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Spotlight Humanitarian Crises

Media coverage 2022 on
Lebanon, Bangladesh and **South Sudan**

Photo: Johanniter / Colas Lemair

Photo: Help – Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe/Simaitis

Photo: Johanniter / Naba'a

Why did we conduct this study?

The start of the Ukraine war in February 2022 has abruptly brought the country into the media spotlight and continues to generate a high level of media interest. But what about crises that occur outside of our continent? How intensively do German media report on humanitarian emergencies that occur not only geographically, but also in relation to the reality of our lives on the other side of the world.

Media reports have a major influence on how strongly a crisis is perceived as such and how present it is in public discourse. Furthermore, the amount of donations for countries affected by crises is also related to their media attention. The higher the media attention, the higher the donation income.

The aim of the present study is therefore to examine the media coverage of the three focus countries Lebanon, Bangladesh and South Sudan via the campaign #InDenFokus in more detail and to provide information about their structure, temporal dynamics and content. Ukraine was also considered as an analogue country.

The evaluation is divided into three chapters:

#01 General media presence
#02 Stories & Actors
#03 Media Reports & Google Searches

What is the database?

The data basis of our study is represented by all articles published in 2022 from German online media in which one of the three focus countries and/or Ukraine is mentioned in at least two places in the media report. Accordingly, the investigation period extends from Jan 1 to Dec 31 2022. For chapter #01, contribution figures were also collected for some other comparison countries, but these are only shown in selected graphs.

How did we proceed?

The study is based on a hybrid research approach that combines methods of classical media resonance analysis with artificial intelligence (AI). In the case of the former, certain topics are defined in advance – in this case, crisis issues such as natural disasters, wars or famine. With this confirmatory approach, the presence of an issue-relevant topic can be specifically queried in the database. AI, on the other hand, is used as an explorative technique to identify open-ended entities and topics. This is a big data strategy that takes into account thousands of relevant text passages. The corresponding topic model then represents an optimal topic model for all these texts.

"The hybrid research approach outlined here combines the best of both worlds. Thus, the AI has shown many topics that surprised us. We probably wouldn't have looked for German influencer Fynn Kliemann or the Pope's knee problems in the context of the topic of forgotten crises. This is where topic modeling broadened our understanding, because these stories led to reporting on the focus countries."

A detailed overview of the methodological approach can be found on page 44 of the report.

– Sara Schiesberg & Jennifer Selig, pressrelations GmbH

Around 10,000 crisis-related articles were published on Libanon, Bangladesch and South Sudan in 2022 – around 1.5 Million articles reported on Ukraine.

Photo: Johanniter / Colas Lemair

Key Takeaways

There are major differences in the intensity of reporting between the three focus countries and Ukraine: While around 10,000 crisis-related articles* were published in German online media on the focus countries Lebanon, Bangladesh and South Sudan last year, around 1.5 million crisis-related articles reported on Ukraine. Unlike the focus countries, Ukraine is not being forgotten due to the high volume of reports. The focus countries and other forgotten crises around the world also need that kind of attention, so that the millions of people who depend on humanitarian aid receive the media attention they need.

Based on the data structure of the time period, it becomes obvious that there is only a selective and not a constant media interest in the focus countries. This temporary dynamic is the result of event-oriented reporting driven by agency reports. The publication of a relevant agency report is usually followed by a steep increase in the frequency of contributions. In the case of the focus countries, however, this is followed by an equally steep decline. This means that in the days following the publication of the agency report, there will be no conspicuous editorial review of the new topics.

Crises often only come into the media focus due to external factors: For example, a large part of the media mentions of the focus country South Sudan resulted from reports about the postponement of the Pope's Africa trip due to knee problems.

Crisis events in the focus countries do not lead to a significant increase in search interest or Google Searches among the population in Germany. Overall, the interest of the population in Germany in the focus countries is negligible compared to Ukraine. In this regard, the Google search queries show a similar data structure to the media reports.

The topic of *donations* is present neither in the reporting on the three focus countries nor on Ukraine. The largest share of topics here is found in reporting on South Sudan: 7.2 per cent of the articles that reported on South Sudan addressed the topic of donations.

*Multiple entries of countries and topics in the crisis-related contributions were possible here
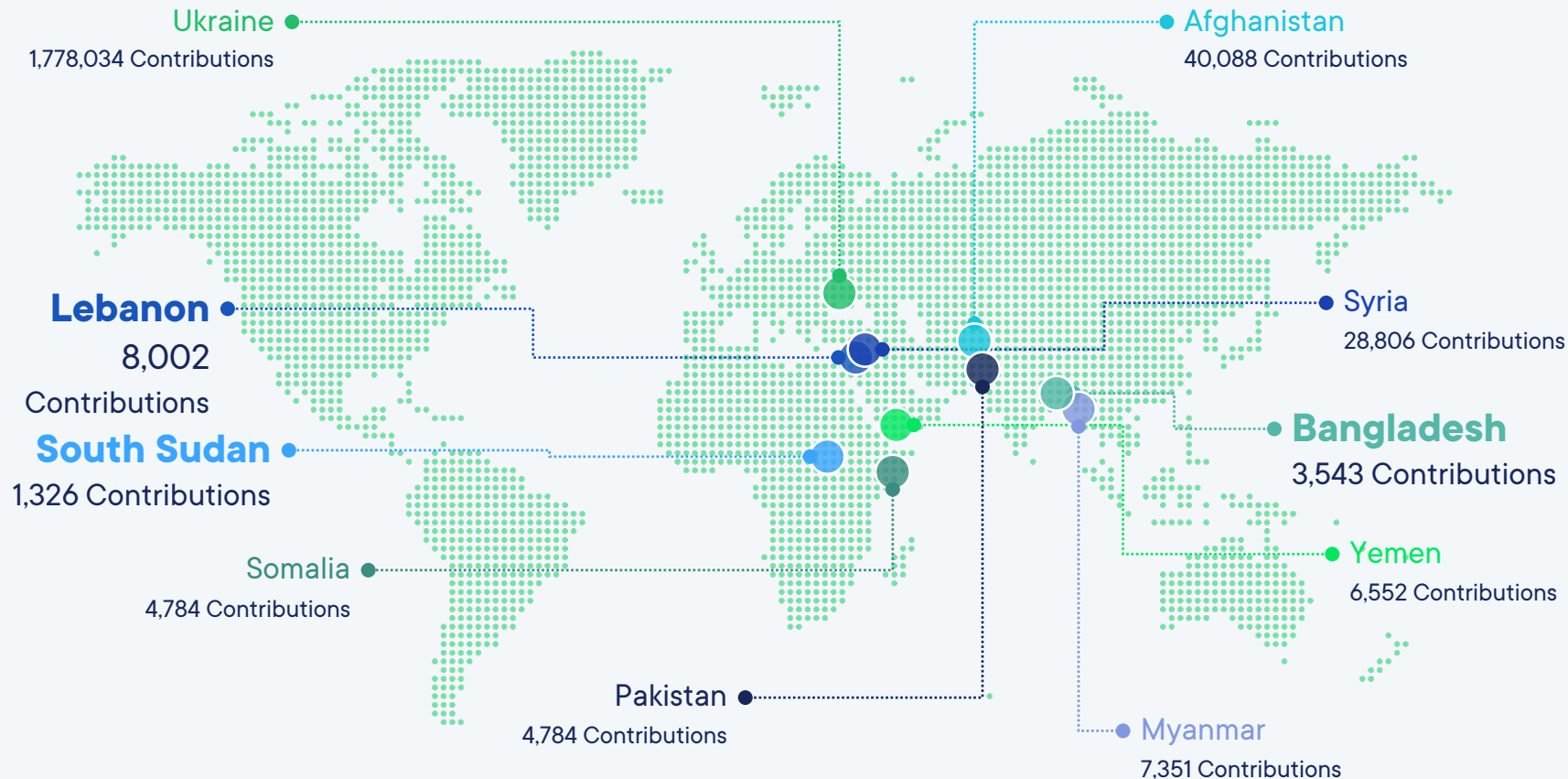
#01

General Media Presence

How intensively are crises in individual countries reported? What or which topics are reported on in connection with the individual countries?

Photo: World Vision/Himaloy Joseph Mree

Media resonance of individual countries & share of crisis topics in reporting in Germany in 2022

Total number of contribution of individual countries | by contributions

Ukraine
1,778,034 Contributions

Afghanistan
40,088 Contributions

Lebanon
8,002 Contributions

South Sudan
1,326 Contributions

Syria
28,806 Contributions

Bangladesh
3,543 Contributions

Somalia
4,784 Contributions

Yemen
6,552 Contributions

Pakistan
4,784 Contributions

Myanmar
7,351 Contributions

In order to get an overview of the intensity of the reporting on the focus countries and to be able to classify them in a larger context, the media presence in German online media was surveyed for a total of 34 countries. The selection of the comparison countries is based, among other things, on the report Global Humanitarian Overview 2022 (Update 12|22) and Global Humanitarian Overview 2023, which is presented by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). The report shows OCHA's annual assessment of global humanitarian needs and resources. The aim is to provide an overview of humanitarian and financial needs, to launch calls for funding and to make the voices of the globally affected people heard.

The chart on the right shows the media response for the focus and comparison countries. Last year, for example, Lebanon was reported in 8,002 articles from German online media.

In addition to the total number of articles on the individual countries, it was also surveyed how many of these media reports addressed at least one of the crisis topics we had defined in advance – including, for example, the number of media reports that we had defined in advance. Natural disasters, wars and political conflicts, or humanitarian crises and aid in general.

The results clearly show how present crisis topics are within the reporting on the focus countries as well as on Ukraine and the other comparison countries. The highest proportion of crisis topics among the focus countries
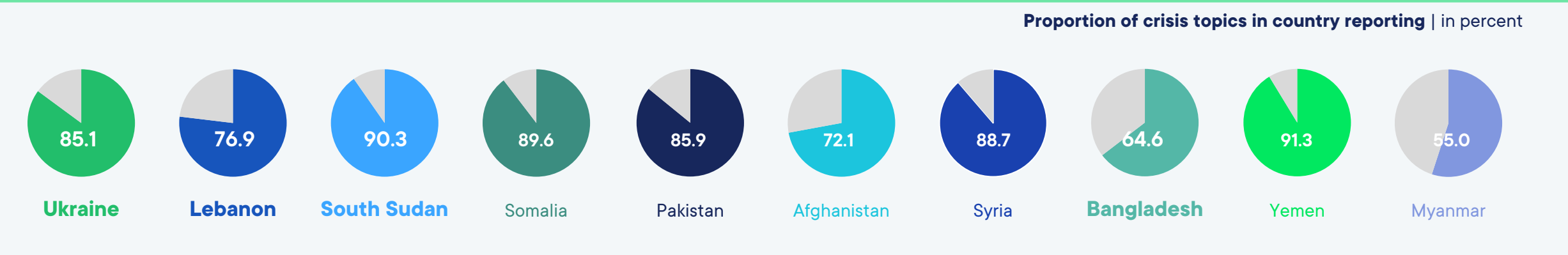
South Sudan has 90.3 percent – in other words, nine out of ten articles reporting on South Sudan also address at least one of the defined crisis topics.

The overall overview of all the countries examined in the present study (page 9) clearly shows a few outliers with comparatively high (crisis-related) contributions: Afghanistan and Syria with around 40,000 and 29,000 contributions respectively last year and a crisis topic share of 72.1 and 88.7 percent of reporting, respectively.

In addition to the focus country South Sudan and Syria, Yemen (91.3%), Somalia (89.6%) and Libya (86.9%) have the highest proportions of crisis topics in the reporting in the country comparison presented here.
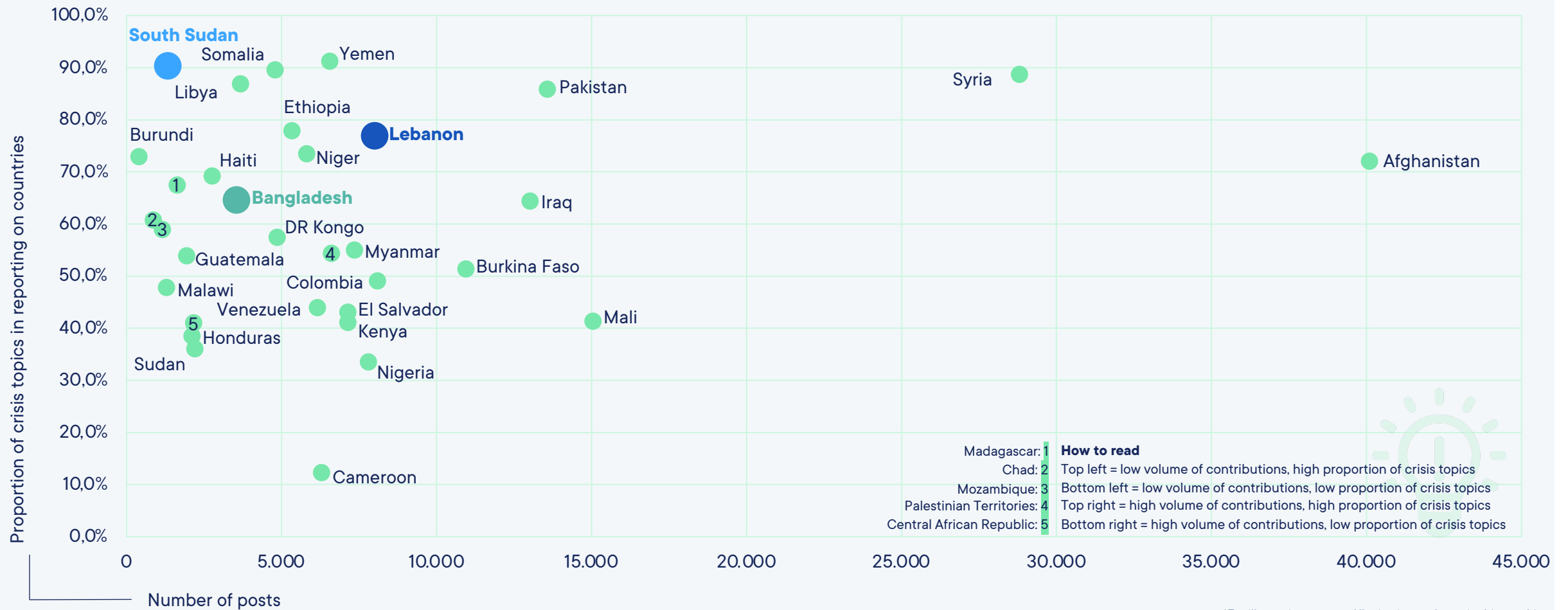
On the other hand, Cameroon (12.3%), Nigeria (33.6%) and Sudan (36.1%) have the lowest proportions of crisis issues. However, this does not suggest that there are no crises or people in need here, only that they are not addressed in the media – they become forgotten crises.

In addition to the focus country South Sudan, Syria, Yemen, Somalia and Libya have the highest proportions of crisis-related articles.

Proportion of crisis topics in country reporting | in percent

85.1	76.9	90.3	89.6	85.9	72.1	88.7	64.6	91.3	55.0
Ukraine	**Lebanon**	**South Sudan**	Somalia	Pakistan	Afghanistan	Syria	**Bangladesh**	Yemen	Myanmar

Media resonance of individual countries & share of crisis topics in reporting in Germany in 2022

Media response 2022 & share of crisis topics* | by contributions & in percent

Proportion of crisis topics in reporting on countries

Number of posts

Madagascar: 1
Chad: 2
Mozambique: 3
Palestinian Territories: 4
Central African Republic: 5

How to read
Top left = low volume of contributions, high proportion of crisis topics
Bottom left = low volume of contributions, low proportion of crisis topics
Top right = high volume of contributions, high proportion of crisis topics
Bottom right = high volume of contributions, low proportion of crisis topics

*For illustrative reasons, Ukraine is not shown in this graphic.

Crisis topics in reporting

The chart below shows the relationship between the respective overall reporting coverage of the focus countries, as well as Ukraine and the crisis-related contributions. There are very large differences in the intensity of reporting: While a total of 12,843 articles from German online media reported on the three focus countries last year, reporting on Ukraine comprised around 1.8 million
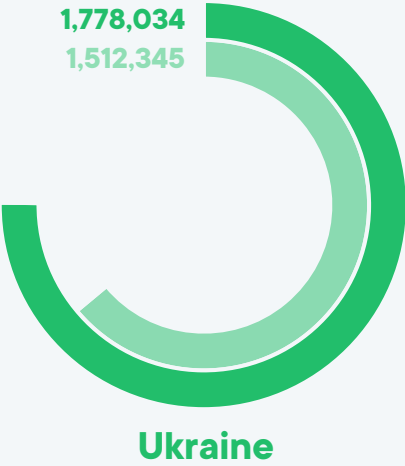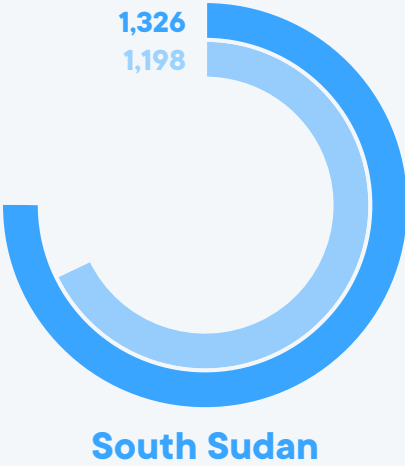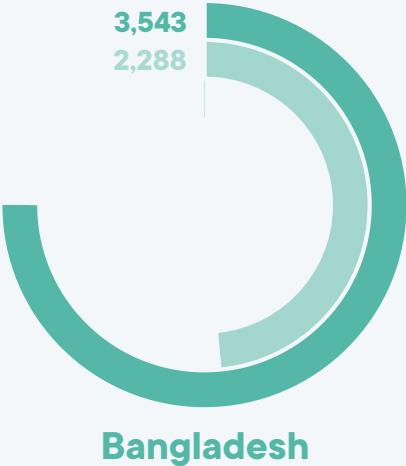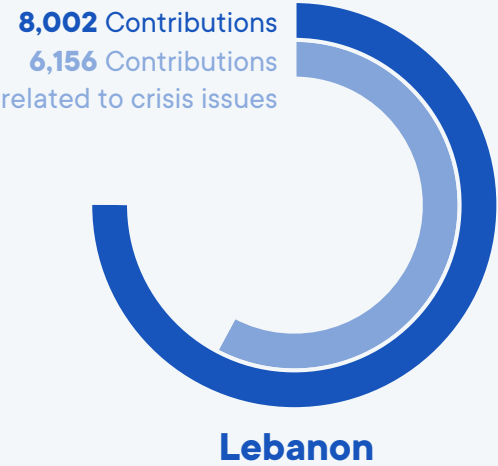
articles. Ukraine's reporting volume is thus approximately 140 times higher than that of all focus countries.

Furthermore, an average of 75 per cent of the contributions to the focus countries addressed at least one of the defined crisis topics* (Lebanon:

76.9%, Bangladesh: 64.6%, South Sudan: 90.3%); in the case of Ukraine, these media reports account for 85.1 percent of total coverage.

In 2022, a total of 12,843 articles were published in German online media on the three focus countries.

Total number of contributions & crisis-related contributions by country | by posts

8,002 Contributions
6,156 Contributions related to crisis issues

3,543
2,288

1,326
1,198

1,778,034
1,512,345

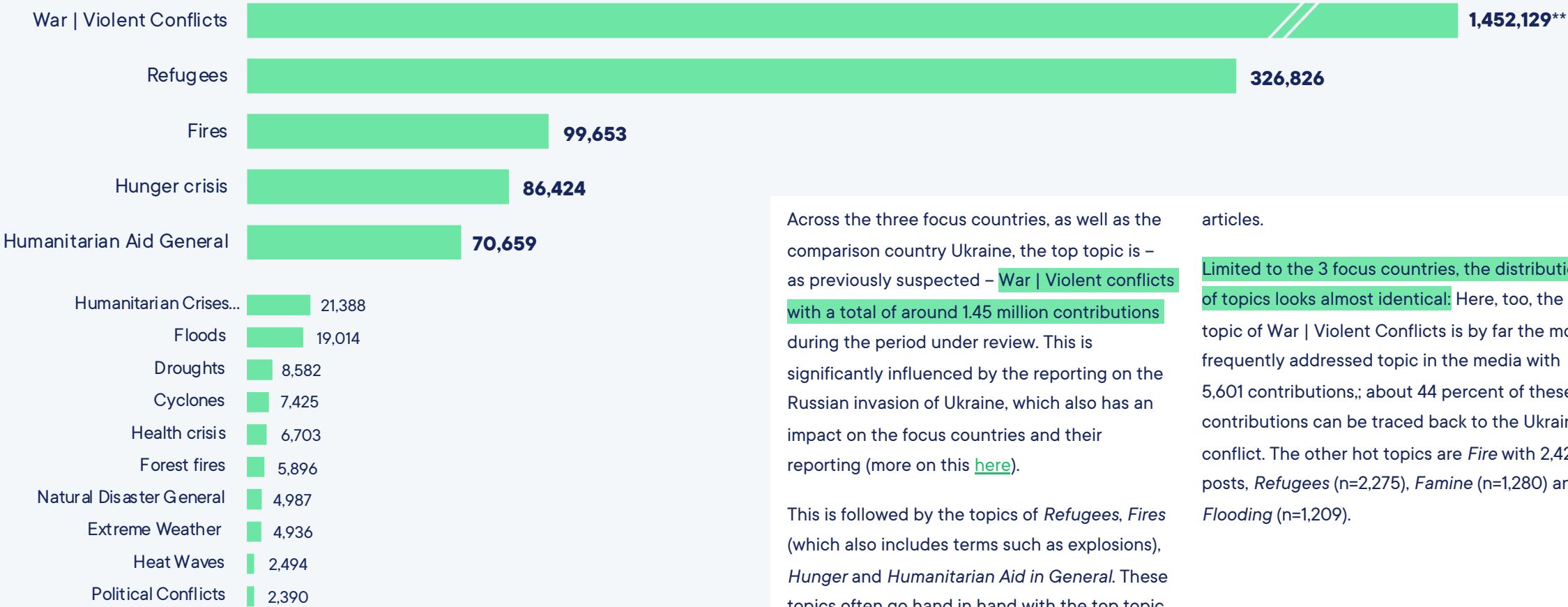**Lebanon**

Bangladesh

South Sudan

Ukraine

*Multiple answers of countries and topics possible

The most prominent topic in the reporting on Lebanon, Bangladesh and South Sudan: War|*Violent conflicts*.

Photo: Johanniter / Paul Hahn

Crisis topics in reporting

Crisis topics in reporting | Total by entries*

Topic	Value
War | Violent Conflicts	1,452,129**
Refugees	326,826
Fires	99,653
Hunger crisis	86,424
Humanitarian Aid General	70,659
Humanitarian Crises...	21,388
Floods	19,014
Droughts	8,582
Cyclones	7,425
Health crisis	6,703
Forest fires	5,896
Natural Disaster General	4,987
Extreme Weather	4,936
Heat Waves	2,494
Political Conflicts	2,390

*Shown are all crisis topics with more than 2,000 mentions in the evaluation period | **Data cut at 400,000 posts.

Across the three focus countries, as well as the comparison country Ukraine, the top topic is – as previously suspected – War | Violent conflicts with a total of around 1.45 million contributions during the period under review. This is significantly influenced by the reporting on the Russian invasion of Ukraine, which also has an impact on the focus countries and their reporting (more on this here).

This is followed by the topics of *Refugees*, *Fires* (which also includes terms such as explosions), *Hunger* and *Humanitarian Aid in General*. These topics often go hand in hand with the top topic and are increasingly mentioned together in articles.

Limited to the 3 focus countries, the distribution of topics looks almost identical: Here, too, the topic of War | Violent Conflicts is by far the most frequently addressed topic in the media with 5,601 contributions,; about 44 percent of these contributions can be traced back to the Ukraine conflict. The other hot topics are *Fire* with 2,421 posts, *Refugees* (n=2,275), *Famine* (n=1,280) and *Flooding* (n=1,209).

72.9%

of crisis-related contributions on Lebanon address the theme of war | Violent conflicts

The topic is also very present in the articles on South Sudan. Furthermore, the topics of refugees, hunger and humanitarian aid are increasingly being discussed.

In the reporting on Bangladesh, on the other hand, the topic of Floods is the most present in the media.

Distribution of topics in connection with the focus countries and Ukraine*

Proportion of crisis topics in the respective country reporting | in percent

	Lebanon	Bangladesh	South Sudan	Ukraine
Wars | Violent Conflicts	72.9%	18.6%	57.3%	95.7%
Refugees	18.3%	28.5%	41.5%	21.5%
Fires	29.0%	26.9%	1.8%	6.4%
Hunger crisis	12.5%	6.9%	29.5%	5.6%
Humanitarian aid in general	3.7%	3.5%	25.4%	4.6%
Humanitarian crises in general	0.2%	0.1%	2.9%	1.4%
Floods	2.4%	34.1%	23.6%	1.2%
Droughts	3.3%	2.0%	22.1%	0.5%
Cyclones	0.2%	12.0%	0.2%	0.5%
Health Crises	2.6%	1.7%	2.7%	0.4%
Forest Fires	0.3%	1.0%	0.3%	0.4%
Natural disaster in general	0.5%	3.0%	0.6%	0.3%
Extreme weather	0.3%	19.8%	0.4%	0.3%
Heat waves	0.0%	2.4%	0.0%	0.2%
Political conflicts	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%

*Multiple answers of the topics within one contribution are possible.

Crisis topics: What did the media report on in 2022?

As the distribution of crisis issues shows, 72.9 percent of crisis-related contributions to Lebanon address the issue of War | Violent Conflicts. A large part of these articles can be traced back to the effects of the Ukraine conflict. In this context, e.g. At the beginning of August, there was more media talk about the grain freighter Razoni, which was the first freighter to leave the Ukrainian port of Odessa after the grain blockade and was to dock in the port of Tripoli in Lebanon. Lebanon imported its wheat almost exclusively from Russia and Ukraine; Consequently, the sanctions imposed on Russia have hit the country particularly hard. The issue of the hunger crisis, which is addressed in 12.5 percent of the crisis-related articles on Lebanon, is also frequently mentioned in this context.

Apart from the Ukraine conflict, the agreement between Lebanon and Israel on a common maritime border in the Mediterranean was reported in October. The agreement between the hostile states stipulates, among other things,

the development of natural gas deposits.

Furthermore, 29.0 percent of crisis-related media reports in Lebanon address the topic of Fire. Thematically, these contributions can be traced back to renewed mentions of the explosion in the port of Beirut in 2020, which were published in February and May 2022, among others.

In the reporting on Bangladesh, the topic of Flooding is the most present in the media. Especially in June, there are more reports of continuous and monsoon rains, which have led to severe flooding in parts of Bangladesh and India. In October, tropical storm Sitrang also raged across the country. As a result of the extreme weather events, many people lost their lives; millions had to be evacuated.

In the context of the topic of refugees, the crisis-related articles on Bangladesh often report on the Rohingya who fled Myanmar, who are still living in refugee camps in Bangladesh five years after the start of the displacement.

The top topic of crisis-related articles on Lebanon and South Sudan is *War | Violent conflicts*; regarding Bangladesh it is *flooding*.

At the beginning of June, there was also a major fire at a container depot in Sitakunda in southeastern Bangladesh. This results, among other things, in the 26.9 percent of crisis-related articles on the subject of Fire.

The 57.3 per cent of crisis-related contributions to South Sudan are on the subject of War | Violent conflicts can be attributed, among other things, to the reporting in June around the

postponement of the Pope's Africa trip. The visit to the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan should have taken place at the beginning of July*. In this context, the two African countries are discussed as states in which violent and persistent conflicts as well as refugee misery prevail.

Furthermore, media reports in July informed that the US does not want to continue to accompany the peace processes in South Sudan. However, it was stressed that the United States will continue to provide humanitarian assistance.

*The Pope finally made up for the trip from 31.01. to 05.02.2023.

#02

Stories & Actors

What does the coverage look like over time?
What events are driving the coverage?
Which actors are involved and how strongly are they represented?
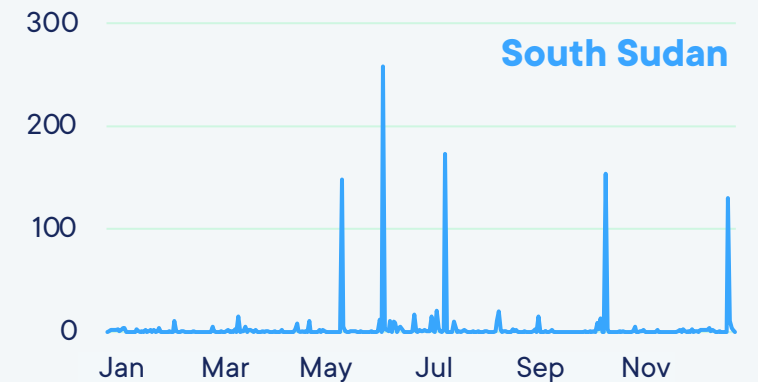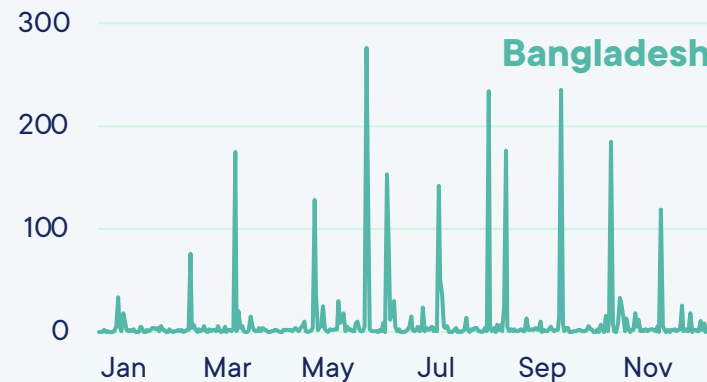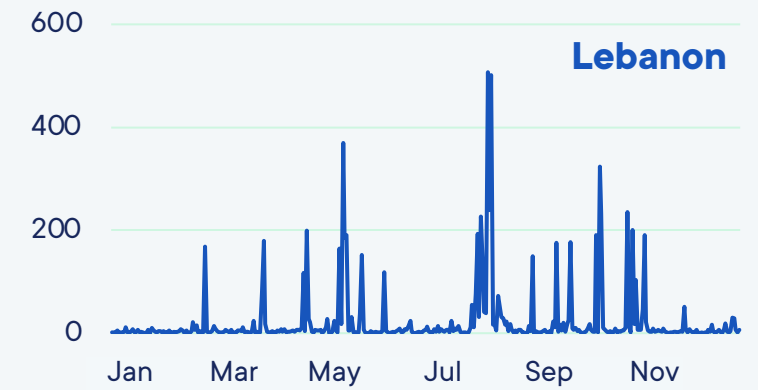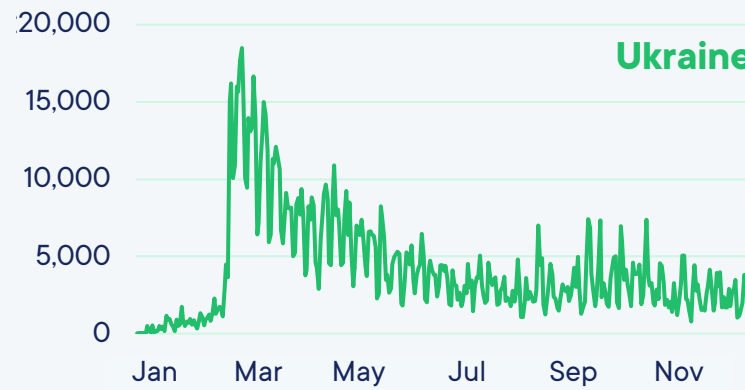
Photo: Johanniter / MAPs

Reporting over time in 2022

Ukraine abruptly became the focus of media attention with the Russian attack in spring 2022. From then on, a data structure can be observed over time that can only be seen with constant media interest. The fluctuations contained are due to a normal medial weekly cycle. For example, the number of articles on Sundays is usually low and increases again on Mondays.

The temporal dynamics of the media reporting about Lebanon, Bangladesh and South Sudan are very different. Larger quantities of articles are only available for a few days, which can be seen as clear peaks over time. It is not possible to maintain constant media interest in the focus countries; on most days in 2022, no or very few media reports were published.
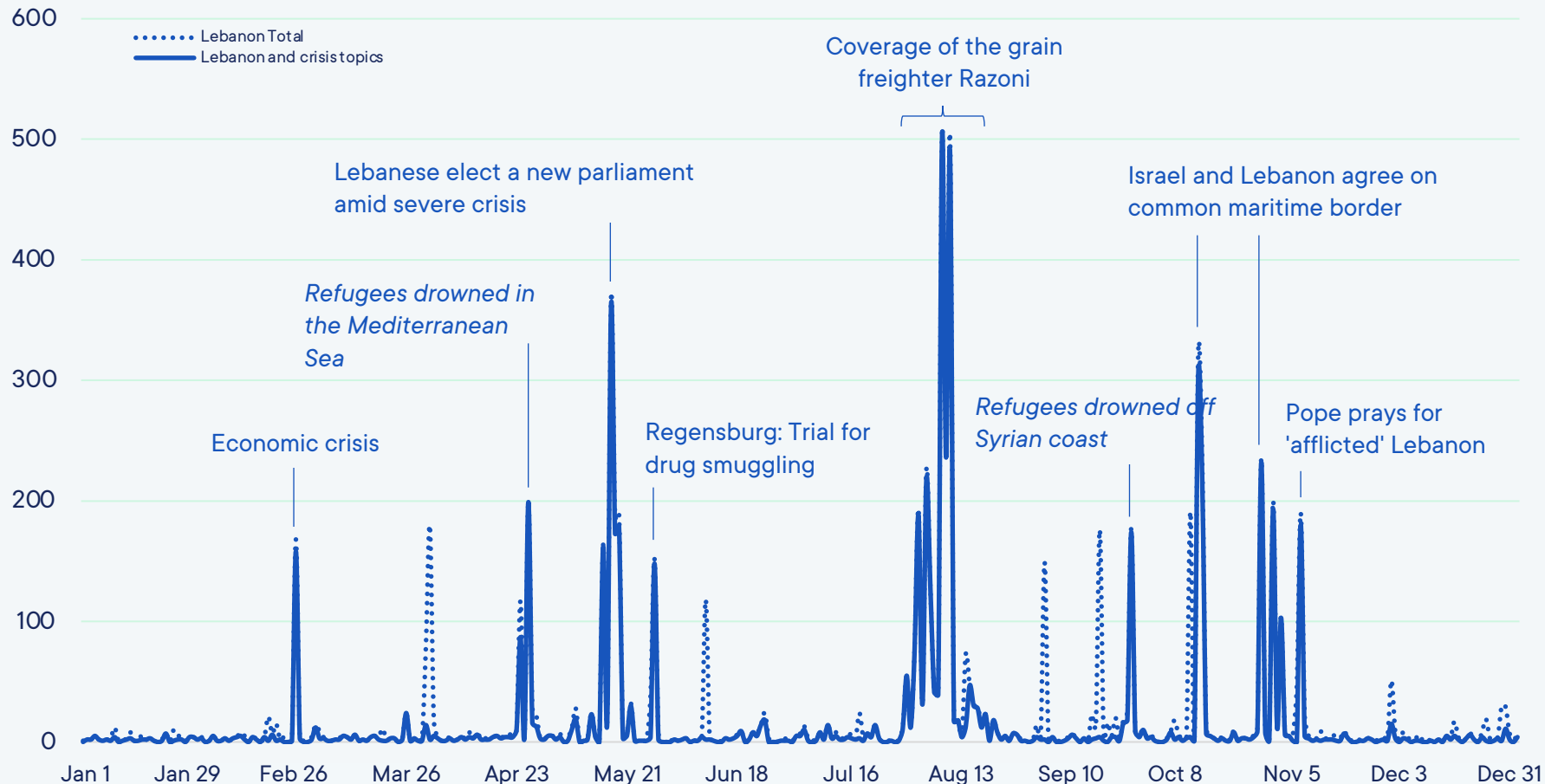
The data structure of the individual peaks is the result of a news situation driven by agency reports. In the field of media analysis, such initiations are a well-known phenomenon. The publication of a relevant agency report is often accompanied by a steep rise in article frequencies. Typically, however, the graph does not fall steeply, as can be seen here, but rather flatters, because the new topic will be subject to editorial processing in the following days.

It is striking that this data structure is not observed in the articles with a mention of the focus countries.

Lebanon over time in 2022

Total contributions over time | by posts

······· Lebanon Total
——— Lebanon and crisis topics

Coverage of the grain freighter Razoni

Lebanese elect a new parliament amid severe crisis

Israel and Lebanon agree on common maritime border

Refugees drowned in the Mediterranean Sea

Refugees drowned off Syrian coast

Economic crisis

Regensburg: Trial for drug smuggling

Pope prays for 'afflicted' Lebanon

Data basis: n=8,002 contributions on Lebanon

The selective interest in the focus countries is due to reporting driven by agency reports. Such an agency report made headlines about the economic crisis in Lebanon in February 2022. In April and September, on the other hand, agency reports were published reporting on the deaths of refugees in the Mediterranean. These reports can be seen as clear peaks over time.

The coverage of the elections in Lebanon attracted a comparatively high level of media attention. Only a short time later, the agency report on the drug smuggling trial in Regensburg initiated many contributions.

However, the highest media response has been recorded for the reporting on the Ukrainian grain freighter Razoni. The Razoni is mentioned in connection with Lebanon because its cargo was actually destined for Lebanon.

Lebanon: AI-Identified Issues

AI-Identified Topics | by posts & number of text fragments

Grain carrier Razoni
Economic & Financial Crisis | Domestic policy
Foreign Policy | International
Explosion in the port of Beirut
Health | Women
Political system
Opposition | Protest | Escape
Pope
Banks
Organized crime in Germany

0   2,000   4,000   6,000

● Number of posts   ● Number of text fragments

💡 On the one hand, the graph on the left shows the number of articles in which a topic occurs. However, a post can report on a topic in several text fragments. The sum of all relevant text passages is therefore also shown as a measure of the intensity of reporting.

Lebanon was mentioned in 2022 particularly in connection with the odyssey of the Razoni. The Razoni was the first ship to leave Ukraine after the Russian blockade. So, the trigger for this story is not events in Lebanon itself, but the war in Ukraine.

The high level of media interest in the Ukrainian grain freighter can also be seen against the background that the Russian blockade has also led to an increase in grain prices in Germany. The coverage of the economic and financial crisis is closely linked to the dispute over Lebanon's political leadership, which is sometimes referred to as the "government mafia". The coverage around the elections is also dominated by the crisis. The effects of the crisis – the collapse of the infrastructure – are described very vividly.

In the articles on the elections in Lebanon, the retrospectives of the devastating explosion in the port of Beirut are a recurring element. Furthermore, the political system of Lebanon is described in these articles with a very uniform wording, which the AI recognizes as its own narrative. Thus, this is a fragile balance between the denominations. Christians, Sunnis and Shiites share the most important posts.

In the thematic complex Opposition | Protest | Flight, text passages can be found that report on the entry of the opposition protest movement into parliament. It has set itself the goal of breaking the parties' monopoly on power. In addition, the survivor of a capsized refugee boat also has his say with the statement that life in Lebanon has become "unbearable".

As a result of the economic and financial crisis, Lebanese banks partially froze their customers' money. This led not only to protests in front of the banks, but also to robberies and extortion. Through these actions, people tried to regain their own savings.

Closer look: Political system

Lebanon's infrastructure, which has deteriorated drastically in the wake of the economic crisis, has made it more difficult for large parts of the population to access clean drinking water: The WHO drew attention to the resulting cholera outbreaks in 2022. The reports on cholera are based on the thematic model in the Health | Women. The reason for this is the many reports on a study that covers both aspects. This is a study on female genital mutilation published by researchers from Lebanon. The researchers point out that genital mutilation is an extreme form of gender inequality that has lifelong health and economic consequences for women and girls. In the thematic block Health | Women the scientist Najat Aoun Saliba, who ran for Lebanese parliament, also played an important role

Closer look: Health | Women

The topic of Foreign Policy | International Affairs are dominated above all by the conflict between Lebanon and Israel. This conflict was reported in 2022 particularly in connection with the maritime border agreement. A smaller story that can also be included in the topic of Foreign Policy | International is represented by the reports on former Nissan CEO Carlos Ghosn. Ghosn, who is wanted by an international arrest warrant, was in Lebanon after a spectacular escape. Lebanon is also frequently mentioned in connection with organized crime in Germany. In 2022, the Regensburg trial of drug smuggling is the most important story in this thematic block.
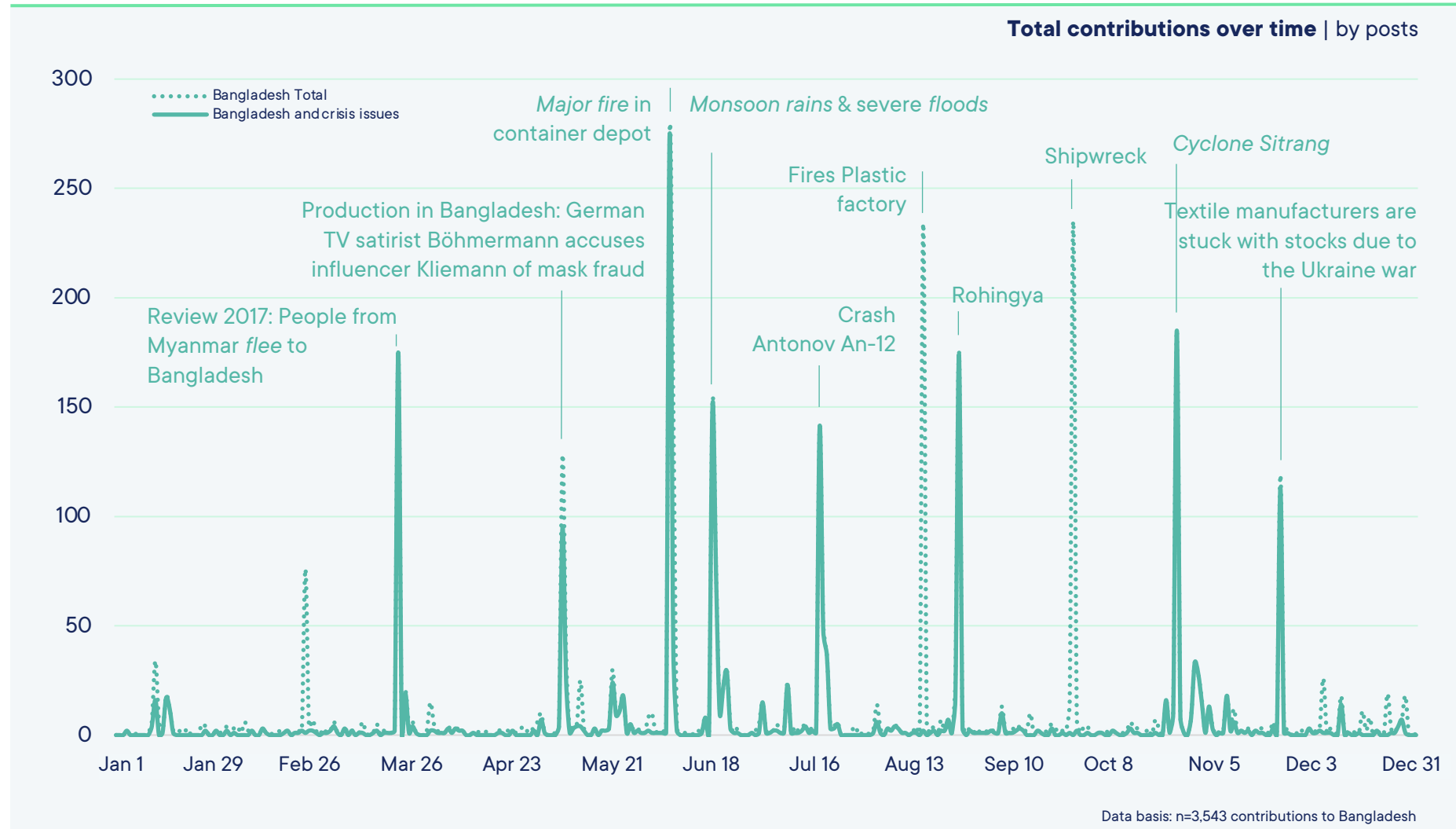
Bangladesh over time 2022

The reporting on the focus country Bangladesh also takes place only very selectively and is essentially characterized by agency reports.

Incidents include reports on the Rohingya, which triggered high contributions in March and August. Bangladesh was also frequently mentioned in May in the wake of the face mask scandal involving Jan Böhmermann and Fynn Kliemann.

In 2022, Bangladesh was hit by two natural disasters: severe flooding caused by monsoon rains and tropical storm Sitrang.

The major fire at a container depot in Dhaka was a devastating catastrophe that suddenly attracted media attention from the focus country. In addition, there was a fire in a plastic factory in August and a shipwreck in September.

Total contributions over time | by posts

Legend:
- Bangladesh Total
- Bangladesh and crisis issues

Chart annotations:
- Review 2017: People from Myanmar *flee* to Bangladesh
- Production in Bangladesh: German TV satirist Böhmermann accuses influencer Kliemann of mask fraud
- *Major fire* in container depot
- *Monsoon rains* & severe *floods*
- Fires Plastic factory
- Crash Antonov An-12
- Rohingya
- Shipwreck
- *Cyclone Sitrang*
- Textile manufacturers are stuck with stocks due to the Ukraine war

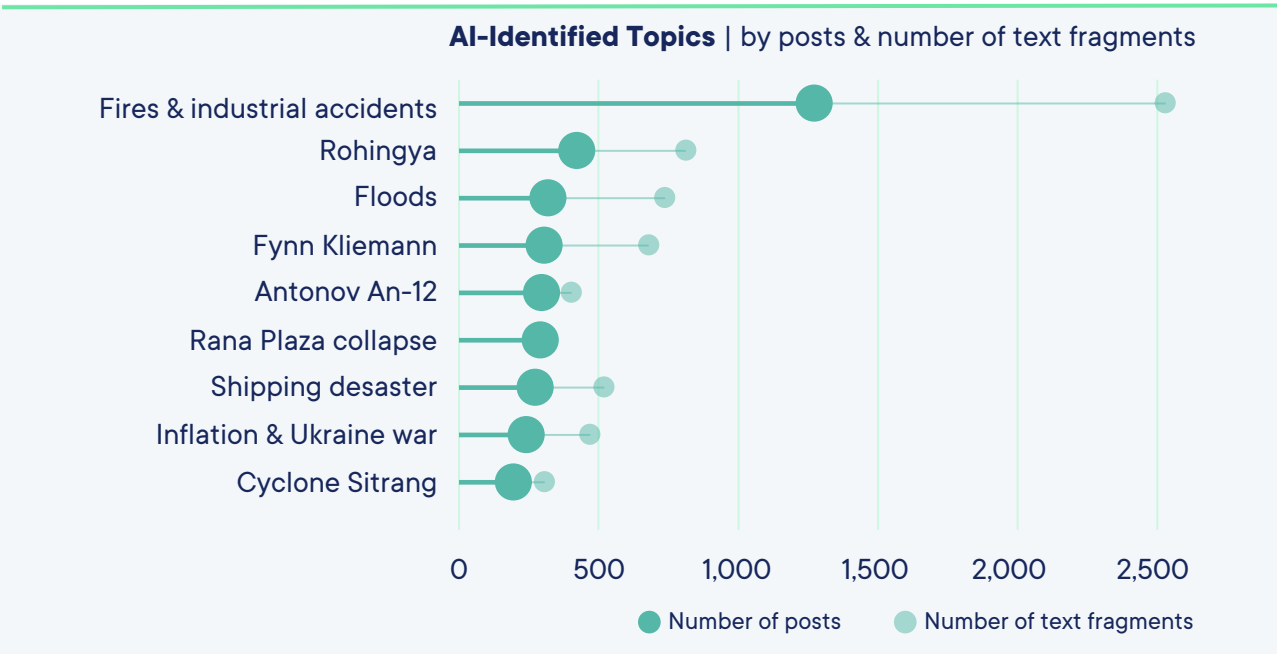Data basis: n=3,543 contributions to Bangladesh

Bangladesh: AI-identified issues

The media coverage of the focus country Bangladesh is characterized by catastrophic accidents. These are often related to a lack of safety precautions or use beyond the intended capacities.

Accordingly, the most important issue is some fires. In particular, the major fire in the container depot made headlines. Furthermore, the fire in the plastic factory also attracted a high level of media interest. People often look back on the fire of a passenger ferry, in which almost 40 people died in December 2021. In retrospect, it is also mentioned that 52 people died in a fire in a food factory this year.

Closer look: Fires and industrial accidents

AI-Identified Topics | by posts & number of text fragments

- Fires & industrial accidents
- Rohingya
- Floods
- Fynn Kliemann
- Antonov An-12
- Rana Plaza collapse
- Shipping desaster
- Inflation & Ukraine war
- Cyclone Sitrang

0   500   1,000   1,500   2,000   2,500

● Number of posts   ● Number of text fragments

A separate narrative thread is provided by flashbacks to the collapse of the "Rana Plaza", in which more than 1,000 people lost their lives in 2013. These retrospectives take place on the one hand in connection with fires, and on the other hand in the media with the Supply Chain Act. In Germany, for example, this was changed due to the "Rana Plaza" disaster.

Another serious accident is the shipping accident that occurred in August 2022. Here, the media reported that at least 50 people died as a result of the sinking of the overcrowded boat.

Through media reports on floods in the wake of the monsoon and the effects of tropical storm Sitrang, readers were able to learn more about the fate of people living in Bangladesh. On the other hand, the coverage of YouTuber Fynn Kliemann and the "mask affair" does not contribute to a better understanding of the specific situation in Bangladesh. Thus, the focus country appears here only in the context that the masks sold by Kliemann were not produced in Europe, as he claims, but in Bangladesh and Vietnam.

Even through the reporting around the Antonov An-12, one hardly learns more about the situation of the people living in Bangladesh. Instead, this story has generated a lot of attention on the international political stage only because the plane was supposed to bring weapons from Serbia to Bangladesh. However, the Antonov An-12, a plane belonging to a Ukrainian airline, crashed over Greece.

As the wordcloud below clearly shows, the suffering of the Rohingya is described in detail in German media. It also describes the cruelty that befalls the Rohinyga in Myanmar.

There, girls and women are raped, and entire villages are razed to the ground. The difficult situation of the Rohingya in Bangladesh's overcrowded refugee camps is also a present media topic.
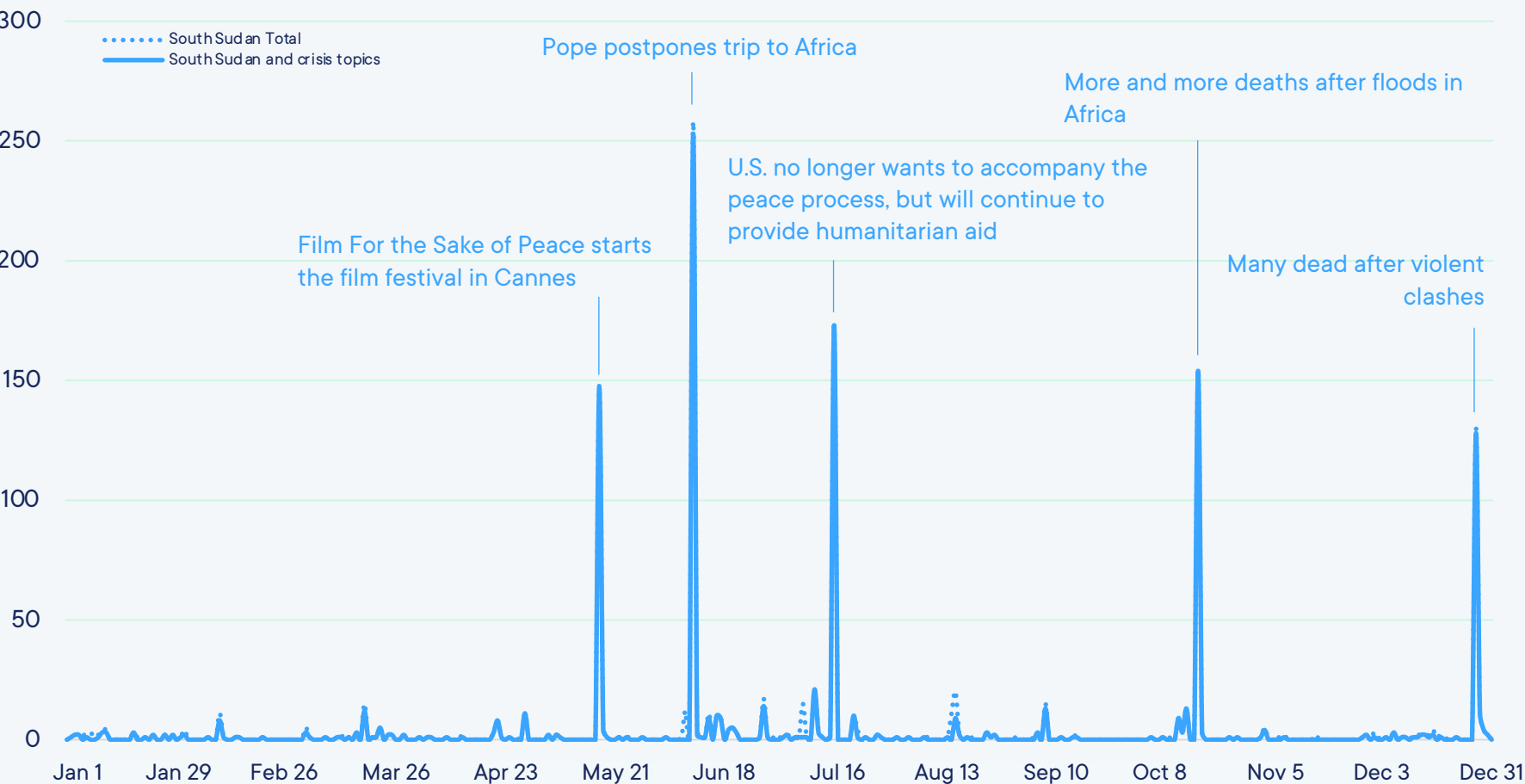

Closer look: Fynn Kliemann

Closer look: Rohingya

South Sudan over time in 2022

Total contributions over time | by posts

- - - - - - South Sudan Total
———— South Sudan and crisis topics

Pope postpones trip to Africa

More and more deaths after floods in Africa

U.S. no longer wants to accompany the peace process, but will continue to provide humanitarian aid

Film For the Sake of Peace starts the film festival in Cannes

Many dead after violent clashes

300
250
200
150
100
50
0

Jan 1   Jan 29   Feb 26   Mar 26   Apr 23   May 21   Jun 18   Jul 16   Aug 13   Sep 10   Oct 8   Nov 5   Dec 3   Dec 31

Data basis: n=1,326 contributions to South Sudan

As already shown in chapter #01, South Sudan accounts for 90.3 percent of the crisis issues. As a result, the timelines of overall reporting and in connection with crisis topics are almost congruent. On 17.05, for example, the dpa initiated many articles on the opening of the Cannes Film Festival – the film For the Sake of Peace addresses, among other things, conflicts in South Sudan. On 10.06. the headline read: "Pope postpones trip to Africa because of knee problems". The associated rumours of his resignation are generating a high level of media resonance here. South Sudan is also coming into focus as a state marked by violent conflicts.

In the 2nd half of 2022, several reports were published that are more closely related to what is happening in South Sudan. In mid-July, the State Department announced that the United States would withdraw from the peace processes. In October, the number of victims of floods is reported to rise. At the end of the year, the violence in South Sudan will become the focus of media attention.

South Sudan: AI-identified issues

The Pope's trip to Africa is the most important topic in reporting on South Sudan in 2022. This applies both to the number of contributions and to the quantity of the relevant text passages. In comparison, it is particularly striking that the reports on the crisis-ridden events in South Sudan are often limited to a single section. This applies, for example for the reports about the devastating famine in South Sudan, which are accompanied by an urgent appeal for more food aid.

The reports on the violent confrontations in Jonglei State explained with a brief text that "according to authorities, at least 60 people were killed" (e.g., Berliner Zeitung, 27.12.2022). In 2022, there were many such reports telling of the suffering in South Sudan. For example, it was said. At the beginning of June: "According to authorities, at least 15 people died in South Sudan, East Africa, after drinking from a poisoned water source" (e.g., rnd.de, 08.06.2022). Due to the similar wording, all these brief reports are

summarized by the AI as reports on the number of victims.

Through topic modeling, the theme of the UN mission appears as a narrative thread in its own right. This is particularly apparent in the context of the withdrawal of the USA from the peace process, as these articles also report intensively

on the participation of German soldiers in UNMISS.

In addition, the United Nations also appears in South Sudan's reporting on its development aid organization UNDP.

The political leadership of South Sudan represents another thematic block. In the relevant passages, the interim government is typically described as a fragile or fragile system. President Salva Kiir Mardit received special attention because he publicly wet himself in 2022.

AI-Identified Topics | by posts & number of text fragments

Word cloud: welthungerhilfe, benötigten, müssen, benötigt, müller, hunger, unhcr, erhalten, prozent, vereinten, euro, südsudan, millionen, hilfe, caritas, mehr, care, mittel, fehlen, menschen, ukraine, krisen, humanitäre, nationen, ernährungshilfe, international

Lollipop chart topics:
- Pope's visit
- UN-Mission | UNDP
- Reports on casualty figures
- USA | Peace process
- Transitional Government | Salva Kiir Mayardit
- Film For the sake of peace
- Floods
- Hunger | Nutritional support

X-axis: 0, 150, 300, 450, 600, 750, 900

● Number of posts   ● Number of text fragments

4%

Posts related to climate change

It stands to reason that humanitarian crises triggered by natural disasters such as extreme weather events, hurricanes or floods are also discussed in the context of global climate change.
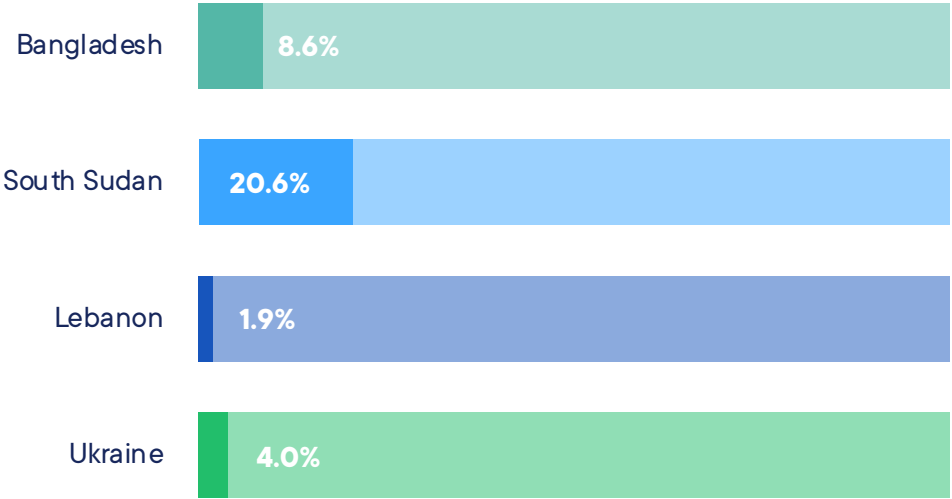
In the context of the present study, however, climate change shows only a small media presence in connection with the defined crisis topics, the focus countries or the comparison country Ukraine.

How present is the topic of climate change?

In accordance with the hybrid research approach, specific topics that were not covered by topic modeling were once again specifically examined using thematic search queries, as shown here using the topic of *Climate* as an example. The topic is taken up in around 4 percent of the contributions across all four countries. Restricted to reporting on the three focus countries, this proportion increases slightly to 5.7 percent. The topic is particularly present in the reporting on South Sudan, where it is mainly related to the topics of *Hunger Crisis | Floods* and *Droughts*.

In October, for example, the media reported an increasing number of deaths from flooding in Africa, including South Sudan, whose *Unity State* was almost completely flooded.

Country	Percentage
Bangladesh	8.6%
South Sudan	20.6%
Lebanon	1.9%
Ukraine	4.0%

Data basis: n=1,788,271 posts

Actors in the focus countries

Present actors in reporting on Lebanon | by mentions
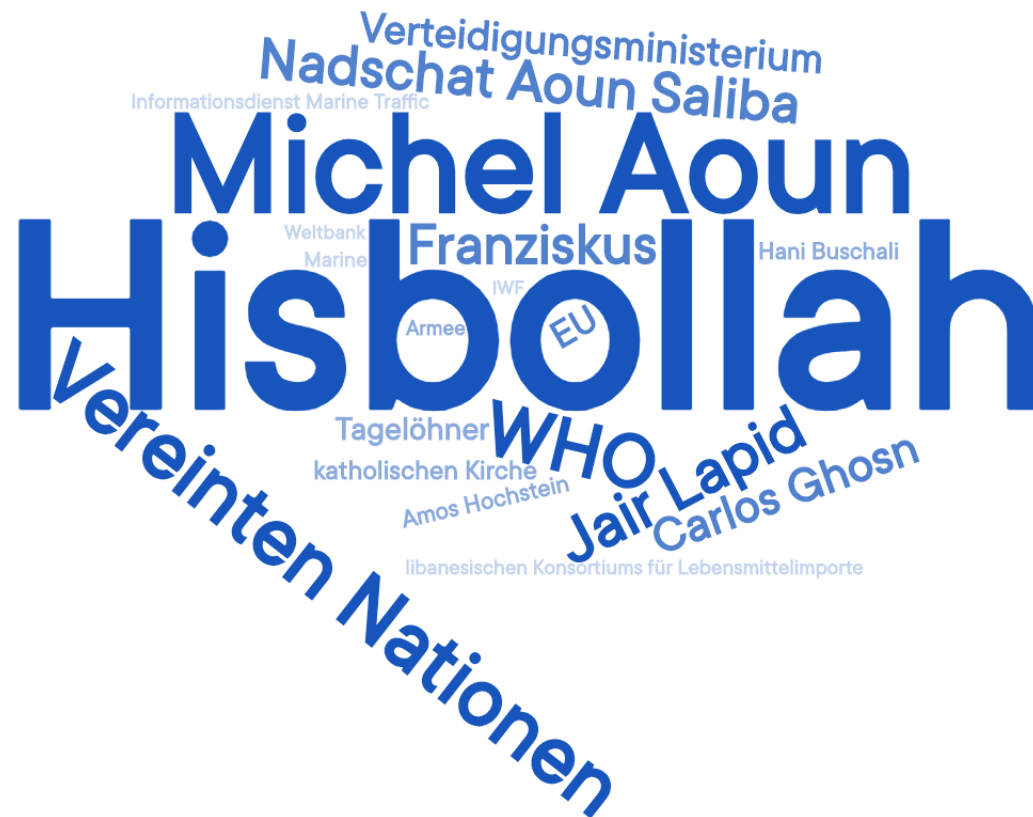
The analyses of the text entities were evaluated here with the help of an AI-based approach. This shows that Hezbollah and former Lebanese President Michel Aoun in particular appear as important actors in the context of Lebanon.

It is noteworthy that Najad Aoun Saliba, an environmental activist and scientist, is mentioned very frequently. Hani Buschali, the president of the Lebanese Food Import Consortium, often speaks out in connection with the Razoni aberration.

In 2022, then-Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid was an important international actor in Lebanon's political life. The conflict between Lebanon and Israel was accompanied by the American diplomat Amos Hochstein.

Actors in the focus countries

Present actors in the reporting on Bangladesh

In the reporting on the focus country **Bangladesh**, the Rohingya are particularly important protagonists. Myanmar's military and Myanmar's military junta are held responsible for the atrocities committed against the Rohingya.

In addition, many external actors are mentioned in the contributions.

Fynn Kliemann, among others, is mentioned very often. Serbian Defense Minister Nebosja Stefanovic is also worth mentioning, according to which the Antonov An-12 cargo of weapons was destined for the Bangladesh Ministry of Defence.

Generic reports are made about the "workers" in the textile factories and about the "health personnel".

Airport manager Hafiz Ahmed is mentioned in connection with the heavy monsoon rains.

For the focus country **South Sudan**, external protagonists make an appearance. Among them are Pope Francis and the Vatican spokesman Matteo Bruni. In contrast, the South Sudanese actors Salva Kiir Mayardit and his opponent in the civil war Riek Machar are clearly receding into the background.

Compared to Bangladesh and Lebanon, the strong presence of aid organisations in South Sudan is striking. These include, for example, the *United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Caritas and Save the Children.*

In the reporting on South Sudan, the UN mission UNMISS is an important topic. In this context, not only the United Nations itself, but also the Bundeswehr and the American State Department are relevant.

Present actors in the reporting on South Sudan

Actors in the focus countries

Presence of stakeholders in reporting on the focus countries | by mentions

	Lebanon	Bangladesh	South Sudan
World Health Organization (WHO)	331	5	4
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	0	0	184
Norwegian Refugee Council	0	161	0
Red Crescent Moon	0	159	0
Save the Children Deutschland e.V.	4	46	43
World Food Programme of the United Nations (WFP)	27	0	61
SOS Children's Villages e.V.	42	28	0
CARE Deutschland e.V.	2	0	32
Johanniter-Unfall-Hilfe	0	0	18
Islamic Relief Germany	0	0	22
UN Refugee Agency e.V.	2	9	10
German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)	1	9	8
UN-Refugee aid agency (UNHCR)	10	2	2
UNICEF	4	5	1
UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)	8	0	0
Human Rights Watch	6	1	0

This analysis shows how often humanitarian organisations and development aid institutions are mentioned in connection with the focus countries.

With regard to South Sudan, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is particularly prominent. It is the publisher of the Human Development Index, in which South Sudan ranks last.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has highlighted the severe cholera outbreaks in all parts of Lebanon in 2022. The Secretary General of the Norwegian Refugee Center drew media attention to the situation of the Rohingya in Bangladesh.

The topic donations is only present in just under three percent of the contributions to the three focus countries.

Photo: World Vision/Shabir Hussain

Ukraine over time in 2022 (in conjunction with crisis issues)
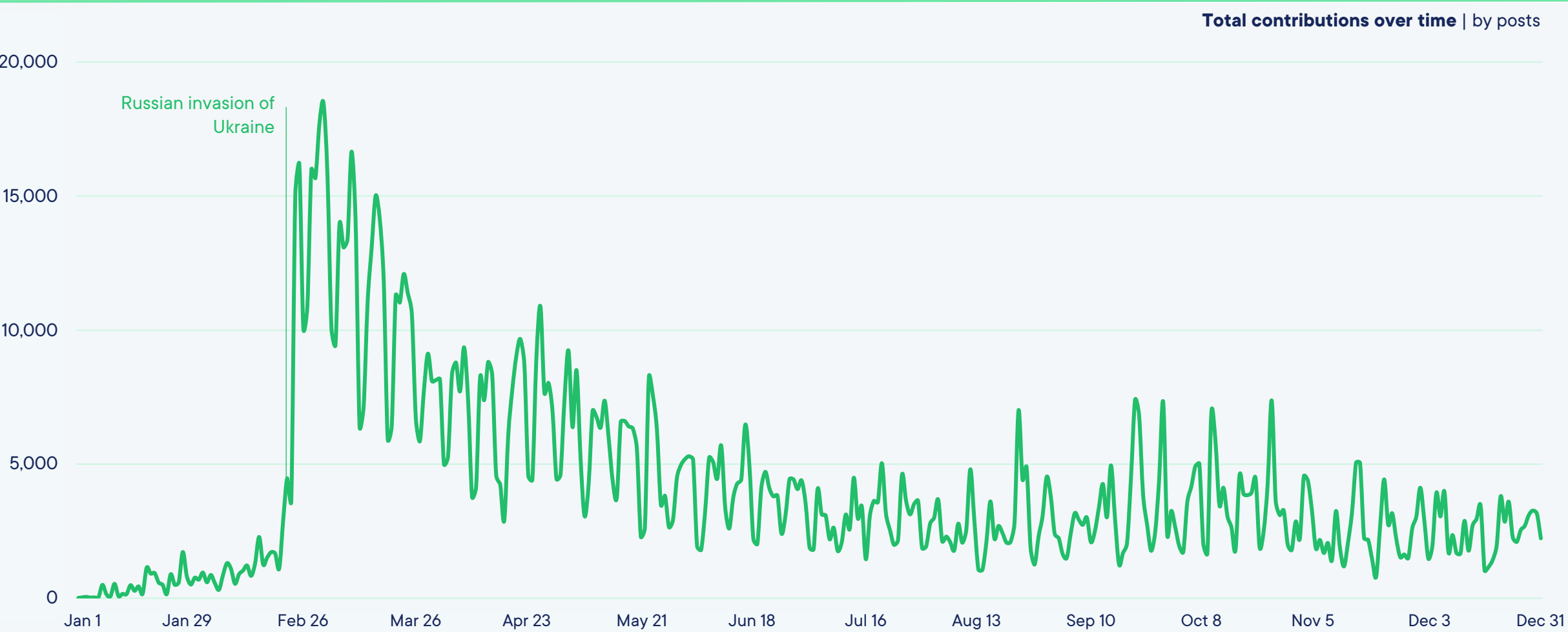
Total contributions over time | by posts

Russian invasion of Ukraine

Data basis: n=1,512,345 contributions to Ukraine in connection with at least one crisis topic

Ukraine: AI-identified topics

With the Russian attack on Kyiv, Ukraine suddenly became the focus of media attention. The number of articles will then decrease until the beginning of April, when Russian troops withdrew from Kyiv. In May and June, the Russian offensive took place in the Donbas. For this time horizon, a further reduction in the number of articles can be recorded. From then on, premium volumes in the second half of 2022 will remain at a low level compared to February.

AI-Identified Topics | by posts & number of text fragments

Legend: ● Number of posts   ● Number of text fragments

In the thematic model, the reports on the course of the war take up by far the largest share. For the most part, these are reports on troop movements associated with conquests and retreats, as well as descriptions of the course of the war with a view to offensives and counter-offensives.

In addition, this thematic block is also about the supply of troops and the population. The grain blockade and the agreement on the resumption of exports, which was signed in July, play an important role here. In addition, the reports on the withdrawal of diplomats from Kyiv and the trips of various politicians to the war zone also fall into this thematic block.
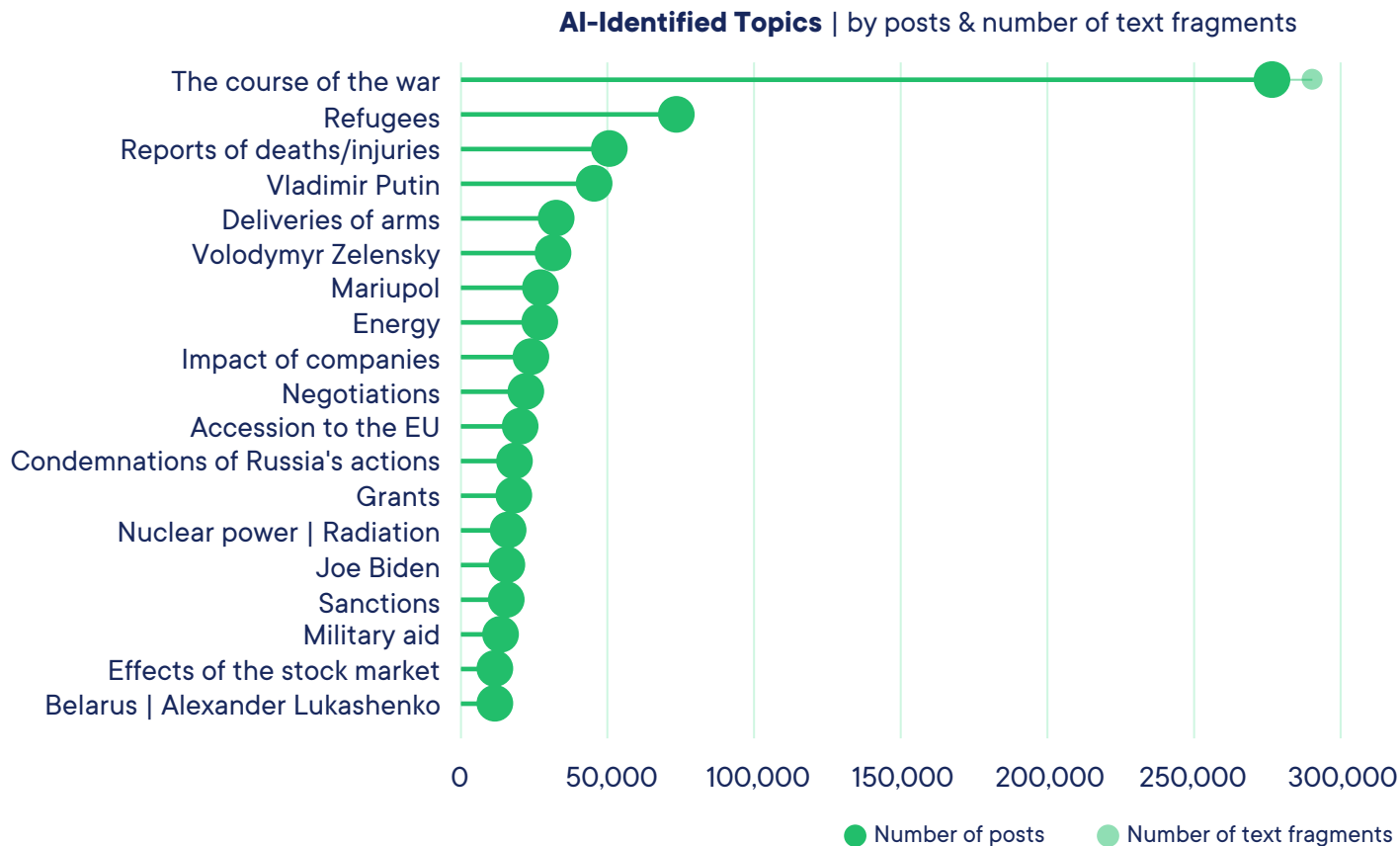
The media debate on Ukraine is represented by a completely different data structure than the reporting on the focus countries. For example, topic modeling identified individual storylines initiated by the agency reports for the three focus countries with their relatively small amounts of contributions. In the reporting on Ukraine, on the other hand, there are a variety of narratives, all of which together form a complex network of topics. This network of themes is depicted here by a dendrogram. Colour-coded connections characterise aspects with a greater thematic overlap.

In the reports on the course of the war, death figures are often mentioned and so this subject area has great similarities to the reports of dead and injured. Many people also lost their lives in the city of Mariupol. Accordingly, there is also a greater thematic proximity between the reports on Mariupol and the reports on war events as well as deaths and injuries.

Dendrogram on thematic similarity | on the basis of the text fragments
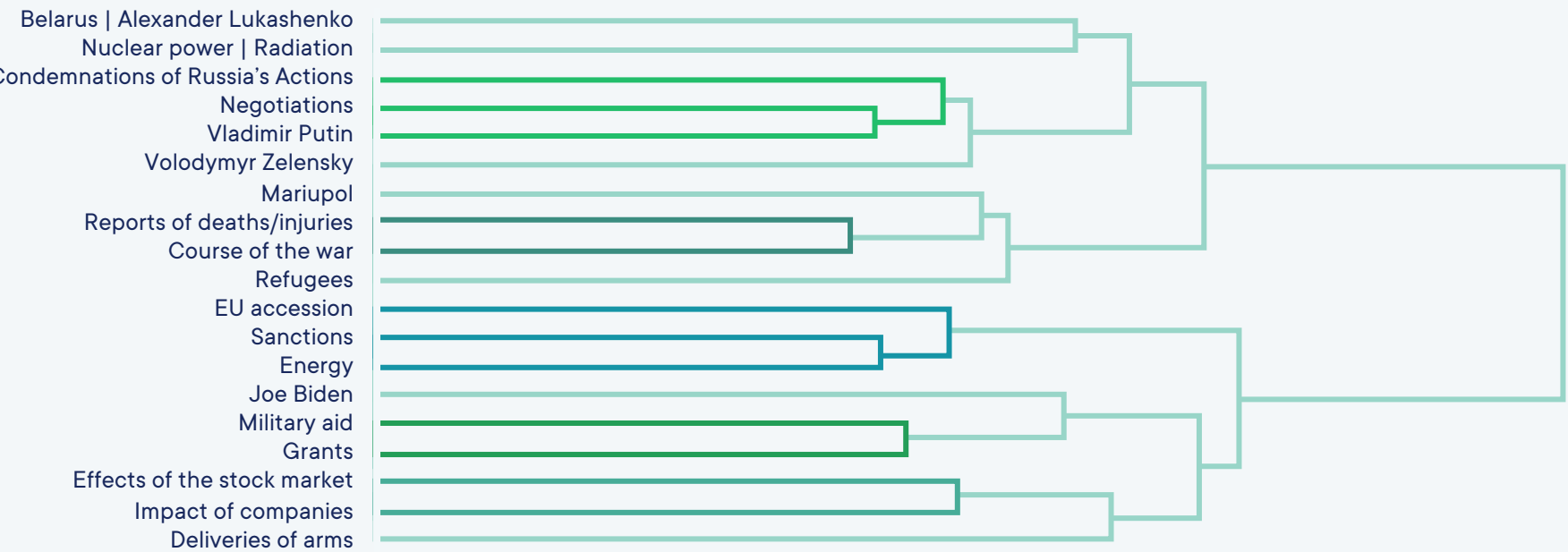
Closer look: Mariupol

The themes of negotiations, Vladimir Putin and condemnations of Russia's actions represent a closely related complex. In the area of negotiations, for example, it is often mentioned whether negotiations with Putin could be held at all. Generally, journalists describe the events in Ukraine from a factual perspective. However, there are also individual passages in which actors condemn Russia's actions. Due to the rather uniform wording, these passages are taken up by the AI as a separate topic.

Also, between the topics Belarus | Alexander Lukashenko and Nuclear Power | Radiation, there are certain overlaps. The reason for this is that the reports on nuclear power | Radiation is also about the Chernobyl reactor disaster. Since the reactor is located near the Belarusian border, Belarus has been severely affected by the disaster.

Closer look: Condemnation of Russian acts

In addition, the thematic block Belarus | Alexander Lukashenko as a deployment area for Russian troops. The exclusion of Belarusian athletes from international sporting events is also an important aspect of reporting. The most important narrative in the reporting on Nuclear Power | Radiation is what happened around the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant.

Closer look: Financial aid

Financial and economic topics are also relevant in reporting on the war in Ukraine. In the model, there is a greater overlap between the topics of financial assistance and military aid. The issue of financial assistance is essentially centred on European policy. In addition, the narrative thread to the donations is also located here.

Closer look: Military aid

Unlike financial aid, the issue of military aid is embedded in narratives about American politics. Because of this, this aspect also has a certain proximity to the topic of Joe Biden.

Strong thematic overlaps can be seen in the discussion about the effects of the Ukraine war on the stock market and on the economy. In the latter, price increases and inflation are relevant aspects. The economic consequences of the Ukraine war are being discussed, especially regarding the situation in Germany. The issue of arms deliveries, on the other hand, is almost exclusively limited to German politics.

The issue of energy is very much related to the question of sanctions, because the end of Russian gas supplies is intensively discussed in German domestic politics. Finally, the issue of sanctions is linked to the question of how to deal politically with Russia as an aggressor. On the other hand, the question of a political solution for Ukraine is being discussed in the area of EU accession.

Closer look: Effects of the stock market

Closer look: Effects of the economy

Closer look: Sanctions

Closer look: Energy

Closer look: Deliveries of arms

Arms Shipments vs. Humanitarian Aid

One of the top five issues identified by the AI in the Ukraine report is the issue of *arms deliveries*. For the analogue country Ukraine, therefore, it was also examined to what extent this topic is more present in media coverage than the topics of humanitarian aid and humanitarian crises.

The chart below clearly shows that the topic of arms deliveries is much more present than the other two topics, accounting for 27.8 percent of the total reporting on Ukraine last year. More than a quarter of the articles reporting on Ukraine also talk about weapons.

Topic Presence | by share of total reporting | in percent
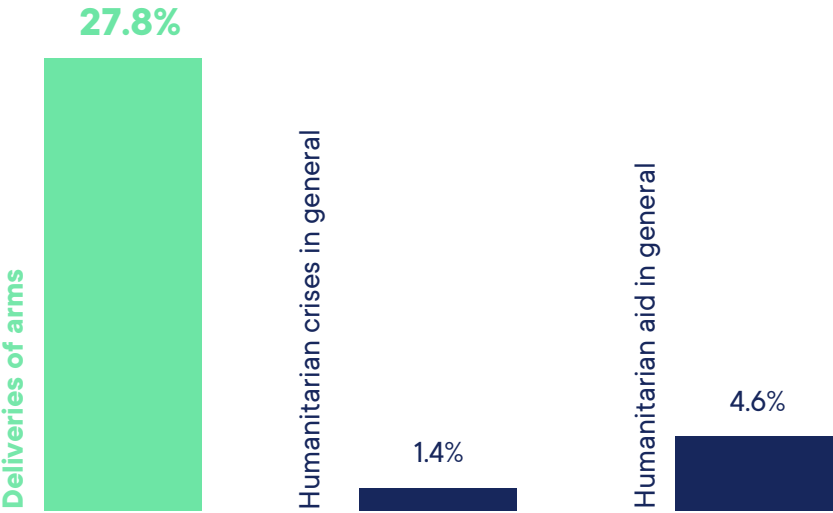
27.8%

Deliveries of arms

Humanitarian crises in general — 1.4%

Humanitarian aid in general — 4.6%

Data basis: n=1,512,345 contributions to Ukraine in connection with at least one crisis topic

27.8%

of the crisis-related contributions to Ukraine address the topic of *Arms Deliveries*

On the other hand, there are the topics of humanitarian aid and humanitarian crises, which are much less present with shares of only 4.6 and 1.4 percent respectively of crisis-related media reports on Ukraine.

How present is the topic of donations in the reporting?

Since donations for countries and regions affected by crises often go hand in hand with their presence in the media, we also used thematic search queries to find out how present the topic of *donations* is in the reporting on the three focus countries and Ukraine. This shows that the topic is addressed in 4.6 percent of the articles across all four countries.

In the context of reporting on the three focus countries, the issue of donations is taken up in just under three percent of media reports. However, the topic is also only slightly more present in connection with Ukraine, with a reporting share of 4.6 percent, and is lost in the abundance of reporting.

<3%

Posts related to
the topic of *Donations*

Limited to reporting on the three focus countries Lebanon, Bangladesh and South Sudan, contributions in which the topic of donations are taken up account for just under three percent.

Topic Presence | by share of total reporting | in percent

Country	Share
Bangladesh	4.8%
South Sudan	7.2%
Lebanon	1.4%
Ukraine	4.6%
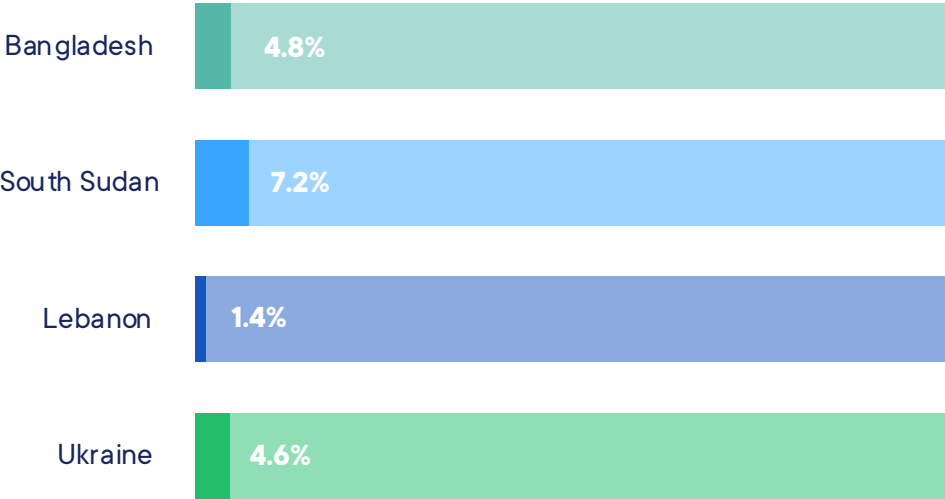
Data basis: n=1,788,271 contributions

Summary

As explained in this chapter, media coverage of the three focus countries Lebanon, Bangladesh and South Sudan as well as their temporal dynamics are largely shaped by the publication of agency reports – but there is no constant media interest beyond this. Furthermore, it could be shown that many of the (crisis) topics already highlighted in chapter #01 as well as the media reports behind them can also be found in the topics identified by the topic modeling of artificial intelligence, such as the topic modeling of artificial intelligence. the articles about the *grain freighter Razoni*, which are published here in connection with Lebanon on the topics of *War | Violent conflicts* as well as hunger crisis.

In addition, however, the AI has also identified themes and narratives or highlighted narrative strands in more detail that could not be captured using the predefined topics and search queries. This is because topic modeling represents a topic model that offers optimal adaptation for all relevant text passages. Typically, individual narrative strands are summarized in blocks that correspond to our rather abstract understanding of the topic. So is the case in the coverage of Ukraine. Topics such as *economic and financial aid* as well as *arms deliveries* were identified here. In the case of the focus

countries, however, the thematic variability is so low that the topics are largely represented by individual storylines. Many of these narrative strands are of secondary importance for the events in the respective focus country. This applies, among other things, to the reporting on the mask scandal and Fynn Kliemann. It is also striking that the topic models often reveal almost identical formulations. One example of this is the recurring formulations on the political system in Lebanon. This shows that there is only a small editorial processing of the agency reports.

Conversely, topics that topic modeling could not identify were subsequently examined in more detail by means of thematic search queries. This shows that neither the topic of *climate change* nor the topic of *donations* is of particularly present in the media coverage of the focus countries and Ukraine, as they only account for a very small proportion of the respective country reporting. Only in connection with South Sudan is the climate issue taken up in 20.6 percent of the contributions.

The reporting of the focus countries is characterized by agency reports. There is no constant media interest.

Photo: Johanniter / Colas Lemaire

#03

Media Coverage & Google Searches

What interest does the German population have in the focus countries Lebanon, Bangladesh and South Sudan?

Search interest for the focus countries & Ukraine: Overview

Media reports reflect the perspective of media professionals. However, these perspectives often differ from the interest of media consumers. In this chapter, therefore, these two perspectives will be contrasted. A revealing proxy data set to reflect the interests of people living in Germany is the Google Search Scores, which can be queried via Google Trends. The search volume or search interest is quantified by Google as a score. This is a relative value that is interesting for comparative studies.

As the chart below clearly shows, the interest of the population in Germany in the focus countries is dwindling compared to Ukraine. In this respect, Google searches show a very similar data structure to media reports. Here, too, the volume of articles in online media last year was significantly higher for Ukraine than for all focus countries combined (page 10).

If, on the other hand, we only look at the focus countries, Lebanon has the highest search volume. Bangladesh was searched less frequently, and South Sudan follows far behind in last place. Therefore, based on this order, the interests of media professionals is consistent with that of media consumers.

The graph on the left shows the relationship between search interest in the focus countries and Ukraine. This search interest is quantified by Google's search score. Since this is a relative value, the numbers cannot be compared to the chart on the right.

**Average Google Search Score for Focus Countries & Ukraine** | per day
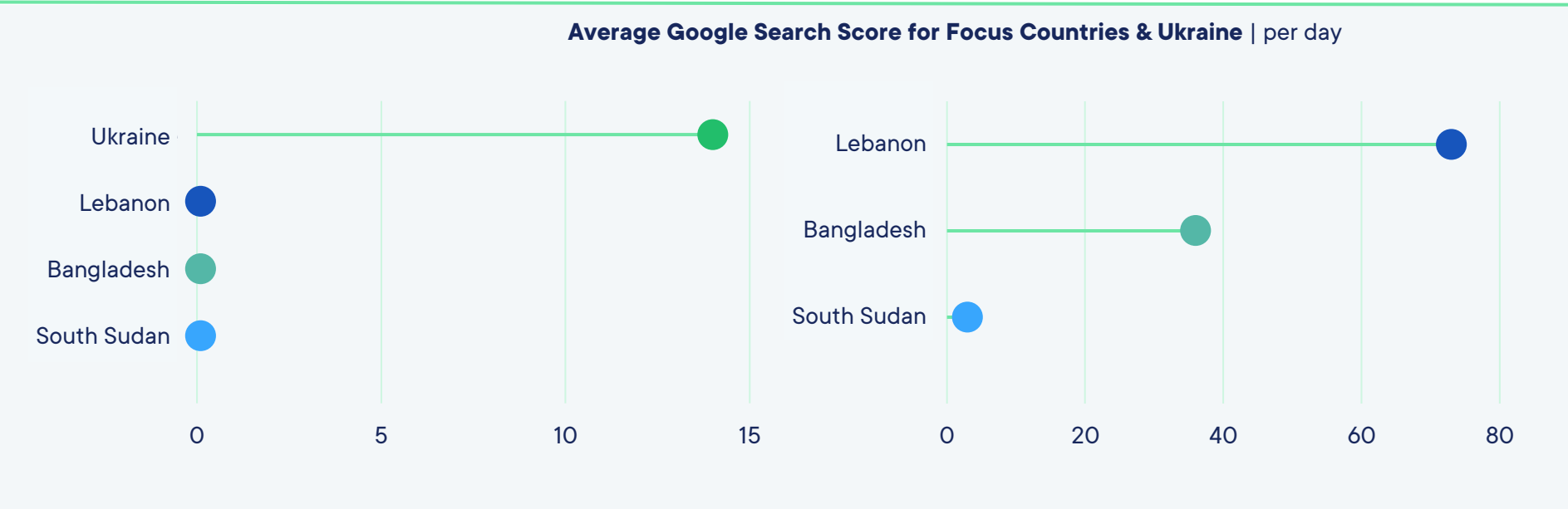
Search interest in Ukraine

For Ukraine, the search volume follows a very similar temporal dynamic as the media response. When many media professionals wrote about the Russian invasion of Ukraine and related topics in the spring of 2022, the country was also at the centre of search interest among media consumers. From April 2022, Google search queries will drop significantly along with the number of posts. Compared to the previous months, the search volume and media interest in the second half of 2022 are very low. Users who googled Ukraine in 2022 searched for news particularly frequently. The war in Donbas, Vladimir Putin and refugees are also related topics to the search term Ukraine. Thus, both Google searches and media reports seem to result from the confrontation with the Russian war of aggression.

Coverage & Google Search Score over time 2022 | by posts & search interest
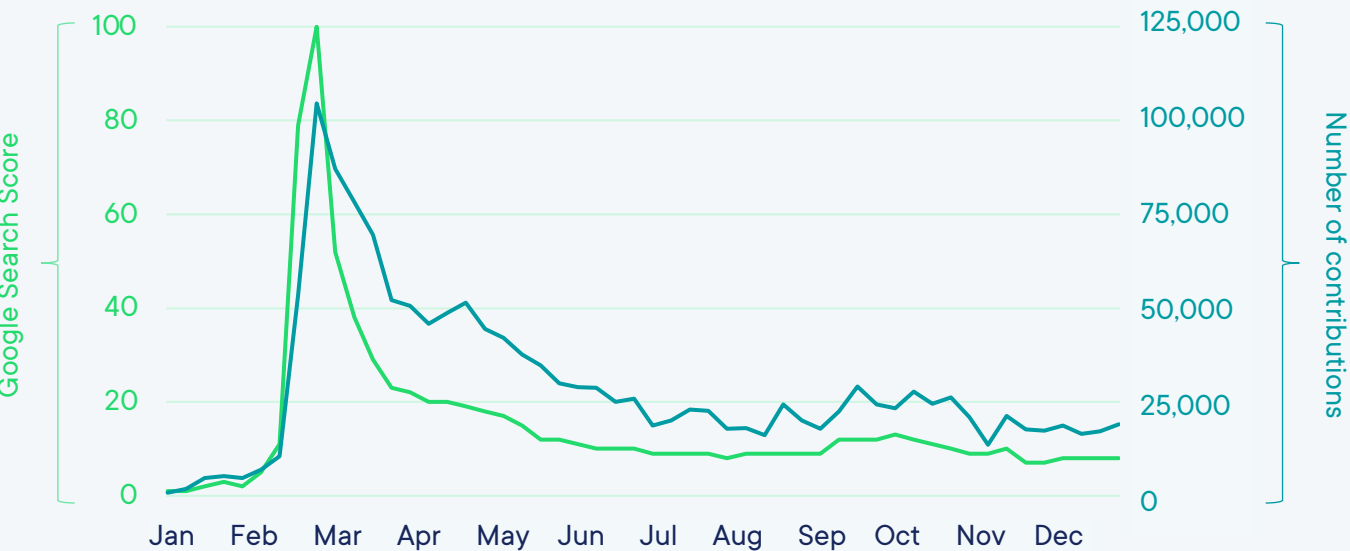
Related searches related to Ukraine | by search interest
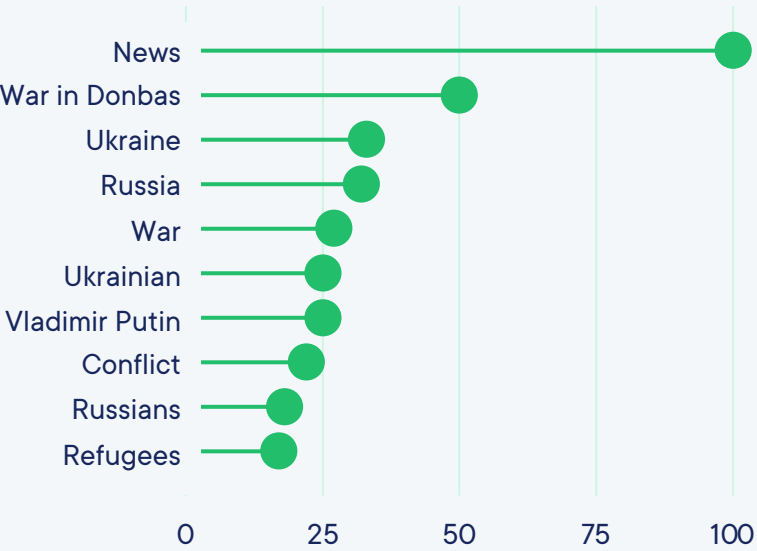
Search interest in the focus countries

For Ukraine, the chronological course of Google searches and the number of articles proved to be largely congruent. The situation is quite different in the focus countries. Only selective similarities between the search emergence and the media response can be determined. Overall, the temporal dynamics of Google searches differ significantly from the chronological development of article volumes.

The clearest deviations can be seen in the focus country Bangladesh. Since the intensity of Google search queries reflects a completely different temporal dynamic than the number of articles, it can be ruled out that a peak in reporting has a significant influence on the research activity of people living in Germany.

There is an interesting point of convergence in Lebanon. In 2022, for example, this focus country was most frequently googled in the week from May 15 to May 22. At that time, the parliamentary elections were held there, which were also intensively reported on by the German media.

During the week of April 10 to April 17, many media outlets reported that the US was withdrawing from the peace process between South Sudan and Sudan. Google searches also show a rash here. However, this coincidence cannot be interpreted as a substantive relationship. On the one hand, the sample for South Sudan is not sufficiently reliable due to the low search volume. On the other hand, an in-depth study showed that this week's searches on South Sudan had a different thematic context than the articles published in parallel.

Google Search Score
Number of posts

Reporting & Google Search Score 2022 | by posts & search interest
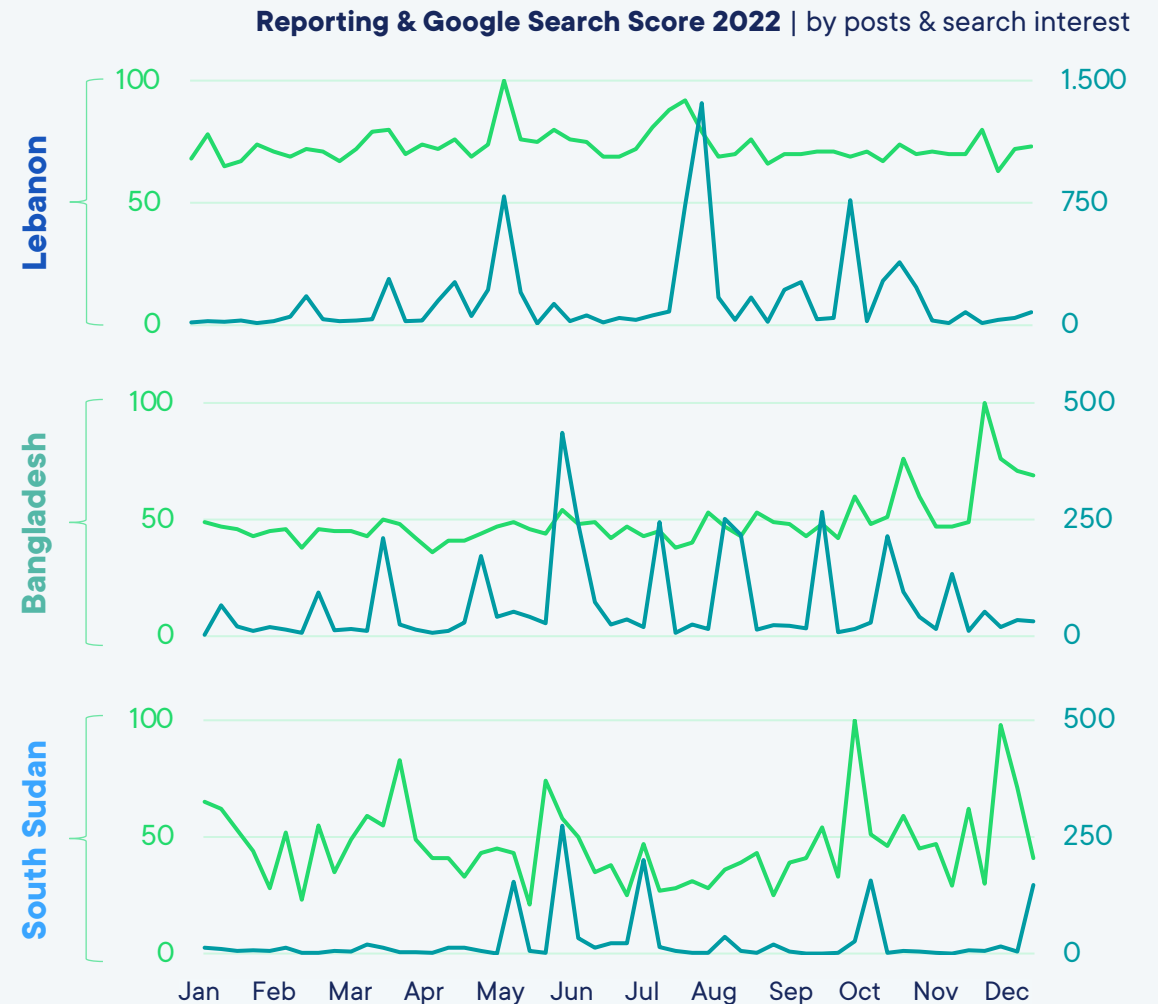
Related search queries in connection with the focus countries | by search interest
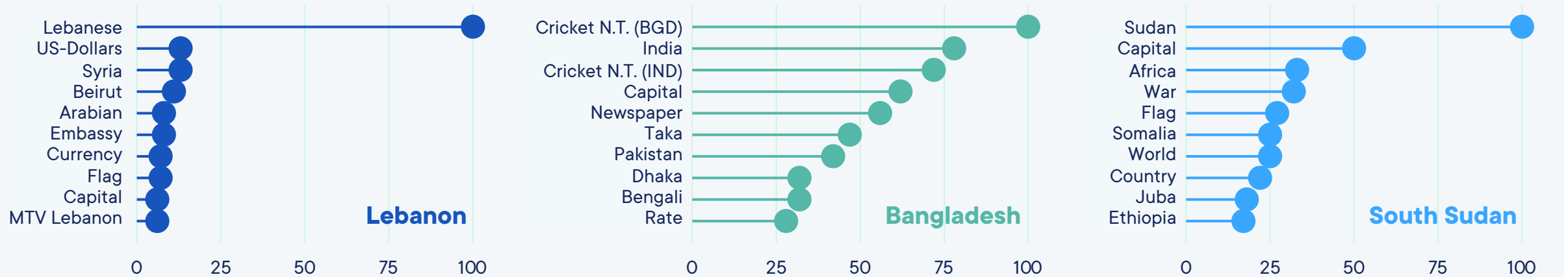
Regarding the question of why people living in Germany searched for something, the related topics are of interest. These show what the users were looking for in addition to the country. For Ukraine, these searches revealed a thematic spectrum with many links to the news situation.
In contrast, the distribution of topics for the focus countries deviates considerably from the aspects that are discussed in the media.

Only in the case of South Sudan can a clear connection to the crisis be established with the top 10 related topics. Thus, the term war is represented in this list.
In connection with the focus country Bangladesh, the users searched particularly frequently for cricket or the national teams (here: *N.T.*). With the searches for MTV, a topic from the field of entertainment also appears for Lebanon.

Such cultural topics represent an aspect that cannot be quantified in the media.
In the case of Lebanon, the high frequency of the term Lebanese is striking. Therefore, this entity was subjected to a separate Google search. The result shows that Lebanese are searched for in different contexts. Culinary topics, for example, represent one such context.
For all three focus countries, the capital is among

the ten most frequently related topics. Aspects such as flag, currency, language and neighbouring country also indicate that the motivation for a Google search on a focus country is not the crisis taking place there. Instead, users inform themselves about the focus countries at a very general level through their searches.

Photo: Johanniter / MAPs

What was the aim of this study?

Donations for countries and regions affected by crises are directly related to their media presence. The more media attention can be generated for people in need and the funds needed for humanitarian aid, the higher the amount of donations.

Therefore, the aim of our study was to show to what extent the media coverage in 2022 in German online media on the three focus countries in the #InDenFokus campaign – Lebanon, Bangladesh and South Sudan – differed from the coverage on Ukraine. More specifically, how, what and how intensively it was reported, as well as which actors it mentioned.

What key findings could be gained?

In addition to large differences in reporting intensity between the focus countries and Ukraine, as well as a high proportion of crisis topics in the reporting, the timelines of Lebanon, Bangladesh and South Sudan for 2022 have clearly shown that there is only selective rather than constant media interest in them. This temporal dynamic is decisively shaped by the publication of agency reports, which, however, are subject to barely perceptible editorial processing. As a result, the reporting peaks fell just as quickly as they had previously risen when the agency reports were published. Furthermore, the topic of donations is not present in the reporting on the three focus countries or on Ukraine and only accounts for a small proportion of reporting.

In addition, we have seen that crisis-ridden events in the focus countries do not lead to a significant increase in the search interest of the population in Germany, and that overall, there is only a very low level of interest on the part of the population.

What could the reporting on forgotten crises look like in the future?

At best, there will be no need for external reporting incidents in the future, e.g., a trip by the Pope or a mask affair to pick up on forgotten crises in the media and to report on countries that are dependent on humanitarian support. Because of the great influence of the media and the public discourse they stimulate, the interest of the population in Germany in these countries can also be increased.

We also hope that the findings of this analysis will help to give more media attention to focus countries and other forgotten crises in the future, so that the millions of people around the world who need humanitarian assistance receive the support they require.

Structure & Hybrid Research Approach

This study examines the media coverage of the three focus countries Lebanon, Bangladesh and South Sudan in Germany in 2022. In addition, the coverage of Ukraine was examined more closely for comparison. The report is divided into the following chapters and research questions:

#01 General media presence
How **intensively** are the crises in the individual countries reported? What or **which topics** are reported on in connection with the individual countries?

#02 Stories & Actors
What does the reporting look like **over time**? Which **events** are driving the reporting? Which **actors** are involved and how strongly are they represented? How present are donation information/appeals in the reporting?

#03 Media Coverage & Google Searches
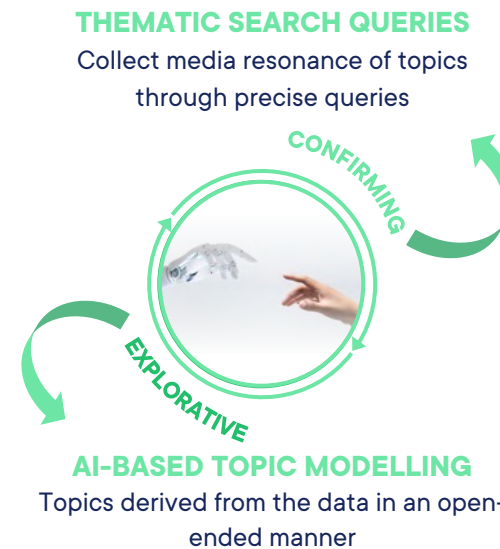What interest does the population in Germany have in the focus countries?

What is the database of the study?
The data basis of the present study is represented by all articles published in 2022 from German online media in which one of the three focus countries and/or Ukraine was mentioned in at least two places in the media report. No deliberate selection of individual media was made, but the database is limited to the following types of media: national and regional daily newspapers, Sunday newspapers, weekly newspapers/magazines, trade media, popular press and broadcasts TV/radio (online).

The relevant contributions were determined by search queries based on Boolean search operators – multiple mentions of the countries per article were possible. The investigation period of the present study therefore extends from 01.01 to 31.12.2022. For the analyses of the general media presence in chapter #01, additional contribution figures and coverage shares of the crisis topics were collected for some further countries of comparison, which are, however, only shown in selected graphics.

How is the research carried out?
This study is based on a hybrid research approach. It combines traditional methods of classical media resonance analysis with cutting-edge artificial intelligence.

THEMATIC SEARCH QUERIES
Collect media resonance of topics through precise queries

CONFIRMING

EXPLORATIVE

AI-BASED TOPIC MODELLING
Topics derived from the data in an open-ended manner

Hybrid research approach

Within the framework of classical media resonance analysis, analysts define topics. With this confirmatory approach, the media resonance of an already known concept is checked on the data. In this way, the presence of a topic relevant to the question can be specifically queried. In the present study, artificial intelligence is used as an exploratory technique to identify entities and topics. In this open-ended approach, the analysts do not prescribe any concepts. Instead, an algorithm determines which concepts are present in the data.

The hybrid research approach described here combines two different approaches that complement each other and contribute to a more comprehensive view of the topics. In addition, the use of AI also made it possible to identify some topics and stories that could not be determined using the predefined search queries, such as the story about influencer Fynn Kliemann that incidentally also drew attention to the focus country Bangladesh.

Selection and overview of crisis topics

A topic model shows those topics that represent a quantitatively relevant data structure. For this reason, AI has not identified climate as a relevant topic for any of the focus countries, but it is certainly relevant in the context of humanitarian crises. With the methods of classical media resonance analysis, the corresponding small figures could be identified, which contribute to a holistic understanding of reporting.

Thematic Search Queries

The thematic search queries were formed based predefined topics from the thematic complex of humanitarian crises. Since there is no uniform definition of this topic, various sources were consulted for researching these topics, including Reliefweb and Malteser International. Furthermore, the total of 19 defined individual topics were subdivided into three superordinate topic categories, which are listed below and broken down in detail in the overview to the right:

— **Natural disasters**

  (Droughts, cyclones, etc.),

— **Societal crises**

  (Wars, political conflicts, hunger)

— **Humanitarian crises and aid in general**.

After the individual topics had been defined and categorized, individual thematic search queries were created for them using Boolean search operators, with the help of which the presence of the topics as a whole and in connection with the focus countries and Ukraine was surveyed.

Natural disasters	Societal crises	Humanitarian Crises & Aid
Droughts	Health crises (e.g., epidemics)	Humanitarian crises in general
Earthquakes	Hunger crises	Humanitarian aid in general
Floods	Fires | Fire disasters	
Cyclones	Refugees	
Extreme weather	Wars | Violent conflicts	
Volcanic eruptions	Political conflicts	
Avalanches		
Forest fires		
Cold and heat waves		
Pest infestations		
Natural disasters in general		

Topic Modeling, Entities & Google Searches

Database

In Chapter #02, both topics and actors were identified using machine learning methods. Relevant text passages form the data basis here. These are represented by paragraphs in which the focus countries or Ukraine are named directly. Such a reduction of the contributions to the level of the text fragment is necessary in order to filter out narrative strands that have nothing to do with the focus country. By limiting the text to relevant passages, it is ensured that only those topics and actors are included in the analysis that have a meaningful connection with the country.

Topic Modeling

Topic modeling is a method of unsupervised machine learning. The cutting-edge technology *BERTopic* is used here. This is a modular system that can be executed in detail with different methods. The calculation is based on embeddings, which represent a numerical representation of relevant text passages. For the present study, the embeddings were generated with the large language model BERT. UMAP was used as a dimension reduction method and HDBSCAN as a clustering algorithm. In the case of Ukraine, the topics were modelled with a representative sample and then scaled up.

Entities

The entities were determined with the help of *spaCy*. In contrast to topic modeling, this approach uses a pre-trained model. This model has learned to recognize entities through training with an extensive text corpus.

As part of an entity determination with spaCy, the text is broken down into individual tokens. Then, for each token, it is determined whether it is an entity. These entities are then classified. In the context of the present study, operations were carried out with entities that were operated by the algorithm as a person or organization. Finally, we corrected these entity determinations to generate a normalized data set.

Media Coverage & Google Searches

The search queries for the focus countries and Ukraine were researched with Google Trends. There you can query both the searches for a country as an entity and the country name as a search term. This study is based on queries about the countries as entities. In terms of time, these queries were limited to the last year and spatially to Germany. The result is a proxy data set for the interests of the population in Germany.

The search volume is quantified by GoogleTrends through the search score. This is based on a random sample of Google searches. The values for these searches are standardized and indexed. Normalization expresses search queries as a percentage, which is the ratio between the relevant search queries and all other searches made in the corresponding time window and investigation space. As part of indexing, the maximum value is set equal to 100. The value 50 therefore means that the search volume was only half as large. In this way, the information is always converted into a ratio to the maximum value.

Time course (p. 41/42): With Google Trends, data for a year can only be queried in calendar weeks. As is customary in the USA, a week always begins on Sunday. In order to ensure comparability, the articles recorded by pressrelations were also aggregated in this way into weeks starting with Sunday.

Related Topics (S. 41/43): Google Trends also reveals what other topics the users who searched for the country in question have queried. These additional searches form the basis for identifying the related topics.

Get in touch!

Do you have any questions?

Don't hesitate to contact us.

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