



CATÓLICA
FACULDADE DE
CIÊNCIAS HUMANAS

LISBOA

INTERNAL DIVERSITY AND POLITICAL PARTIES:
COMPARING EXPRESSO'S ONLINE AND PRINT
COVERAGE OF THE 2022 PORTUGUESE LEGISLATIVE
ELECTIONS

Internship Report presented to Universidade Católica
Portuguesa to obtain a Master's Degree in Communication
Studies

By

José Miguel Neves

Faculty of Human Sciences

September, 2023



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INTERNSHIP REPORT

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Under the supervision of Professor Rita Figueiras

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Abstract

In modern democratic societies, the value of news media content diversity in safeguarding social harmony cannot be underestimated. By providing citizens with a broad range of political, economic and social viewpoints, news media outlets ensure that everyone can participate meaningfully in the democratic process. This task is particularly important in elections, as this is when the public must decide who will be in government. By means of a content analysis of Expresso's coverage of the 2022 Portuguese legislative elections, this report, which was the culmination of a 6-month internship in Expresso, determined which format, online or print, can better deliver diverse news content. At the article level, the average Expresso print article mentioned more political parties, actors and topics. At the newspaper level, however, both formats displayed strikingly similar levels of content diversity. The results of a multilevel analysis indicate that the size of the article is positively related to content diversity, while game and conflict news frames, often derided as conducive to polarizing and frivolous reporting, can also play a vital role in improving the multiperspectival nature of election coverage.

Keywords

Portuguese 2022 legislative elections, content diversity, political parallelism, journalism, election coverage, digital media, democracy, comparative analysis

Resumo

Nas sociedades democráticas modernas, o valor da diversidade dos conteúdos dos meios de comunicação social na salvaguarda da harmonia social não pode ser subestimado. Ao fornecerem aos cidadãos um vasto leque de pontos de vista políticos, económicos e sociais, os meios de comunicação social garantem que todos podem participar de forma significativa no processo democrático. Esta tarefa é particularmente importante durante períodos eleitorais, uma vez que é nesta altura que o público deve decidir quem o vai representar. Através de uma análise de conteúdo da cobertura do jornal Expresso das eleições legislativas portuguesas de 2022, este relatório, que foi o culminar de um estágio de 6 meses no Expresso, determinou qual o formato, online ou papel, que melhor consegue fornecer conteúdos noticiosos diversificados. Ao nível do artigo, o artigo médio da versão impressa do Expresso mencionou mais partidos políticos, actores e tópicos. No entanto, ao nível do jornal, ambos os formatos apresentaram níveis muito semelhantes de diversidade de conteúdo. Os resultados de uma análise multinível indicam que a dimensão do artigo está positivamente relacionada com a diversidade de conteúdo, enquanto que os enquadramentos noticiosos que enfatizam o conflito, muitas vezes referidos como conducentes a reportagens polarizadoras e frívolas, podem também desempenhar um papel vital na melhoria da natureza multiperspectiva da cobertura eleitoral.

Palavras-chave

Eleições legislativas portuguesas de 2022, diversidade de conteúdo, paralelismo político, jornalismo, cobertura eleitoral, meios de comunicação digitais, democracia, análise comparativa

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Introduction

Can democratic societies survive without diverse journalism? Like many others in the communication sciences, this question does not have a simple answer. But the literature does broadly assert that having news outlets produce diverse content, be it in political, economic or social terms, is beneficial for the well-being of modern democratic societies (Della Porta, 2005; Dahl, 1963/2008). This is because reliable reporting is essential for the public to effectively participate in the political process. In the heavily mediatized societies of today, the news media represent the vehicle through which political information reaches citizens. And the topics journalists choose to approach, and the manner in which they approach them, can influence public opinion (Dearing & Rogers, 1996). Their decisions on depicting reality influence how their audience perceives it (Strömbäck & Lee Kaid, 2009).

In this task, diversity is a key factor. According to McNair (2009), journalists in liberal democracies are expected to supply the necessary information and policy viewpoints for the public to meaningfully perform their political duties and “judge between competing candidates and parties” (McNair, 2009, p. 239). This requires extensive coverage of a large number of political movements and actors, presenting the public with a wide array of viable alternatives to choose from. During elections, political journalism is crucial for helping voters assess the performance of incumbents and choose the potential leaders that most align with their convictions (Strömbäck, 2005). Without diverse content, this will not be possible. As Strömbäck (2005, p. 339) notes, people must “know what platforms the political alternatives put forward (...), have the ability to compare their own views with those of the political alternatives, and (...) have enough knowledge and information to evaluate the likely consequences of different proposals”. This means that political journalism should emphasize each candidate’s viewpoints and contributions to the public debate.

This is where the concept of content diversity becomes relevant. over the years, scholars have sought to determine how to assess whether specific news outlets or markets produce diverse content. When it comes to news media output, three major categories have been studied: actor diversity, viewpoint diversity and topic diversity. The first category refers to the number and the characteristics of the political, economic and social actors quoted in news articles (Masini & Van Aelst, 2017), while viewpoint diversity is concerned with the opinions expressed by said actors (Baden & Springer, 2015). An article is considered more diverse when it quotes a greater number of actors, particularly if they represent different sectors of society and have multifaceted views. Topic diversity, on the other hand, concerns

the quantity and variety of topics covered by media organizations, specifically if they can offer the public sufficient multiperspectival content to stay informed about social affairs. Here, the distinction between internal and external content diversity must be addressed. Internal diversity, the focus of this report, is related to content diversity at the level of the single news outlet, while external content diversity relates to the whole media market.

In empirical research, scholars often quantitatively code a sample of news articles to record the number of actors, viewpoints and topics they mention, a method also utilized in this report. Benson (2009b, p. 408), for instance, coded actors in accordance to which “institutional field” they belonged to, from “executive/bureaucracy” and “peripheral/center political parties” to “trade unions”, “religion” or “university/research”. Masini et al. (2018) categorized the various viewpoints on immigration expressed in four European newspapers into four broad types – negative, administrative burden, victimization and positive – and found that, on average, each sampled articles contained 1.36 viewpoints. In another instance, Humprecht & Büchel (2013) conducted an analysis of online news across six countries, examining the number of topics covered by each newspaper. They focused on the ‘occupy Wall Street movement’ and coded 37 different topics, including “general politics”, “general economics” or “OWS/activism” (Humprecht & Büchel, 2013, p. 455). Their findings suggested that the level of topic diversity was contingent on country-specific factors such as proximity or economic stability.

The internet’s emergence and growth sparked great optimism regarding media companies’ capacity to provide diverse content. New technologies would allow journalists to publish stories in real time and interact with their readers, certifying that every voice could be heard in the public sphere. However, several decades later, the literature presents a complex and mixed picture of the internet’s influence on media content diversity. Depending on the scholar you ask, online news are either less diverse, equally as diverse or more diverse than print media.

The primary justification for online news being less diverse than print is attributed to market pressure. With the simplicity and cost-effectiveness of online news production, competition intensifies. Consequently, large media firms may simplify their news content and emphasize polarizing topics to protect or enhance their profits (Phillips, 2010; Redden & Witschge, 2010). Conversely, more recent studies have demonstrated that online news can be more diverse than print. One critical factor is the format, namely the space available for

content on websites compared to physical newspapers. Studies by Masini et al. (2018) and Powers and Benson (2014) compared online and print news from various newspapers and found that longer articles tended to exhibit higher levels of actor and viewpoint diversity.

Meanwhile, other studies have highlighted the similarities between online and print news. Ghersetti (2014, p.383), for example, compared the content of the print and online versions of five Swedish newspapers and found that “the reader of the print newspaper was basically presented with an identical image of the election aspects and issues (what), and actors (who), as the user of online news”. This similarity has been attributed to the deeply ingrained journalistic organizational norms among professionals in the field (Mitchelstein & Boczkowski, 2009). According to proponents of field theory, journalists, regardless of whether they write online or in print, adhere to the same professional ideology and are guided by enduring beliefs and norms that originated when their field was established (Henkel et al., 2020; Benson & Neveu, 2005).

This report combined the findings of all this literature and applied them to the Portuguese media market. More specifically, to the elite newspaper *Expresso*. Studies dealing with internal content diversity are rare in Portugal, especially ones that compare online and print coverage. In that sense, this report bridges a clear gap in the literature.

Regarding political party diversity, those past Portuguese studies suggest that PS and PSD, the two biggest political parties in Portugal, and their respective leaders usually receive the lion’s share of the coverage (ERC, 2020; Salgado 2018a). But other issues were also worth taking into account when it came to the political parties expected to be heavily featured in *Expresso*’s coverage. From a journalistic standpoint, three political storylines generated particular interest. First, it is worth noting that these elections were called prematurely after the Portuguese President decided to dissolve parliament following a breakdown in negotiations in the left-leaning ruling coalition, made up of PS, BE and CDU, regarding the approval of the 2022 yearly state budget (Santana-Pereira & De Giorgi, 2023). Thus, the matter of which political forces would be able to muster enough support from the public to assemble a new ruling coalition was crucial. Here, the spotlight fell not only on the disarray between the left-wing parties, with a special focus on the largest one, PS, and whether it would be willing to reunite with its former political partners, but also on the main opposition party, PSD. As exemplified in election coverage research, journalists in semi-presidential and parliamentary democracies center large proportions of their reporting on the political parties

with the best chance of leading a future government (Strömbäck & Lee Kaid, 2009). In Portugal's case, that means covering PS and PSD (Salgado, 2022), the two parties that have almost exclusively alternated in power since the democratization process began in 1974 (Pratas & Bizzarro, 2022). Indeed, two structural storylines could feasibly have shaped the news media coverage of the 2022 general election: would PS be able to win the election and continue governing, with or without a coalition? Or, instead, would PSD be able to reclaim the reins of government?

The third storyline stems from the last one mentioned above, and tracks the rise of the far-right, populist CHEGA. CH improved its voting share from 1.29% in the 2019 general election to 7.18% in 2022, placing it firmly as the third-largest political force in Portugal (Carvalho, 2022). Its growth largely mirrors that of other radical right-wing parties in Europe over the past decades, but the ideological views it defends only began to gain traction in Portugal at the end of the 2010s (Mudde, 2019). The populist, anti-immigration and anti-elite rhetoric regularly employed by André Ventura, CHEGA's leader, contrasted vividly with that of the remaining actors in the Portuguese electoral landscape, shocking many citizens and, for its sensationalist and vitriolic style, earning him vast amounts of coverage in news media (Carvalho, 2022; Novais, 2022). Despite this, his views seemed to increasingly resonate with large segments of the population (Carvalho, 2022; RTP, 2022), to the point that any path to a PSD-led government could be conditioned by CHEGA's voting results in 2022, hence the journalistic and political relevance (Lobo, 2022). Because of this, news media in Portugal, and *Expresso* in particular, could be led to report on PS, PSD and CH disproportionately in relation to all others.

For actors, many studies tackling election coverage point to the often-overwhelming dominance of party leaders in terms of coverage (Santana-Pereira & Rogeiro Nina, 2016; Antunes & Lisi, 2011). In terms of content, the analysis of election coverage in Portugal does verify this theory. Salgado (2018a) discovered great levels of personalization around party leaders while evaluating the coverage of the 2015 national elections. She noted that 65.9% of news stories featured party leaders as the central political actor, with a special focus on the heads of PSD and PS, who got mentioned in 16.1% and 17.1% of stories, respectively. Also in 2015, Resende (2021) looked at a larger sample of reporting and noted that 70% of the actors mentioned during the electoral period were party leaders, while politically unaffiliated personalities only accounted for 5% of total coverage. In 2019, going by ERC (2020), *Expresso's* print coverage was also heavily personalized around party bosses. For PS, 55% of

election news had its party leader as the principal political actor. For PSD, BE, CDU and CDS-PP, the numbers were 57%, 61%, 56% and 44%, respectively. In total, party bosses were the focal point of 50.4% of news articles.

Lastly, the Portuguese academic literature denounces frequently the topical concentration of election coverage. Party politics and post-electoral speculation, in addition to stories dedicated to parsing the party leaders' personal and political profiles, are given precedence over more substantive topics such as economic policy or foreign policy. The nature of elections and the importance of political parties in the Portuguese democratic system go a long way in explaining this reality. Still, the media coverage of the elections in 2015 and 2019 differed significantly in terms of the topics discussed. In 2015, the aftermath of the financial and sovereign debt crisis of 2008 remained a prominent issue, with 40% of the coverage focused on the state of the economy, while 11% addressed social issues. The Euro Crisis was another topical flashpoint, accounting for 25.2% of coverage, whereas party politics constituted only 13.3% of the coverage (Salgado, 2018a). In contrast, during the 2019 elections, as reported by ERC (2020), party politics took the forefront in the media, with an average of 35% of articles in newspapers and digital outlets focusing on this topic. For example, *Jornal I* dedicated nearly 60% of its coverage to party politics, while *Expresso* covered it in 37.6% of its articles. *Público*, another major elite newspaper, allocated 23% of its stories to party politics. Additionally, the tracking of campaign agendas and post-electoral scenarios received an average of 10.4% and 5.8% of coverage per newspaper, respectively. The dual issue of political economy and fiscal policy received a measly 4.5%.

With this in mind, the data for this report was collected after a process of content analysis. Every article in the 'politics' section of *Expresso* was coded quantitatively to determine how many political parties, actors and topics they mentioned. These three categories were chosen because they mirror the three major categories of analysis in the communication science literature: viewpoint diversity, actor diversity and topic diversity. With this in mind, the report aims to answer the following research question: how does internal diversity and political party diversity differ when comparing *Expresso*'s online and print coverage of the 2022 Portuguese legislative elections? After the descriptive memory of the internship, in which the many tasks I performed during my time in *Expresso* are detailed, the report summarizes the relevant scientific literature on the subjects of the Portuguese political and media systems, the concept of content diversity in news media, election coverage and the difference between online and print news making. The methodology comes next, as the report

identifies the dependent, independent and moderating variables at play and describes the contours of the content analysis method used for collecting data. In total, the *corpus* of analysis included 444 news articles, of which 393 were published online and 51 in Espresso's print version. Following the presentation and discussion of the results for political party, actor and topic diversity, the report concludes by answering the research question posed above.

Descriptive memory

This report is based on my internship in *Expresso*, a weekly Portuguese newspaper. Between September 5, 2022 and March 5, 2023, I worked as an intern in the online section of the newspaper for 7 hours every week day. During that time period, I worked as journalist, and my main tasks included doing research, attending newsroom meetings with my fellow journalists, writing daily articles regarding current events for the online section of the newspaper and conducting interviews with experts and sources from various fields. The writings touched upon various topics, including business, economics, health, national and international politics and public policy.

Expresso was founded in 1973 and is currently one of the outlets owned by Grupo Impresa, a large Portuguese media conglomerate that also controls a television channel, SIC, and several cable channels (Grupo Impresa, 2013). It is considered to be an extremely reputable newspaper and is known for its thorough coverage of political events and a star-studded lineup of opinion writers, among them many past and present politicians (Salgado, 2022; Santana-Pereira & Rogeiro Nina, 2016). While it produces content spanning all areas of knowledge, from culture and tourism to light entertainment, it caters towards elite, highly-educated and politically-knowledgeable readers. This type of publication, known in the communication sciences literature as elite newspapers, is more multiperspectival in its coverage than tabloid/popular newspapers (Benson, 2009b).

On average, I wrote three articles a week during my 6 months working for *Expresso*. My first news report focused on the 2022 Swedish legislative elections, namely the profile of Jimmie Akesson, who led his far-right, populist party Sweden Democrats to an unprecedented second place finish at the polls (The links to every article mentioned in this section are available in Annex 1). After that came a series of articles regarding the aftermath of the death of Queen Elizabeth II. One of these, which delved into the financial situation of the British royal family, was briefly among the ten most read articles in the website. Still in September, I reported on a prisoner swap between Russia and Ukraine, describing in detail some of the most notorious prisoners in the group. The following month I wrote a piece chronicling the history of OPEC (Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries), which was published after the Organization's decision to cut oil supply by 2 million barrels/day. The article had 1487 words and marked the first time I wrote about economic issues. During October and November, I worked on stories related to a wave of climate activism involving

the desecration of paintings in famous museums, such as the ‘Girl with a Pearl Earring’, and covered the 2022 Brazilian presidential elections, including a recap of all the public reactions from international politicians to the victory of Lula da Silva. In addition, the war in Ukraine was also a much-discussed topic, and I contributed to *Expresso*’s coverage with two articles about the military capabilities of the Ukrainian army and the struggle of the city of Kherson. When December rolled in, the transatlantic quarrel over the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), a piece of legislation introduced by the United States to boost its green industries, was heating up. My contribution to this debate came in form of an article published in December 2, 2022, which explained the specificities of the IRA was and how the legislation could affect European industry.

After this, January and February were the last months of the internship. In this period, two news pieces stand out: a story I wrote about the North-American congressman George Santos, who fabricated the vast majority of his resume and repeatedly lied to voters about his education, career and finances, and another regarding the Davos meetings, and how the Labour sector is consistently underrepresented among the type of events that cater to economic elites. In between, I also worked on several short articles that didn’t require expansive research, so they are not worth mentioning in this descriptive memory.

My time at *Expresso* also involved conducting interviews with various experts, especially in the fields of international politics and issues relevant to Portuguese society. These habitually resulted in longer articles, with more in-depth research. The first such instance came in October, when I interviewed the President of the Nutritionist Association of Portugal, Alexandra Bento, regarding new European Union directives on food labels. The aim of the legislation was to improve the clarity and informative value of food labels, thereby encouraging healthier choices by consumers. The interview centered on the Portuguese reality, and how food labels in Portugal can incentive healthier eating habits. That same month I also interviewed a Portuguese business owner, whose hemp t-shirt won a prize at a business fair in Barcelona. In the conversation, which eventually became an article, the owner emphasized the difficulties associated with starting a business in Portugal and the byzantine process of applying for European Union grants. As November arrived, an article about the desperate situation of dog pounds in Portugal following the covid-19 pandemic, as more animals were abandoned due to financial troubles, followed.

Finally, in January and February, my last two months on the job, two news stories stand out: one article included contributions from three experts in international relations, who analyzed whether the Chinese diplomatic stance towards the West was becoming more conciliatory, while the other discussed the state of Portuguese public services post-covid. For this last one, I interviewed the President of PróPública, a Portuguese NGO, and the leader of a public sector trade union, as both noted that covid-era restrictions were still in place months after the law mandated their end.

The various examples of my work in *Expresso* illustrate the diversity of the newspaper's content. From national issues to international politics, I wrote about a wide array of subjects and talked with experts spanning innumerable fields of knowledge. The idea for this report came directly from my experiences. More specifically, I noticed the content diversity of *Expresso*'s website, which I believed far surpassed that of the print version. Since *Expresso* publishes its physical version weekly, and because of space limitations, it is difficult for its editions to include all the relevant news stories of the week. The website does not have that problem. At first glance, it seemed like the online version of *Expresso* featured a higher level of content diversity, particularly in its political party, actor and topic diversity. The decision to conduct an empirical study to test this premise came next, and this internship report provides the perfect framework for investigating whether *Expresso*'s content is more diverse online or in print.

Throughout my classes at Católica's Faculty of Human Sciences, I understood that journalism plays an indispensable role in the fabric of modern democratic societies. As I listened to my professors describe the interaction between the forces of news media and democracy, and how that fragile balance safeguarded social and political harmony, I realized that I wanted my internship report to help contribute to a better understanding of how journalism can impact the democratic process. The arena of national politics appeared to be the perfect starting point. And there is no more significant event on the Portuguese political calendar than national legislative elections. I started my internship in 2022, the year in which the most recent Portuguese legislative elections had taken place. Thus, I decided to take the 2022 legislative elections as my object of study and attempt to determine whether *Expresso*'s election coverage was more diverse online or in print. Besides being an excellent vehicle for innovations in political communication, making them worthy of academic study, elections allow voters to directly influence the direction and priorities of their polity. It is fundamental, therefore, that journalists are able to inform their readers about political events, helping them

evaluate the various candidates and political parties running. It is crucial to determine which format, online or print, better allows Expresso to fulfill this obligation.

Thus, the synergy between my master's course in Communication Studies, with a focus on journalism, and my professional and personal experiences while working at Expresso was key to the production of this internship report. The theoretical background I accrued over my many classes – such as Media and Politics, Digital Journalism Lab, Journalism Studies or Media and Society – provided me with invaluable knowledge in the pursuit of a journalism internship. Besides giving me the technical skills necessary to successfully perform my duties at Expresso, especially in the realms of research, interviewing and journalistic writing, the master's course curriculum also stressed the normative role of journalists and news media professionals more broadly. Viewed from that perspective, I gained a profound understanding of the responsibility associated with my position as a journalist in one of Portugal's most reputable elite newspapers, reinforcing my motivation and determination to carry out any task assigned by my editors.

At the same time, the practical and hands-on nature of my tasks at Expresso was a perfect complement to the more theoretical approach of Católica's master in Communication Studies. Working in a large newsroom alongside some of the best journalists in the country provided me with a unique insight into the news-making process in Portugal, which proved useful when designing the theoretical section of this report and will undoubtedly benefit any future endeavor I pursue in communication sciences. Through weekly meetings with my colleagues and many personal interactions with my editors, I am closer to understating how journalists perceive newsworthiness, their choices of news frames when discussing certain issues, their views on certain political actors and their motivations seeking to inform their readers. This knowledge will prove when it comes time to develop empirical research models and in properly interpreting and applying academic literature.

During my internship, some tasks were more challenging than others. I felt the logistical side of being a journalist, particularly when going out on reporting trips or preparing large-scale articles that involve interviews with multiple experts, was particularly difficult to adapt to at first. In Católica's masters in journalism, this facet of the profession is not approached with sufficient depth. While media theory is indispensable, I feel some of the more technical aspects of working in print media could also have been broached in my classes. Tasks such writing emails requesting an interview, for example, while seemingly

straightforward, can have a significant impact on the final news product, and, if done incorrectly, can negatively affect the whole article. On the other hand, my favorite aspects of my time at Espresso were definitely the article writing process and the interactions with my fellow journalists. Through writing and debating with my colleagues and editors, I learnt a tremendous amount about journalism. How to frame a good quote, how and when to think about the perspective of the reader when writing, which issues to highlight, which sentences to delete, how to cope with the fundamental role of journalism in society. All of this I learnt at Espresso. My internship gave me a new appreciation for the news media, and encouraged me to try to make my mark in this field.

Part I – Literature review

1. Portuguese political and media systems

1.1. Semi-presidential democratic system with proportional representation

Portugal's system of governance has been the subject of vigorous debate in academic and political circles ever since the country's democratic transition began in 1974. After the constitutional reform of 1982, it currently fits into the mold of a semi-presidential democratic system, more specifically, a premier-presidential democratic system (Neto, 2022). This system incorporates both presidential and parliamentary dynamics and assumes a political role for the figure of the President (Shugart & Carey, 1992). As Neto (2022, p. 123) describes it, premier-presidential democratic systems are "characterized by the separation of the assembly and cabinet survival. The President has the power to appoint the prime minister, who, in turn, appoints the rest of the cabinet". The President cannot remove cabinet members directly, while the parliament, called *Assembleia da República* in Portuguese, retains the power to bring down the government with a vote of no confidence. Besides being responsible for lawmaking, the parliament, then, also holds sway over the governing process. Therefore, legislative elections are crucial events in the Portuguese political calendar, with far-reaching consequences for most citizens. And to select the politicians that get to sit in the *Assembleia da República*, Portugal has a closed-list proportional representation electoral system that puts political parties at the heart of the delegation of power (Fernandes, 2022).

In the 2022 legislative elections, Portuguese citizens were asked to vote for the parties they wanted to see in the *Assembleia da República*, not individual candidates. Unlike most European democracies, citizens do not vote directly for the members of parliament, making parties "the sole gatekeepers of office" and "the party brand the most important electoral cue to voters" (Fernandes, 2022, p. 181-182). From an academic perspective, this makes closely observing the role and behavior of political parties unavoidable. In this sense, journalists should cover each party assiduously, as, under this system, they represent the embodiment of the ideological currents in society, even more than individual candidates, and the strongest link between the populace and the political system (Pratas & Bizzarro, 2022).

Of the 21 political parties running, 8 received enough votes to be elected to parliament in this election (Monteiro & Leite Pinto, 2022). The center-left Partido Socialista (PS) was the clear winner, getting 41.37% of the vote and 120 of 230 members of parliament, enough for an absolute majority. Following it was the center-right Partido Social Democrata (PSD), with 29% of the votes and 77 members of parliament. In third place was the far-right,

populist CHEGA (CH), achieving 7.18% of the vote and 12 members of parliament. In fourth, with 4.91% of the vote and 7 members of parliament, was the ultra-liberal, right-wing Iniciativa Liberal (IL). The remaining elected parties are positioned on the left side of the political spectrum. The far-left Bloco de Esquerda (BE) and the Coligação Democrática Unitária (CDU), uniting the Marxist-Leninist Partido Comunista Português (PCP) and the Partido Ecologista "Os Verdes" (PEV), got 4.4% and 4.3% of the vote and elected 5 and 6 members of parliament, respectively. Lastly, the environmentalist Pessoas-Animais-Natureza (PAN) and the green Livre (L) each elected one member of parliament and got 1.58% and 1.28% of the vote, respectively.

1.2. Description of the Western cluster media system

Just like Portugal's political system, the country's media system has also been the subject of much debate in communication studies. Taking the definition of Santana-Pereira (2016, p.783), a media system is a "network of media outlets" that "exist, interact and compete in a certain geographic area within the same period, serving the same population, using the same language and cultural codes, acting under the same legal framework, and meeting local political, economic, and social constraints". Originally, Hallin & Mancini (2004) placed Portugal in the pluralized pluralist camp of media systems alongside southern European countries like Spain, Italy and France. In their telling, these countries' media systems shared a specific set of structural elements: low reach of the daily press, high levels of political parallelism, meaning that newspapers closely aligned with political parties and politicians (Mancini, 2012), weak standards of journalistic professionalism and robust state intervention in news media markets (Brüggemann et al., 2014; Hallin & Mancini, 2004).

A decade later, Brüggemann et al. (2014) conducted a study in which they revisited the media system models introduced by Hallin & Mancini (2004). In Portugal, the reality on the ground did not seem to confirm the assumptions of the pluralized pluralist model. As Brüggemann et al. (2014) explained, Portugal's media system differed from other southern European countries in three major ways. First, its levels of political parallelism are much lower than those of Spain, Italy or France. Second, the Portuguese state is less interventionist than the average state in Hallin and Mancini's pluralized pluralist model, with relatively weak press subsidies and public broadcasting. And third, journalistic professionalism and the reach of the media market in Portugal are higher than previously hypothesized, as Brüggemann et al. (2014, p.1057) claim both are at a "medium level" when comparing with

other Western countries. For that reason, Portugal falls under the larger Western cluster of media systems, along with countries such as Belgium or the Netherlands.

Benefiting from a more privileged vantage point, the work of Portuguese news media scholars has introduced new layers of analysis, particularly considering the reach of the media market and the degree of political parallelism. The news media market is generally weak, as Portugal was the European country with the lowest circulation of newspapers per million inhabitants in 2009 (Santana-Pereira, 2016; WAN, 2010). While noting that television is watched regularly by 99% of Portuguese citizens and newspapers and magazines read regularly by 68.2%, Salgado (2022, p.311) says that “interest in politics and consumption of political information is lower in Portugal than the European average”. In the European Values Study 2017-2019, only 4% of respondents revealed "a lot of interest" in politics, while 27% revealed "some interest" (the average percentages in Europe were 11 and 34%). Total newspaper circulation tumbled every year since 2008, when 624 million newspapers circulated country-wide, reaching 86 million in 2021 (PORDATA, 2022).

Lower circulation and sales translate into liquidity problems for newspapers, potentially leaving its journalists and owners more vulnerable to external pressure. Even as Santana-Pereira (2015, p.238) claims that the impact of economic and political pressure on media freedom in Portugal is “negligible”, Salgado (2022) underscores the other face of political parallelism in the Portuguese media system, and how politicians still hold sway over news agendas and individual outlets. In her telling, journalists still display a very “deferential attitude” towards mainstream parties and political leaders, resulting in “more time/space devoted to politics in the news media when compared to other European countries”. Moreover, professional interchangeability between the news media and political fields is still common (Figuerias, 2017), with "journalists often becoming political consultants and politicians often becoming regular commentators on television, radio and newspapers” (Salgado, 2022, p.310). This relationship is relevant for this internship report since the extent to which an outlet depends on certain political connections for stories may influence the diversity of its news content (Shoemaker & Reese, 2013; Hallin & Mancini, 2004). Slightly offsetting this dynamic is the penchant of Portuguese journalism for interpretive and negative reporting. In the 2015 general election, 31% of the articles studied by Salgado (2018a) had an interpretive lens, including 17.3% of all straight news stories, while negativity was prevalent in 41% of articles. This tendency speaks of the effort of news journalists to rise above the

political fray, criticize every candidate regardless of their ideological leanings, and “use the opportunity to expand their own influence on politics” (Salgado, 2018a, p.89).

Given all these constraints, the wide variety of news outlets in Portugal across many mediums is still apparent. As of 2020, according to the data of the Entidade Reguladora para a Comunicação Social (ERC), the Portuguese Media Regulatory Authority, there were 1716 newspapers, 305 media companies; 284 radio stations, 25 television outlets, and 129 Internet-only organizations (Salgado, 2022; ERC, 2021).

Among these is *Expresso*, the weekly newspaper whose content this internship report will analyze. Among the founders of the newspaper are Francisco Pinto Balsemão and Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa. Besides their contribution to Portuguese journalism, both had prolific political careers as members of the center-right PSD. Francisco Pinto Balsemão, still the President of Grupo Impresa, was prime-minister from 1981 and 1983; and Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa is currently the President of the Portuguese Republic. For this reason, *Expresso* is often accused of having a center-right bias in its political coverage (Santana-Pereira & Rogeiro Nina, 2016). By looking at the latest report published by ERC regarding the coverage of general elections (ERC, 2020), it is possible to test that premise. The report analyzed the election coverage of the seven largest daily newspapers (*Expresso*'s print version is published weekly, but its website is updated daily) in terms of political party diversity during the period that led to the 2019 legislative elections, from September 22 to October 4. As verified by the data, *Expresso* does not differ substantially from its competitors in the percentage of coverage dedicated to each of the six largest parties in parliament. While it mentioned PSD more frequently than any other newspaper, at 20.5% of total coverage, if only by a slight margin, it also referenced the two hard-left parties CDU and BE more than any other news outlet, at a combined 27% of total coverage. In part, the goal of this internship report lies in determining whether *Expresso*'s coverage of the 2022 legislative elections maintained the same level of diversity, even as the populist CHEGA started gaining in popularity and the dissolution of parliament jumbled the electoral landscape.

2. Democracy, diversity and political journalism

2.1. Democracy and political journalism – the role of diversity

Going by the definition of Kovach & Rosenstiel (2001/2021, p. 7), “the primary purpose of journalism is to provide citizens with the information they need to be free and self-governing”. While accurately determining the purpose of political journalism and mass

media writ large is not an easy task, Kovach & Rosenstiel (2001/2021) do offer an excellent starting point from which to approach this topic. Their definition effectively asserts that journalism has a role to play in the political process. But its specific function and impact will depend on the political system in question (Stier, 2015; Curran, 2011). At this point, it should be noted that this internship report focuses on the interplay between media and politics within the boundaries of semi-presidential representative democracy, the political system currently in place in Portugal (Silveira, 2022).

When considering liberal democracy, the need to provide citizens with the information they require in order to understand and participate in the political affairs of their respective polity points to a series of normative expectations for political journalism. As McNair (2009) sees it, four crucial normative expectations should guide the work of every political journalist and news media outlet in a democratic society: “information; critical scrutiny, representation and advocacy; and partiality” (McNair, 2009, p. 240). As it will become clear by the description of each, these apply to both routine and election periods.

In democratic systems, the scientific literature overwhelmingly stresses that an informed citizenry will be better able to contribute to the preservation and optimization of the political process (Milner, 2002; Galston, 2001). Be it by voting rationally and deliberately, having present the pros and cons associated with every candidate, by possessing the necessary knowledge to influence policymaking at every level of government or by understanding the most effective ways of mobilizing their peers towards constitutionally-guaranteed political action and protest, a politically-informed community forms the basis of any vibrant democratic culture (Della Porta, 2005; Dahl, 1963/2008). This is where news media, and political journalism more specifically, comes in. According to McNair, journalists are tasked precisely with supplying the public with the necessary information and policy viewpoints for them to meaningfully perform their political duties and thoughtfully “judge between competing candidates and parties” (McNair, 2009, p. 239). Partly, this requires extensive coverage of a large number of political movements and figures, presenting the public with a wide array of viable alternatives to choose from.

Journalism must also scrutinize and hold the powerful to account. Acting as a *watchdog* and a check on the abuse of power by political, economic or societal elites has long been part of the ethos of journalism (Bennet & Serrin, 2005). Considering the first normative expectation mentioned, it is clear that by closely monitoring the actions of elected politicians,

that is, by investigating wrongdoing, examining whether legislation is running smoothly or ascertaining whether the promises made on the campaign trail have been kept, political journalists allow citizens to make accurate evaluations of their representatives (Norris, 2014).

Meanwhile, the function of representation and advocacy entails that journalists must act as mediators between the political class and the general public. In this sense, journalism serves as a link between the powerful and the people they represent, ensuring that the aspirations, grievances and beliefs of the citizenry reach the upper echelons of the policymaking community. This way, the public can participate in the democratic process and contribute in shaping the social, political and economic vocations of the State (Christians et al., 2010).

In the same vein, the normative ideal of partiality underscores that political journalism can and should take sides while attempting to persuade people of particular ideological stances, so far as it ensures that multiple points of view are given a voice. To this aim, newspapers and media companies must clearly distinguish between the formats of news reporting and opinion, making it so there is a steady supply of both impartial, detailed information about public affairs and the kind of electrifying political commentary that may mobilize citizens into democratic participation (McNair, 2009).

All four normative expectations, if applied in practice, should guarantee a great level of pluralism in society and lead to a diverse news media landscape. Here, it is important to note and clarify the seemingly interchangeable nature of the terms ‘diversity’ and ‘pluralism’ in journalism studies literature. Sjøvaag (2016, p. 171) sheds some light on this matter, stating that “pluralism is an overall democratic aim, whereas diversity is how that aim is achieved”. In his mind, pluralism relates to the notion that there is not a single, unquestionable solution to social, economic or political dilemmas. Accordingly, political aims and decisions must result from a vigorous process of public discussion between free and equal citizens, all with their own perspectives, values and ideologies. A diverse news media will provide the mechanisms “that allow there to be spaces for citizens to encounter the expressions of other citizens”, says Sjøvaag (2016, p. 172). Otherwise, instead of enhancing the democratic character of a given polity, the press will give ammunition to those sowing political discord and calling into question the legitimacy of democratic institutions, only contributing to the erosion of public faith in lawmaking and the political class (Bergmann, 2020). Diversity in journalism, then, is only one of several tools necessary for the existence

and success of the normative aim of pluralism. Because of this, from now on, this internship report utilizes the term ‘diversity’ when evaluating the news content of Expresso.

In his work, McNair lists the various normative expectations of journalism while assuming a generic model of democracy as a backdrop. In political and communications theory, however, the media in general, and newspapers in particular, are seen as having varying roles according to which model of democracy one is examining. The literature broadly points to three models that map the intersection between democratic politics and news media, all of which require a heavy dose of diversity in news coverage: elite, deliberative and participatory (Benson, 2009a; Ferree et al., 2002; Baker, 2001). This internship report, however, will deal exclusively with the elite model, the one whose contours most closely resemble the relationship between media and politics in Portugal.

The elite model of democratic theory envisions a limited, albeit crucial, role for the citizenry. Theorists in this tradition claim that the general population lacks the knowledge and inclination to participate intimately in public affairs. Because of this, it willingly delegates the responsibility of governing to the policymaking elite and experts in fields such as economics, politics and law, legitimizing their political authority in the process (Schumpeter, 1942/2013; Higley & Burton, 2006; Baker, 2001). In the elite model, political legitimacy, key to social rest and prosperity (Fabienne, 2017), is achieved through democratic elections, the most appropriate vehicle for popular involvement in politics.

As Ferree et al. (2002, p. 207) state, “the citizen’s main role is to choose periodically which among competing teams of would-be office-holders will exercise public authority”. For elections to accurately echo public sentiment, news media must provide unbiased information about critical social issues and faithful coverage of daily political events. At election time, it is especially important that political journalism can help voters retroactively evaluate the performance of those currently in office, as well as aid them in deciding which set of potential leaders most aligns with their convictions (Strömbäck, 2005). The concept of diversity is central in this equation as, according to Strömbäck (2005, p. 339), people must “know what platforms the political alternatives put forward (...), have the ability to compare their own views with those of the political alternatives, and (...) have enough knowledge and information to evaluate the likely consequences of different proposals”. This means that political journalism should focus on every candidate’s viewpoint and what they have to offer to the public debate. In that sense, Ferree et al. (2002) posit that news media should design a

public sphere that reflects the weight of each political actor and institution in society. A party's or actor's prevalence in media discussions should be proportional to their share of voting results, for example, or their standing in public affairs.

In theory, as a well-respected elite newspaper, *Expresso* fits the mold of the impartial, relentless press outlet envisioned by the elite model. In practice, this internship report aimed to determine whether *Expresso*'s coverage of the Portuguese 2022 legislative elections actually met the normative expectations of the elite model of democracy. Namely, if its coverage of topics, actors and political parties was sufficiently diverse and avoided thematic concentration.

2.2. How to measure external and internal diversity in political journalism

Over the years, the concept of diversity in news media has been analyzed through multiple lenses and perspectives, holding an ever more central role in communication science research. One avenue often taken by academics is trying to determine which factors – be it social, political or economic – may influence the level of diversity in a given news market or organization (Shoemaker & Reese, 2013; Benson, 2009). Partly justifying this intellectual drive is the realization that a more diverse news media ecosystem can improve the democratic process by comprehensively informing citizens of social problems and their solutions, fostering a higher level of political participation and facilitating public deliberation (Roessler, 2007; Strömbäck, 2005; Ferree et al., 2002).

While the positive impact of diversity in journalism has been established, how to appropriately measure that same diversity within the context of an empirical study, and even how to define it conceptually, has proven more challenging. To understand this, it is enough to consider three published papers that aim to resolve the conceptual confusion surrounding diversity in news output and to propose a novel framework for further analysis (Hendrickx, Ballon, & Ranaivoson, 2022; Loecherbach et al., 2020; Hopmann, Van Aelst, & Legnante, 2012).

First, there is the crucial distinction between internal diversity and external diversity, often mentioned as internal and external pluralism. Hallin & Mancini (2004, p. 29) define external diversity as “pluralism achieved at the level of the media system as a whole, through the existence of a range of media outlets or organizations reflecting the points of view of different groups or tendencies in society”. In contrast, internal diversity can be seen as the level of diversity achieved “within each individual media outlet or organization”. Since it

only analyzes the news output of one newspaper, this report deals almost exclusively with the concept of internal diversity.

An incredibly multifaceted concept, it has generated voluminous literature in communication science over the years as scholars have attempted to identify the various dimensions that make up internal diversity in the context of media organizations. As Loecherbach et al. (2020) describe, the theoretical foundation of diversity in news media rests on the premises of three major studies: Napoli (1999), Voakes et al. (1996) and McQuail (1992). Voakes et al. (1996) focused exclusively on the dimension of content diversity, separating it into two sub-dimensions: source and perspective. Source diversity related to the political and social actors that journalists quote in their articles, making it so “the more even the dispersion of the representation among source affiliations, status, and proximity in a given story or medium, the greater the diversity” (Voakes et al., 1996, p. 583). Perspective diversity, on the other hand, dealt with the viewpoints and ideological positions of those quoted, namely if the news organization under consideration supplied a wide-enough range of distinct “ideas, perspectives, attributions, opinions, or frames” (Voakes et al., 1996, p. 585) for every issue under discussion.

Besides news content, Napoli (1999) further explores two additional dimensions of diversity: structure and exposure. Structural diversity doesn't concern the news output itself but the structural factors that influence the news-making process and the features of the journalists producing it. Here, it is important to consider the ownership structure of a given news organization and whether the owners have a meaningful imprint on the working methods of their employees. Workforce diversity is also discussed, as the level of ethnic, cultural and gender diversity of a newsroom can impact its content in a fundamental way (Sui & Paul, 2022; Correa & Harp, 2011). In parallel, Napoli (1999) also wrote about the idea of exposure diversity, meaning the diversity of content consumption from the point of view of audiences and readers. This dimension is examined predominantly in studies on external diversity and takes a more market-oriented perspective. It mostly tries to measure whether news media consumers are being exposed to diverse content at the level of the overall media market instead of focusing on the specific content of each individual newspaper or network (Hendrickx, Ballon, & Ranaivoson, 2022; Helberger, Karppinen, & D'acunto, 2018).

Introducing an additional level of complexity, McQuail (1992) emphasizes that the concept of internal diversity must be evaluated in terms of its ability to achieve explicit

normative goals, which may differ between countries and news media systems. If the goal is to have the media landscape perfectly reflect the heterogeneity of society, then journalism ought to represent each public entity and actor in proportion to their weight in that very society, an understanding of diversity that the author termed ‘reflective diversity’ (McQuail, 1992). By contrast, if the ultimate aim is to ensure that every group in society has an equal voice in the public sphere, then journalism must serve as the mouthpiece of every social, political or economic actor that demands a say (‘open diversity’). On the other hand, if the liberal, market-centric perspective is prioritized, then a plural media should only be judged and prized by its ability to guarantee that a wide array of programs and news angles are available to every consumer, regardless of each news organization’s output (Van Cuilenburg, 2000). This report is mostly preoccupied with ‘reflective diversity’, the concept that most aligns with the assumptions and expectations of the elite model.

Now, following the lead of Loecherbach et al. (2020), it is necessary to detail the various sub-dimensions of content diversity as defined by the communication science literature and explain how each relates to the research design of this report. Three major sub-dimensions are routinely operationalized in these studies: actor/source diversity, viewpoint diversity and topic diversity.

Actor diversity refers to the political, institutional, social and economic characteristics of the individuals and groups quoted in news articles (Masini & Van Aelst, 2017). There is no definitive way to calculate it or define it conceptually, since scholars tend to separate actors into different categories of analysis according to the study in question. Benson (2009b, p. 408), for instance, codes actors in accordance to which “institutional field” they belong to, from “executive/bureaucracy” and “peripheral/center political parties” to “trade unions”, “religion” or “university/research”. Masini & Van Aelst (2017) and Masini et al. (2018, p. 2331), however, opted for a coding design aimed at getting the several actor categories to match the actual composition of modern societies, adding groups such as “public opinion and ordinary people”, “civil society” or “public agencies/organizations”. Within that framework, Masini & Van Aelst (2017) analyzed the content of six Flemish newspapers and found that the average article about immigration featured around two actor categories, and that political actors dominated coverage. They were also able to establish a positive correlation between the number of actors mentioned and the number of viewpoints expressed.

The second sub-dimension, viewpoint diversity, relates to the views expressed by the quoted actors, and whether media outlets can ensure a fair balance of political and social positions and perspectives in their news product (Baden & Springer, 2015). This, in turn, certifies that each member of society can influence public debate (Benson & Wood, 2015). In empirical terms, scholars usually divide viewpoints into various categories and examine each article sampled according to how many or how few it portrays. Here, the already-quoted Masini et al. (2018) split the various viewpoints on immigration expressed in four European newspapers into four broad types – negative, administrative burden, victimization and positive – and concluded that each article sampled offered an average of 1.36 categories. For their part, Hayes and Guardino (2010, p. 59) assessed the diversity of tones and political stances attached to television stories in the run-up to the U.S. invasion of Iraq, noting that anti-war viewpoints were “barely audible” while pro-war opinions were disproportionately represented.

Viewpoint diversity can also be operationalized in terms of ideological diversity, or, in the case of this report, in terms of political party diversity. By that evaluative standard, a study by the ERC noted that Portuguese elite newspapers presented the public with balanced coverage of all political parties running in the 2009 Portuguese legislative elections, with enough space afforded to representatives of each party (ERC, 2010; Santana-Pereira & Rogeiro Nina, 2016). Similarly, by looking at ERC’s 2020 report regarding the 2019 general elections (ERC, 2020), it is possible to match each party’s share of the voting results with the coverage it received in *Expresso*’s online and print versions. As referenced in Table 1, *Expresso*’s online coverage during the electoral period leading up to the 2019 general elections, from September 22 to October 4, was incredibly balanced when considering the 5 parties mentioned the most– PS, PSD, CDS-PP, BE and CDU. As expected, PS and PSD, the two parties that traditionally receive the most votes in Portugal, were mentioned more frequently than all others. But not to the point of dominating coverage. In fact, the percentage of the total coverage dedicated to them was significantly lower than their respective voting results (24.5% to 36.3% for PS; and 20.5% to 27.8% for PSD).

The same dynamic played out in the newspaper’s print version, with reporters extending their efforts to cover multiple parties. Again, as referenced in Table 2, PS and PSD’s percentage of total coverage was significantly lower than their respective voting shares (23.2% to 36.3% for PS; and 19.6% to 27.8% for PSD). Conversely, all other parties that ended up with parliamentary representation were covered much more diligently than

Table 1 Expresso's online coverage of the 2019 legislative elections

Political Party	Percentage of total coverage	Voting share
PS	24.4%	36.3%
PSD	20.5%	27.8%
CDS-PP	15.4%	4.2%
BE	13.5%	9.5%
CDU	13.5%	6.3%
PAN	8.3%	3.3%
CH	1.3%	1.3%
Aliança	0.6%	0.8%
IL	0.6%	1.3%
JPP	0.6%	0.2%
L	0.6%	1.1%
PNR	0.6%	0.3%

Source: ECR (2020); Note: in bold are the political parties that got parliamentary representation

Table 2 Expresso's print coverage of the 2019 legislative elections

Political Party	Percentage of total coverage	Voting share
PS	23.2%	36.3%
PSD	19.6%	27.8%
BE	13.8%	9.5%
CDU	12.8%	6.3%
CDS-PP	10.4%	4.2%
PAN	9.8%	3.3%
Aliança	2.4%	0.6%
IL	2.4%	1.3%
L	2.1%	1.1%
CH	1.5%	1.3%
PDR	1.2%	0.2%
RIR	0.3%	0.7%

Source: ECR (2020); Note: in bold are the political parties that got parliamentary representation

their voting results justified. CDS-PP got 15.5% of the total coverage while only garnering support from 4.2% of voters. A similar pattern applies for all left-wing parties, revealing a concerted effort from *Expresso*'s political journalists to offer their readers wide-ranging and plural reporting of the Portuguese electoral landscape. Indeed, most of the parties without representation in the *Assembleia da República* were also disproportionately overrepresented both online and offline when judging by their voting share.

Lastly, topic diversity concerns the number and kind of topics approached by media organizations, namely whether they can provide the public with enough multifaceted content to allow them to be informed about social affairs and aptly perform their political duties. In one example, Humprecht & Büchel (2013) analyzed online news from six countries in terms of the number of topics touched upon by each newspaper. By focusing on the 'occupy Wall Street movement', the authors coded 37 different topics – including "general politics", "general economics" or "OWS/activism" (Humprecht & Büchel, 2013, p. 455) – and concluded that the level of topic diversity was contingent on country-specific factors such as proximity or economic instability, uncovering a positive relationship between the two.

As for this internship report, it approaches the content diversity of *Expresso*'s coverage from three angles, which closely mirror the three sub-dimensions alluded to above. It codes a sample of news articles quantitatively and analyzes internal diversity both at the article level and newspaper level, considering all articles published in the 'politics' section during the time period chosen. For actor diversity, it gauges the level of political actor diversity in *Expresso*'s coverage, with codes including party leader, party candidate or public opinion and regular people; for topic diversity it will code articles according to which topics are discussed, such as fiscal policy, health policy or party politics, among others. The full list of codes is available in Part II of the report.

And for viewpoint diversity, the report measured the total number of political parties represented in each article. In this case, the particular opinions of each party and party representative weren't coded. Rather, since we are considering an electoral period, it is assumed that parties are constantly trying to share their political ideas in the public sphere and that *Expresso*'s articles will reference them. Therefore, mentioning a particular party in an article corresponds, in essence, to referencing the set of values and political solutions it stands for. This way the diversity of the community's political viewpoints may be reflected in the newspaper's content.

2.3. Micro, meso and macro-level influences on internal diversity

Another fundamental layer in this debate regards the structural and contingent factors that may explain either high or low levels of internal content diversity. The scientific literature is vast, but Masini et al. (2018) offer a great blueprint from which to approach the topic at hand. They propose a multilevel model of influence, divided into three levels: micro, meso and macro, corresponding to article, newspaper and country.

Starting at the micro-level, the authors are preoccupied with “the way in which information is organized and presented to the newspaper’s readers”, namely with the specific form of news articles – their size and type. In their study, Masini et al. (2018) conclude that longer articles tend to include more actors and viewpoints than shorter articles, a finding that echoes Humprecht & Büchel (2013). Likewise, they found that informative and special report article types, which place a greater emphasis on multiperspectival reporting, are better able to represent a larger number of actors than opinionated, editorial or interview journalistic types. Considering viewpoint diversity, however, article type did not have any impact in their study.

At the meso-level, the concern lies with the features of the news organization, specifically its political leanings, the financial resources it possesses and its target-audience. Masini et al. (2018) and Humprecht & Büchel (2013) both found a positive relationship between the size of a newspaper, in terms of human resources, circulation and scope of coverage, and content diversity, particularly actor diversity. With regard to the target-audience of a news publication, Benson (2009b) suggested that so called elite newspapers, which usually cater to highly-educated audiences that are culturally “omnivorous” and demand wide-ranging reporting (Peterson & Kern, 1996), “tend to be more multiperspectival than other newspapers” (Benson, 2009b, p. 405). The editorial line and political leanings of organizations and their owners also play a part. Owners set policies and enforce them, meaning that, in case they prefer a more opinionated or partisan kind of journalism, the level of actor, viewpoint and topic diversity in their publications may drop (Shoemaker & Reese, 2013; Durante & Knight, 2012). As mentioned in the previous chapter, *Expresso* is an elite newspaper, placing enormous emphasis on factual, impartial coverage (Salgado, 2022; Santana-Pereira & Rogeiro Nina, 2016). In theory, it strives to provide diverse coverage on every issue it touches upon. Not mentioned by Masini et al. (2018), but also relevant, is the guiding light of news-value logic. Besides cultural and geographical proximity, the political capital that outlets attribute to some actors over others can alter the focus of news coverage.

Good results in opinion polls, a propensity for polarizing public statements or the inherent newsworthiness of incumbency-status can catapult some candidates into the media spotlight (Hopmann et al., 2017).

Climbing another rung in the ladder, the macro-level concerns the array of country-specific factors that can influence content diversity. One of the main ones is geographic and cultural proximity. The more relevant a topic is for a certain country/region, the more its newspapers are expected to cover it with a high degree of intensity and diversity (Humprecht & Büchel, 2013; Branton & Johanna, 2009). As far as this report is concerned, far from a peripheral topic for Portugal, it is expected that *Expresso* will endeavor to cover the Portuguese legislative elections with great dedication and through a variety of viewpoints and lenses. National journalistic norms and the interaction between the state and news media are also important. Building on the work of Hallin & Mancini (2004), Brüggemann et al. (2014) devised an empirical model of the Portuguese media system, which falls under the larger Western cluster among countries such as Belgium and the Netherlands. Countries in the western cluster share “low levels of state intervention but only medium levels of press market and journalistic professionalism” as well as a “low level of public broadcasting and press subsidies” (Brüggemann et al., 2014, p. 1057). Lower levels of journalistic professionalism suggest that journalists may be more dependent on official sources and more pliable to institutional, economic or political pressure, meaning the diversity of their reporting may suffer as a consequence (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). At the same time, if the state declines to intervene proactively in media markets, news organizations’ decisions will be guided mostly by market forces and economic-survival rationales, which may dampen the level of diversity in their coverage (Benson & Hallin, 2007).

One final factor influencing content diversity is the online orientation of the news outlet and whether its articles are published offline, in a physical newspaper, for instance, or online. This report dedicates chapter 3.1 and 3.2 of the literature review to detailing exactly how scholars have tried to determine the manner in which online news coverage differs from print coverage.

3. Election Coverage in semi-presidential democracies and diversity: online vs. print

3.1 Election coverage in semi-presidential democracies

The study of election coverage has taken on added significance in the communication science canon ever since mass media asserted itself as the main source of political

information for the general population. As news media began to serve as the fundamental link between politicians and voters, the coverage of elections as an object of study took off as elections became the preeminent vehicle for innovation in political communication practices and news media formats (Strömbäck & Lee Kaid, 2009; Blumler & McQuail, 2001/2018)

In the terminology employed by Strömbäck & Lee Kaid (2009), scholars mainly focus on three dimensions of election coverage: antecedents, content, and effects. For antecedents, this chapter will detail how the features of the Portuguese political and media systems may influence *Expresso*'s election coverage. For content, it will document how past studies have evaluated the election coverage of news media outlets in countries that share comparable systemic conditions with Portugal, particularly their findings regarding actor diversity, viewpoint diversity and topic diversity. And for effects, it will explain how and whether the news coverage of national elections can impact voting decisions and the democratic process itself.

Starting with antecedents, Strömbäck & Lee Kaid (2009) and Salgado (2018b) lay out how media-system-specific factors may influence election coverage. When it comes to news media liberalization, a lax regulatory environment and the lack of public service media alternatives can impact the level of diversity in election coverage. The imperatives of navigating an excessively commercialized media system, namely the need to produce content that is easy to understand for a wide audience, can impel news outlets to frame politics as a game instead of centering their efforts on more substantive issues (Strömbäck & Lee Kaid, 2009). This can manifest itself through the copious use of strategy frames, highly focused on competition between candidates and the game-like nature of politics (Aalberg, Strömbäck, & de Vreese, 2012), or through the personalization of campaign coverage, which occurs when journalists afford more attention to certain well-placed candidates in contrast to all other actors and topics not directly related to party leaders (Van Aelst, Sheafer, & Stanyer, 2012). As previously stated, Portugal's media system features average levels of media ownership regulation and weak press subsidies, resulting in a relatively commercialized media sphere filled with cash-strapped organizations (Santana-Pereira, 2016). And while this is true for the market as a whole, *Expresso* is an elite newspaper that caters to politically informed and demanding readers, making it more likely to incorporate a lot of diversity in its content regardless of market signals and economic challenges.

Another factor that can affect election coverage has to do with journalistic norms and the relationship between journalists and politicians. While Portugal's media system features weaker political parallelism than previously thought and average levels of journalistic professionalism, there is still a great deal of proximity between politicians and journalists, who often depend on political actors as sources of information (Salgado, 2018a). This can translate into news media outlets being pressured into publishing more favorable coverage about the parties that hold the most power and influence, in Portugal's case, PS and PSD (Salgado, 2018a). On the other hand, journalists have always adopted a very "sacerdotal" approach to party politics, meaning political news are perceived as "an intrinsically important service that must be provided as of right" (Blumler & Michael, 1995, p.68). This particularity disproportionately benefits smaller parties with parliamentary representation, claims Salgado (2022, p.312), mainly because of the "high salience" and "overall relevance" that journalists place on parliamentary activities. Thus, a conflicting picture emerges when balancing Portuguese journalism's dependency on individual political operatives and its reverence of the political process writ large, one which precludes any prediction as to how viewpoint diversity in *Expresso's* coverage may be affected by journalistic norms and practices.

Besides media systems, the political system under which news media professionals labor can also shape election coverage. Majoritarian democratic systems, in which very few parties joust for electoral supremacy, provide journalists with different incentives than proportional systems, just like the one in place in Portugal. The adversarial nature of the former, fostered by its first-past-the-post voting scheme and tendency for clear majorities, induces newspapers to personalize coverage around party leaders and to overemphasize conflict and strategy frames (Dimitrova & Kostadinova, 2013; van Dalen, 2012). Conversely, proportional representation systems generate multi-party parliaments and aim to "include as many voices as possible, emphasizing the need for bargaining and compromise within parliament and government" (Strömbäck & Lee Kaid, 2009, p.6). Because of this, election outcomes are generally unpredictable, and every party, no matter how small, might eventually play a role in government. Following the criteria of newsworthiness, journalists under proportional systems are more likely to devote their efforts to covering all political parties running in national elections, making coverage more diverse in the process. Plus, since proportional systems allow for more consensus-building political rhetoric and action and do not produce a stark distinction between winners and losers, they also encourage issue-

based coverage, both regarding framing and the overall number of topics discussed (Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2012).

In terms of content, the analysis of election coverage in Portugal over the years does verify some of the theoretical suppositions stated above. Considering actor diversity, Salgado (2018a) discovered great levels of personalization around party leaders. While evaluating the coverage of the 2015 national elections by television channels, newspapers and online-only outlets, she noted that 65.9% of news stories featured party leaders as the central political actor, with a special focus on the heads of PSD and PS, who got mentioned in 16.1% and 17.1% of stories, respectively. Experts, like economists, constitutional layers or pundits, were referenced in 8.7% of the coverage, opinion polls in 6.8%, and citizens in 3.8%. Also in 2015, Resende (2021) looked at a slightly larger sample of reporting and noticed that 70% of the actors mentioned during the electoral period were party leaders (972 mentions in a total of 1384), while politically unaffiliated personalities only accounted for 5% of total coverage. In 2019, going by ERC (2020), *Expresso*'s print coverage of most parties was also heavily personalized around party leaders. For PS, 55% of election news had its party head as the primary political actor. For PSD, BE, CDU and CDS-PP, the numbers were 57%, 61%, 56% and 44%, respectively. In total, party bosses were the focal point of 50.4% of news articles, while an additional 35% focused on politicians at the top of the ticket in the different electoral circles (which, for the most part, were also the party leaders). Other election candidates, the second most referenced set of actors, got 7.9%.

Unlike Portugal, Irish media did not seem to be in thrall to party leaders in the run-up to the 2016 general elections, only dedicating 16% of their coverage to that group (Culloty & Suiter, 2018). The *Irish Times*, a center-left elite newspaper, emphasized party heads in 17% of its articles, the party itself in 24.1% and other actors in 58.2%. For the center-right elite broadsheet *The Independent*, the same categories came to 26.5%, 24% and 49.5%. These results are incredibly pertinent for this report as Ireland shares both a political and a media system with Portugal (Neto, 2022; Brüggemann et al., 2014). On the other hand, Irish media exhibited a pattern of reverence for party politics when it came to the topics it chose to approach. Respectively, 62.7% and 60.3% of all news stories published in *The Independent* and *The Irish Times* were about party politics, the largest category in both by a wide margin. For the *Times*, social affairs came in at 5%, macroeconomics at 8%, the Euro crisis at 5.3% and opinion polls at 4.5% (Culloty & Suiter, 2018). According to Culloty & Suiter (2018, p.64), this “trend towards homogeneity” in topic diversity is surprising given the salience of

economic and European themes in Ireland in 2016. It also speaks of a strong propensity towards herd journalism in the country (Ho & Liu, 2015), which is partly motivated by the commercialization of the sector.

In Portugal, the elections of 2015 and 2019 differed substantially on the topics discussed by the media. In 2015, the lingering effects of the financial and sovereign debt crisis of 2008 were still fresh, whereas in 2019 matters related to party politics took center stage. According to the work of Salgado (2018a), 40% of coverage in 2015 referenced the state of the economy, while 11% dealt with social issues. The Euro Crisis was another topical flashpoint, garnering 25.2% of coverage, while party politics got only 13.3%. By contrast, as measured by ERC (2020), the average newspaper and digital outlet writing about the 2019 elections addressed party politics in 35% of its articles. *Jornal I*, for example, wrote about party politics in almost 60% of its coverage. For *Expresso*, that figure was 37.6%. And for *Público*, another major elite newspaper, it was 23%. Also related, the tracking of campaign agendas and post-electoral scenarios received an average of 10.4% and 5.8% of coverage per newspaper, respectively. The dual issue of political economy and fiscal policy received a measly 4.5%. The “broadly favorable conditions” under which the economy sat in 2019, especially compared to 2015, and the political nature of the then-incumbent ruling coalition, uniting PS, BE and CDU and generating tremendous interest and debate among the journalistic class in Portugal (Jalali, Moniz, & Silva, 2020, p.235), go a long way in explaining the discrepancy.

News-framing is yet another category ripe for analysis within the context of election coverage. A multifaceted and much-explored academic subject, journalistic framing refers to the manner in which journalists highlight certain features of a particular issue or event and ignore others when writing their articles (Matthes, 2009). As the world becomes more mediatized and citizens rely almost solely on the news media for political information, journalists hold more sway over public opinion. And their decisions over how to depict reality have an impact on how their audience perceives that same reality (Strömbäck & Lee Kaid, 2009). Therefore, news-framing is a valid category of analysis when considering *Expresso*'s coverage of the 2022 Portuguese elections. Three major frames were coded: game frame/conflict frame, which focuses on opinion polls, winners and losers and “emphasizes conflict between individuals, groups or institutions as a means of capturing audience interest” (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p.95; Aalberg, Strömbäck, & de Vreese, 2012); strategy frame, which underlines campaign strategies and tactics as well as the personal styles and

motivations of politicians (Strömbäck & van Aelst, 2010); and issue frame, dominant in news stories that tackle policy proposals, issues and the issue positions of the various candidates running (Nelson & Kinder, 1996).

All four are regularly employed by Portuguese journalists, but research on news-framing in Portuguese elections is still scarce. In one example, the aforementioned study by Salgado (2018a) notes that coverage in 2015 was split between issue-based and strategy framing, with the former dominating 42.6% of news stories and the latter 57.4%. This was a surprising result, given Portuguese media's tendency to overutilize strategy frames during elections (Graça, 2017; Jalali & Silva, 2011; Serrano, 2008) and data presented by ERC (2020) showing that in 2019, only four years later, political strategy and campaign agendas generally overshadowed policy debates.

Similar dynamics play out in Belgium, a country that shares a media system with Portugal (Brüggemann et al., 2014). During the 2007 general elections, Strömbäck & van Aelst (2014) discovered that the relative weight of strategy framing against issue framing was contingent on the type of newspaper under study, with tabloids more likely to frame politics as a game. Still, both quality/elite newspapers in Belgium, *De Standaard* and *De Morgen*, framed political events in game-like terms in 65% and 66% of their articles, respectively. A more recent example, in Croatia, a semi-presidential democracy with a proportional representation electoral system, also conforms to the longstanding notion that strategy and game frames prevail over issue frames during electoral periods (Farnsworth & Lichter, 2011; Cappella & Jamieson, 1997). Even if Croatia's multi-party parliament and proportional electoral system, like Portugal's, would suggest a consensus-prone political and media landscape, the coverage of the 2015 general elections was heavily tilted towards the discussion of strategy and political intrigue. Indeed, Croatian media framed politics as a strategic game in 73.4% of news items in 2015, meaning that in "three of every four news items, the media spoke of the relationship between the parties, the popularity of individual politicians, and the private lives and personalities of politicians" (Mustapić, Balabanić, & Plenković, 2018, p.131).

Lastly, the variable of viewpoint diversity, treated in the way this report chose to operationalize it, has also been the subject of much investigation in election coverage studies. In Portugal, most academics highlight that the two largest parties, PS and PSD, receive the bulk of the coverage election year after election year (Salgado, 2018a; Santana-Pereira &

Rogeiro Nina, 2016; Antunes & Lisi, 2011). Still, the degree to which they dominate news stories varies widely. As evident in ERC (2020), in 2019 both parties were consistently underrepresented by all major newspapers if we consider their respective voting results. In fact, by the same criteria, most other parties with representation in parliament were overrepresented in the coverage of the 2019 general elections. Still, it is not surprising that the parties with the best shot at winning the election are mentioned the most. By news-value logic, journalists attribute more political capital to candidates who can attract public support and are within reach of leading a government (Hopmann et al., 2017). That explains data from Ireland in 2016, which showed that the then-prime minister received the highest plurality of mentions at 31% (Culloty & Suiter, 2018). However, unlike in Portugal, the leader of the Irish opposition only received 11% of the coverage and the leader of the junior party in the outgoing coalition got 13%. By comparison, the controversial, combative leader of an anti-austerity party was second only to the prime minister at 19%. A similar dynamic arose in The Netherlands between 1994 and 2012, a period in which political party diversity in election coverage rose because of the arrival of several populist and belligerent political forces that started consuming some of the journalistic oxygen usually reserved for establishment parties (Van Hoof et al., 2014). This points to another tenet of news-value logic, namely that conflict fuels audience interest (Takens et al., 2013).

Having this in mind, the striking rise of the far-right, populist CHEGA in the polls presented a challenge to *Expresso* in the run-up to the 2022 general election (the party ended up with 7.18% of the vote in 2022). While past studies have shown that populist political actors don't have much salience in Portuguese election news (Salgado et al., 2022), European scholars have shown that the coverage of populist actors in general traditionally increases as they start to pick up electoral steam (Esser, Stępińska, & Hopmann, 2016; Bos, van der Brug, & de Vreese, 2010). Plus, past studies in Portugal dealt with a political landscape that did not feature a party like CHEGA at the height of its capacity. In this sense, the 2022 elections are unique when compared to previous general elections. Fundamental to any debate on the democratic role of journalism, this report aimed to discover whether the political party diversity of *Expresso*'s online and print coverage was undermined by CHEGA and the specter of populist politics.

At last, while this report did not try to gauge the effects of *Expresso*'s coverage on its readers or the election itself, that is one of the fundamental dimensions of election coverage. Here, two concepts warrant close examination: agenda-setting and priming. Agenda-setting

refers to the power wielded by news media in highly mediatized societies. As most people today get their political information almost exclusively through the news media, the topics journalists choose to approach, and how they approach them, can greatly influence public opinion (Dearing & Rogers, 1996). While the internet and social media have disrupted this process somewhat, diminishing journalism's established gatekeeper role, traditional news media is still a major player in agenda-setting, particularly elite newspapers (Harder, Sevenans, & Van Aelst, 2017). Even as research in this field is rare in Portugal, Van Aelst & Walgrave (2016, p.174) reviewed the literature on the power of agenda-setting during general elections in various countries and concluded that "the media does affect the political agenda" and that "media attention for issues often precedes political attention for the same issues". The other concept, priming, refers to how news media can alter the standards voters use to evaluate particular candidates (Iyengar & Simon, 1993). For example, if journalists focus their coverage on economic issues, then voters will start evaluating both incumbent politicians and the opposition by their economic policy solutions and the state of the economy (Kalogeropoulos et al., 2017). All in all, "by emphasizing certain issues and not others, the media may thus influence electoral results, because it appears that people tend to vote for parties that 'own' the issues primed by the media" (Shaefer, Weimann, & Tsfati, 2009, p.218)

Thus, determining whether *Expresso's* website covers topics and political actors differently from its print version is crucial, as a slight shift in emphasis from one political actor to another or from economic issues to political conflict can alter public opinion drastically, with grave consequences for Portuguese democracy.

3.2. Internal diversity: online vs. print

The advent and rise of the internet brought about a sense of optimism when regarding the ability of media companies to supply diverse content. New technologies would allow journalists to report and publish stories in real time and close the gap between news professionals and the public, certifying that every voice could be heard in the public sphere. But several decades later, the academic literature paints a muddled and mixed picture of the impact the internet had on media content diversity. According to Powers & Benson (2014), three theories have been forwarded by academia: depending on the scholar you ask, online news are either less diverse, equally as diverse or more diverse than print media.

Market pressure is given as the principal justification for online news being less diverse than print. Because it is simpler and less expensive to produce news online, the level of competition will inevitably increase, pushing legacy media firms to simplify their news output and focus on more polarizing topics to protect or boost their profits (Phillips, 2010; Redden & Witschge, 2010). Website audience metrics, which give the journalists real-time information about which stories are being read and shared, also incentivize media outlets to further cater to popular preferences, even if they are not very diverse in nature (Tandoc Jr., 2014). Online journalists are also among the most over-worked and unexperienced employees in large newsrooms, and often find it challenging to keep up with the heightened pace of news in the internet age and the multitasking that comes along with it (Mitchelstein & Boczkowski, 2009). They are likely to default to standard journalistic norms for news gathering and source-finding, not worry excessively about diversity and even imitate the content of similar publications (Boczkowski, 2010).

Other studies point to the similarities between online and print news. Ghersetti (2014, p.383), for example, compared the content of the print and online versions of five Swedish newspapers during the 2010 Swedish election campaign and claimed that “the reader of the print newspaper was basically presented with an identical image of the election aspects and issues (what), and actors (who), as the user of online news”. This fact has been explained by the nature of journalistic organizational norms, which are deeply engrained among professionals in the field (Mitchelstein & Boczkowski, 2009).

As suggested by proponents of field theory, journalists share the same professional ideology and are bound by longstanding beliefs and norms established at the creation of the field to which they belong, regardless of whether they write online or in print (Henkel et al., 2020; Benson & Neveu, 2005). Supporting this thesis, Nielsen (2013) conducted a six-country comparative study that discovered marked similarities between online and print news in each country, even accounting for cross-national differences in terms of media structures and journalistic norms. Yet another study, this one authored by Quandt (2009, p.717), analyzed news websites of five countries and concluded that “the promises of an interactive age of reporting are not fulfilled yet” and that online journalism is essentially “good old news journalism” (Quandt, 2009, p. 735).

More recent studies, however, have demonstrated that online news can be more diverse than print. One key factor relates to form, namely the amount of space websites have

for writing when juxtaposed against physical newspapers. According to the findings of Masini et al. (2018) and Powers and Benson (2014), which resulted from comparing online and offline news output from several newspapers, longer articles featured a higher degree of both actor and viewpoint diversity. Another study, this one by Jacobi, Kleinen-von Königslöw, & Ruigrok (2016), compared the political news coverage of six Austrian newspapers' print and online versions during the Austrian election campaign of 2013. The authors concluded that "online versions in general are slightly more diverse than print versions" and that "nearly all individual outlets are more diverse online than in print" (Jacobi, Kleinen-von Königslöw, & Ruigrok, 2016, p. 732). This was especially true in elite newspapers, the category *Expresso* falls under, in which the amount of political news and the diversity of political parties represented were greater online. Additionally, Benson et al. (2012) performed a cross-national study comparing newspapers from the United States, Denmark and France, and found internet outlets to be more diverse in terms of deliberation and the space given to nonjournalistic voices. All these findings are in line with the theoretical framework of medium theory (Deuze, 2003), which states that online media is fundamentally different from traditional journalism because it generates, and is subsequently influenced, by its own distinct set of "contextual factors" (Engebretsen, 2006, p.4). These idiosyncrasies will in turn shape the final product, affording the participants in online-news-related "communication events" particular opportunities for "meaning-making" (Engebretsen, 2006, p.4).

One of these factors pertains to the technological potential of digital media, which features certain tools which can theoretically incentivize deliberation and foster interactivity between writer and reader. Comment sections under online articles are one such example, potentially allowing readers to introduce further layers of complexity and additional viewpoints that the journalist did not address. Research on this point has been mixed. Quite emblematic of the state of the field, Baden & Springer (2014, p. 529) took the financial crisis of 2008 as a case study and noted that news commenters under the pages of five German newspapers "mostly remain within the wider interpretative repertoires offered by the media" even as they sometimes elaborate upon new themes. However, *Expresso* has only recently reintroduced a comment section under its articles, which was not active in the run-up to the 2022 Portuguese legislative elections. Thus, viewpoints introduced by user comments will not affect the analysis of *Expresso*'s content diversity.

Still, the majority of the studies mentioned above deal with diversity in online news at the external level, meaning the diversity achieved when considering the media system as a whole. This report, by contrast, focuses on the internal level, meaning the diversity achieved when considering the content of a single news publication. From the studies referenced above, two center their analysis on the internal level by comparing the content diversity of single newspapers' online and print articles. Ghersetti (2014) found that online and offline versions of Swedish newspapers do not differ tremendously, while Jacobi, Kleinen-von Königslöw, & Ruigrok (2016) indicated that online articles from Austrian newspapers were more diverse than their print counterparts.

3.3. Election coverage in semi-presidential democracies: online vs. print

There are not many academic articles directly comparing online and print election coverage within the same news outlet, especially those taking that distinction into their principal object of study. In part, this internship report aimed to bridge that gap in the communication science literature. However, many of the authors quoted in the previous sections of this report did compare and contrast the coverage of print news outlets to that of online publications.

In Ireland, the digital-only TheJournal.ie employed significantly fewer game and strategy frames than The Irish Times or The Independent (67% compared to 74.3% and 82% for the two broadsheets) while focusing more on public opinion and candidate performance and personal conduct (Culloty & Suiter, 2018). As far as topic diversity is concerned, TheJournal.ie was not too dissimilar from both Irish elite newspapers, except for the number of stories dedicated to party politics (52.8% of coverage, compared to an average of 61%) and social issues, a category to which the digital outlet dedicated 18% of total coverage (for the Times, the figure was 5%). The opposite trend played out during the 2015 parliamentary election in Poland, which shares a political system with Portugal (Neto, 2022). Stepieńska, Lipiński, & Adameczewska (2018, p.160) delved into the political coverage by elite newspapers and digital-only outlets and concluded that television and online news media “share some characteristics”, including the fact they prefer strategic game frames, the “high level of coverage of the ‘us’ vs. ‘them’ division and exclusion populism”, and the high degree of personalization of the campaign around party leaders. By comparison, Polish elite print newspapers “not only covered a broader range of topics but also provided more opportunities

to political actors other than just the leaders to present their points of view” (Stepińska, Lipiński, & Adamczewska, 2018, p.160).

Overall, Salgado (2018b, p.171) concluded that the prevalence of the strategic news frame was lower in online news outlets, attributing that finding to the fact “that online news media outlets have fewer limits in terms of space”, allowing them “to publish not only longer news stories but also more news pieces about specific issues”. Nevertheless, the same author states that the content analysis of the various elections included in the study, among them the already quoted Irish, Portuguese, Croatian and Polish examples, showed that “online news media were more likely to include news containing populist features” (Salgado, 2018b, p.177). Justifying this is the nature of digital news, which are “often written to be clicked, ‘liked’ and ‘shared’ as much as possible” and aimed at “gaining a fast and wide distribution to reach more audience, including outside national borders, which often means the use of simple, appealing language and more visuals” (Salgado, 2018b, p.177).

As for Portugal, it is worth revisiting Salgado (2018a) and ERC (2020). Salgado (2018a) found that online news outlets and print newspapers behaved very similarly when covering the 2015 election. Digital outlets used issue frames in 58% of their stories, while print outlets did the same for 55% of theirs. And far from a large gap, online publications addressed the Euro Crisis in 30% of their articles, while their print counterparts did so in 25% of theirs. Similarly, ERC (2020) looked at actor, viewpoint and topic diversity in the 2019 general elections, making it possible to compare Expresso’s print and online coverage directly. For viewpoint diversity, the results were incredibly similar. The two largest parties, PS and PSD, accounted for 42.8% of all party mentions in print and 44.9% online. Judging by the left-right spectrum criteria, the combination of all parties on the political left accounted for 61.8% of all mentions in print and 60.3% online. Regarding actor diversity, Expresso’s website offered slightly more diverse coverage to its readers. Online, political actors besides the party leader or the politician at the top of the ticket for a given electoral circle (often the same person) gathered 31.4% of all personalized mentions (in print, they got 18.3%).

Some differences emerge, however, when contemplating topic diversity. In this category, a slight trend towards simplification and sensationalism in the online version of the newspaper comes to light. The contrast is most striking in articles related to law and order. Judicial issues were dominant in only 10.6% of print news articles, but the same figure for

online articles is 25%. Even as both versions covered most other topics quite similarly, this discrepancy feeds into the theory that holds the intense competition in online journalism, forcing news professionals to focus on polarizing issues, as one of the factors potentially weakening content diversity (Phillips, 2010; Redden & Witschge, 2010).

Part II – Methodology and empirical research

1. Methodology

1.1 Research question

This internship report aims answer the already mentioned research question: how does internal diversity and political party diversity differ when comparing Expresso's online and print coverage of the 2022 Portuguese legislative elections? In that endeavor, it took into account three categories of content diversity often measured in the communication sciences literature. Through content analysis, the report analyzed Expresso's coverage in terms of its political party diversity, actor diversity and topic diversity both at the newspaper level and the article level. This way, it can be sure that Expresso conforms to the ideal template of a press outlet under a liberal semi-presidential democratic system. For that to occur, the newspaper's coverage must be characterized by high degrees of diversity, both political and social, so as to inform its readers effectively about the affairs of their polity. As discussed in Part I of this report, the importance of a knowledgeable citizenry for the well-being of democracy cannot be underestimated. And to be informed in the realm of public affairs one ought to be exposed to varying ideological positions, political actors and public issues, especially during electoral periods. Identifying whether Expresso is better able to provide diverse coverage online or in print, therefore, is of tremendous significance to Portuguese democracy. The novelty in this report lies in the combination of factors under analysis. There have been many academic studies in the past that examine election coverage under the prism of content diversity. And there have also been several authors contrasting the content diversity of online and print news outlets. However, it is uncommon to find studies that compare online and print election coverage within a single news outlet in terms of content diversity, particularly in Portuguese scientific literature.

1.2 Content analysis and *corpus* of analysis

To meet these aims, the report employs a fundamentally quantitative approach grounded on the tenets of content analysis and inferential statistics. Content Analysis was chosen because it represented the most appropriate method for data collection when considering the aims of this report. It has been defined as “a systematic, replicable technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding” (Stemler, 2001, p.1) The objective of the report is to quantitatively compare Expresso's online and print coverage in terms of content diversity. To do that, it is indispensable that I analyze the articles in question and code them according to relevant

categories. As it allows “researchers to sift through large volumes of data with relative ease in a systematic fashion” (Stemler, 2001, p.1), content analysis is the most efficient method available, the one allowing me to establish a relationship between the dependent, independent and moderating variables of the study - which will be detailed in the following section - and answer my research question.

Overall, the *corpus* of news articles analyzed includes every article published in the politics section of Expresso’s website and weekly print version between December 28, 2021, and January 28, 2022. The time period chosen corresponds to the last 31 days before the legislative elections of 2022, which were held on the 30th of January. No articles were published on the 29th of January due to what is called in Portugal “Dia de Reflexão”, or “day of reflection”, a product of Portuguese Election law that states that no political propaganda is allowed on the day right before an election. By including the articles corresponding to last days of December in the *corpus* of analysis, it was possible to examine five print editions of Expresso. If the report looked exclusively at the month of January, the *corpus* of analysis would have included only four. All print articles were sampled from Expresso’s editions published on December 28, 2021, January 7, 2022, January 14, 2022, January 21, 2022 and January 28, 2022. This report only considered articles published in the politics section of the newspaper, both online and in print, as this section is the most relevant for any reader looking for information regarding political events and the upcoming election. It also opted against including opinion articles in the sample, as doing so would not be the most direct way to measure content diversity, given that the newspaper has limited control over the topics chosen by opinion writers. The vast majority of the *corpus* of analysis encompasses articles about the 2022 general elections, although there were some news stories in the politics section that dealt with local issues in Lisbon, for example, or unrelated social issues. The sample of print coverage wielded a total of 51 articles, spread over the five editions. The online sample was more expansive, covering 31 days of coverage and wielding a total of 393 articles. All articles were then coded quantitatively in view of determining how many political parties, actors and topics each mentioned, as detailed next.

1.3 Dependent variables

- Political party diversity

For coding, the political party category, which is a count variable, will include all the parties that were represented in parliament right before the election, plus the category

“other”: Partido Socialista (PS), Partido Social-Democrata (PSD), Chega (CH), Iniciativa Liberal (IL), Bloco de Esquerda (BE), Partido Comunista Português (PCP), Partido Animais e Natureza (PAN), Livre (L), CDS – Partido Popular (CDS) and other (OT). The report coded each article according to how many of the above parties it mentioned. In this case, each party was recorded every time it was mentioned in any article. This coding strategy is justified by looking at the perspective of the news reader. In election season, readers should be able to come across the activities and ideas of every party running. For this reason, it is important to exactly how many parties are mentioned in Expresso’s coverage and in how many articles. Meanwhile, this method is also useful in empirical terms, since it allows for direct measures of diversity, namely the number of parties mentioned by the average Expresso article.

Here lies a fundamental piece to the puzzle of this report, as political party diversity is intimately tied to the notion that a free press must offer the public a broad spectrum of political opinions and voices in its electoral coverage. The category “other” was included as there are many small parties that do not usually get mentioned in Expresso, or most other Portuguese news outlets, which would distort the final results. At the article level, the value of this category ranged between 0 and 11 online and between 0 and 9 in print. The scale is different because the category “other” can assume values larger than one, which happens when a particular article mentions more than one party without parliamentary representation.

A relevant party to watch in this section is the far-right, populist CHEGA, which improved its voting share from 1.29% in the 2019 general election to 7.18% in 2022, placing it firmly as the third-largest political force in Portugal. The 2022 election marked the first time that mainstream media in Portugal had to consistently report on a national populist party with a strong base of support. The anti-immigrant and brash rhetoric of André Ventura, the party’s leader, aims to shock and capture media attention. It is a possibility that Portuguese journalists, unprepared and unaccustomed to such political phenomena, may end up dedicating a unproportionally large amount of coverage to CHEGA. Another party to watch is PSD, along with the rest of the Portuguese political right-wing. Given the role of prominent right-wing politicians in the foundation of Expresso, mainly Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa and Francisco Pinto Balsemão, it has been noted that the newspaper tends to cater to more liberal, right-of-center audiences (Santana-Pereira & Rogeiro Nina, 2016). Journalists send signals to their audience by selecting to talk about certain parties over others, giving them an aura of victory and importance, which then can impact voter’s decisions at the polls. The impact of this potential influence cannot be ignored.

- Actor diversity

Actor diversity is another count variable, corresponding to the total number of actors represented in an article. This report divided them into two sections: political actors and societal actors. In this task, it was guided by the criteria of ERC (2020), which previously evaluated the coverage of Portuguese newspapers with its own list of codes. The decision to use ERC's list of political actor categories is justified by the comprehensive nature of the list itself. Moreover, it simplifies and optimizes the exercise of comparing the results obtained by ERC (2020) with those obtained by this report. The report distinguishes between seven groups of political actors: Party Leader; Politician at the top of the electoral ticket (in the various Portuguese districts); Party candidate; Other party representatives; Party historical figures; Others; Politicians without party representation. For societal actors, it coded eight different groups, taking as inspiration the list compiled by Masini et al. (2018): Public opinion and ordinary people; Civil Society; Public Agencies and Organizations; Religion; Judiciary, Police and the Military; International Politicians; Economy and Business; Experts. At the article level, the value of this category ranged between 0 and 14 online and between 0 and 12 in print. The scale is different as each group can be represented more than once in an article, and so assume values larger than 1 (if all party leaders are mentioned in a particular article, for example, the value of that group would be 9, which would then have to be added to the values of all other groups). It is worthy to note that to be represented actors needed to be quoted directly, paraphrased by other actors or have their name referenced in a way that was indispensable to the furthering of the article's narrative. Past studies of Portuguese and European elections discovered that party chiefs dominate coverage in mainstream newspapers (Salgado, 2018b). With the heavy personalized debates in Portuguese media regarding the prospects of a new left-wing coalition and the profile of Rui Rio, the opposition leader, as a potential prime-minister, Expresso's coverage of the 2022 general elections will most likely confirm this trend.

- Topic diversity

Lastly, the report coded each article based on the total number of topics discussed. Again, the list of topic categories used by ERC (2020) serves as the blueprint. In that sense, the report coded twenty different topics: Party politics; Post-Electoral scenarios; Election polls; Law and Order; Political party manifesto; Government performance; Political Endorsements; Political economy; Labor policy; Campaign Agendas; Candidate profile;

Fiscal policy; Environmental policy; Budget policy; Health policy; Justice Policy; European Union; Corruption; Social issues; Other. At the article level, topic diversity is a count variable, with values ranging from 1 to 20, corresponding to the total number of topic categories considered by the report. Previous studies in Portugal found that mainstream newspapers spend enormous energy covering party politics and election campaigns, often to the detriment of other social or economic issues (Salgado, 2018a; ERC, 2020). In the 2019 general election, party politics was the dominant topic in 37.6% of Expresso's articles (ERC, 2020). Given the salience of coalition-related debates – highly political in nature – in the run-up to the elections, it is likely that coverage in 2022 will fit the pattern.

1.4 Independent variable

The independent variable in this report is the format in which the news articles are published. There are two options: online or print. Here lies the crux of the entire report, and the key to answering the research question posed in the preceding sections. To determine whether Expresso's coverage is more diverse in its online or print version, I compared the coded results obtained from both samples (51 print articles and 393 online articles).

1.5 Moderating variables

While the research question relates most directly with the relationship between the dependent and independent variables, it is worth considering another dimension in data collection and analysis. Some moderating variables were introduced: news frames, tone and article length. For each article, the report attributed a news frame, noted the evaluative tone of the reporting and recorded the size of the text.

- News frame

As outlined in chapter 3.1 of the literature review, three relevant news frames are applicable to this report. First, *political strategy frame*, which emphasizes campaign strategies and tactics as well as the personal style of politicians (Strömbäck & van Aelst, 2010). Second, *game frame/conflict frame*, which concentrates on opinion polls and horse-race political analysis and “emphasizes conflict between individuals, groups or institutions as a means of capturing audience interest” (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p.95). And third, *issue frame*, relating to news stories about policy proposals, the positions of the candidates regarding particular topics or discussions between experts on relevant social issues. Accordingly, each article in the sample was coded to identify the dominant news frame

among these three. This variable plays a crucial role in the process of comparing online and print coverage. According to communication science theory, online media often prioritizes sensational topics and tends to oversimplify its coverage (Phillips, 2010). That could mean that Expresso's journalists may employ more conflict or political strategy frames online than in print. Furthermore, it allows the report to identify which frame better promotes diverse coverage.

- Evaluative tone

The evaluative tone of the articles was also recorded. Articles in the sample were coded to identify the dominant evaluative tone, which can be either negative, positive or neutral/balanced. The tone used by journalists can influence readers to form positive or negative perceptions of certain political actors or parties, thus potentially impacting election results (Sheafer, 2007). An adversarial press can be difficult to overcome for some candidates, and determining if Expresso's coverage was tendentious in any way, favoring some actors over others, is of paramount significance for this report. Given the reported tendency of Portuguese journalists to cover political events in a negative light (Salgado, 2018), it is also interesting to ascertain whether Expresso's reporters conform to the stereotype. Plus, the report was also able to identify which evaluative tone led to more diverse reporting.

- Article size

At last, the size of the articles is the third moderating ordinal variable. Articles were divided into three categories: *small* (less than 500 words); *medium* (between 500 and 800 words); and *large* (more than 800 words). Here, the principal aim is to test the argument forwarded by several past studies that the article's size is positively correlated to viewpoint, actor and topic diversity (Powers & Benson, 2014; Masini, et al., 2018). Moreover, it is a highly effective tool for comparing online and print coverage, as one of the key distinctions between the two lies in the fact that websites are not limited in terms of space and number of words (as opposed to print newspapers).

1.4 Aims of Research

As justified by the previous sections, the aims of research include:

1. Determine whether the average article in Expresso's website references more political parties, actors and topics than the average print article

2. Determine whether party leaders will account for over than 50% of total coverage
3. Determine whether CH will have the largest positive difference between their percentage of total party mentions (coverage) and their voting results
4. Determine whether party politics will account for over than 50% of total coverage
5. Measure the impact of size of article, news frames and evaluative tones on the level of content diversity online and in print

1.5 Instrument

Statistical analysis formed the bedrock of the data treatment for this report. At the article level, through the coding process, the report calculated how many political parties, actors and topics were mentioned by the average article in *Expresso*. The figures obtained allowed for direct comparison between online and print coverage.

At the newspaper level, political party, actor and topic diversity is accessed by evaluating the equitable distribution of total parties, actors and topics across their respective categories. This is measured by means of Simpson's standardized diversity index (Dz), which is "adequate to measure diversity on two dimensions: it reflects categories of classification and distribution of elements within those categories" (Humprecht & Büchel, 2013, p.14). It essentially measures how even the total number of observations are distributed among the categories of analysis. The formula is:

$$Dz = 1 - \frac{\sum p_i^2}{\left(1 - \frac{1}{k}\right)}$$

where p_i corresponds to the proportion in the i th category, categories i through j ; and k is the number of categories in the distribution (McDonald & Dimmick, 2003). Simpson's standardized diversity index ranges between 0 and 1, 0 being the less diverse possible – if all observations were concentrated in one category – and 1 being the most diverse possible – if observations were distributed equally between all categories.

Taking topic diversity as an example, k equals 20, for the total number of topic categories. p_i is calculated as the fraction of observations within each topic category divided by the overall number of observations. And the overall number of observations is reached by summing the topic diversity values of each article in the sample. In this report, the total number of topic observations was 1089 for online and 166 for print while candidate profiles were discussed

53 times online and 12 times in print. Therefore, the values of p_i for candidate profiles were 4.9% and 7.2%, respectively. The same logic applies to political parties and actors.

Besides the diversity index, a series of multilevel linear regression tests were conducted to isolate the effect of the moderating variables on the level of political party, actor and topic diversity and ascertain whether they had a statistically significant impact. The variables tested were the size of the article, the dominant news frame and the dominant evaluative tone.

2. Results

2.1 Results - political party diversity

Political party diversity represents an important part of news media content diversity literature. With the role of journalism being to help citizens aptly perform their political duties, namely by providing them with reliable information about political events, it is key that news outlets follow closely every party running in each election. In Portugal, given the importance of political parties as links between public affairs and the citizenry, this responsibility takes on an added level of relevance. In this report, from a methodological perspective, political party diversity also assumes the role of the category of viewpoint diversity, one of the three most examined in the communication sciences, potentially paving the way for future studies to employ a similar methodology.

In total, political parties were mentioned 1295 times online across 393 articles and 211 times in print across 51 articles (each party can mention multiple parties). Results show that, as expected, PS and PSD were the two political forces most prevalent in Expresso's coverage of the 2022 legislative elections. In print, PS got 19.91% of all party mentions, with 41, while PSD was mentioned 37 times – 17.54% of the total (see Annex 2 for full distribution). Digging deeper, this means that PS was mentioned by Expresso's journalists in 82.4% of the print articles sampled, with the corresponding figure for PSD being 72.5% (37 divided by 51). As evident in Table 3, online coverage followed a similar pattern. PS represented 19.69% of overall party mentions on the website, while PSD was responsible for 19.15%. Slightly less overwhelming, 64.9% and 63.1% of online articles talked about PS and PSD, respectively. Right away, it is clear that PS got covered more frequently than PSD, despite the alleged center-right bias of Expresso.

And while it seems at first glance like the two largest parties in Portugal dominated the sampled reporting, this is not the case. Closely behind followed CH, IL, BE and CDU, with 10.43%, 9.48%, 10.43% and 11.37% of total party mentions in print, respectively. Online results were close, even as IL took a dip to 7.72% of total coverage and BE jumped to 10.58%, making it the third party most referenced online (34.9% of articles discussed BE). PAN, L and CDS-PP took the last three spots in both formats, not accounting for the “other” category. The amount of coverage dedicated to these three parties was, still, quite sizable when compared to their voting results in the 2022 election. PAN and CDS-PP stand out particularly. More so than any other party, PAN was often enmeshed in debates about environmental and animal rights issues, two topics that concern young readers specifically, which goes a long way in explaining its salience in Expresso’s election coverage. In CDS-PP’s case, nostalgia played a crucial role. Before this election, CDS-PP used to be a bastion of Portuguese conservative thought and political action, often the third largest party in the *Assembleia da República*, and its downfall under new leadership proved to be extremely newsworthy.

Overall, left-wing parties (PS, BE, CDU, PAN and L) received more coverage than their right-wing counterparts (PSD, CH, IL and CDS-PP) both online and in print. As a bloc, the left got 53.59% of party mentions online, with 694, while the right garnered 582, enough

Table 3 Expresso's coverage of the 2022 Legislative Elections

Political Party	Percentage of total coverage – Print	Percentage of total coverage – Online	Voting share in 2022
PS	19.91%	19.69%	41.37%
PSD	17.54%	19.15%	29.09%
CH	10.43%	10.42%	7.18%
IL	9.48%	7.72%	4.91%
BE	10.43%	10.58%	4.40%
CDU	11.37%	10.50%	4.30%
PAN	7.11%	7.49%	1.58%
L	5.21%	5.33%	1.28%
CDS-PP	8.53%	7.64%	1.60%
OT	0	1.47%	4.29%

Source for voting results: Monteiro & Leite Pinto (2022)

for 44.94% of coverage. In print, left-wing parties accounted for 54.03% of the total number of parties mentioned (114), and right-wing parties made up the remaining 45.97% (97). Thus, these findings refute the notion that *Expresso* would focus more heavily on the Portuguese right-wing out of allegiance to the political views of its past owners and editors. From an elite democratic model perspective, the percentages presented above also resemble the voting shares of the two political blocs in the 2022 elections, as the left garnered support from 52.93% of Portuguese voters and the right received 42.78%. As for CH, it appears that the concerns about André Ventura's rhetoric and aggressive style disorienting *Expresso*'s newsroom and persuading journalists to excessively cover the populist party were overblown. CH got 10.42% of total party mentions online and an almost identical percentage in print. On average, the party got covered 3.25% above its voting share in the 2022 elections. While that value is high, the actual party with the largest positive difference between their percentage of total coverage and their voting results was CDU, which was covered, on average, 6.64% above its voting share. The personal condition of Jerónimo de Sousa, CDU's leader, who had a health scare during the campaign which sidelined him for weeks, contributed greatly to this discrepancy. Several articles were written about his health and the potential succession within the party's leadership.

Through correlation analysis, it is possible to compare the voting results of 2022 with the data presented by this report. In print, the correlation coefficient (r) between the coverage dedicated to each party and their respective voting shares was 0.828 (with a value of 1 corresponding to the most positive relationship possible). Online, r was equal to 0.874. Using data from ERC (2020) and Tables 1 and 2, it is possible to contrast these figures with those obtained by *Expresso* in 2019. Digitally, the correlation between coverage and voting shares was barely unchanged between both years, as the 2019 coefficient equaled 0.872. But print coverage tracked voting scores more closely in 2019, with a coefficient of 0.899. Still, the values reflect a deliberate and consistent effort on *Expresso*'s part to ensure political party diversity in its reporting. This becomes clear when considering that PS and PSD, by far the largest parties in Portugal, got discussed far less than expected based on their levels of electoral support in both 2019 and 2022.

At the article level, the average *Expresso* news story referenced 4.14 political parties in print ($SD = 2.64$) and 3.30 online ($SD = 2.62$). Both numbers give the idea of an impressive level of political party diversity even as standard deviations are large, indicating great fluctuations between high and low scores. Looking at Table 4 it is clear that some

Table 4 Average number of political parties per article per articles' characteristics

	Print coverage	Online coverage
Articles' Characteristics	Average number of political parties per article	Average number of political parties per article
All articles (N = 51; 393)	4.14	3.30
Short articles (N = 9; 101)	2.78	2.10
Medium articles (N = 14; 145)	4.93	3.30
Large articles (N = 28; 147)	4.18	4.11
Issue frame (N= 14; 154)	2.64	2.67
Game/Conflict Frame (N = 21; 122)	5.48	4.48
Strategy Frame (N = 16; 117)	3.69	2.89
Neutral tone (N = 36; 332)	4.58	3.42
Positive tone (N = 7; 19)	3.00	2.63
Negative tone (N = 8; 42)	3.13	2.60

Note: N indicates the number of articles (the first number pertains to print articles and the second number pertains to online articles).

Table 5 Value of standardized diversity index (Dz) per articles' characteristics

	Print coverage	Online coverage
Articles' Characteristics	Dz score	Dz score
All articles (N = 51; 393)	0.86	0.86
Short articles (N = 9; 101)	0.82	0.83
Medium articles (N = 14; 145)	0.87	0.86
Large articles (N = 28; 147)	0.85	0.86
Issue frame (N= 14; 154)	0.82	0.87
Game/Conflict Frame (N = 21; 122)	0.87	0.86
Strategy Frame (N = 16; 117)	0.85	0.81
Neutral tone (N = 36; 332)	0.87	0.86
Positive tone (N = 7; 19)	0.80	0.81
Negative tone (N = 8; 42)	0.85	0.84

Note: N indicates the number of articles (the first number pertains to print articles and the second number pertains to online articles).

factors contributed to higher averages of political party diversity. First, the size of the article directly influenced the number of parties referenced. The effect was statistically significant online ($F(2, 390) = 19.249, p = 0.000$), with averages ranging from 2.10 (short articles, $SD = 2.40$) to 4.11 (large articles, $SD = 2.56$). By contrast, the overall effect of article size on political party diversity was not statistically significant in print coverage ($F(2, 48) = 1.89, p = 0.161$), even though there was a clear difference when comparing short with medium or large articles individually ($t(21) = -1.906, p = 0.035$ and $t(35) = -1.391, p = 0.086$, respectively). Still, the data appears to provide endorsement of the idea that content diversity is positively correlated to news article size, at least as far as political parties are concerned.

Moving on to news frames, it seems *Expresso*'s coverage provided an adequate balance between all three frames under analysis. Issue-based articles made up 27% of all print reporting and a strong 39% of all online reporting. While both percentages are lower than those found by Salgado (2018a) for the 2015 elections (digital outlets used issue frames in 58% of their stories while print outlets did the same for 55% of theirs), they still suggest that *Expresso*'s newsroom felt the need to inform its readers of relevant policy debates and the issue positions of the various candidates running in 2022. Conflict frames had the largest positive impact on the level of political party diversity both in print and online, while the effect of news frames overall was statistically significant ($F(2,48) = 6.276, p = 0.004$ and $F(2,390) = 19.936, p = 0.000$, respectively). Indeed, t-tests show that print articles using game/conflict frames referenced a significantly larger number of political parties than those with issue or strategy frames ($t(33) = -3.418, p = 0.001$ and $t(35) = 2.274, p = 0.015$, respectively). The same dynamic played out online, with game/conflict framing much more conducive to diverse content than issue or strategy framing ($t(274) = -5.226, p = 0.000$ and $t(237) = 6.159, p = 0.000$, respectively). Journalists used the conflict frame to report on the many televised debates between party leaders, which partly explains the results. The frequent political clashes between leaders resulted in a great number of parties and actors being mentioned during the 38 debates, and *Expresso* published between one and two articles covering each of them.

Regarding evaluative tones, the print sample does not allow this report to submit any major conclusions. This is primarily because there were not enough articles with positive and negative tones (seven positive and eight negative). The sample consisted primarily of standard news reports, which tend to maintain a neutral stance, especially in elite newspapers. Salgado (2018a) noticed in her study that 31% of the articles about the 2015 general election

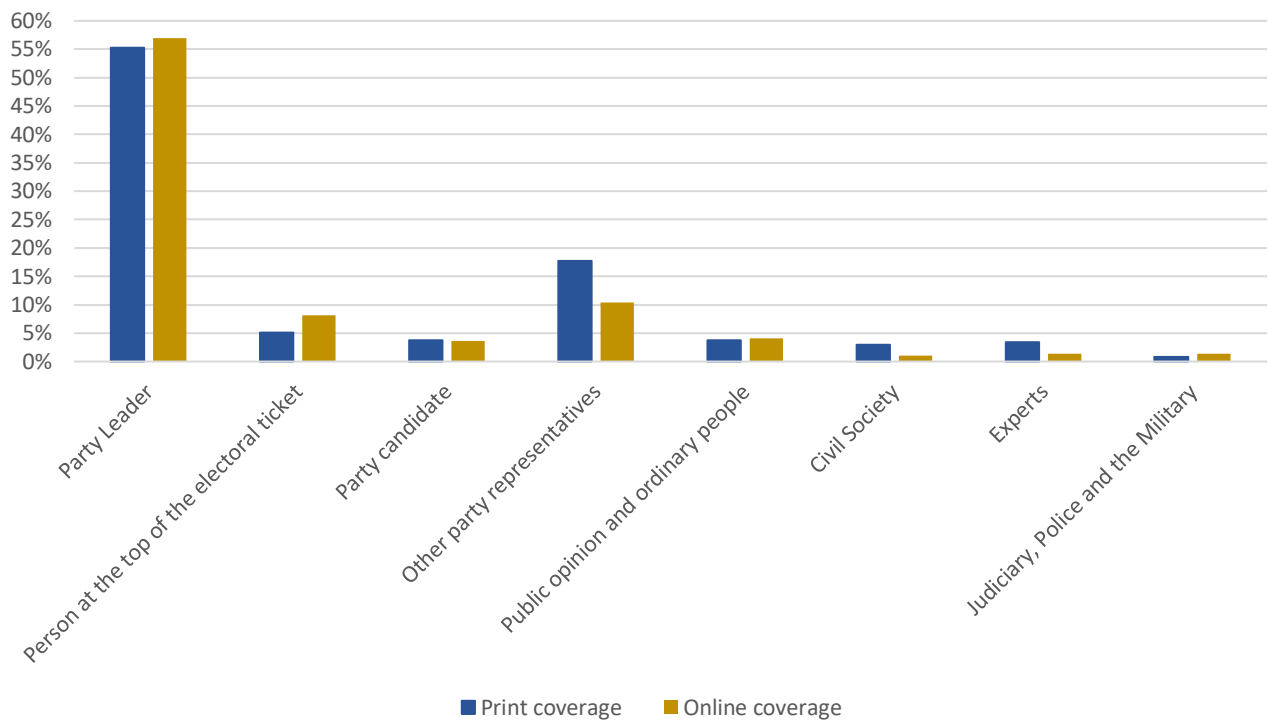
that had an interpretive lens, while negativity was prevalent in 41%. The disparity between the studies is justified by the sample selection criteria. This report did not include opinion articles, which, due to their nature, encourage authors to express their viewpoints and typically exhibit either a positive or negative tone. Minding that, ANOVA tests show that the evaluative tone of the article did not have a statistically significant impact on the level of political party diversity in the print version of *Expresso* ($F(2,48) = 1.811$; $p = 0.175$). Yet the same cannot be said about the online version, as tone did influence the number of political parties mentioned per article ($F(2, 390) = 2.514$, $p = 0.082$). Individually, though, the difference was only statistically significant between neutral and negative articles, with the former leading to a greater degree of political party diversity ($t(372) = 1.904$, $p = 0.029$).

At the newspaper level, standardized diversity index (D_z) scores suggest that *Expresso*'s coverage was extremely diverse. For political parties, as evidenced in Table 5, D_z for all articles had a value of 0.86 both online and in print. As the score is close to 1, this indicates that the distribution of the 10 parties was well balanced for the time period considered. Even as PS and PSD towered above all others in terms of coverage, the score is partly driven by the evenness of the distribution of the remaining parties. The effect of the moderating variables is harder to detect in this case, as D_z scores are very similar across the board. Size does appear to have an impact, however, with scores in both formats being higher for medium and large articles compared to short articles.

2.2 Results - actor diversity

Throughout the time period under consideration, 51 print articles mentioned 237 actors while a total of 393 online articles referenced 1474. Among these, party leaders made up the vast majority. To be exact, 57% of all actors mentioned online were party leaders (840 in 1474), and that same category accounted for 55% of actor mentions in print (131 in 237). The second actor category most referenced in both formats was "other party representatives" – particularly the Portuguese president Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, Carlos Moedas, the Lisbon mayor, and some government ministers – with 10.38% of actor mentions online and 17.72% in print, as evidenced in Figure 1. In fact, the difference in coverage between political and non-political actors was abysmal: political actors made up 88.19% of all actors mentioned in print and almost 89% online. Among the non-political groups, *Expresso*'s journalists often quoted or paraphrased "public opinion and ordinary people", "experts" and "civil society" actors, with each category typically ranging between 1% and 4% of total coverage (see

Figure 1 Distribution of political and non-political actor categories online and in print



Note: The figure includes the four most mentioned political actor categories and the four most mentioned social actor categories. It does not include the following categories – Party historical figures; Other political actors; Public agencies and organizations; International politicians; Economy and Business

Annex 3 for full distribution of actor categories). Given this report dealt with an electoral period, the results, while lopsided, were not surprising. Long a debated topic in political communications theory, Salgado (2018a) and Van Aelst, Sheafer, & Stanyer (2012) had already noted the tendency of news outlets to personalize coverage around party leaders during elections, with Portuguese newspapers not an exception to this rule. It is understandable that political actors hold an important role in elections, and it is not undesirable for newspapers to provide extensive coverage of leaders and other candidates. But the discrepancy in the percentage of total coverage is undeniable. Any reader of *Expresso* between December 28, 2021, and January 28, 2022, would have primarily, and almost exclusively, encountered the opinions and actions of political actors. In this equation, party leaders reigned supreme. Especially António Costa and Rui Rio, the heads of the two largest parties, PS and PSD. 66.67% and 51.15% of all print and online articles, respectively, quoted or paraphrased António Costa, while the equivalent figures for Rui Rio were 64.71% and

Table 6 Distribution of Party leader mentions in print and online coverage

Party Leader	Print coverage		Online coverage	
	Total mentions	Percentage of total articles in which the leader is mentioned (N = 51)	Total mentions	Percentage of total articles in which the leader is mentioned (N = 393)
António Costa (PS)	34	66.67%	201	51.15%
Rui Rio (PSD)	33	64.71%	183	46.56%
André Ventura (CH)	12	23.53%	97	24.68%
João Cotrim de Figueiredo (IL)	8	15.69%	51	12.98%
Catarina Martins (BE)	12	23.53%	75	19.08%
Jerónimo de Sousa (CDU)	11	21.57%	60	15.27%
Inês Sousa-Real (PAN)	8	15.69%	58	14.76%
Rui Tavares (L)	6	11.76%	49	12.47%
Francisco Rodrigues dos Santos (CDS)	7	13.73%	52	13.23%

Note: N refers to the total number of articles in the sample

46.56% (see Table 6). Together, they accounted for 51.15% of all party leader mentions in print and 46.48% online. Firmly in third place in both formats, André Ventura, CHEGA's leader, got discussed meaningfully in 97 online articles and 12 print news stories. Next came the heads of the other left-wing parties, BE and CDU. Catarina Martins was mentioned in 75 online articles and 12 print articles, while Jerónimo de Sousa, CDU's leader, came in fifth place with similar numbers. For the most part, the findings reflect the voting shares each party received in 2022. The exceptions being some of the less-voted political forces, such as PAN, L or CDS-PP, whose leaders received comparable coverage to that of the chiefs of much larger parties, another testament to Expresso's efforts to introduce actor and political diversity in its reporting. In the same vein, CDU's coverage is worth highlighting. While Jerónimo de Sousa was referenced about as much as expected, he had to be sidelined from the campaign for several weeks due to a health issue. In his place CDU sent two of its biggest names to the field: João Oliveira, a member of the *Assembleia da República* at the time, and João Ferreira. João Oliveira was quoted or paraphrased by Expresso a total of 51 times in the

time period considered, 47 of those coming online. For his part, João Ferreira was meaningfully discussed in 25 articles (21 online and 4 in print), as evidenced in Tables 7 and 8.

Besides the aforesaid party leaders, João Oliveira, who served as the de facto leader of CDU for most of the campaign by doing speeches and performing in televised debates, was the most frequently mentioned actor in online coverage. Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, the Portuguese President, came in second place, as he was often quoted during the electoral period. As President, his role in the governing formation process in Portugal is pivotal, with his opinions on potential coalitions after the elections being extremely relevant from a journalistic perspective. Pedro Nuno Santos and Ana Catarina Mendes, featuring at the top of the electoral ticket for PS in the districts of Aveiro and Setúbal, respectively, were also heavily in the mix. Both have been touted as future successors of António Costa by the news media, and *Expresso*'s journalists sought out their political and personal views on a regular basis. Some PSD lieutenants, such as David Justino, José Silvano or Paulo Rangel, were also featured frequently, given their roles in the campaign and their professional relationship with Rui Rio. Carlos Moedas, the mayor of the city of Lisbon, from PSD, also received significant coverage (*Expresso* is a national newspaper, but it is based in Lisbon, and often writes about local issues). Anonymous sources were quoted or paraphrased 14 times in print and seven times online. As print articles were usually larger and more interpretive in nature, their authors used anonymous sources when discussing potentially sensible topics from both political and personal angles.

Considering the bigger picture, at the newspaper level, the results were notably positive, with the average print article meaningfully discussing 4.65 actors and the average online article 3.75 (see Table 9). Online, every moderating variable tested had a statistically significant impact on the level of actor diversity. In print, only the size of the article and the news frame did ($F(2,48) = 4.899, p = 0.012$ and $F(2, 48) = 4.487, p = 0.016$, respectively). At the newspaper level, however, Dz scores paint a much darker picture. Of all dependent variables tested newspaper-wide in this report, actor diversity fared the worst, by far. Contributing to this result was the overwhelming reliance on political actors as sources and as targets of speculation, especially party leaders. As a result, both the online and print samples had a Dz score of 0.63 for actor diversity. The sample including Game/conflict-framed articles performed the worst, with an average of 0.46 across both formats, while issue frames performed the best, with an average of 0.76.

Table 7 Actors mentioned in print (excluding party leaders)

Actor	Total mentions in print
Anonymous source	14
Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa	6
Pedro Nuno Santos (PS)	4
Ana Catarina Mendes (PS)	4
David Justino (PSD)	4
João Oliveira (CDU)	4
Paulo Rangel (PSD)	3
Luís Montenegro (PSD)	3
Duarte Cordeiro (PS)	2
João Ferreira (CDU)	2
Bernardino Soares (CDU)	2

Note: The table includes every actor referenced in at least two print articles

Table 8 Actors mentioned online (excluding party leaders)

Actor	Total mentions online
João Oliveira (CDU)	47
Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa	38
João Ferreira (CDU)	21
Pedro Nuno Santos (PS)	20
Carlos Moedas (PSD)	15
David Justino (PSD)	11
Augusto Santos Silva (Foreign Affairs Minister)	11
Duarte Cordeiro (PS)	9
Rui Moreira (Independent)	9
Source from <i>Comissão Nacional de Eleições</i>	9
Ana Catarina Mendes (PS)	7
Anonymous source	7
José Silvano (PSD)	7
Antero Luís (PS)	7
Luísa Salgueiro (PS)	6
Francisca Van Dunen (Justice Minister)	6
Fernando Medina (PS)	5
Joacine Katar Moreira (Independent)	5
Pedro Passos Coelho (PSD)	5

Note: The table includes every actor referenced in at least five online articles

In terms of size, medium and large articles referenced significantly more actors. The contrast is most pronounced when opposing short and long articles online and in print ($t(246) = -8.456, p = 0.000$ and $t(35) = -3.064, p = 0.002$, respectively). For that reason, the greater proportion of large articles in the print sample may have contributed to the higher actor diversity averages when compared to online coverage. Likewise, news frames were statistically significant both online and in print. At the article level, game/conflict frames performed the best in both formats. Significantly so when comparing with issue frames ($t(274) = -3.800, p = 0.000$ for online; and $t(33) = -2.293, p = 0.014$ for print). Inversely, at the newspaper level, issue-based framing led to a more balanced distribution between actor groups (Dz scores for the issue frame were among the highest of the whole category). This was because journalists writing issue-based articles usually called upon public opinion or experts in specific fields and avoided focusing excessively on party leaders, thereby balancing the overall level of actor diversity. Meanwhile, the success of game/conflict frames in achieving diversity can once more be attributed to the numerous reports written about the 38 televised debates, during which every leader would rally against their political adversaries and criticize other parties.

Even as the report recognizes the small sample size, the impact of evaluative tones on actor diversity was only statistically significant online ($F(2,390) = 2.975, p = 0.052$), as measured by ANOVA tests. Neutrally-toned articles, the vast majority, performed the best in this category, particularly at the newspaper level. And the individual difference between positive and negative articles was not statistically significant in either format ($t(13) = -0.636, p = 0.268$ for print; and $t(59) = -0.045, p = 0.482$). Beyond the statistical analysis, when considering which actors/parties were the focus of each evaluative tone, a sense of balance prevails. Individually, the leaders of CH, CDS-PP were referenced in a negative light most often, mostly due to their subpar debate performances. António Costa was not far behind, just like Rui Rio. Collectively, the political class was the focus of two negative articles, while three other negatively-toned news stories were directed at the ruling government at the time. On the other side of the spectrum, the leaders of IL, L, PS, PCP and PSD enjoyed a similar degree of positive coverage. Regarding PCP, Expresso highlighted the record of Jerónimo de Sousa's leadership following his health scare and the strong debate performances of João Oliveira. Positive coverage was also extended to Rui Rio, João Cotrim de Figueiredo, IL's leader, and Rui Tavares, the leader of Livre, due to their impressive debate performances.

Table 9 Average number of actors per article and value of standardized diversity index (Dz) for actor diversity per articles' characteristics

Articles' Characteristics	Print coverage		Online coverage	
	Average number of actors per article	Dz score	Average number of actors per article	Dz score
All articles (N = 51; 393)	4.65	0.63	3.75	0.63
Short articles (N = 9; 101)	2.33	0.65	2.35	0.66
Medium articles (N = 14; 145)	5.00	0.62	3.68	0.60
Large articles (N = 28; 147)	5.21	0.62	4.78	0.63
Issue frame (N= 14; 154)	3.00	0.78	3.19	0.74
Game/Conflict Frame (N = 21; 122)	5.05	0.49	4.39	0.42
Strategy Frame (N = 16; 117)	5.56	0.63	3.83	0.67
Neutral tone (N = 36; 332)	4.92	0.59	3.88	0.63
Positive tone (N = 7; 19)	3.57	0.55	3.05	0.65
Negative tone (N = 8; 42)	4.38	0.79	3.07	0.57

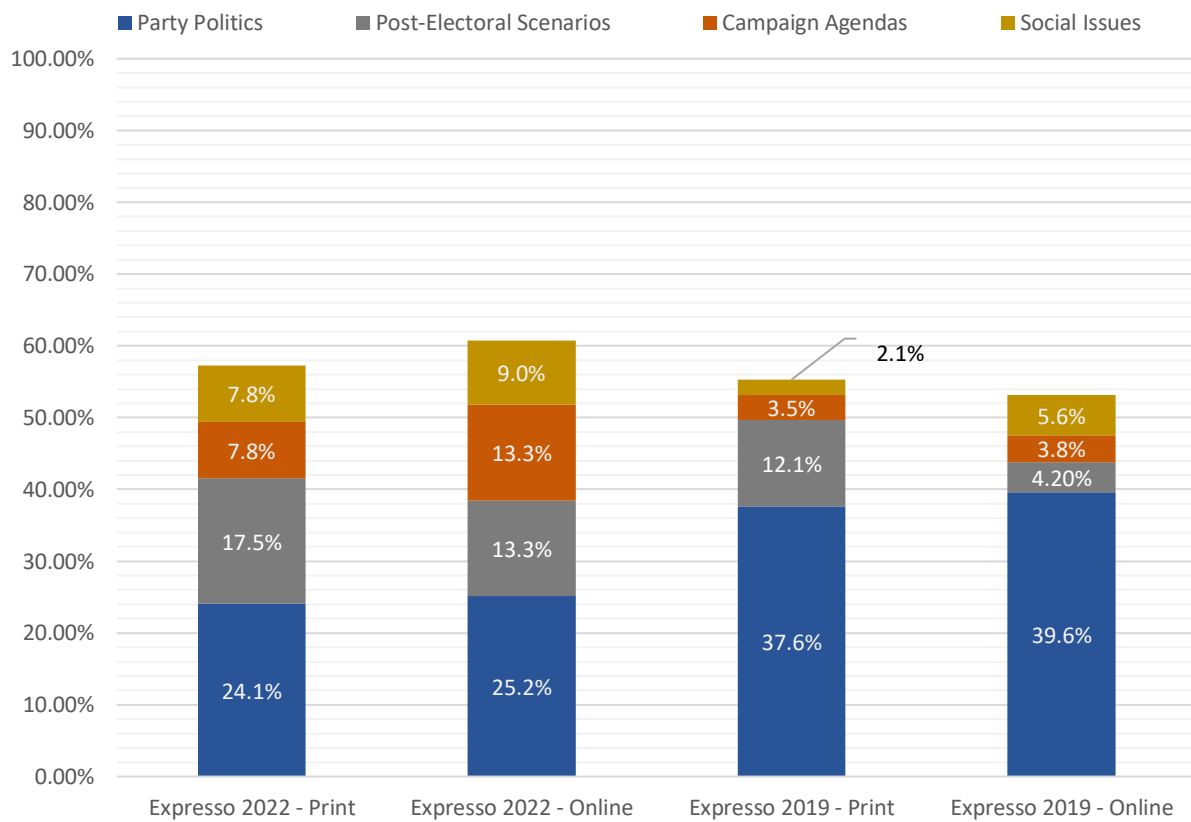
Note: N indicates the number of articles (the first number pertains to print articles and the second number pertains to online articles).

2.3 Results - topic diversity

In total, the 393 online articles addressed 1089 topics, while the 51 print articles touched upon 166 (note that each individual article can reference multiple topics). One issue above all others was front and center in *Expresso*'s coverage of the 2022 legislative elections. In line with the findings of Salgado (2018b), the topic of party politics was clearly the most debated over the time period considered by this report. Party politics accounted for 24.41% of all topic mentions in print, while online it represented 25.7%. Meanwhile, the topic of post-electoral scenarios came at a distant second place in both formats, corresponding to 17.5% of all topics mentioned in print and 13.31% online (see Annex 4 for full distribution of actor categories). Overall, 70% of online articles sampled and 78% of print articles discussed party politics, while the four most mentioned topics in both formats were party politics, post-electoral scenarios, campaign agendas and social issues, an umbrella category comprising themes such as voting rights and education policy. Collectively, these four accounted for 57.23% of topic mentions in print and 60.76% online, as illustrated in Figure 2. From this point onward, topic selection differed. Online articles focused more on health policy (6.15% of total coverage) and the category "other", which included subcategories such as foreign policy or animal rights (5.60%). And the print version dedicated more time to candidate profiles and political party manifestos (7.23% and 6.63% of all topic mentions, respectively). Economic issues, while approached by *Expresso*, did not feature in the top five of topics mentioned in either format under analysis. Still, the thematic triumvirate of political economy, labor policy and fiscal policy accounted for 11.40% and 10.01% of total coverage in print and online, respectively. Especially bearing in mind that *Expresso* publishes a separate physical newspaper dedicated exclusively to economic journalism, the figures do underscore the newspaper's efforts to inform its readership. Conversely, the topics of corruption, justice policy, European Union and political endorsements had minimal representation in the sample, with values ranging from 0.09% to 1.29% of topic mentions.

Comparing with 2019, there was a clear reduction in the number of news stories dedicated to party politics as a percentage of total coverage. Moreover, social issues were more prominent in 2022. Perhaps because the sample was larger (in 2019, ERC looked at 106 print articles and 47 online articles), the overall coverage of *Expresso* was more balanced in 2022, with more space given to topics not directly related to party politics or electoral speculation. Health policy serves as a prime example. Because of the Covid pandemic, health policy was one of the major debate points between political parties and leaders in 2022,

Figure 2 Percentage of total coverage dedicated to the four most mentioned topics in Expresso’s coverage of the 2022 legislative elections



Source for 2019 data: ERC (2020)

unlike in 2019, and Expresso’s coverage reflected that dynamic. Another good marker is law and order, often one of the most discussed topics by Portuguese newspapers in 2019. It was barely audible in 2022, representing 0.6% and 1.38% of party mentions in print and online, respectively. This can be attributed to the fact that this report did not sample articles from the “Society” section of Expresso, usually packed with reports on court cases and crime.

In both years, Expresso featured a heavy dose of party politics in its reporting. This is not surprising, nor is it necessarily damaging in terms of topic diversity. During electoral periods, citizens must be cognizant of the activities, policy-positions and political rhetoric of the various candidates running. This means that news outlets must closely follow every party, especially given the importance of such entities in Portuguese democracy. Plus, coalition-building speculation held enormous sway over the conscience of political elites in 2022, with left-wing parties pondering whether to run back their parliamentary agreement from the previous election and right-wing parties concerned with CHEGA’s rise. It was not unexpected, then, that these arguments found their way into Expresso’s coverage.

Despite the dominance of party politics, Dz scores for topic diversity were strong. Once again, this could be due to the evenness of the distribution between the other topics. In print, Dz had a value of 0.88 while the average article discussed 3.25 topics (SD = 1.23), as illustrated in Table 10. Online, the corresponding figures were 0.87 and 2.77 (SD = 1.17). At the article level, print seems to have a slight edge, even as results were strikingly similar at the newspaper level. The effect of the size of the article was, just like with actor diversity, statistically significant both online and in print ($F(2, 390) = 56.856, p = 0.000$ and $F(2,48) = 3.594, p = 0.035$, respectively). In both formats, the size of the article was positively related to the number of topics discussed, particularly when comparing short and long articles individually via t-tests ($t(246) = -10.534, p = 0.000$ for online; and $t(35) = -2.300, p = 0.014$ for print).

For news frames, their effect on the level of topic diversity was only statistically significant online ($F(2,390) = 52.291, p = 0.000$). Even so, only when distinguishing between issue frames and the two others, with the former being less conducive to diverse coverage from a topical perspective. Surprisingly, at the article level, news stories that used game/conflict frames discussed on average the greatest number of topics (3.38 for print and 3.26 for online). Partly explaining this is the nature of the vast majority of issue-framed articles in *Espresso*, which often focus on a single topic, examining it from different angles and perspectives.

Similarly, the evaluative tone of the articles was only found to be statistically significant in the online sample ($F(2,390) = 3.140, p = 0.044$), with positive articles addressing the highest number of topics on average (3.42). Two factors contributed to this result. First, since 55% of print articles are large in size (the figure for online is 38%), the average print article is likely to discuss more topics, regardless of its evaluative tone. This, coupled with the smaller sample size of print articles, reduces the variability in topic diversity values. In print, scores at the article and newspaper levels were strikingly similar across all evaluative tones, with the average number of topics per article only ranging between 3.13 (SD = 1.36) and 3.22 (SD = 1.27). Second, debate analysis by *Espresso*'s journalists was conducted more frequently online. These articles involved grading the debate performances of party leaders, often positively. Given that debates brought up a wide array of topics, the articles covering them naturally reflected this diversity.

Table 10 Average number of topics per article and value of standardized diversity index (Dz) for topic diversity per articles' characteristics

Articles' Characteristics	Print coverage		Online coverage	
	Average number of topics per article	Dz score	Average number of topics per article	Dz score
All articles (N = 51; 393)	3.25	0.88	2.77	0.87
Short articles (N = 9; 101)	2.44	0.89	1.99	0.86
Medium articles (N = 14; 145)	3.07	0.85	2.68	0.85
Large articles (N = 28; 147)	3.61	0.87	3.40	0.88
Issue frame (N= 14; 154)	3.00	0.89	2.10	0.89
Game/Conflict Frame (N = 21; 122)	3.38	0.84	3.26	0.85
Strategy Frame (N = 16; 117)	3.31	0.82	3.14	0.79
Neutral tone (N = 36; 332)	3.22	0.87	2.74	0.86
Positive tone (N = 7; 19)	3.57	0.84	3.42	0.88
Negative tone (N = 8; 42)	3.13	0.87	2.71	0.89

Note: N indicates the number of articles (the first number pertains to print articles and the second number pertains to online articles).

2.4 Results - online vs. print

The aim of this report was, above all, to determine whether *Expresso*'s coverage of the 2022 general elections in Portugal was more diverse online or in print. With the results described in the previous sections, it is possible to ascertain that, at the article level, *Expresso*'s print version mentioned more political parties, actors and topics than its website during the time period considered. At the newspaper level, however, both formats displayed a strikingly similar level of political party, actor and topic diversity. The findings also laid bare the impact of certain moderating variables in both formats, showing that the level of content diversity was often conditioned by the size of the article in question, the news frame used by the journalist and the evaluative tone of the narrative. By conducting a multilevel linear regression test (see Table 11), it is possible to calculate with more precision which variables had the most direct and statistically significant impact, a method employed previously by

Table 11 Results of the multilevel linear regression model

	Political party diversity		Actor diversity		Topic diversity	
	Coefficient	SE	Coefficient	SE	Coefficient	SE
Online	-0.653	0.36	-0.684*	0.33	-0.210	0.15
Size of the article (reference: short)						
Medium	1.126**	0.30	1.309**	0.28	0.493**	0.12
Large	1.765**	0.30	2.364**	0.28	1.129**	0.12
Frame of the article (reference: issue frame)						
Game/conflict frame	1.593**	0.28	0.841**	0.26	0.858**	0.11
Political strategy frame	-0.051	0.28	0.402	0.26	0.761**	0.12
Evaluative tone of the article (reference: neutral)						
Positive tone	-1.441**	0.49	-1.473**	0.45	0.254	0.20
Negative tone	-0.913*	0.36	-0.774*	0.33	0.029	0.15

Note: Total articles N = 444; *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01

Masini et al (2018) in a very similar context. The regression test (in which online, size, news frame and evaluative tone were operationalized as dummy variables) confirmed the results outlined previously. Straight away, it becomes clear that the size of the article is positively related to political party, actor and topic diversity (p < 0.01, for the three variables). Rather

surprisingly, articles with game/conflict frames were significantly more diverse than issue-based ones ($p < 0.01$, for political party, actor and topic diversity), while the difference between political strategy and issue frames was only statistically significant in regards to topic diversity ($p < 0.01$). The effect of evaluative tones was more muddled, a possible consequence of the low sample size. Still, the positive tone was negatively related to political party and actor diversity ($p < 0.01$, for both), while the same happens for negative tones, albeit to a lesser degree ($p < 0.05$). On the other hand, for topic diversity, the evaluative tone of the article did not have a statistically significant impact.

Moving on to the relevant contrast between online and print coverage. The linear regression model shows that the average online article was only less diverse when considering actor diversity ($p < 0.05$), while the effect of the change in format was not statistically significant for political party and topic diversity. Nevertheless, a second linear regression test, this one excluding every moderating variable, paints a different picture (see Table 12). When not controlling for size, news frame or evaluative tone, online articles were significantly less diverse than their print counterparts. This was the case for political parties and actors ($p < 0.05$, for both), and especially for topics, with the average print article more diverse from a topical perspective ($p < 0.01$).

Table 12 Results of the multilevel linear regression model (excluding moderating variables)

	Political party diversity		Actor diversity		Topic diversity	
	Coefficient	SE	Coefficient	SE	Coefficient	SE
Online	-0.842*	0.390	-0.896*	0.361	-0.484**	0.175

Note: Total articles $N = 444$; * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

At the newspaper level, both formats displayed similar levels of content diversity. Individual t-tests comparing Dz scores showed that the difference between print and online articles was not statistically significant when considering political party diversity ($t(18) = -0.22$, $p = 0.414$), actor diversity ($t(18) = 0.432$, $p = 0.336$) and topic diversity ($t(18) = 0.565$, $p = 0.290$). Simpson's standardized diversity index measures the evenness of the distribution of observations between the different categories, suggesting that both Expresso's website and

print version offered balanced coverage of political events in the run-up to the 2022 legislative elections, especially in terms of political parties and topics.

The chapter 3.2 of the literature review grouped scholars into three camps by their findings regarding the differences between print and online news media output. Depending on who you asked, online news media was either less diverse, equally as diverse or more diverse than print media. From the results obtained highlighted above, it is impossible to assert that *Expresso*'s coverage of the 2022 general election was more diverse online. At best, it can be argued that coverage was equally diverse in both formats, while the print version has a clear advantage at the article level.

In the literature, the most compelling argument for online news content being more diverse relates to size constraints. In theory, as the size of the article is positively related to content diversity (Masini, et al., 2018; Powers & Benson, 2014), articles published in websites can be more diverse because there are no space limitations, unlike those published in print newspapers. In this report, the sample selection process and *Expresso*'s characteristics seem to have nullified the potential impact of article size. The print sample covered five print editions of *Expresso*, with a total of 51 articles, while the online sample covered a full month of reporting, with a total of 393 articles. Besides the glaring disparity in the number of observations, large articles accounted for a much higher proportion of the print sample (55%) when compared to the online sample (37%). And *Expresso* is a weekly newspaper, meaning it must condense a great number of issues and reporting into each edition, ultimately improving its content diversity indicators. Perhaps if the print sample was larger, or if *Expresso* was a daily elite newspaper, the gap between online and print coverage at the article level would have been smaller. Another argument wielded by scholars seeking to defend the superiority of digital media in terms of diversity relates to reader-author interaction. Through comment sections, for example, internet users can add further layers of complexity by referencing actors or topics the journalists did not address (Baden & Springer, 2014). But *Expresso* did not feature a comment section or any other tools for reader interaction in the time period considered, negating its potential positive influence on content diversity.

Other academic studies point to the market pressure in online news media as a justification for print news being more diverse (Phillips, 2010). As competition is tougher online, news outlets must resort to the oversimplification of their content, focusing on more

polarizing topics and actors, the thinking goes. In Expresso's coverage of the 2022 elections, this argument does not seem to hold. A quick glance at the distribution of political parties, actors and topics in the sample is sufficient to realize that the newspaper's website did not succumb to the temptation of catering to popular preferences. First, the coverage of André Ventura and CHEGA, by far the most polarizing actor and political party in Portugal, was extremely similar across both formats in both quantity and kind. Second, issue frames were actually more preponderant in online coverage, at 39% of total articles, when compared to print (27%). Game/conflict frames, more associated with the type of polarizing reporting scholars attribute to digital media, were dominant in 41% of print articles (online, they accounted for 31% of coverage). And third, the topics addressed by Expresso's website did not differ substantially from those discussed in print. Divisive themes such as law and order or corruption were not reported to a great degree online, contradicting the notion that journalists writing for digital publications are overly preoccupied with readership numbers.

Conclusion

This internship report set out to study the content diversity of Expresso's coverage of the 2022 Portuguese legislative elections. More precisely, it wanted to answer the following research question: how does internal diversity and political party diversity differ when comparing Expresso's online and print coverage of the 2022 Portuguese legislative elections? By looking at every article published in the newspaper's 'politics' section between December 28, 2021 and January 28, 2022 (51 print articles and 393 online articles), the report was able to reach surprising and relevant conclusions.

The empirical section of the paper was built on a robust process of content analysis and the methods of inferential statistics. Each article was coded quantitatively according to how many political parties, actors and topics it mentioned. The report coded 10 different political parties, 15 different actor categories and 20 different topic categories. Content diversity was then calculated at the article and newspaper levels with a diversity formula that measured how even the total number of observations were distributed among the categories of analysis. The report also tested three moderating variables for their effect on content diversity, namely the size of the article, the news frame used by the journalist and the evaluative tone of the news story. This methodology is not innovative, but the combination of factors under analysis bridged a clear gap in the communication science literature, particularly in Portugal. In the past, not many studies have directly compared online and print coverage in the same news

outlet (internal diversity), especially in electoral periods. And most Portuguese studies on this subject deal almost exclusively with the concept of external diversity, meaning they take the whole news media market as their object of study. This report focused exclusively on Expresso, allowing it to further the discussion about which format is more effective in achieving diverse coverage.

After the statistical analysis, the first and core conclusion pertains to the level of content diversity of Expresso's election coverage. The report found that the print version of Expresso mentioned on average more political parties, actors and topics at the article level. The difference was statistically significant for all three categories. At the newspaper level, however, Expresso's print and online versions displayed extremely similar levels of content diversity. This finding implies that some of the typical constraints associated with print newspapers, and print news media more generally, did not cause Expresso's physical version to be less diverse. Chiefly among them are the size limitations of physical newspapers, whose pages cannot be stretched even if journalists want to write more to include extra sources or ideas. Here, it is worth to note that the report found a positive relationship between article size and content diversity, and that the sample of print articles had a significantly higher proportion of large articles (>800 words) when compared to the online sample. Contributing to this is the fact that Expresso is a weekly newspaper, meaning it must condense a week's worth of news and journalistic analysis into each edition. When considering elite news media, the results suggest that weekly newspapers can perhaps nullify the effect of some of the constraints associated with physical newspapers. By having to, in essence, summarize and report every crucial political event that occurred over the previous week, weekly elite newspapers can afford to produce larger articles featuring heavy doses of political party, actor and topic diversity. Far from a footnote, this issue warrants further academic investigation. Based on the findings of presented here, it can be argued that weekly newspapers may outperform daily newspapers in terms of providing diverse coverage, and the value of news media diversity for the well-being of democratic societies cannot be underestimated.

This finding also implies that Expresso's journalists did not approach their task any differently when writing online or in print. The writing style was similar in both formats, as were the themes, actors and political parties referenced. Results at the newspaper level, measured by Simpson's diversity index (D_z), were almost indistinguishable between formats. This appears to vindicate the proponents of field theory, which state that all journalists are bound by professional ideology and adhere to longstanding beliefs and norms, regardless of

whether they write online or in print (Henkel et al., 2020; Benson & Neveu, 2005). It seems like *Expresso*'s workers saw themselves as journalists first, not as print journalists or online journalists. In fact, many of the individuals writing for *Expresso*'s print version also contributed to the website, highlighting the potential benefits of combining print and digital news teams to enhance content diversity. Rather than professional norms hindering innovation, they may, if harnessed effectively, help maintain the principles of diverse and unbiased journalism in digital news media.

As for the content itself, the results largely fell in line with previous expectations. When considering political party diversity, PS and PSD were the most mentioned parties, but not by a significant margin. Just like in ERC (2020), their percentage of *Expresso*'s total coverage was rather low when judging by the 2022 voting results. Both parties had the largest negative difference between their percentage of total coverage and their performance at the polls, while the remaining parties received more coverage than their voting shares would suggest. This dynamic indicates a concerted effort by *Expresso*'s newsroom to ensure that most political parties running had enough exposure, not only those with a shot at leading any future government. The case of CHEGA is a great example, as concerns mounted prior to the election that Portuguese news media would cover the far-right party excessively. In reality, CH's populist and divisive nature did not pressure *Expresso* to give it a disproportional amount of journalistic attention in 2022. Meanwhile, left-wing parties as a group were covered more frequently than their right-wing counterparts, while António Costa, PS's leader, was referenced more often than Rui Rio, PSD's leader. Because of this, any supposed right-wing bias of *Expresso*, given its history, was not confirmed by the data.

Moving on to actor diversity, the results of the report did not differ substantially from past Portuguese election coverage studies. Just like the literature would suggest (ERC, 2020; Salgado, 2018a; Van Aelst, Sheafer, & Stanyer, 2012), party leaders were overwhelmingly the most represented group in the sample, to the extent that the actor diversity variable had the lowest newspaper-level Dz scores. Party leaders were equally as dominant online and in print, meaning the tendency to personalize coverage around that group did not seem driven by a strategy to oversimplify reporting for the sake of increasing readership, a tactic often associated with digital news media. The issue seems to be more structural, and is probably associated with the sacerdotal approach of Portuguese journalists to politics and the dynamics of electoral periods. This is particularly true because party leaders play a central role in political campaigning in Portugal, often at the expense of other political and social actors.

Still, this is the one area where Expresso's level of content diversity falls short, even when factoring in that covering party leaders' actions and opinions is particularly important during electoral periods.

A similar dynamic played out when considering the topics discussed by the newspaper. As anticipated, the topic of party politics dominated coverage, being discussed in 70% of all online articles and 78% of print articles. The research alluded to in the paragraph above had already pointed that outcome as a realistic possibility. Again, there were no significant differences between online and print coverage at the newspaper-level. The topical concentration, therefore, cannot be attributed to a digital media drive to focus on divisive and polarizing issues. And while party politics was the most referenced topic by a wide margin, diversity scores for topic diversity were rather high, showcasing Expresso's willingness to provide its readers with plural content. Taking into account that the sample only included articles from the 'politics' section of the newspaper, which is expected to focus on political themes such as post-electoral scenarios or campaign agendas, the results were encouraging.

The data also confirmed the findings of Masini et al. (2018) and Humprecht & Büchel (2013), whose studies both discovered a positive relationship between the size of news articles and content diversity. At the article level, Expresso's large and medium articles referenced a significantly higher number of political parties, actors and topics when compared with short articles. Such direct conclusions regarding evaluative tone, however, cannot be drawn. While a neutral tone led to both more political party and actor diversity (the impact of evaluative tone was not statistically significant for topic diversity), the sample was lopsided against negative and positive articles. More specifically, 71% of print articles and 84% of online articles had a neutral tone. If more positive and negative reporting were to be included, which could have been done by including opinion articles, the results may have been different. Still, as it stands, this report contradicts past research underscoring the negativity associated with Portuguese journalism (Salgado, 2018a).

The analysis of news frames resulted, perhaps, in the most surprising conclusion of the whole report, one with implications for future research in the communication sciences. Game/conflict frames, which concentrate on opinion polls and horse-race political analysis and emphasize conflict between individuals, performed the best when it came to political party, actor and topic diversity. Articles in which the game/conflict frame was dominant featured on average more political parties, actors and topics than those with issue and strategy

frames. In all three categories, the difference between frames was statistically significant both online and in print. Thus, the theory that game and conflict frames should not be used in election coverage, due to their tendency to oversimplify complex issues and distract from more substantial reporting, should be revised. The data also suggests that placing conflict at the center of news stories, while giving equal space to each individual's or group's position on the particular subject, can actually improve the level of content diversity of news outlets. In *Expresso's* case, a lot of conflict-framed reporting was done on the various televised debates between party leaders. From an external diversity perspective, debates between party leaders, even if rowdy and quarrelsome, should be encouraged by the news media.

Another suggestion to narrow the content diversity gap between *Expresso's* online and print versions involves introducing comment sections and similar tools of author-reader interaction. In fact, *Expresso* has recently introduced a subscriber-only comment section, although it was not available during the time period considered by this report. This change clearly recognized the potential to improve content diversity and strengthen the relationship between the newspaper and its readership. Going a step further, *Expresso* could also extend the comment section features to all readers, even as it enforces strict community guidelines, maximizing the tool's impact on promoting diversity.

In general, the findings prove that the recent shift towards polarized media systems, filled in news outlets with low levels of internal diversity, is not inevitable. And that news media consumers will always have access to quality reporting, if they chose to go down that path. Elite newspapers like *Expresso* demonstrate how the pressures of online media markets do not necessarily lead to lower-quality and less diverse news output. With the populist surges in the political and social landscapes of modern democratic societies threatening stability the world over, this realization is reassuring.

Lastly, it is necessary to address some of the limitations of this report, namely in the design of its methodology and empirical sections. The first one relates to the sampling process. Simply put, the size of the print and online samples was very different. 51 print articles were compared to 393 online articles throughout the whole report. Given that *expresso* publishes its print edition weekly while updating its website daily with new content, this was somewhat inevitable. However, it remains unclear whether the content diversity scores would have been different had the report considered a larger print sample. Another limitation worth mentioning refers to the time period considered by the report. Electoral

periods have their own dynamics when compared to regular periods, and news coverage shifts accordingly. It could be that all the relevant conclusions and suggestions mentioned above only apply to electoral periods. Nevertheless, journalism's role in preserving the harmony of democratic societies is not only limited to election seasons, although it's most vital then, and so every effort to ensure more internal and external diversity in news media is worthwhile.

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Annexes

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Annex 1 – Links for Expresso’s articles

Sweden Democrats, Jimmie Akesson: <https://expresso.pt/internacional/2022-09-12-Eleicoes-na-Suecia-quem-e-Jimmie-Akesson-o-populista-de-extrema-direita-a-um-passo-do-Governo--5b500f9d> (Article published on September 12, 2022)

British royal family’s finances: <https://expresso.pt/internacional/2022-09-14-Como-esta-dividida-a-fortuna-real-britanica-avaliada-pela-revista-Forbes-em-28-mil-milhoes-de-euros--2a942f96> (Article published on September 14, 2022)

Russia-Ukraine prisoner swap: <https://expresso.pt/internacional/guerra-na-ucrania/2022-09-22-Ucrania-e-Russia-anunciaram-uma-troca-de-quase-300-prisoneiros-Quem-sao-eles--52e897e3> (Article published on September 22, 2022)

OPEC (Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries):
<https://expresso.pt/economia/2022-10-12-A-montanha-russa-do-petroleo-como-a-OPEP-tentou-controlar-o-preco-da-materia-prima-ao-longo-dos-anos-c09d3563> (Article published on October 12, 2022)

European Union directives for food labels: <https://expresso.pt/sociedade/2022-10-24-Os-EUA-vao-mudar-o-criterio-para-rotular-alimentos-como-saudaveis-sera-a-medida-mais-eficaz-para-promover-uma-alimentacao-equilibrada--9c52cc71> (Article published on October 24, 2022)

Climate activism, ‘Girl with a Pearl Earring’: <https://expresso.pt/internacional/2022-10-27-Mais-uma-obra-atacada-por-ativistas-ambientais-desta-vez-foi-Rapariga-com-Brinco-de-Perola-de-Vermeer-b775a5cc> (Article published on October 27, 2022)

Reactions to Lula da Silva’s victory in the 2022 Brazilian presidential elections:
<https://expresso.pt/internacional/brasil/eleicoes/2022-10-31-Brasil-entre-felicitacoes-e-avisos-as-primeiras-reacoes-a-vitoria-de-Lula-da-Silva-43cd6d59> (Article published on October 31, 2022)

Interview with Portuguese business owner: <https://expresso.pt/economia/2022-10-31-T-shirt-de-canhamo-tingida-com-cascas-de-cebola-ganhou-premio-de-inovacao-o-textil-portugues-esta-pronto-para-a-moda-da-sustentabilidade--d1a04ee4> (Article published on October 31, 2022)

Ukraine's military capabilities: <https://expresso.pt/internacional/guerra-na-ucrania/2022-11-08-NASAMS-quais-as-vantagens-do-sistema-de-defesa-antiaerea-que-chegou-segunda-feira-a-Ucrania--678238ce> (Article published on November 7, 2022)

Kherson's struggle: <https://expresso.pt/internacional/guerra-na-ucrania/2022-11-28-Como-Kherson-se-tenta-reerguer-restabelecer-energia-e-prioridade-mas-a-Russia-continua-a-bombardear-a-cidade-e-deixou-um-rasto-de-tortura-81768363> (Article published on November 28, 2022)

Desperate situation of Portuguese dog shelters: <https://expresso.pt/sociedade/2022-11-30-Inflacao-fez-disparar-abandono-animal-associacoes-e-centros-de-recolha-temem-rotura-58e11f1d> (Article published on November 30, 2022)

Inflation Reduction Act: <https://expresso.pt/internacional/2022-12-02-Escalada-do-protecionismo-tres-pontos-para-perceber-a-potencial-guerra-comercial-entre-a-UE-e-os-EUA-b18a930a> (Article published on December 2, 2022)

George Santos' fabricated résumé: <https://expresso.pt/internacional/2023-01-06-Quem-e-George-Santos--O-congressista-republicano-eleito-apos-inventar-quase-a-totalidade-do-seu-curriculo-641ed371> (Article published on January 6, 2023)

Public sector, covid-era restrictions: <https://expresso.pt/economia/administracao-publica/2023-01-23-Dez-meses-depois-do-fim-das-restricoes-da-covid-19-atendimento-por-marcacao-previa-ainda-e-norma-na-Administracao-Publica-043ec4b4> (Article published on January 23, 2023)

Davos meetings, lack of Labor representation: <https://expresso.pt/economia/trabalho/2023-01-26-Apenas-1-dos-oradores-em-Davos-representavam-o-sector-do-trabalho-estaraos-trabalhadores-arredados-da-discussao--4ec137c4> (Article published on January 26, 2023)

China, diplomatic thaw with the West: <https://expresso.pt/internacional/asia/2023-02-03-A-China-quer-mostrar-o-seu-lado-mais-cordial-ao-Occidente-mas-sera-que-um-balao-pode-travar-esse-processo--cc1e3d48> (Article published on February 3, 2023)

Annex 2 – Political party diversity category distribution

Table 13 Political party distribution - print

Party	Mentions	Percentage of total mentions
PS	42	19,91%
PSD	37	17,54%
CH	22	10,43%
IL	20	9,48%
BE	22	10,43%
PCP	24	11,37%
PAN	15	7,11%
L	11	5,21%
CDS	18	8,53%
other	0	0,00%
Total	211	

Note: Total articles N = 51

Table 14 Percentage of total articles in which the parties are mentioned - print

Party	Percentage of total articles in which the party is mentioned
PS	82,35%
PSD	72,55%
CH	43,14%
IL	39,22%
BE	43,14%
PCP	47,06%
PAN	29,41%
L	21,57%
CDS	35,29%
Other	0,00%

Note: Total articles N = 51

Table 15 Political party distribution - online

Party	Mentions	Percentage of total mentions
PS	255	19,69%
PSD	248	19,15%
CH	135	10,42%
IL	100	7,72%
BE	137	10,58%
PCP	136	10,50%
PAN	97	7,49%
L	69	5,33%
CDS	99	7,64%
other	19	1,47%
Total	1295	

Note: Total articles N = 393

Table 16 Percentage of total articles in which the parties are mentioned - online

Party	Percentage of total articles in which the party is mentioned
PS	64,89%
PSD	63,10%
CH	34,35%
IL	25,45%
BE	34,86%
PCP	34,61%
PAN	24,68%
L	17,56%
CDS	25,19%
Other	4,83%

Note: Total articles N = 393

Annex 3 – Actor diversity category distribution

Table 17 Actor diversity distribution - print

Actor group	Mentions	Percentage of total mentions
Party Leader	131	55,27%
Politician at the top of the electoral ticket (excluding leader)	12	5,06%
Party candidate	9	3,80%
Other party representatives	42	17,72%
Party historical figures	4	1,69%
Other Political Actors	10	4,22%
Politicians without party representation	1	0,42%
Public opinion and ordinary people	9	3,80%
Civil Society	7	2,95%
Public Agencies and Organizations	0	0,00%
Religion	0	0,00%
Judiciary, Police and the Military	2	0,84%
International Politicians	2	0,84%
Economy and Business	0	0,00%
Experts	8	3,38%
Total	237	

Note: Total articles N = 51

Table 18 Actor diversity distribution - online

Actor group	Mentions	Percentage of total mentions
Party Leader	840	56,99%
Politician at the top of the electoral ticket (excluding leader)	120	8,14%
Party candidate	54	3,66%
Other party representatives	153	10,38%
Party historical figures	44	2,99%
Other Political Actors	83	5,63%
Politicians without party representation	17	1,15%
Public opinion and ordinary people	61	4,14%
Civil Society	16	1,09%
Public Agencies and Organizations	20	1,36%
Religion	1	0,07%
Judiciary, Police and the Military	21	1,42%
International Politicians	18	1,22%
Economy and Business	5	0,34%
Experts	21	1,42%
Total	1474	

Note: Total articles N = 393

Table 19 Actors mentioned online (excluding party leaders)

Actor	Total mentions
João Oliveira (CDU)	47
Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa	38
João Ferreira (CDU)	21
Pedro Nuno Santos (PS)	20
Carlos Moedas (PSD)	15
David Justino (PSD)	11
Augusto Santos Silva (Minister of Foreign Affairs)	11
Duarte Cordeiro (PS)	9
Rui Moreira (Independent)	9
Source from National Electoral Commission	9
Ana Catarina Mendes (PS)	7
Anonymous source	7
José Silvano (PSD)	7
Antero Luís (OS)	7
Luísa Salgueiro (OS)	6
Francisca Van Dunem (Justice Minister)	6
Fernando Medina (OS)	5
Joaquim Katar Moreira (Independente)	5
Pedro Passos Coelho (Ex-prime-minister)	5
José Sócrates (Ex-prime-minister)	5
Paulo Rangel (PSD)	4
Cavaco Silva (Ex-President)	4
Source from the Interior Ministry	4
Ricardo Batista Leite (PSD)	4
Filipe Anacoreta Correia (CDS-PP)	4
Carlos Guimarães Pinto (IL)	4
Manuel Pizarro (OS)	4
Francisco Louçã (BE)	4
Luís Montenegro (PSD)	3
Bernardino Soares (CDU)	3
José Luís Carneiro (Interior Minister)	3
Manuel Marques Mendes (PSD)	3
Paulo Portas (CDS-PP)	3
António Guterres (Ex-prime-minister)	3
David Neelman	3
Ribau Esteves (PSD)	3

Note: The table includes every actor referenced in at least three online articles

Annex 4 – Topic diversity category distribution

Table 20 Topic diversity distribution - print

Topics	Mentions	Percentage of total mentions
Party politics	40	24,10%
Post-Electoral scenarios	29	17,47%
Election polls	6	3,61%
Law and Order	1	0,60%
Political party manifestos	11	6,63%
Government performance	4	2,41%
Political Endorsements	0	0,00%
Political economy	8	4,82%
Labour policy	4	2,41%
Campaign Agendas	13	7,83%
Candidate profile	12	7,23%
Fiscal policy	7	4,22%
Environmental policy	3	1,81%
Budget policy	3	1,81%
Health policy	5	3,01%
Justice Policy	2	1,20%
European Union	2	1,20%
Corruption	2	1,20%
Social issues	13	7,83%
Other	1	0,60%
Total	166	

Note: Total articles N = 51

Table 21 Topic diversity distribution - online

Topics	Mentions	Percentage of total mentions
Party politics	274	25,16%
Post-Electoral scenarios	145	13,31%
Election polls	14	1,29%
Law and Order	15	1,38%
Political party manifestos	24	2,20%
Government performance	18	1,65%
Political Endorsements	1	0,09%
Political economy	61	5,60%
Labour policy	11	1,01%
Campaign Agendas	145	13,31%
Candidate profile	53	4,87%
Fiscal policy	37	3,40%
Environmental policy	27	2,48%
Budget policy	7	0,64%
Health policy	67	6,15%
Justice Policy	14	1,29%
European Union	8	0,73%
Corruption	9	0,83%
Social issues	98	9,00%
Other	61	5,60%
Total	1089	

Note: Total articles N = 393

Table 22 Percentage of total articles in which the topics are mentioned - print

Topics	Percentage of total articles in which the topic is discussed
Party politics	78,43%
Post-Electoral scenarios	56,86%
Election polls	11,76%
Law and Order	1,96%
Political party manifestos	21,57%
Government performance	7,84%
Political Endorsements	0,00%
Political economy	15,69%
Labour policy	7,84%
Campaign Agendas	25,49%
Candidate profile	23,53%
Fiscal policy	13,73%
Environmental policy	5,88%
Budget policy	5,88%
Health policy	9,80%
Justice Policy	3,92%
European Union	3,92%
Corruption	3,92%
Social issues	25,49%
Other	1,96%

Note: Total articles N = 51

Table 23 Percentage of total articles in which the topics are mentioned - online

Topics	Percentage of total articles in which the topic is discussed
Party politics	69,72%
Post-Electoral scenarios	36,90%
Election polls	3,56%
Law and Order	3,82%
Political party manifestos	6,11%
Government performance	4,58%
Political Endorsements	0,25%
Political economy	15,52%
Labour policy	2,80%
Campaign Agendas	36,90%
Candidate profile	13,49%
Fiscal policy	9,41%
Environmental policy	6,87%
Budget policy	1,78%
Health policy	17,05%
Justice Policy	3,56%
European Union	2,04%
Corruption	2,29%
Social issues	24,94%
Other	15,52%

Note: Total articles N = 393

Annex 5 – Distribution of size of article, news-frames and evaluative tones per article

Table 24 Distribution of size of article, news frame and evaluative tone per article - print

	News frame			Size			Evaluative tone		
	Issue-based frame	Conflict/Horse Race Frame	Political Strategy frame	Short	Medium	Large	Neutral	Positive	Negative
Number of articles	14	21	16	9	14	28	36	7	8
Percentage of total articles	27,45%	41,18%	31,37%	17,65%	27,45%	54,90%	70,59%	13,73%	15,69%

Note: Total article N = 51

Table 25 Distribution of size of article, news frame and evaluative tone per article - online

	News frame			Size			Evaluative tone		
	Issue-based frame	Conflict/Horse Race Frame	Political Strategy frame	Short	Medium	Large	Neutral	Positive	Negative
Number of articles	154	122	117	101	145	147	332	19	42
Percentage of total articles	39,19%	31,04%	29,77%	25,70%	36,90%	37,40%	84,48%	4,83%	10,69%

Note: Total articles N = 393

Annex 6 – Multilevel regression results for political party, actor and topic diversity

Table 26 Multilevel regression test – political party diversity

SUMMARY OUTPUT

<i>Regression Statistics</i>	
Multiple R	0,44188589
R Square	0,19526314
Adjusted R Square	0,18234306
Standard Error	2,38111809
Observations	444

ANOVA

	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	7	599,811432	85,6873474	15,1131444	1,0301E-17
Residual	436	2471,99938	5,66972335		
Total	443	3071,81081			

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>	<i>Lower 95,0%</i>	<i>Upper 95,0%</i>
Intercept	2,56040445	0,42431523	6,03420351	3,4159E-09	1,72644687	3,39436202	1,72644687	3,39436202
Online	-0,6527762	0,36015873	-1,8124681	0,07060159	-1,3606393	0,05508692	-1,3606393	0,05508692
Medium	1,12604609	0,30096458	3,74145717	0,00020741	0,53452433	1,71756786	0,53452433	1,71756786
Large	1,76500146	0,30077126	5,86825177	8,7255E-09	1,17385966	2,35614326	1,17385966	2,35614326
Game/Conflict Frame	1,59276554	0,27965795	5,69540585	2,2661E-08	1,04312025	2,14241084	1,04312025	2,14241084
Political Strategy								
frame	-0,0513998	0,28434649	-0,1807646	0,85663634	-0,61026	0,50746046	-0,61026	0,50746046
Positive	-1,4405235	0,49188698	-2,9285661	0,00358379	-2,407288	-0,4737591	-2,407288	-0,4737591
Negative	-0,913416	0,36143924	-2,5271635	0,01185134	-1,6237959	-0,2030362	-1,6237959	-0,2030362

Table 27 Multilevel regression test – political party diversity (excluding moderating variables)

SUMMARY OUTPUT

<i>Regression Statistics</i>	
Multiple R	0,10208241
R Square	0,01042082
Adjusted R Square	0,00818195
Standard Error	2,6224751
Observations	444

ANOVA

	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	1	32,0107809	32,0107809	4,65450523	0,03151039
Residual	442	3039,80003	6,87737563		
Total	443	3071,81081			

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>	<i>Lower 95,0%</i>	<i>Upper 95,0%</i>
Intercept	4,1372549	0,36721996	11,2664215	4,6916E-26	3,41554076	4,85896904	3,41554076	4,85896904
Online	-0,8420895	0,39032062	-2,1574302	0,03151039	-1,6092044	-0,0749746	-1,6092044	-0,0749746

Table 28 Multilevel regression test – actor diversity

SUMMARY OUTPUT

<i>Regression Statistics</i>	
Multiple R	0,46146384
R Square	0,21294887
Adjusted R Square	0,20031273
Standard Error	2,1828192
Observations	444

ANOVA					
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	7	562,075189	80,2964555	16,8523646	1,0022E-19
Residual	436	2077,40905	4,76469965		
Total	443	2639,48423			

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>	<i>Lower 95,0%</i>	<i>Upper 95,0%</i>
Intercept	2,84100571	0,38897837	7,30376273	1,3409E-12	2,0764999	3,60551152	2,0764999	3,60551152
Online	-0,6844871	0,33016481	-2,073168	0,03874346	-1,3333996	-0,0355746	-1,3333996	-0,0355746
Medium	1,30936373	0,27590033	4,74578528	2,8205E-06	0,76710374	1,85162371	0,76710374	1,85162371
Large	2,36383743	0,27572311	8,57322937	1,7671E-16	1,82192576	2,90574909	1,82192576	2,90574909
Game/Conflict								
Frame	0,84124063	0,25636811	3,28137779	0,00111601	0,33736965	1,34511161	0,33736965	1,34511161
Political Strategy								
frame	0,40190503	0,26066619	1,54183794	0,12383843	-0,1104135	0,91422353	-0,1104135	0,91422353
Positive	-1,4732685	0,45092276	-3,2672303	0,00117189	-2,359521	-0,587016	-2,359521	-0,587016
Negative	-0,7741857	0,33133868	-2,3365389	0,01991529	-1,4254053	-0,1229661	-1,4254053	-0,1229661

Table 28 Multilevel regression test – actor diversity (excluding moderating variables)

SUMMARY OUTPUT

<i>Regression Statistics</i>	
Multiple R	0,11723119
R Square	0,01374315
Adjusted R Square	0,0115118
Standard Error	2,4268527
Observations	444

ANOVA

	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	1	36,2748344	36,2748344	6,15911913	0,01344424
Residual	442	2603,2094	5,88961403		
Total	443	2639,48423			

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>	<i>Lower 95,0%</i>	<i>Upper 95,0%</i>
Intercept	4,64705882	0,33982735	13,674764	9,479E-36	3,97918064	5,31493701	3,97918064	5,31493701
Online	-0,8964227	0,36120482	-2,4817573	0,01344424	-1,606315	-0,1865304	-1,606315	-0,1865304

Table 30 Multilevel regression test – topic diversity

SUMMARY OUTPUT

<i>Regression Statistics</i>	
Multiple R	0,57865004
R Square	0,33483587
Adjusted R Square	0,32415663
Standard Error	0,97541712
Observations	444

ANOVA

	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	7	208,819182	29,8313117	31,3539022	3,5783E-35
Residual	436	414,827215	0,95143857		
Total	443	623,646396			

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>	<i>Lower 95,0%</i>	<i>Upper 95,0%</i>
Intercept	1,8684119	0,17381933	10,7491609	4,5835E-24	1,52678394	2,21003985	1,52678394	2,21003985
Online	-0,2097809	0,14753783	-1,4218788	0,15577638	-0,4997547	0,08019287	-0,4997547	0,08019287
Medium	0,49290985	0,12328914	3,99799883	7,5012E-05	0,25059492	0,73522478	0,25059492	0,73522478
Large	1,12895277	0,12320995	9,16283788	1,995E-18	0,8867935	1,37111205	0,8867935	1,37111205
Game/Conflict								
Frame	0,85797491	0,11456095	7,48924384	3,879E-13	0,63281454	1,08313528	0,63281454	1,08313528
Political								
Strategy frame	0,76094115	0,1164816	6,53271559	1,8037E-10	0,5320059	0,98987639	0,5320059	0,98987639
Positive	0,25408509	0,20149987	1,26096901	0,20799433	-0,1419468	0,65011693	-0,1419468	0,65011693
Negative	0,02855633	0,14806239	0,19286687	0,84715304	-0,2624484	0,31956108	-0,2624484	0,31956108

Table 31 Multilevel regression test – topic diversity (excluding moderating variables)

SUMMARY OUTPUT

<i>Regression Statistics</i>	
Multiple R	0,13019218
R Square	0,01695
Adjusted R Square	0,01472591
Standard Error	1,17773038
Observations	444

ANOVA

	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	1	10,5708089	10,5708089	7,62107909	0,00600903
Residual	442	613,075587	1,38704884		
Total	443	623,646396			

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>	<i>Lower 95,0%</i>	<i>Upper 95,0%</i>
Intercept	3,25490196	0,16491524	19,7368174	1,2203E-62	2,93078652	3,5790174	2,93078652	3,5790174
Online	-0,4839096	0,17528954	-2,7606302	0,00600903	-0,8284141	-0,1394051	-0,8284141	-0,1394051