of ten countries. We find that the media landscape, although fragmented and largely confined by boundaries of nation-states, is undergoing a transformation as the importance of international context grows (cf. Habermas 1996). The British and German media demonstrate signs of this shift from a focus on security threats to an awareness of possible trade-offs between security measures and of health, privacy, and freedom. Terrorism and organised crime are increasingly framed as transactional and beyond the scope of nation-states’ control. The public is becoming more sensitive not only to threats, but also to the costs of security.

In our qualitative comparative analysis, we have concentrated on the key role of the media in political communication, – both in transmitting information and in shaping opinions on key security issues. Case studies included cyber terrorism as an example of risk and 3D scanners
and CCTV cameras as an example of security measures, although as was mentioned above, some media outlets framed Stuxnet as a security measure. The main factors shaping media reporting on terrorism threats and security measures were past experience with a particular security threat, as well as the probability of the country being targeted in the future. These factors account for the main differences in the extent of coverage dedicated to the issue in the domestic media.

However, it is not only experience with terrorist attempts and threats that determines the media attention given to different security measures and tools. The nature of these measures and tools and the extent of their applicability to the domestic context is also discussed in the media. This influences the composition of actors who communicate with the public through printed media. In the case of CCTV cameras, journalists dominate the debate; they were the most important actors in seven countries. Stuxnet represents a special case among the three selected topics, as it does not directly affect individual security, but rather national security. It is also a highly complex technical issue, and hence experts mainly spoke about Stuxnet. In the debate surrounding 3D body scanners, many different actors were involved. Here, the United States is indisputably the leading country in the debate about 3D body scanners and the remaining nine countries in the sample were merely reactive to the US in terms of actors, patterns of interaction, topics, and justifications.

We stated in the introduction that the dilemma of our times for governments, for media and for individual citizens is the question of how much safety we desire and at what price. The analysis presented here demonstrates that safety and security, two essential features of the social contract, have their price; freedom, both personal and that of a society, is a defining feature of legitimate government; and governments are seen as legitimate if they resolve the tension between safety and freedom to the general satisfaction of the people. In this dilemma, the media plays a critical role as an arena in which information is made available to the public, multiple claims and justifications are presented and discussed, and essentially opinions are formed.

Acknowledgement
This article presents results of an international project founded by the European Union Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007-2013) under grant agreement n° 285223 – SECONOMICS (Socio-Economics meets Security), www.seconomicsproject.eu. The goal of the project is to synthesize sociological, economic and security science into usable, concrete, actionable knowledge for policy makers and social planners who are responsible for citizens’ security. The project is driven by industry case studies and tries to identify security threats in transport (air, urban and suburban metro) and critical infrastructure. The results of the project, which are presented in this paper, identify how security threats in critical infrastructures are presented in media and examine the dilemma between security and economy and security and privacy in three case studies – air traffic, the national power grid and public transportation.

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