



**RefugeesReporting.EU**  
**Refugees and Communication Rights in Europe**

# **REFUGEES REPORTING MEDIA MONITORING**

## **TWITTER MONITORING GUIDE**

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**GMMP**  
Global Media  
Monitoring Project  
**WACC**

and through the news media.

This methodology guide is adapted with permission from the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) for use in monitoring European migration news. The original version of the guide and accompanying research instruments are available at [www.whomakesthenews.org](http://www.whomakesthenews.org). Active since 1995, the GMMP is a worldwide research and advocacy initiative for gender equality in

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# PLANNING & PREPARATION

## 1. How to select Twitter news sources

**Note: The National Coordinators are responsible for the selection of news media Twitter feeds.**

**Select only national (and if necessary, local) media house Twitter feeds.** Do not code regional and international news media Twitter feeds such as those of BBC International @BBCWorld and Al Jazeera. Where international news networks also provide local or national news of the country in which they are based, do not code the international news twitter feeds of such a provider. Restrict coding to the national and/or local news media Twitter feeds.

**Select only major Twitter news feed providers.** This means Twitter feeds that you are reasonably sure are viewed on a regular (ideally, daily) basis by a significant number of real Twitter users in your country. If you are unsure, consult with your national coordinator which Twitter news feeds to code.

**Select only Twitter feeds concerned with news.** This means that the main function of the Twitter feed selected must be to deliver news and NOT celebrity gossip, “how-to” journalism, advertising, quizzes, puzzles or other interactive components, etc. Just as you would not code editorials or letters to the editor in a newspaper, do not code reader commentary under the tweets.

The following are some guidelines for choosing reputable news Twitter feeds:

- a. Choose feeds affiliated with media houses. Although these are not always guaranteed to be of a higher quality this is often a helpful guideline for selecting reputable Twitter accounts.
- b. Look for good layout and visual design. The quality of content in Twitter news is often linked to the quality of presentation. A Twitter news source with an appealing and professional layout is likely to contain superior content to a Twitter news source that appears sloppy and haphazard.
- c. Ascertain the account really belongs to a media house. Avoid parody or impersonated accounts. A real account for instance will have the media house logo, a bio, coherent and logical tweets, regular tweets and a link back to the media house internet page.

**Select national Twitter news feeds first.** Then select regional (in-country) or local daily Twitter news feeds.

**Select Twitter accounts that reflect diversity and balance.** You should aim for a range of Twitter feeds that reflects the diversity of your media system. Consider factors such as:

Ownership: e.g. of private, state-controlled media

Political position: e.g. accounts belonging to media houses that support/oppose particular political parties, government.

Target audience: e.g. political/cultural élites, business community, mass market

Appeal: 'quality' and 'popular' accounts

Language: accounts in different official languages of your country.

**Do not code accounts belonging to:**

- Regional and international news media such as Asia News Network @asianewsnetwork and Al Jazeera @AJEnglish, @ajam, etc.
- Citizen bloggers and individuals
- Newsfeeds (that sample from numerous different sources)
- Wire services (e.g. Associated Press @AP, Reuters @Reuters, etc.)

- Specialist services that focus on a particular genre of news only (e.g. Business News Network @BNN etc.)

**Note: If necessary, seek advice – for example, from experts in the media or communication studies – to help you select the most appropriate Twitter news feeds.**

## 2. What to code

Begin selecting the tweets **after 6.30 p.m.** (your local time) on the days selected for the collection of news items, Tuesday **30 May**, Wednesday **7 June** and Monday **12 June**. Code **all tweets** time stamped 6.30 p.m. or earlier published on the above-mentioned dates. If the Twitter news feed provider you have chosen provides less than 15 tweets per day, they are not appropriate for inclusion in the monitoring.

A review of Twitter news feeds from several countries revealed that while some feeds kept up a stream of tweets throughout the day, others achieved an appreciable volume of tweets only later in the day.

If the Twitter feeds in your selection are active, meaning, tweeting at least once every hour, it is practical to begin coding earlier in the day. In advance of the monitoring day, review the Twitter feeds to be coded to assess the volume of tweets. You will then be in a position to decide when your team can begin coding. Finally code tweets tweeted between 7.00 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.

Click on the time stamp of the tweet to open the tweet in a separate screen which shows the entirety of the tweet. You can do a print screen of the tweet for later coding. When you click on the time stamp the URL is the URL which identifies the specific tweet. Copy and paste the URL so that you can access it again later.

Click on links in the tweet only for the purpose of identifying the reporters behind the story. **Don't code** anything else in the links leading outside the page and beyond the 140 characters.

Sometimes next to the story there are accompanying features such as audio or video clips. Monitor these in accordance to the guidelines on coding multimedia features.

### **Do not code:**

Retweeted content of other providers or comments published under the tweet.

Teasers under the tweet.

Comments by followers or others appearing below the tweet

Cartoons and jokes.

Advertising.

YouTube videos. Sometimes stories will link to a video on YouTube. Do not code such videos.

**Note: If you don't know whether to code something or not, code it, and attach a note to the coding sheets to describe why you were unsure.**

## 3. Practicalities

**Work with a partner**, to ensure accurate coding

**Print all information** clearly on the coding sheets.

**Use a dark pencil (not a pen)** so that you can correct mistakes and make clear photocopies.

**Check each completed coding sheet** for errors and omissions.

**Keep photocopies** of the sheets in case the originals are lost.

#### **4. Before you start coding**

For each Twitter news story you will need to provide four types of information:

- (I) about the media house to which the feed belongs
- (II) about the story. Multimedia features such as video or audio clips are considered 'stories' for this research.
- (III) about the journalist(s)/reporter(s) You may need to click on the link to identify the journalist if this information is not in the tweet.
- (IV) about the people in the story mentioned within the 140 characters
- (V) analysis of the story

In the next section of this Guide, the Twitter News Coding System details all the information required, as well as the range of possible answers. You are asked to choose a number or 'code' that corresponds to your answer, and to enter this code on the Twitter News Coding Sheet.

We suggest that first you read through the Coding System to get a general idea of what is involved. You may find it useful to study the examples annexed to this guide.

After that you should be ready to start coding!

# TWITTER NEWS CODING SYSTEM

## A. BASIC INFORMATION

Enter this information **once** for each Twitter account - in the top right-hand corner of the Twitter coding sheet.

**Monitor name:** Enter your full name, in legible letters.

**Country:** The name of your country, in English

**Twitter account description and URL:** For example. 'CNN Breaking News'

<https://twitter.com/cnnbrk>

Tweet date/time stamp: Eg: 10:07 PM - 21 May 2017

## B. STORY

Code this information **once** for each news story - on the first coding line for the story.

### 1. Tweet

Is this Tweet:

- 1 An original Tweet
- 2 A retweet\*

\*Only retweets from the same media house can be coded. Do not code retweets from other news providers

### 2. Topic

We have developed a list of possible topics, which are grouped into broad categories (Politics, Economy etc.). For each of the broad categories we suggest a number of topics to help you fit the news story into an appropriate topic area. For instance if the story is about dire living conditions in a refugee camp, you will code it 19, Living Conditions.

Within each broad category, we include a code for 'other stories'. Please use these codes **only as a last resort**.

Choose **one** topic that best describes how the story is reported. Remember that a single event can be reported in different ways. Sometimes several topics will be covered within the same story. Choose the one that is given most prominence - e.g. in terms of the amount of time or commentary devoted to it.

Politics & Governance	
1	European asylum legislation (debates, approvals, rejections, Common European Asylum System)

2	National legislation (asylum, immigration, visas, etc.)
3	Returns and deportations
4	Sanctuary
5	Integration
6	Externalisation of migration controls (partnerships with third countries, EU-Turkey deal, Valletta Summit)
7	Access to Europe (fences, closed borders, impossibility to enter, etc.)
8	Search and Rescue at sea
9	Family reunification
10	Relocation
11	Detention
12	Other stories on politics and governance (specify the topic in the 'Comments' section of coding sheet)
<b>Economy</b>	
13	Economic impact of refugees
14	Poverty, social welfare
15	Employment
16	Other stories on economy (specify the topic in the 'Comments' section of coding sheet)
<b>Social and health</b>	
17	Health
18	Education
19	Living conditions
20	Children
21	Religion
22	Popular opinion
23	Other stories on social and health (specify the topic in the 'Comments' section of coding sheet)
<b>Displacement</b>	
24	Displacement from wars, conflicts
25	Displacement due to persecution/discrimination
26	Displacement due to economic factors
27	Displacement due to climate change, disaster
28	Other stories on displacement (specify the topic in the 'Comments' section of coding sheet)
<b>Crime</b>	
29	Crime, terrorism by refugees
30	Smuggling, trafficking, danger of passage
31	Attacks, crime, discrimination against refugees
32	Child abuse, violence against children
33	Other stories on crime (specify the topic in the 'Comments' section of coding sheet)
<b>Other</b>	
34	Other (use only if no other option available – try to avoid using this code)

## C. JOURNALISTS AND REPORTERS

**Click on the link in the tweet leading to the full story to see the name of the journalist or reporter.**

For each online news story, you should code **each journalist/reporter** who wrote the story and whose name appears.

**Do not code:**

Unnamed journalists (e.g. 'Staff reporter', 'Our correspondent')

News agencies

### 3. Gender

- 0 Do not know
- 1 Female
- 2 Male
- 3 Other: transgender, transsexual

## D. PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

For each tweet, you should code:

**Any person whom the tweet is about**, even if they are not interviewed or quoted.

**Each person in the tweet who is interviewed**

**Each person in the tweet who is quoted**, either directly or indirectly\*

\* A person is **quoted directly** if their own words are printed in the tweet - e.g. 'I am disappointed and angry about the continued use of drugs in sport' said the President of the Olympic Committee.

A person is **quoted indirectly** if their words are paraphrased or summarised in the tweet - e.g. The President of the Olympic Committee today expressed anger at the incidence of drug use.

**Code individual people ONLY**

**DO NOT** code:

Groups (e.g. a group of nurses, a group of soldiers)

Organisations, companies, collectives (e.g. political parties)

Characters in novels or movies (**unless** the tweet is *about* them)

Deceased historical figures (**unless** the tweet is *about* them)

People who are simply mentioned or listed (**unless** the tweet is *about* them)

### 4. Gender

- 0 Do not know
- 1 Female
- 2 Male



3 Other (transgender, transsexual)

**5. Is there a photo or video of the person in the tweet?**

0 Do not know

1 Yes

2 No

**6. In the notes of the coding sheet describe any photographs, images, other multimedia components included in the tweet and the conclusions you draw from them**

In the notes section of the coding sheet **say what you conclude from what you read, see or hear** – What does the photo or multimedia component say to you about refugees' aspirations, roles, responsibilities and position in society? What is your reaction to the photo? Different people will come to different conclusions based on their understanding of who are refugees in their specific cultural contexts. Write down your own conclusion from your own perspective. In this column, **paste in all the hashtags (#)** contained in the tweet.

**SKIP TO QUESTION 11 IF THE PERSON IS NOT DESCRIBED OR REFERRED TO AS AN IMMIGRANT, REFUGEE, ASYLUM SEEKER, ETC.**

**7. The person is identified as:**

This question help us identify how many times people in the news are referred to as refugees, migrants, both or neither. It is useful to understand if the media you are analysing has a proper understanding of the difference of the terms implied. If the person is referred to as 'economic migrant', code 2, Migrant.

1 Refugee

2 Migrant

3 Asylum seeker

4 Illegal migrant

5 Two or more terms are used interchangeably to refer to the same person

6 None of the terms are used

**8. Region of origin**

Please specify the region where the person is identified as coming from. **If the specific country is named, please write it down (in English) in the comments section of the sheet.** If you are uncertain about the region of origin, please consult with your National Coordinator.

<b>0</b> Do not know / Not specified	<b>7</b> Rest of Asia (Bangladesh, India, Vietnam, China, etc.)
<b>1</b> Middle East (Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, Iran, Palestine, Yemen, etc.)	<b>8</b> Eastern Europe (Turkey, Russia, Kosovo, Albania, Serbia, Ukraine, etc.)
<b>2</b> North Africa (Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, Algeria, etc.)	<b>9</b> Central or South America
<b>3</b> Eastern Africa (Somalia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan, etc.)	<b>10</b> North America
<b>4</b> Western Africa (Gambia, Mali, Nigeria, Guinea, Senegal, Ghana, Niger, Ivory Coast, etc.)	<b>11</b> Oceania
<b>5</b> Central and Southern Africa (DR Congo, Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, South Africa, etc.)	<b>12</b> Central, Southern and Western Europe (Germany, UK, Italy, etc.)
<b>6</b> Central Asia (Afghanistan, Pakistan, Georgia, etc.)	

**9. Is the person mentioned alive or dead?**

- 0** Do not know/Unclear
- 1** Alive
- 2** Dead

**10. Religion**

Code this if the religion is explicitly mentioned or clearly implied in the article. Do not make guesses based on someone's country of origin. If the person comes from a Middle Eastern Muslim majority country but is not explicitly identified as being Muslim, code 0, not mentioned. However, if the person is said to observe a well-known religious festivity, eg. Ramadan, code 6, Muslim.

- 0** Not mentioned
- 1** Atheist or no religious affiliation
- 2** Buddhist
- 3** Christian
- 4** Hindu
- 5** Jewish
- 6** Muslim
- 7** Other

## E. ANALYSIS

When and how do refugees become newsmakers? To what extent does the news increase public understanding of displacement issues and reasons for fleeing one's country? Are refugees negatively stereotyped or portrayed in an egalitarian light? These are the questions addressed in the final part of the coding.

Code this information **once** for each tweet - on the first coding line for the story - in columns 11 to 14.

**11. Is the tweet about an individual refugee/migrant of a group of refugees/migrants?**

- 0 Do not know/Not specified
- 1 Individual
- 2 Group

**12. This tweet clearly challenges negative stereotypes about migrants/refugees:**

Tweets that challenge stereotypes include those that overturn common assumptions about refugees in relation to their host societies, their expertise or competence, their interests, their contributions, etc. For example, a tweet which portrays refugees as proper agents of their future and not passive recipients of aid can challenge a negative stereotype. While some stereotypes are common across countries, you will know your national and local context best, so you will be best placed to identify which tweets are challenging a commonly held stereotype.

If you are unsure, or cannot decide whether or not the tweet clearly challenges stereotypes, code 0.

**This tweet clearly challenges negative stereotypes about migrants/refugees**

- 0 Do not know, cannot decide
- 1 Agree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neither agree nor disagree

**13. This tweet clearly promotes negative stereotypes about refugees/migrants**

Stories that promote negative stereotypes include, for example, those that portray refugees and migrants as a burden to host countries, as dependent on aid and benefits, as passive recipients of kind actions from good-natured residents. While some stereotypes are common across countries, you will know your national and local context best, so you will be best placed to identify which tweets are challenging a commonly held stereotype.

**This tweet clearly promotes negative stereotypes.**

- 0 Do not know, cannot decide
- 1 Agree
- 2 Disagree.
- 3 Neither agree nor disagree.

**14. Does this tweet warrant further analysis**

We intend to make a detailed analysis of some of the news tweets. The national coordinator will be responsible for this analysis. But we need *your* help in identifying suitable samples. We want to draw attention to certain tendencies or patterns in news coverage – from the worst to the best.

For example:

- (i) a tweet which illustrates journalism that CLEARLY CHALLENGES negative stereotypes about refugees/migrants
- (ii) a tweet which illustrates journalism that CLEARLY REINFORCES negative stereotypes about refugees/migrants
- (iii) a tweet that illustrates a missed opportunity to create better understanding about and/or response to refugees/migrants

In the 140 characters of the tweet, what words, descriptors or terminology are used to describe refugees/migrants? How would you describe the tone of the tweet with regard to refugees/migrants? Is it sensitive, fair, accurate, objective and balanced?

Considering these sample questions, do you think that this particular tweet would be a useful example to analyse in more detail?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

**Remember: When you find a tweet that you think would be useful for further analysis, you will need to send the text to your national coordinator. Cut and paste the tweet text in the comments section of the coding grid.**