

Envisioning the Future of Communication

Vol 2, No 1 (2025)

Envisioning the Future of Communication - Conference Proceedings vol. 2



Foreword to the seventh thematic

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doi: [10.12681/efoc.7929](https://doi.org/10.12681/efoc.7929)

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Foreword to the seventh thematic: Media Representations of social and political issues

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The thematic section “Media Representations of Social and Political Issues” explores how various forms of media frame, shape, and communicate pressing social and political concerns. In an era where public opinion and discourse can be (heavily) influenced by media narratives, understanding these representations is crucial for grasping how societies perceive and respond to critical events.

The first paper is titled “A Human Tragedy or a Statistic? Media Framing of Greece’s Deadliest Migrant Shipwreck”. The objective of this study is to examine how the Greek media covered the June 2023 migrant shipwreck off the Greek coast of Pylos, which has been labeled as one of the deadliest migrant shipwrecks in the Mediterranean. The study was based on data from a quantitative content analysis and a sample of news stories from the online versions of five Greek news media outlets (EfSyn, Ta Nea, Kathimerini, Proto Thema, and Eleftheros Typos), representing diverse political spaces.

In “The Institutional Image of Femininities in an International Scandal,” the study explores whether MEP Eva Kaili became the face synonymous with the “Qatargate” scandal and how her gender characteristics made her the key figure for the attractiveness of the topic. To this end, quantitative content analysis is applied to Francophone newspapers from December 2022 to February 2023.

The third paper is titled “The Effects of the Greek 'MeToo' Movement on Representations of Femicide in the News Media and Social Media”. The subject of the present effort is to examine the effect of the ‘Metoo’ movement in Greece in reference to the way femicides are covered by the print and television news media, as well as the impact of the movement on users of social media and especially on Facebook. The research method used in order to provide answers to the main research questions is qualitative content analysis.

Finally, “Commandos, Frigates, and Other Media Imaginations” analyses journalistic discourses during the televised debate among Greek political leaders ahead of the 2023 general election. It examines through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) whether and how journalistic questions reflect the Polarized Pluralist Model of media systems in an age of increased mediatization.

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This section provides a nuanced view of how media representations influence societal understanding of critical social and political issues, seeking to shape public discourse and public opinion accordingly.