New Country, New(s) Habits: How does migration affect news consumption and avoidance behavior?

A case study on young millennial immigrants living in Stockholm, Sweden

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Abstract
This audience study explores the changes of news consumption and avoidance behaviour by young millennial immigrants from various backgrounds, living in Stockholm, Sweden. Considering various theoretical frameworks, such as the intentional vs. unintentional model (Skovsgaard & Andersen, 2020), the migration change model (Tabor & Milfont, 2011), as well as a combination of a phenomenology of news model (Bengtsson & Johansson, 2021) and media repertoires established by Swart et al. (2017), a qualitative research has been conducted consisting of eight semi-structured interviews. Through a thematic analysis possible patterns have been established and findings show that individuals tend to change their behaviour in news consumption for various reasons. (1) Participants want to be able to establish their own news-routines and use their migration as an opportunity for a new start, (2) there is a certain influence by people closest to them and with their social circle changing, their (news) interests change as well, and (3) motivation and interest play an important role in shaping new consumption behaviours in a new country: the more one is interested in learning more about the new country, its culture and its language, the more likely they are to check that country’s traditional news media sources.

Keywords: young millennial immigrants, changes in news consumption behaviour, news avoidance, migration news change, intentional vs. unintentional news avoidance
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1. Introduction

My original intention was to focus this study on news avoiders alone and find out not only ‘how’ people avoid the news, but why, and more importantly what could be done for news avoiders to start consuming the news, whether it is going back to old habits or just starting to consume news for the first time. However, several challenges seemed to be piling up with the first and most important one being that many in my social circle that I would’ve considered news avoiders turned out to be not avoiding news after all. It wouldn’t have been easy to find solely news avoiders and after talking to a few other young millennials and conducting the pilot study for this research, I realized that everyone has already or will at some point avoid the news to a certain extent or due to certain circumstances. Luckily, there are already several studies that focus on either certain events or circumstances, such as the pandemic of the covid-19 virus in relation to news avoidance (Vandenplas et al., 2021; Ytre-Arne & Moe, 2021) or the impact socio-cultural factors have on the news consumption behaviour of an individual (Shehata, 2016; Villi et al., 2022).

As an immigrant myself, having lived in Germany, Canada, Austria, and now in Sweden, I noticed how my personal (news) media behaviour changed with every move and that the acculturation process consists not only of feeling and being integrated in a new culture but also in changing and/or giving up certain habits.

Motivated by curiosity and determination, I am positive that this study will result in a future case study that can be used to contribute within journalism studies, when it comes to considering immigrants as a target group. It also contributes to the more specific research field of news avoidance studies, as well as human’s tendency to change habits depending on certain circumstances or events.
2. Literature Review & Theoretical Framework(s)

This section will present relevant literature based on previous studies as well as theoretical frameworks that will be used later in the analysis chapter to compare and explain the findings.

2.1. What’s New(s)?

As the profession of the journalist remains fluid, so does the definition of news. Whether something is considered news or news-worthy depends on the individual’s perspective as well as their motivation and effort to devote their time to information learning and processing (Edgerly & Vraga, 2019).

Based on studies from the 60s and 70s, a long-established definition of the term ‘news’ is ‘as a commodity produced and packaged within organized journalistic institutions’ (Bengtsson & Johansson, 2021, p. 2875). News would involve an emphasis on truth-claiming, newness, a specific tone as well as a set of specific values and actors that determine what is newsworthy to an audience (ibid.). There are slight variations when it comes to previous studies, but the base concept from the definition above is quite similar. The concept of news can be further sub-categorized into ‘local’, ‘national’, ‘global’, or ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ news (ibid.). Or as Skovsgaard and Andersen (2020, p. 460) refer to news as ‘novel information about relatively recent affairs of public interest or importance provided by journalists’. However, those definitions have all been established by journalistic organizations or media producers, meaning that an audience wouldn’t use or identify topics as news solely based on the criteria mentioned above.

Edgerly and Vraga (2019) used two experimental designs to analyze how audiences make genre assessments when encountering media content that blends with elements of entertainment and news. One of these experiments considered whether audience perceptions of ‘news-ness’ are influenced by shifts in headline angles and source attributions. Headlines do have to stand out in a way, since they only provide limited amount of time to grab the attention of the reader. This would fuel the tendency of simply scanning the headlines. According to Romenesko (2010) an estimation shows that 44% of Google News visitors scan headlines without reading the full story. Skimming headlines is more and more the way on how information is encountered, consumed, and shared as for many it would be already enough to share a news story based on the headline (ibid.).
Furthermore, personalized news feeds on social network sites (SNS), such as: Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, consist of a mixture of personal posts, shared content, films, videos, photos and advertise ment. They are defined within the sites as ‘news’, making rigid distinctions between ‘news media’ and ‘social media’ problematic (Bengtsson & Johansson, 2021, p. 2874).

According to Costera Meijer and Groot Kormelink (2015) as cited in Bengtsson and Johansson (2021, p.2877), their study of news consumption shows a broadening definition of what counts as news according to news users: as not only events described by journalists, but also ‘everything that is new - from developments in the personal life of one’s Facebook friends to opinions on Twitter and information on specific websites.’

For this thesis the concept of news is as wide as the participants define it to be. I won’t be using the exact definitions mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, but rather emphasize that news can be anything from reports by official mainstream sources to new posts on social media about a specific interest (e.g.: gaming news, sport news, etc.), as it was done by Bengtsson and Johansson (2021) as well as by their mentioned sources above.

2.2. Young Millennials News Consumption

With the rise of internet, social media, and general media consumption usage, digitalization has affected general news consumption behavior. With the possibility to access more information, at any time, audiences now have the possibility – with help of algorithms – to decide what kind of content they are interested in, giving the possibility of consuming more news from different sources, or making it quite easy to avoid news all together (Ksiazek et al., 2010). Considering multiple sources Mitchell et al. (2014) as cited in Edgerly and Vraga (2019, p.810) found out in their study that alternative news media sources, such as shows like The Daily Show and Colbert Report (both shows produced in the US) present an alternative form of journalism, also known as ‘infotainment’. The audience (especially young audience) would consider those a source on where to get their news from, however, these shows also evade the norms of objectivity and professionalism of journalism, as the moderators of the show are sharing their personal views and opinions as well.
2.2.1. Obtaining News

Young adult audiences especially have gravitated more and more toward online sources to gain news and information. On the one hand, a study by Antunovic et al. (2018) focused on the emerging processes of news consumption among college students within a large state university in the US, using focus group interviews to examine how they obtain news. Results show that their news consumption habits and routines show a pattern of having not enough time or not being able to fit their schedule, which overlaps with certain news channels on TV or how they had to adapt or change their routines, since they started going to college. Hence, they would miss out on the scheduled news reporting (mostly on TV) as well.

On the other hand, Edgerly's (2017) study takes a closer look at the role media plays when it comes to young adults’ decision in informing themselves. Through in-depth interviews with 21 young adults within the age range of 18 to 27 (in comparison, this study focuses on the sample aged between 22-32), two strategy patterns were developed. The first set includes strategies that directly involve use of the news media, and the second set includes strategies that either avoid or indirectly involve the news media, which will be further explained in the ‘news avoidance’ section of this paper. When it comes to the first set of strategies, the participants were asked where they would look for more information about particular topics or in particular situations, and why. The following results emerged: participants had clear and detailed strategies when it came to locating information through news media without relying on solely one media source. Firstly, Wikipedia was used as a complementary source to news media, which would aid the learning process, as well as provide background information that news media was missing. Secondly, only few named a specific source of credible information, whereas the belief that no single source offered credible information was more common. Common statements were that they would not trust just one source, but rather read about the same topic in several sources, such as the New York Times, Washington Post, and BBC, to form their own opinion. Many also made the conscious decision to invite news to their social media news feed, basically feeding their algorithm in a way that they would receive general news information on their social media homepage, such as Facebook. Other participants even stated they would rely on their social network sites to provide them with the most important information, giving them the possibility to choose whether to investigate this further (ibid.). This approach comes close to the news-find-me perception, which will be explained in the news avoidance chapter of this paper.
Boczkowski et al. (2018) conducted 50 in-depth interviews with participants aged 18-29 between March 2016 and July 2017 in Argentina. A diverse group in terms of gender, age group, and occupation was chosen. The focus of their study was to shed light on how incidental news consumption on social media happened among young people in Argentina, and their findings show four key traits that characterize young adults’ practices:

1. ‘Texto-materiality of the phenomenon’, meaning their omnipresent ‘use of mobile devices for various communication aspects of daily life, the almost constant connection to social media platforms, and the recurrent access to news stories on those platforms.’ (ibid., p.3533),
2. ‘Tempora-spatial coordination of anytime and anywhere’, where it is added that the participants of their study did not indicate a preferred time or space when it came to incidental learning about current events on social media (ibid.),
3. ‘Routinization’, meaning that ‘checking the news while on Facebook or Twitter is often part of larger social media habits, and those habits drive news consumption more than vice versa’ (ibid.), and
4. ‘Everyday sociability’, which showed that their interviewees were partly motivated to read about current events as a result of their wish to interact and be exposed to the information created and distributed by others (ibid.).

Boczkowski et al. (2018) conclude that “Incidental news consumption is not necessarily - and not primarily - about the news, but about exercising sociability and passing time.” (p.3533).

Keeping the focus on the audience, these studies show all together that young adults tend to search for news through several sources, being highly aware that they believe there is no single right source to trust and therefore having the ability to consume news in a critical manner. The findings presented above by Boczkowski et al. (2018) will be used as a model for analysis and its findings will be compared to those of this study in the analysis chapter.

2.2.2. News in Everyday Life

As it has been established in the previous chapter, young people have nowadays many possibilities to attain news (or to avoid them). However, Swart et al. (2017) found that it wasn’t clear yet how people would negotiate this fluctuating environment when it comes to deciding which news media to select or ignore, how they would assemble distinctive cross-media
repertoires - referring to the endless seeming supply of media -, and what would make these compositions meaningful.

In their study 36 participants of mixed gender, age (not solely focusing on young people), and education level were recruited in three different regions. Data was collected in three phases from October to December in 2014. Their findings showed that users would not organize their news media repertoires solely around devices but base their selection of combinations around four types of news media attributes which will be presented below including examples for each based on my interpretation:

1. ‘Regionally and nationally oriented repertoires’, where the focus lies on location, matching with topic-related repertoires found in other countries, e.g.: reports on the covid-19 pandemic which was relevant for every country although differently handled and reported on in different countries.

2. ‘Background-oriented repertoires’, which relate to the form or genre in which news is presented, e.g.: whether a report or article is presented in bullet form or contextualized in a long text.

3. ‘Laid-back repertoires’, that refer to the mode of use and users’ motivation for their repertoire choice’, e.g.: someone chooses to read the same newspaper as they have done for the past 15 years out of habit or someone who continues the news consumption habits they know from their family or friends.

4. ‘Platform-based repertoires’, which is organized around digital news use, and reflect current shifts in news exposure, e.g.: news consumption through social media and in what different ways one is exposed to news content (ibid., p.1356).

Furthermore, Bengtsson and Johansson (2021) introduced a theoretical approach based in ‘classic phenomenology’, which should open up further reconsideration of the concept as well as provide a potential basis for research on digital news consumption. This model emphasizes the fluidness of journalism, and the concept of news. The authors focused on the audiences’ perception on what they perceive as news-worthy and in what way they incorporate news in their every-day life, asking the following questions: What topics are important to them?, What do they do to stay informed about these topics?, Which sources do they trust and turn to? (ibid.). All questions were asked in a way without mentioning the word ‘news’ per se to open up the field
for any kind of interpretation the interviewee might offer and to broaden the field of resulting findings, which could turn out to be literally anything. As Bengtsson and Johansson (2021) stated that “Phenomenology takes human existence as its vantage point and explores how human subjects exist and create meaning in their everyday lives in relation to basic categories such as time, space and (sociocultural) relevance.” (p.1).

In other words, phenomenology evolves around the concept of ‘Dasein’, which means translated from German ‘to exist’. Everyone who is alive does exist, it further then depends on which time in an individual life is measured, where (referring to ‘space’), and under which circumstances (referring to ‘sociocultural relevance’). What is the individuals’ intention in life? All these factors shape the perspective on how the individual perceives news practices.

*Figure 1: ‘A phenomenology of news: A model of analysis’*
by Bengtsson and Johansson (2021, p.9)

![Figure 1: ‘A phenomenology of news: A model of analysis’](image)

Each ring presents a dimension with all dimensions being connected to each other and most importantly every outer dimension affecting the perception of news an individual has.

As both studies conducted above relate to the overall concept of news perception in an everyday life of an individual, I’d like to use a combination of the phenomenology of news model and the repertoires established by Swart et al. (2017) for this study, as their concepts are aligned. The first ‘regionally and nationally oriented repertoires’ could be placed in the second
outer dimension of the phenomenology of news model, showing the influence ‘space’ has on the perception of news. The second repertoire set of background-orientation is difficult to align to the phenomenology of news model, as the participants of this study each provide a different cultural background and therefore it is not possible to study the different genres and forms in which news are presented in their countries of origin within the scope of this thesis. And, therefore, it stands on its own in this paper. ‘Laid-back repertoires’ would align with ‘intentionality’, showing what causes an individual to choose a certain news source. The last repertoire set of ‘platform-based repertoires’ would align together with ‘lifeworld’ in the second inner dimension, as the repertoires are focused around digital news use, and millennials have grown up living through a world where digital news use has not always been so present, but becoming more popular and more advanced as they grew up.

Keeping these connections in mind for the thematic analysis later, I will summarize the findings according to themes, that align with the mentioned dimensions and repertoires.

2.3. News Avoidance

The concept of news avoidance is a broad and complex field, even when broken down to specific behaviours or strategies. Researchers have been conducting studies on intentional versus unintentional news avoidance (Aharoni et al., 2021; Damstra et al., 2021), news avoidance impact on democracy and its relationship to civic participation (Ksiazek et al., 2010; Woodstock, 2014), as well as the familiar and socio-cultural context that impact news consumption and avoidance behaviour (Shehata, 2016; Villi et al., 2022).

2.3.1. Definition

Definitions on the term ‘news avoidance’ differ from study to study. In Skovsgaard's and Andersen's (2020) study for example, news avoidance would equally stand for no or only a limited amount of news consumption, not stating what is meant with ‘limited’. Toff and Kalogeropoulos (2020, p.368) define news avoidance in their study more broadly as a behaviour: ‘[...] an intermittent practice that may occur at different rates among the public separate from overall rates of news exposure’. They also find that news avoidance and news use would be clearly intertwined, although not the same, as even heavy news consumers or news enthusiasts may also routinely avoid news. To have a clear line between those definitions, they
decided to stick to ‘active news avoidance’ in their study for structural reasons, while recognizing that many instances of news exposure are not completely intentional or unintentional.

Edgerly (2021) stated one possible approach of explaining news avoidance as one being grounded in demographics. She explains the findings by Ksiazek et al. (2010), which showed that younger adults with lower levels of education, and lower income were more likely to be news avoiders. Referring to one of her previous studies: Edgerly (2015), she found out that a segment of news avoiders would be ‘non-white’, Republican and less educated. Therefore, based on demographic factors by participants, such as: younger age, lower levels of education and income would indicate an overall lower level of news consumption (Edgerly, 2021, p. 3).

In this thesis the concept of news avoidance remains broad, as I aim to find out under which circumstances the participants have avoided and would avoid news generally. It was intentional to not pick solely news avoiders for this study, as I, too, assumed as Toff and Kalogeropoulos (2020) did that news avoidance and news use are ‘intertwined’. For structural purposes, the definition for this study on news avoiders will be applicable to anyone who consumes the news once a week or less.

2.3.2. Incidental News Exposure and News-find-me (NFM)

Picking up from Edgerly (2017) study which takes a closer look at the role media plays when it comes to young adults’ decision in informing themselves, two strategy patterns were developed through in-depth interviews. The first set includes strategies that directly involve use of the news media, which was already explained in a previous section above. In this section, I focus on the second set that included strategies avoiding the news media.

Those who responded towards the second set of strategies relied heavily on Google, taking advantage of its simplicity, but at the same time being less aware of other sources. They also found other ‘functional alternatives to news media’, such as discussing certain events and topics with their friends and family, relying on their perspectives rather. When it comes to finding a credible source, those who tended to use strategies avoiding news media, were aware that not all sources of information can and should be trusted and wanted to avoid unreliable sources - ‘as such, they are primarily concerned with avoiding “bad” sources but have limited knowledge to point them toward the “good” sources’ (ibid., p.372). The last strategy takes the
title ‘Important Information Will Find You’ which resembles the ‘News-find-me’-approach (Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2017). In those cases, participants expected to be informed through the outside, whether it is through a celebrity posting about a certain event (Edgerly & Vraga, 2019) or in general relying on personal contacts and social media without actively following traditional news media (Segado-Boj et al., 2019).

Strauß et al. (2021) conducted a study on why people believe that they don’t have to actively seek news anymore. Their results showed that more educated, older, and individuals belonging to the ethnic majority are less prone to develop the news-find-me perception, in short ‘NFM’. Social media (news) use, discussion frequency, incidental news exposure, and group affiliations would lead to a higher NFM-perception (ibid.). Another study on NFM-perception was made by Gil de Zúñiga et al. (2017) with their survey data showing that individuals who follow the NFM concept are less likely to use traditional news sources and are less knowledgeable about politics over time. The news-finds-me perception would be positively associated with news exposure on social media, however, the authors state that this behaviour doesn’t facilitate political learning. It is therefore suggested that news continues to enhance political knowledge best when actively sought (ibid.). Other reasons for low news consumption are being disinterested in politics, perceiving the news as not relevant enough, low news self-efficacy - referring to people’s low beliefs about their capability to manage control over their own news relating activities - and a general lack of knowledge about the news system (Edgerly, 2021).

In addition, recent studies show that ‘news fatigue’ has emerged especially in the context with crisis information, such as the pandemic of the Covid-19 virus (Vandenplas et al., 2021; Ytre-Arne & Moe, 2021) or the on-going war taking place in Ukraine. Though, not relating to this war, there are other studies, for example that question the impact of war reporting during the war in Afghanistan and Iraq (Ramazani, 2013). Aharoni et al. (2021) explored the varied motivations of young audiences to avoid news through a texto-material conceptualization of news avoidance as directed at both contents and objects. For this study, they conducted 36 in-depth interviews with young Israeli adults and created further three dimensions of news avoidance motivations and practices: content, medium, and user-oriented news avoidance. News avoidance motivations relating to ‘content’ are established due to their untrustworthiness, negativity, and its commercialized nature. ‘Medium’ refers to technological aspects of news
consumptions, such as the inability to control mobile push notifications and live broadcasts. ‘User-oriented’ news avoidance - and the last dimension - demonstrated the ever-present exposure to news, warranted by digital devices may lead to a sense of ‘overuse and even to a fear of addiction’ (ibid., p.48). This last dimension resulted rather from the participants wish to reduce their media consumption in general.

To summarize this section, it can be said that the concept of news avoidance is very broad and shows that an individual does come across news content eventually - whether this is intentional or unintentional. This phenomenon on people trying to avoid news seems to never work 100%, as they can’t control on what topics their friends post on social media, nor whether their family members at home have certain routines to keep them up to date within the news world or not. The scope of this thesis study is not enough to fill all the gaps of the mentioned studies, nor to focus on all aspects that have been described so far.

Instead, when it comes to news avoidance, this study is focused on what role communication in the participants’ social circle has on their news consumption behaviour, as well as whether there have been certain situations that caused them to avoid certain news topics, and what their strategies were/are in those situations.

I have chosen the intentional vs. unintentional news avoidance model by Skovsgaard and Andersen (2020) to be a focal point of this study. The model will be further explained in the next section and will be set in relation to the findings of my study in the analysis part.

2.3.3. Intentional vs. Unintentional News Avoidance

Skovsgaard and Andersen (2020) distinguished two types of news avoidance in their study: intentional and unintentional news avoidance, depending on the underlying causes that lead people to tune out:
On the one hand, Skovsgaard and Andersen (2020) described the causes for intentional news avoidance being that individual’s perceptions of news are ‘too negative’ (ibid.), they have low trust in the news and might feel overloaded by the news, which is also commonly called suffering from ‘news fatigue’ (Fitzpatrick, 2022). Although Skovsgaard and Andersen (2020, p.466) emphasize that there is no ‘one-size-fits-all’ solution to the problem of news avoidance, they suggested potential solutions, such as an increased implementation of constructive journalism. With its future oriented perspectives as well as add-on solutions to a news story, it has shown that this would reduce people’s negative perceptions and earn more favourable attitudes towards the general news story (Haagerup, 2017; McIntyre & Gyldensted, 2017; as cited in ibid.). Other solutions presented are more ‘fact-based reporting’ in addition to more transparency that should be shown to the audience as well as ‘news curation and slow journalism’. As Skovsgaard and Andersen (2020, p.467) put it in other words: “Not all people know how journalism works and providing insights to the journalistic work process might help increase trust in the media.” With ‘news curation’ it is meant that news outlets these days provide news content from other news media outlets, which causes ‘news overload’ perceived by the audience. Slow journalism would therefore be a reaction to avoid this ‘hype-acceleration’ and ‘over-production’ of journalism where quantity often exceeds quality by taking a step back and slowing the flow of news content (ibid.).
On the other hand, there is ‘unintentional news avoidance’ where the individual consumer would have a relatively higher preference for other (media-) content than news. Causes for the emerging disinterest is the increase of media supply and the personalization through algorithms. Even if an individual actively decides to not follow any news media content, one can’t control what other people (friends, family) post on their social media, which will be shown to the individual. A suggested solution is the mix of news and entertainment, which can be referred to as ‘infotainment’ (Edgerly & Vraga, 2019). It is further explained that though ‘public service broadcasters have an obligation to reach people with information of societal relevance’, this would not be the case for social media (Skovsgaard & Andersen, 2020, p. 468). As with these types of news avoidance, the individuals would not actively turn away from the news. The last solution of ‘public service algorithm’ focuses on ‘lowering the cost or the effort of being exposed to news as well as increasing the effort needed to avoid the news.’ (ibid.). This could be implemented by creating an ‘opportunity structure’ where news would be streamed during high traffic on social media and placed in connection with entertainment content. While media organizations have responsibility for their individual choices when it comes to their content, a large part of responsibility for the mentioned opportunity structure for inadvertent news exposure in a media system lies with the policy makers.’ (ibid.).

I’d like to base my study around this model and find out whether young millennials’ news avoidance habits and suggestions (for solutions) fit into the categories above based on their answers and comments from the interviews.

2.4. Immigration in Stockholm, Sweden

At the time of this study the population of Stockholm’s city consists of approximately 1,7 million people, which accounts for 22% of Sweden’s total population. About 27% of Stockholmers are immigrants or of non-Swedish background and about 15% are foreign-born, representing the highest percentage of any other Nordic city (World Population Review, 2022). There’s a wide variety of languages spoken in the Stockholm area, which include: Swedish, Finnish, English, Bosnian, Arabic, Syriac, Kurdish, Persian, Dutch, Turkish, Spanish, Serbian and Croatian. The largest foreign-born groups living in Stockholm are supposedly Finns (18,000), Iraqis (16,400), and Iranians (11,600) (ibid.).
It is further expected that Stockholm will hit a population of 3 million by 2045, mainly due to migrants from Afghanistan and Syria (ibid.), however, whether the current on-going war in Ukraine has been taken into account is unclear (yet).

### 2.4.1. Migrant, Emigrant, Immigrant

There have been only few studies that focused their audience-based research within the journalism field solely on immigrants, migrants, or emigrants. Most of those that can be found on migration will have the terms ‘immigrant’ or ‘migrant’ in them. According to the Cambridge Online Dictionary a ‘migrant’ would be ‘a person that travels to a different country or place, often to find work’, whereas an ‘immigrant’ is defined as ‘a person who has come to a different country to live there permanently’. Another similar term is ‘emigrant’ which is understood as ‘a person who leaves a country permanently to live in another one’ (ibid.). Therefore, every immigrant and migrant is an emigrant first when they decide to leave their country of origin. Then it depends on the reason, if it is for a job, the emigrant becomes a migrant when entering their new host country. If the move is not job-specific, the emigrant would become an immigrant.

The most appropriate term for this study would be to use ‘immigrant’ as the participants of this study all moved voluntarily to Stockholm, Sweden and have been living here for more than one year making them somewhat integrated.

### 2.4.2. Immigrants’ News Habits

Widholm (2019, p.1472) found out in his study about transnational news consumption and digital content mobility with focus on the case of Sweden that transnational news consumption was more widespread among people with a background in other countries than Sweden. In total, more than a quarter of the Swedish population and nearly half of the younger generation consume news from other countries on a weekly basis. His study therefore shows that transnational news consumption is no longer restricted to a specific elite-segment within a society, which had been one of the main arguments in academic debates around the globalization of news. Furthermore, the consumption of transnational news is motivated with a willingness to understand the outside world through alternative perspectives, as opposed to dissatisfaction with content quality or trustworthiness by Swedish news outlets (ibid.). Another study conducted by Adman and Strömblad (2018) focused on immigrants’ knowledge about politics and public
affairs of their new home country. The case of Sweden has been used in this study as well. Findings suggest that generally immigrants living in Sweden know less about Swedish politics than natives, but that this difference also disappears with time. Their study suggests that the development of learning about Swedish politics - via education in Sweden, and by improved Swedish language skills - is an especially important explanation for the increase in political knowledge. Alencar and Deuze (2017) found out in their study on immigrants living in Spain and The Netherlands, that those tend to consume the news of their new host country mainly as a strategy to learn the new language and to get familiar to the new culture and their politics. It also depended a lot on the immigrants’ educational background and language skills, showing that the more educated would usually know several languages, which automatically increased the availability of news sources for them to choose from.

Although these previous studies have considered immigrants, they all lack the comparison on how the immigrants’ behaviour or news consumption might have changed since their migration to Sweden.

However, there are other studies that focus on individuals general change in behaviour during their migration experience, for example Tabor and Milfont (2011) conducted a study to develop a model that considers the voluntary migration experience before individuals would leave their country of origin and continue the acculturation process, based on the stages of change model by DiClemente and Prochaska (1982). As they stated there was a lack of studies considering the pre-migration phase of an individual, hence they established their resulting ‘migration change model’. It consists of four stages: precontemplation, contemplation, action, and acculturation as well as the possibility of return to the home country or onward migration. The first stage ‘precontemplation’ presents the period before the individual attempted or thought about moving abroad. This period would often involve developing professional skills and qualification, even though their intention might not have been to use those outside of their country of origin (Tabor & Milfont, 2011, p. 820). As second comes the ‘contemplation’ stage, which consists of an individual’s active examination of possibilities that include moving out of the country of origin, such as family related reasons, job offers, and/or lifestyle reasons. This period already begins before an opportunity has presented itself to make the move abroad possible, or immediately after an opportunity arises. ‘Action’ represents the third stage when the individual has made the decision to move abroad. Although the decision making could be seen as
a separate step, the actual ‘actions’ represent the steps that will be done shortly after that decision has been made, such as: informing family members and friends, applying for residence, purchasing a ticket of transport, and so on (ibid., p.821). The last stage ‘Acculturation’, which this study will be focused on, takes place once the individual has departed their country of origin and includes the process of integrating in the new country. The individual, therefore, makes the choice on how they would deal in a society that is different from their own. Their choices refer to maintaining one’s own culture and cultural identity and/or participating in the host culture and establishing new contacts (ibid., p.822).

Tabor and Milfont (2011) established further smaller stages in between those already mentioned, however, this study will keep the focus on mainly the fourth stage narrowing it down towards the individual’s change of (news) media consumption or avoidance behaviour since their migration to Stockholm.

3. Research Purpose

This chapter shows the research gap by referring to studies mentioned in the previous chapters, as well as stating the research aim and the research question(s).

3.1. Research Gap

Although the previous studies shown in the last chapter have considered immigrants in their studies, they all lack the comparison on how the immigrants’ behaviour or news consumption might have changed before, during, and after the migration process, which will be considered in this study considering the migration change model (explained under theoretical frameworks) by Tabor and Milfont (2011). Furthermore, several studies that considered news avoidance behaviour and their factors and/or influences, that were mentioned in the literature review have not considered the possibility that behaviour might change over time, based on certain events, experiences, or other moments in an individual’s life.

This study will contribute by taking one further step into filling the mentioned gaps, using theoretical models and frameworks presented in the literature review.
3.2. Research Aim & Question’s

The aim of this research is to find out whether news consumption/avoidance behavior is influenced during the migration process. The definition on ‘news’ is intentionally being left broad to analyze whether certain types of news are being consumed or avoided more and to find the reasons for this. Hence, news will be understood as anything from news reported by traditional mainstream media, and news reported by alternative media, to general news media content that the participants follow (whether it’s political related or not). When it comes to news avoidance, this study refers to news avoiders as anyone who consumes the news once a week or less. Due to the scope and limitations of this thesis, I focused on producing a case study based on young millennial immigrants, that were born between 1990 and 2000 and who are currently living in Stockholm, Sweden.

The following research questions emerged:

*RQ1: In what way have (young) millennials’ news consumption/avoidance behavior changed since their migration to Stockholm?*

*RQ2: And do their news avoidance strategies fit into the intentional/unintentional news avoidance model by Skovsgaard & Andersen (2021)?*

4. Methodology

This study should serve as a case study to refer to for future research. According to Bryman et al. (2021, p.59) a case study design involves detailed and intensive analysis of a single case, where research can be focused on an organization, life, family, or community. This study focuses on the community of immigrants living in Stockholm (born between 1990-2000), who all have been living in Sweden for at least one full year, and analyzes in what way their news consumption behaviour has changed since they moved to Sweden and under which circumstances they would avoid the news.

With the topic’s focus area of news avoidance, it would have been effective to use a mixed methods approach, consisting of a survey to filter out news avoiders in the young millennials’ sample. Once the news avoiders would have been established, they would have presented the new sample for the interviews. Due to time limitations and those of scope for this
thesis, I decided to focus on a pure qualitative study approach instead. Hence, focusing on young millennial immigrants living in Stockholm by analyzing how their news consumption habits may have changed since their migration, as well as exploring situations in which they tend to avoid news altogether.

4.1. Semi-structured Interviews

For this type of research in-depth interviews with a semi-structured interview design were chosen, as Hennink et al. (2020) state this type of research method is mainly used when seeking to capture people’s individual voices and stories. They can be used to identify the following (ibid., p.117):
- ‘How people make decisions;
- People’s own beliefs and perceptions;
- The motivation for certain behaviour;
- The meaning people attach to experiences;
- People’s feelings and emotions;
- The personal story or biography of a participant;
- In-depth information on sensitive issues;
- The context surrounding people’s lives.’

An in-depth interview consists of two parties who discuss specific topics in depth. They can also be described as ‘conversation with a purpose’ (ibid, p.116). It should be noted that this conversation is not a two-way dialogue as the focus is solely on the interviewee’s responses, whereas the interviewers’ role is in eliciting the story by asking questions and motivating the interviewee to share their perspectives. It is not only important to have questions asked and answered, both parties are also reacting to each other’s perceived appearances, personalities, and identities. Current situations and circumstances influence what and how the issues are being discussed during the interview (ibid.). In this case, it was important for this study to conduct all interviews in person and refrain from digital interviewing to be able to perceive participants body language and facial expressions.

The interview design focuses especially on the points on how people make the decision when consuming and avoiding news and what their potential strategies are, in what way they are
attached to their previous news consumption behavior back in their country of origin vs. once they migrated as well as the context behind their general news consumption.

4.2. Sampling

Although this study shall contribute in the research area of news avoidance with focus on the migration context, I decided that the sample is not exclusively identified as ‘news avoiders’ (using my definition of someone who consumes the news once a week or less and can therefore include both frequent and infrequent news consumers). Aharoni et al. (2021) have used the same sample considerations in their study to allow them to identify and analyze a range of avoidance expressions, in which field I’d like to contribute with – however – with a different case in mind: young millennial immigrants (born between 1990-2000) living in Stockholm. For this research project, a mix of snowball- and generic purposive sampling was approached, meaning that I used certain criteria and selected my interviewees based on them, as well as considered participants that were referred to me by other people (=snowball sampling) (Bryman et al., 2021). The following sample criteria considered for this study were:
- Participants have lived in Stockholm for at least one year with the intention to stay permanently
- Participants moved to Sweden voluntarily
- Participants were born between 1990-2000 and represent therefore a young millennial

The selection process is mainly based on connection and familiarity to the researcher (me). I made sure that the immigrants from my social circle come from different backgrounds, hence every interviewee of this study provides a different country of origin. Furthermore, I made sure that the sample is gender-balanced and that the interviewees do not know each other themselves. The intention behind this was that most would refer to their own original experience without referring to the other participants, as opposed to for example a couple that would have emigrated together that might share the same views through a shared reality concept within their social circle. For familiarization purposes, I have created the table below to give a short overview on the participants of this study:
Figure 3: Overview of participants of this study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Year of birth</th>
<th>Live in Sthlm for:</th>
<th>Country of Origin</th>
<th>Interview conducted on:</th>
<th>Interview duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thomas</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>4 yrs</td>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>20.04.22</td>
<td>33 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>7 yrs</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>20.04.22</td>
<td>26 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elsa</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>5 yrs</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>21.04.22</td>
<td>27 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>4,5 yrs</td>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>21.04.22</td>
<td>25 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conny</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>3 yrs</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>25.04.22</td>
<td>30 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karl</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>3 yrs</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>27.04.22</td>
<td>25 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ebba</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>3 yrs</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>29.04.22</td>
<td>34 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>2 yrs (incl. Breaks)</td>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>06.05.22</td>
<td>30 min</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3. Research Ethics

There are several aspects to consider when it comes to ethics within qualitative research. On the one hand, it must be remembered that online data does not only refer to social media but covers a whole host of sources that include discussion groups, websites, blogs, email, hyperlinks, instant messaging, and so on (Bryman et al., 2021). As the participants of this study have been contacted at first via social media messengers, such as: Facebook messenger, Whatsapp or via Instagram to ask if they would be interested in the first place to participate in this study. Once they confirmed, any further communication took place via my official university’s email account, until the actual interview was conducted in person.

On the other hand, it is encouraged to be culturally sensitive when conducting qualitative research that influences participants from other cultures. It might be a stretch when it comes to my study; however, as the immigrants I interviewed come from different national backgrounds, it might affect their answers as well as their attitude when it comes to answering the questions. They might feel politically obliged to consume the news, not daring to confess they would rather avoid them. It could be the other way around, too, where they officially avoid the news, however, there are certain topics of interest they might refuse to admit. As a researcher I will respect those aspects; the comfort and trust of the participants during the interviews will be prioritized over the gain of interesting data (Hennink et al., 2020).
There are certain risks when it comes to anonymity and confidentiality of the data collected. If an interview would be conducted at a café or other public area, I won’t have the power to control what others surrounding us might hear and tell from our interview. Most of the interviews were conducted in a hotel lobby in Stockholm, where we had the possibility to sit out of other people’s earshot. Those interviews conducted in a café [specifically chosen by me], I made sure that the interviews took place in a secluded corner of the café. Recordings of the interviews only started after the personal data of the participants (such as: name, country of origin, age) was collected, so that the recordings even afterwards wouldn’t be able to lead anyone [besides me] back to the participants. After the interviews, every participant was given a pseudonym (see table above under ‘sampling’). Before the actual interview, I emphasized the participants’ right to withdraw from the interview at any time and explained them the consent forms as well as what my study was about without mentioning too much to prevent indirect influence of the answers. The recorded data was kept confidential and deleted from the cloud/drive right after the finalization of the transcripts. Once the study was conducted, there was no need to keep the transcripts either, leaving only the findings, their quotes and the codebook shown in this thesis.

To include the participant more during the research process, I offered the possibility to contact me anytime during and after this research project by giving them my university’s but also my private email address for further questions.

4.5. Interview Design and Reflections

The interview itself was divided into four main parts: demographics, emigration, news consumption, and news avoidance. The fully written interview design can be found in the appendix, see Appendix A.

In the beginning of each interview demographical questions were asked, such as: “What’s your full name?”, “How old are you?”, “Where are you from originally?” This part was not recorded to secure anonymity of the participants, instead hand-written notes were made. I started recording the interviews from the second part (the emigration part) onwards, which included motivations and reasons on what made the participants leave their countries of origin and move to Sweden in the first place and for how long they have been living in Stockholm.
The news consumption (and third) part of the interview design included most of the total questions, such as: the usage of sources and devices, news consumption routines, language(s) used when checking the news, as well as other (news-) media interests which do not involve politics or mainstream media and whether they would consider themselves being informed. These questions were asked twice, once relating to the time the participants have lived in their country of origin, and the second time relating to how it has been since they moved to Sweden. The fourth and last part of the interview design was focused on news avoidance and whether there have been situations in the participants’ life that would motivate them to avoid the news and which news avoidance strategies they used. I was careful to not directly mention “news avoidance” and “avoiding” in the first question to determine whether there has been a situation or not. Hence, the following questions relating to News Avoidance were asked:

1. “Can you remember a situation or time in your life where you didn’t want to stay up-to-date?”

Once the participant has explained a situation and talked about certain topics that were avoided or the causes for it, I stated my second question relating to news avoidance:

2. “In those situations, what were your strategies to avoid them?”

Each interview was unique and there have been follow-up questions asked individually, which were not part of the interview design. Moreover, all interviews were held in English except one, which was conducted in German. As one interviewee was from Germany - the same country where I am from - it felt unnatural to conduct the interview in a different language. Hence, the quotes that are used from that interview have been translated to English by me except the media sources that have been mentioned as those are the official names of certain newsrooms and channels.

The interview design served mostly as a guidance to cover certain points with the core questions being: “What made you move to Sweden in the first place?”, in what way their news consumption behaviour did change since moving to Sweden, considering: sources, usage of devices and languages when checking the news, as well as their news checking routine, and whether there has been a situation in their life which made them “not wanting” to check the news at all.

One of the biggest challenges while conducting the interviews was to stick to the time limit of max. 30 minutes (which was chosen to create the same requirement for each participant), as often follow-up questions emerged, and the interviewees remembered many things that were...
somewhat or somehow relating to the topics of the questions. Contrary, there were also some participants who focused on only replying to the specifically asked questions without elaborating by themselves. This is something I could not predict nor prepare to very well, as I couldn’t know which interviewee would fall into which category. However, despite those challenges, I managed to gather data and hopefully succeeded to explain them in a correct manner in the analysis chapter.

4.6. Data Analysis and Analytical Tools

The interviews were conducted in person and part of the interviews were held at a hotel lobby, another part at a café [chosen by me], one interview conducted in my home, and one at one of the interviewees working place. Once the interviews were conducted and (after receiving consent) recorded, I transcribed the collected data for analysis purposes. For transcribing the interviews, the web version of Microsoft Word has been used, where it was possible to upload the recording and then Word would transcribe the recording for you. To make sure the resulting text was accurate, I manually listened to each recording once more, cross-checking and completing the transcripts.

The coding process started once the first few interviews had been conducted to eliminate potential weaknesses within the interview design. A range of codes have been established before the data collection process - the so called ‘deductive’ codes (Hennink et al., 2020). They have been formed before the interviews were conducted by focusing on potential themes, that emerged from the theories in the previous chapters, such as: news avoidance (code: avoidance) and news consumption strategies (code: consumption strategies) just to name a few. A full list of emerged codes can be found in the codebook, see Appendix 2. The most efficient way to code I found was to use colour-coding, meaning I assigned one colour (whether the text itself or as a marker) to one code and then I read through the transcripts one by one using the correct colour to mark the belonging text. It is possible to start with one code and then read through all transcripts, before starting with the next code. This would mean one has to read all transcripts equal the amounts of existing codes. Instead, I took the transcript from my first interview and while I read through the text, I marked the important and coding-related passages straight away. In this case, I considered every code simultaneously while reading one transcript after the other. There were few situations where certain text passages stood out, but I was not able to assign them to one of the codes. In
those cases, I marked them for reviewing at a later point. When I found similar text passages in
the other transcripts, I knew that a new code could be created out of those texts. Hence, a few
‘inductive’ codes emerged (Hennink et al., 2020), meaning those that are created during and after
the data collection process. In addition to that, text passages often aligned to several codes at the
same time, which made it quite difficult to rely on colour-coding alone.
In those cases, I have used and categorized the same quotes for several categories and codes,
which I have collected in a codebook including all the quotes and codes that have been used for
this study. However, when it came to writing the analysis part, I have not used the same direct
quotes for several categories, but instead used them for the category that was mostly presented.
For the data analysis, I decided that a thematic analysis would do this study most justice, as it
synthesizes ‘to the emergent properties of the data and those themes of interest that are actively
chosen’ (Bryman et al., 2021, p. 538).

4.7. Reliability and Validity

According to Bryman et al. (2021) reliability would be the degree to which a measure of
a concept is stable. Or in other words, reliability shows us in what way results might differ if this
study would be repeated under the same conditions. For each interview transcript the same
coding procedure has been used, however, starting with the first I have tried to keep a text
passage of one to two sentences for one code only, but later realized with the other transcripts,
that often one sentence alone could be implemented to several codes. Once realized, I went back
to the first interview and repeated the coding process, considering multiple codes for shorter text
passages. It should be noted that the coding process has not been cross-checked by another
person, and therefore the results rely on my interpretation solely, based on the codes that were
previously conducted. Furthermore, I have been choosing the participants foremost from my own
social circle (although they don’t know each other), and those remaining have been referred to
me by other people that are familiar to me.

Another important aspect is language. As almost every interview has been conducted in
English, there is a chance that misunderstandings unknowingly arise for example if one
interviewee uses certain words that I would use in a different context or with a different
meaning. English is both mine and the interviewees second language only. This has only been
possible to avoid with the interview that was held in German - as it is mine and the interviewee’s (Ebba) mother tongue.

Another measurement of quality would be ‘validity’, which ‘is concerned with the integrity of the conclusions generated from a piece of research.’ (Bryman et al., 2021, p. 40). It should be noted that this study provides solely internal validity, not external validity. The difference between those two terms being that external validity in studies is expected to apply more generally to wider groups of people who would be represented by the sample group involved. However, the sample group of this study can only represent the participants themselves, which belong to a larger group of ‘immigrants living in Stockholm, born between 1990-2000, living here for at least one year’. The results of this study can only give an indication for a larger representative study (ibid.).

5. Results and Analysis

This chapter presents the findings based on occurring patterns using a thematic analysis. It will follow a certain theme similar to the order in which the questions were asked during the interviews and, therefore, shows general news perception and motivation of the participants, their strategies for obtaining news media content, their knowledge about- and trust in sources, reasons to avoid news content and their strategies, as well as how they incorporate news content into their everyday life.

5.1. Staying ‘up to date’ – a responsibility or a given?

Only two of the participants stated that they feel more informed since they live in Sweden than back in their countries of origin: Poland and Germany, while the other six participants would either consider themselves being less informed since living in Sweden (N=3), stated it would be about the same (N=2), and one participant redirected his answers and therefore gave no clear statement whether he would consider himself being more informed or not (N=1).

Ebba - who is from Germany - has made quite a jump from being a news avoider to now following several news channels, whether it’s about local Swedish news, or international news including German news. Her main motivations for the drastic shift resulted mainly in her wanting to ‘know what’s going on around her’. Another reason why she started following the
Swedish news was to learn the language. This has been one of the main reasons for other participants as well. Karl mentioned that he appreciates that obtaining news content in Sweden is free without having to pay for it and that there are several sources for immigrants to check in ‘easy Swedish’ or ‘lättsvenska’, such as 8sidor and Radio Sweden. These sources often get introduced by the governmental funded school for immigrants SFI (=Swedish for immigrants). Karl, Thomas, and David have gone to SFI or are currently students at SFI. Out of these three only Karl actively mentioned that he got introduced to the easy speaking Swedish news sources by SFI. David only recently heard about it from his partner (who also went to SFI in the past and used news content for learning the language). Thomas only uses Aftonbladet as a Swedish speaking source (specifically their Youtube channel) and as it is not reported in ‘easy Swedish’ he added that he wouldn’t look long at it due to the language barrier. This shows that even though SFI seems to promote easy Swedish speaking news sources, it might depend on who is teaching and on who is listening while this is mentioned. Considering the sociocultural relevance, time, and space dimension of the phenomenology model (Bengtsson & Johansson, 2021), it shows that the participants care about their new country and they try to stay up-to-date, each in his/her own way, but the circumstances have made them add locally based news sources to their media repertoires. As it was established in the theory part of this paper, the phenomenology of news model can be aligned with Swart's et al. (2017) media repertoires. In this case, when it comes to their motivation and reason for consuming Swedish news (in Swedish) in the first place, they would grab the opportunity for improving their language skills or might chose to actively ignore it (when it becomes ‘too much’ for them, or they are not in the mood). In this case, all tried to actively interact with their mentioned Swedish sources, which some of them would have not done in the past (besides Thomas who actively uses his free time staying up-to-date in the news world), referring to the third set of (Swart et al., 2017) repertoires = laid-back repertoires.

Another significant finding was when Ebba stated she felt she had to fulfill a certain ‘role’ of being informed, so she could pass on the information to others in her social circle. Her family living in Germany would ask her often - especially during the Covid-19 pandemic - how the situation was/is in Sweden. This made Ebba look up news related things more often. On another note, people in Sweden would see her as a Germany-expert and often ask her things like ‘How is this being handled in Germany?’ where in the beginning of her stay she wasn’t able to
answer accordingly as she hasn’t been following any German news sources. Those situations prompted her to want to be informed in both: Sweden and Germany.

There wasn’t a person to whom I could’ve relied on, who would tell me what is happening in the place I lived in. And in a sense, that was good, because one will eventually find out how easy it is to obtain information [...] that they are more concise through social media. [...] But it depends on comfort, because there was no one who told me from the beginning ‘This is how it’s done’, I have to figure it out on my own. - Ebba

(translated from German)

For Ebba, it seems, her acculturation process (Tabor & Milfont, 2011) did not just result in being acculturated in Sweden, but also to have a better connection to her home country Germany, as she has only been staying informed on Germany news as well, since living in Sweden. Her cultural identity consists strongly of both countries, and although she is generally more interested in the Swedish politics than the German one, she believes that her increase in news consumption might be due to different phases in life. As she recently bought an apartment with her partner, they now follow financial related news in Sweden out of worry the interest rate might increase. This again can be referred to a phenomenology of news, as with every change that happens in one’s ‘lifeworld’ - in Ebba’s case: having bought an apartment - would change her intention on which news topics to focus on - in Ebba’s case: financial developments. In general, it would explain, why the others like Karl and Thomas might have been less interested in the news of their home country. When Karl was 18 years old, he moved from Pakistan to Europe by himself, having lived in Cyprus and Germany before he moved to Sweden. Before his first emigration, he had been quite young and generally not interested in staying up to date. Even when he lived in those two countries before Sweden, he wasn’t informed in the way he now is in Sweden, as his acculturation process (Tabor & Milfont, 2011) consists of intensively learning the Swedish language and getting to know other Swedish-learning people and local natives, while staying informed about local news and constantly learning about the new culture. His intention to stay permanently in Sweden drives his motivation, while during his time in Cyprus and Germany, he
knew he’d only be there for a certain amount of time and he never felt as comfortable as he does now in Sweden, therefore his intention was never permanent (Bengtsson & Johansson, 2021). During his ‘rather short’ stay in Cyprus, he was still quite young and followed other interests most of the time. He moved to Germany for a job then, and tried to follow the local news there, but as German news content is not translated (in any other language) on TV, nor radio, it wasn’t possible to follow the content due to the language barrier. This is something, Karl clearly appreciates while living in Sweden. It seemed that he quite enjoys staying up to date:

I like [.] the country. [.] They really give the positive news, especially on media. I mean media is free here. People have their voice, but still […] compared to my country it's much better. It's horrible in my country, I mean. I didn't have so much experience [while] living there, but now I'm just following [the news] literally every day. - Karl

Although Karl could not remember whether Pakistani news were available without pay when he was still living there, he emphasized the advantages when it comes to having access to news media without paying for it here in Sweden. The quality of the country was equalized with the quality of the media in this case. Karl commented that there have been many political scandals in Pakistan and the spread of fake news would be quite high, therefore it was hard to distinguish which sources can be trusted and which not. Considering again the ‘laid-back repertoires’ by Swart et al. (2017), Karl’s motivation on checking the news in Sweden result foremost on his appreciation that he can do so without paying for it, and while comparing to the news coverage in his home country, it seems he finds news coverage in Sweden, generally, more trustworthy.

Both Mark and Conny have stated that they have been staying up to date more in their home countries than they do now in Sweden, although for different reasons it seemed. For Conny it was more of generally staying informed of what was happening in France: “[…] there was a time in France when I was actively checking like once a day […].” Whereas Mark stated a more concrete reason:
A bit more, it was mostly because the political situation was very tense [in Argentina]. There was going to be a change of government from left to right [. ] It was [. ] political chaos. […] It [the situation in Argentina] is the same, but I stopped to care about it as much [since living in Sweden]. - Mark

Mark’s attitude shows an affirmation towards regionally and nationally oriented repertoires - he had been more involved in perceiving news content back in Argentina as he was living there, whereas living on the other side of the world now gives him a certain distance to the politics of his home country, which he gladly avoids.

Linda and Elsa both did not change their news motivation or perception since they moved to Sweden. Elsa would still lack the same amount of motivation when it comes to checking news regularly. One of her main reasons is health-related, as she suffers from an eye condition which prevents her from staring longer on a screen than she has or needs to. Due to this condition, which is part of her life, she reduces her screen-time as much as possible, and only does ‘necessary things’ on screen, and watching news-content is not one of them. However, when it comes to bigger topics - such as the Covid-19 pandemic or the war taking place in Ukraine - it would motivate her to seek out information about those topics in a concised manner, preferring to read news reports in a ‘bullet-form’ format instead of contextualized longer texts (Bengtsson & Johansson, 2021; Swart et al., 2017):

I don't have that same incentive to look it up in Sweden either, and I think also the combination of the fact that I'm slightly less motivated to look up things. Or in general, […] unless it's something massive […]. - Elsa

Linda’s news motivation and perception stayed about the same as well, but quite on an opposite level compared to Elsa’s, as she feels she always knew (and still knows) the most important things happening and follows certain news pages and sources, which she has subscribed to receive newsletters from. More on how the participants obtain their news content will be presented in the next sub-chapter.
5.2. Obtaining News Content and its Challenges

All participants would consume news content mainly on their phones, except Thomas who would mainly use his stationary computer, which would also be the second most used device for other participants in combination with a laptop. Few (N=2) would turn on their TV for certain news content, but none would read physical newspapers or consume news through ‘physical’ prints, unless it was for school related matters, according to Elsa. All would consume their news or general media content via digital sources, whether it’s through blogs, websites, and/or social media. These answers all relate to the participants preference of staying ‘mobile’ even when checking the news, as well as having the possibility to check their news ‘anytime and anywhere’ without a hassle. As almost everyone brings their phone with them at all times these days which in itself speaks for the including ‘routinization’ that occurs, where participants tend to check their news either in addition to scrolling their social media feed or to replace their social media consumption with their news consumption all together (Boczkowski et al., 2018).

Besides Thomas, none of the other participants would say that they are willing to pay for obtaining news content. Especially independent journalism relies on funds by their readers, such as The Local - an online news outlet which produces their news content solely in English and has content produced relating to several European Countries with Sweden included. Thomas is the only one who pays for a subscription, in this case: for The Local. Additionally, he follows certain Youtube channels for global as well as local news relating to Poland and Sweden. He is specifically fond of channels that provide more of a satirical approach to Polish media and enjoys the entertainment part of political news, as he would otherwise get rather ‘angry’. Twitter would also be one of his news sources, however, the content he’d find there is mostly ‘too short’, and he’d go back to retrieving articles through Facebook or watching lengthy videos on Youtube. For navigating all his sources, he mainly uses Facebook and relies on the algorithm to introduce him to certain news content. Facebook itself serves as a news board, which he would have always open on his stationary computer (during work for example): “[…] It is a routine, but it's not [...] like dedicated to checking news [...] it's dedicated to checking updates on various things [on Facebook] [...]”, Thomas said.

Elsa, on the other hand, does not have a routinized manner when it comes to obtaining news content. She rather depends on ‘everyday sociability’ especially through her mother - who lives in the UK - and who would keep her updated about what is going on in the UK. When a
larger news topic arises (as previously mentioned, for example: the Covid-19 pandemic or the current war), she would rely on specific sources to check on specific topics. Her process aligns with the ‘texto-material’ phenomenon, as she, too, would mostly look up news on her phone (Boczkowski et al., 2018). Though she doesn’t seem to rely on her phone to stay constantly connected, but rather uses it for intentional purposes and avoids ‘unnecessary screen time’ as much as possible. Regarding the current war taking place in Ukraine for example she would check on Al Jazeera, whereas for any news content that is Sweden related, she would go to SVT, and anything UK related she would mostly find out through her mother. David doesn’t actively seek out news content either but has learned early on through his family to never check just one source of a topic as one cannot trust a single source. He explained that his family in India used to subscribe to several newspapers - about three from each of different news companies - that were delivered to their home every day and reading those was part of their morning routine: “So having multiple sources is good, that's what I've learned about politics. Don't trust one source.”, David stated.

What stood out in his case was the importance ‘everyday sociability’ would have on him, as the topics he tends to stay up to date on don’t align with his own interests, but mainly with interests of those in his social circle. As Boczkowski et al. (2018, p.3533) put it, an individual would be “partly motivated to read about current events as a result of their wish to interact and be exposed to the information created and distributed by others”. As an example, David explains that back in India when he went to graduate school, his friends were cricket fans (as it’s a common sport in India), and David himself had only kept himself up to date about cricket news, as his friends would constantly talk about it. Since he moved to Sweden, however, he has stopped checking cricket news, as it doesn’t seem to be relevant enough for him anymore. Instead, he follows formula 1 (car racing) news, which is a popular topic at his work, as many colleagues of him are formula 1 fans. A similar pattern resulted from answers by Ebba. As established earlier, Ebba felt more responsible in a sense to stay more informed about both - Sweden and Germany - since she moved to Stockholm. It started through her external social circle, as people kept asking her how things were in the respective country and people in Sweden expected her to be an expert for anything Germany related, whereas her family and friends back home considered her a personal source for anything Sweden related.
Furthermore, Ebba uses her phone mainly, whether it’s for obtaining news content or entertainment, such as watching movies. During working hours, she would use her computer mostly, but outside of work hours she uses her phone to access her social media. On her social media platforms Facebook and Instagram, she is following several mainstream news outlets. For Sweden, she mentioned: *Aftonbladet, Expressen, Dagens Nyheter*, as a “few examples”. In addition, she reads articles produced by *The Local* for Sweden, but only those she has free access to without paying for it. Then for Germany, she follows: *Tagesschau, Funk, and Spiegel TV*. She also mentions Spotify as a source for podcasts, and when it comes to news content related matters, she would listen to *Radio Sweden*. She was one of the few who seemed quite enthusiastic about having access to everything from obtaining news content to entertainment, such as watching a movie through her phone, which can be aligned with Boczkowski's et al. (2018, p.3533) texto-materiality phenomenon: ‘[…] the almost constant connection to social media platforms, and the recurrent access to news stories on those platforms’, as well as ‘routinization’ where access to social media is a habit in itself, which drives news consumption more than vice versa (ibid.). The only other person, who seemed rather enthusiastic about having ‘easy access’ to news sources through her phone, but mostly via social media was Linda. Though she would mainly use her phone for obtaining news content, newsletters by mainstream news media (such as: *The New York Times*) she would read on her laptop through her work email address. She has specifically only subscribed to newsletters relating to news content via her work email - which seemed to be an old habit, as she used to work for a company for which she had to summarize news content. And although, she doesn’t work at that company anymore, the habit of accessing newsletters (with specifically mainstream news content) through her work email address continued as a habit. In this case, I’d like to take the concept of ‘routinization’ (ibid.) even further, not only considering access to social media and its habits, but rather previous news consumption habits which manifest themselves, that even if the situation or new ‘lifeworld’ (Bengtsson & Johansson, 2021) wouldn’t require those habits, Linda still chooses to continue with her old habit on purpose.

Karl - similarly to Thomas - obtains some of his news-content via Facebook, where he follows a Pakistani news source [*Express News*] as well as one source for global related matters. David follows different Instagram channels for Indian politics to stay updated occasionally: ‘[…] they just say things that are facts, which is great.’ However, he never actively seeks out
those channels, but he did actively choose to follow them on his Instagram, therefore relying on the algorithm - like Thomas - to show him relevant news content. In fact, 7 of 8 participants mentioned they would come across certain news content through their social media channels by either following mainstream news channels or by seeing traditional mainstream channel’s posts that were re-posted by individuals. As scrolling through social media is a during-the-day habit, most participants did not indicate a preferred time of checking the news, which refers to Boczkowski’s et al. (2018) ‘tempora-spatial coordination of anytime and anywhere’. Only Ebba indicated certain situations, which she would use to check on the news, such as the commute to work. With the other participants it felt more as ‘whenever’ they would feel like scrolling through their social media, which could be during work (e.g. Thomas) or just to pass time (e.g. David).

With similar intention as Elsa, to only check the news once enough interest or motivation has been established, Mark would perhaps spend a day to actively look for news relating to a specific topic, e.g.: the war in Ukraine and find information through googling - and therefore, he’d come across several different sources, but without actively sorting them nor actively choosing a preferred source (as he didn’t have any). He mentioned that it was only by chance, while watching a streamer on Twitch, who then mentioned during her stream about the war (in Ukraine). Twitch is a similar platform to Youtube with focus on gaming content and a streamer is someone who streams him-/herself while playing a game for others to watch. That was when Mark first heard about the war, and soon it ‘exploded’ quite quickly as everyone was talking about it. Both Mark and Elsa stood out the strongest when it came to reading up on certain news topics only once they had been introduced to them by external sources (whether through social media or other persons) and therefore share Boczkowski’s et al. (2018) ‘everyday sociability’ key trait, that showed that interviewees were partly motivated to read about current events as a result of their wish to interact and be exposed to the information created and distributed by others. Only few (N=2) participants have their go-to-sources or look up news content on different alternative media channels on Youtube. Some of the channels mentioned by the participants were: TLDR news (focused on EU) by David and Aftonbladet by Thomas.

Although the Brexit was the original motivation for David to follow the TLDR news channel, which according to him started off during the Brexit, but continued even after to produce more general news content, he continued to follow them and occasionally watches their
videos. When it comes to Indian related sources, David would mostly receive information on news content via his friends and family living in India or through various channels he follows on Instagram. Conny would use alternative media sources, such as Instagram, mainly for personally relevant media topics, as well as the occasional gossip news, such as the Swedish crown princess’ birthday. Both Conny and David follow, in addition, Sweden related channels on Instagram more with the initial intention to learn the language, as there are channels that post a new Swedish word per day with an explanation and would occasionally post political news content (e.g. when Sweden got their 1st female prime minister) or general news (e.g. crown princess’ birthday).

Linda was the only one who mentioned reading so called ‘blogs’. A blog can be referred to a website that has been created by an individual, an influencer, or even an organization. She does sometimes read up on blogs relating to specific contents, such as financial and marketing - she wouldn’t consider this news though, as it is more about the general topics that interest her and she wants to stay up to date in the areas she was professionally active in and wants to be so in the future, including: marketing, finance, and tourism.

A further significant finding resulted in a pattern that instead of going or checking certain sources themselves, majority of the participants (N=6) would come across news content through their friends, colleagues or family members. Some (N=3) mentioned that those people in their social circle are quite ‘politically active’, whereas Elsa specifically mentions that she trusts her mom’s perception of the news, as their opinions when it comes to news matters seem to align:

I'm mostly considering my mum [...] she had this similar political stance to me that there's some things where I'd be like, OK, I feel like I could look this up a bit more because I'm not 100% sure, but most of the time I feel like my mum has like [...] cause my mum is quite level minded and source critical herself. So, in general like [...] yeah, she usually knows [...] has some kind of an idea. - Elsa

Ebba used to cross-check news information she obtained from Swedish news sources with German news sources at the beginning of her stay to double check whether she understood it all
correct due to the language barrier, especially when it came to the pandemic. It was interesting to her, how Sweden was portrayed in German news and the other way around. She used those sources in both languages to create her own opinion towards pandemic-restrictions and the different strategies that were undertaken by those two countries.

A significant result is that all participants - even those who read the news every day - would come across certain news-find-me situations, whether this would be through social media or other person (e.g.: family, work colleagues, friends).

I usually get a lot [of news information] from my mum. When we [...] when I talk to my mom like OK, did you hear about this? Did you hear about that? [...] I do get it [news updates] from people that I'm following. So, my next thing to say was social media. I get a lot of news from social media [...] what other people posted, reposted, [and through] browsing content [...]. - Linda

As in Linda’s case, she didn’t follow any official news channels on her Instagram, but her friends (or general individuals) she follows on Instagram would post news-relating content or re-post content that was originally published by an official news source website. Hence, her statement would still fall into the news-find-me concept as a strategy that only indirectly involved the news media. Another example of someone being informed these days but still encountering NFM situations is Ebba. Before she moved to Sweden or during the beginning of her stay, she would get most of newsworthy information via her friends and family. Every time they informed her about certain events, she felt somewhat guilty and thought she should probably inform herself more about certain things: “[...] And then I would tell them: Oh god, I really have to inform myself more about those world events. I had this quite often. Because I never kept myself updated. [...]”, Ebba stated.

As already presented in a previous chapter, Ebba’s news consumption behaviour changed quite a lot since those times. She has her go-to sources and is informed, however, every now and then news would find her through her partner. Living both together in an apartment, she stated that her partner would consume news via Youtube and would sometimes watch those on TV.
Although, she wouldn’t watch those herself, if she’s home, she’d indirectly consume those with him and get information about other topics or just different perspectives on current events. Besides family, few participants mentioned friends and/or working colleagues as ‘sources’ on where they would get information about certain events with one example being David who said the following: “[…] big things you will hear somehow anyway from your friends or colleagues […] but I don’t go looking for it, I guess.”.

It was at his work office where David heard first about the Ukrainian war, he mentioned that his boss would end the meeting with a curse on Vladimir Putin. Mark, on the other hand, seems in general not interested in obtaining news content nor staying up to date, but he mentions a friend of his, who is a volunteer for Ukrainian refugees here in Stockholm and she would tell him ‘things about her day’. His Argentinian friends back in his home country would also keep him updated (whether he asks or not) about what’s happening and Mark mentions that the presidential elections would be coming up soon. They would start debating on the positives and negatives of the politicians and who should be the new president. Another election that recently took place is the one in France.

[..] mostly on Facebook, because of the French elections that happened in the past week and for which the last part was actually yesterday. So, I hear about this. I can hear sometimes about some political news in Sweden, but it's very rare and I also don't try to look into it because this is not something that I like actually really keep informed about. - Conny

Like Mark, Conny is not especially interested to keep informed about political situations back in her home country, but she comes across certain updates anyways, whether it’s through her Facebook news page or friends and family that live in France. An outstanding response from Conny was the emphasis whether she expected to be informed through other people or not. There are some, like: Mark, David, Thomas, and Elsa who shared the attitude of being informed somehow, at some point, anyways. They seem not to actively rely on someone else to inform them, but find it inevitable nevertheless.
In Conny’s case, she wants the exact opposite. She chose to not inform herself and turned her back on French news (but also general news updates), because of her previous negative experiences. Her aim was to focus on her life, and not to let news consume her days, and she seems confident in her decision.

It's not even a question of whether it will come to you or not. It's your responsibility to keep yourself aware of what is going on. And not rely on others to actually give it to you because you cannot even trust that people are giving the information as they should.

Sometimes they will change it, [...] but not even consciously so. It's your own responsibility and I know that if I'm not aware of what's going on right now, it's my own fault. It's my own choice because I choose not to be too involved [about] what's going on.

- Conny

Considering the established findings of this section in alignment with Boczkowski’s et al. (2018) key traits that would characterize young adults’ practices: 1. Texto-materiality of the phenomenon, 2. tempora-spatial coordination of anytime and anywhere, 3. routinization, and 4. everyday sociability, I find that those key traits shouldn’t stand on their own, as they overlap quite significantly. As ‘texto-materiality’ refers to the omnipresent use of mobile devices for various communication forms of daily life, referring to the almost constant connection to social media platforms and their access to news stories on those platforms, so does ‘tempora-spatial coordination of anytime and anywhere’: By being ‘mobile’ one has the possibility to consume general (news) media content anywhere, where there is a sufficient internet connection. The trait of ‘routinization’ also refers to checking the news ‘while on Facebook or Twitter’, showing that all these three traits refer to being connected (to the internet, especially social media) and accessing their news content via social media platforms. This makes me wonder, why these three mentioned key traits (texto-materiality, tempora-spatial, routinization) are presented as separate traits instead of one main one.
The only key trait that deserves to stand on its own, in my opinion, is the one of ‘Everyday sociability’ as this refers to individuals being motivated or interested about current events due to distribution by others and therefore doesn’t put its focus solely on social media alone.

5.3. News Knowledge and Trust in News Sources

Although specific questions about knowledge about- or trust in news sources were not part of the interview guide, majority of the participants (N=6) picked up on those themes on their own during our interviews.

A pattern that stood out to me was that many mentioned they had certain knowledge about media sources in their countries of origin, and therefore knew which sources they would trust and which not. When it comes to Sweden, they lack the same kind of knowledge and therefore seem insecure when it comes to certain sources and mainly know about the big ones, such as SVT and Aftonbladet.

[...] the second I see an article posted by the Sun I know like: OK, no don't look at that and you know it's gonna be like messed up, but I don't have that same knowledge for Sweden. I don't really know [...] which are the better newspapers? - Elsa

Elsa has been living in Stockholm for 5 years now and kept coming every summer for a specific event for the past ten years. Although, she’s quite familiar with Stockholm and its surroundings, the lack of knowledge when it comes to news source is still there. One can wonder then, how this can be, if one is already fluent in Swedish as well as has a social circle including native Swedes, as Elsa does. An explanation could be the lack of interest and motivation, as Elsa stated herself: "[...] I don't have that same incentive to look it up in Sweden either, and I think also the combination of the fact that I'm slightly less motivated to look up things. [...]”.

Going back to a more personal way of learning how or which news sources to trust, David, whose family received three newspapers from different news companies per day as well as had the routine of watching news on TV, said:
[...] And my dad is fond of saying that, you know, don't trust one newspaper because they're always being paid by somebody in politics, so it pays to like follow multiple newspapers so that you get different sides of things. - David

Mark was the only one, who shared his rather negative image towards journalism. He criticized that in a way, that there would be no back and forth communication possible between the source and the consumer. As an example, he explains that if a journalist would say something, which doesn’t match exactly the facts he came across, he thinks there would be ‘a level of truth’ missing:

[...] It's a bit too much because there is no way to question it in an open format, so I think that this is the main issue I have with journalism. [...] There's no accountability that they go through and this is in all the levels, right? [...] But if you check all the news channel that spreads misinformation. [...] there was no backlash to those millions [of news outlets], ehm, and so it's like there's a lack of accountability. – Mark

As an example, Mark refers to the backlash Joe Rogan has faced. Rogan runs a podcast, which Mark listens to and his critique above can be understood in the way that when it comes to individuals who do their research and disseminate the information, it’s often very interactive. Meaning that the listeners may contact the podcaster anytime and there is this ‘follower’ basis, that also exists in social media in general. When the individual would do a mistake, the backlash and critique is often quite enormous, as every follower would have the possibility to share their opinion and send out critique. This isn’t exactly the case when it comes to news outlets, as they have a certain status, which gives them more of a ‘shield’ or protection against several thousands of people’s critical opinions on them. I am not saying, this is true, but mainly explaining on how I understood Mark’s statement by providing an interpretive example. As Mark established during our interview, he needs a ‘deeper connection’ first to trust someone, if that someone happens to be part of a news organization, he would most likely consider following them and their content.
However, it seems what he would need in addition is more transparency. Thomas mentioned something similar when it comes to transparency:

[...] I do try to follow sources that are very careful with their commentary and are capable of admitting when they made a mistake. Koroluk is one of them. [...] similarly Adam Something on YouTube is another commentary that has a similar point of view

[...] - Thomas

In Conny’s case, once she learned more about certain news outlets, she got rather confused, not knowing anymore whether the news sources she was looking into were ‘really objective’ or not: “[...] And like maybe that actually contributed in me just leaving this on the side and slowly not looking into information.”

In other cases, the participants Linda, Karl and Thomas mentioned the ‘political chaos’ back in their home country which taught them just by observing that certain political figures would sponsor certain news outlets, who would then produce news content in their favour. Linda stated that she gained her knowledge about how the media world works mainly through her studies, and she never feels behind when it comes to news content, as she is aware that she receives multiple perspectives - especially through social media - than just the Bulgarian news outlets.

5.4. News Avoidance and their Strategies

The majority of participants (N=6) stated at least one reason, whether it was a specific event or certain memories that contributed to their news avoidance behavior (or attitude). Many stated their strategies and only few mentioned what it would take for them to change their mind about the news industry. Only two participants - Elsa and Mark - stated they would not ‘actively avoid’ certain news topics given in any situation. However, both would fall under the category of being a news avoider per definition for this study.

This chapter provides the correlating findings to the model by Skovsgaard and Andersen (2020). Most of the causes for news avoidance mentioned by the participants (N=5) was by far remembering certain situations back in their country of origin. The most similar cause that was
mentioned, was that they grew up with their parents watching the news routine-based once a day on TV, always at the same time. It might be that they were too young to understand, but all of them shared the response of not being ‘interested in that’ and once they moved out of the house, they embraced the possibility of choosing themselves in this case to not watch the news on TV, skipping this routine all together. Some of them (N=3) switched their news consumption on purely digital news media instead, as described in a previous sub-chapter, and some of them (N=2) decided to turn back on news media all together, whether it’s digital and/or especially physical media.

My father used to be someone who watched a lot of the news. And you know those channels when it comes, it's always [...] the same thing. You have 10 minutes of news and it's repeating all that time and I got enough of this. It was so much negativity, then when I moved to Sweden, I decided [...] to not actually keep myself informed of what is going on.

- Conny

Besides having the overall impression of ‘news being too negative’ (the first cause of intentional news avoidance according to the model), Conny also stated that because of her bad experience with politics in France, she always has this thought in the back of her mind which causes her ‘low trust in news’: “[...] And every time I look into an article that's about politics, it just echoes this [...] they're the same [people] as the people they say they're not [politicians on TV]."

Political-related causes were also echoed by Thomas and Mark, who both stated the ‘system’ in their home countries to be ‘corrupt’, which emphasizes the low trust they had in general when it comes to authority figures, including news media outlets. In Thomas’ case he stated that he specifically tries to avoid Polish politics, but usually ends up reading on it anyways - whether this is due to the algorithm online, the lack of discipline, or being too curious to resist was not specifically stated - but he would get angry afterwards and would need to remind himself that he doesn’t live in Poland anymore. He also used to check updates on the Ukrainian war by the minute, but the pictures shown ‘felt too much’ and it was ‘exhausting’, so he stopped checking the most frequent news by simply scrolling past them on his news feed (mainly referring to his
Facebook page). He prefers now to rather look at ‘raw information’ preferably without any war pictures shown and keeps himself up-to-date through more ‘bigger updates’ relating to the war. It should be noted that the cause of ‘news overload’ aligns in this case with ‘news is too negative’, as the participants were quite able to handle negative news content up to a certain point, but once it became too much or only “those kind of news”, they tend to feel negatively affected by them, followed by the need to shut down their news consumption all together.

In Mark’s case he clearly stated that he would not actively avoid the news, meaning that it wouldn’t be intentional. Instead of getting tired of the news, he got more or less tired of the corrupted system he noticed back in his home country:

[…] Not to the level that how to actively avoid it. [...] I mean in this political time of Argentina [...] I got tired but it was not in this way, but it was more you know like. We have a very corrupted system down there, so that is what I got tired of rather than the news itself. - Mark

During the interview with Mark, I noticed that he was the one participant who manages to avoid most of what’s going on and doesn’t come across certain news in any way, as his general social media consumption is quite low. This distinguished his behaviour as a news consumer - or rather avoider - by far from that of the other participants who were all somewhat between the middle by being a news avoider on the one hand, but still getting informed or coming across news content - even though through mostly news-find-me, which will be elaborated in the later part of this section. The causes for unintentional news avoidance, for example through personalized algorithm aligns well with the participants’ choice of intentional, but concised news consumption.

I think it's a bit easier when you don't have TV, that talks constantly and sound constantly as it was during my period in Bulgaria [...] but when I'm by myself living in Sweden. I guess I consciously have to go and put the news on, on the TV or YouTube or whatever. I
cannot avoid what I see on social media and I actually don't mind it. [...] It keeps me informed, but if I don't want to watch the news then I just [do it] later. - Linda

Linda emphasized the fact that she never feels being ‘behind’ on the news and always knows the main news topics that are currently reported on. If she doesn’t feel like consuming the news, although it’s shown on her social media feed or in the newsletter’s she’s subscribed on (e.g.: The New York Times), then she would just open them or read them at a later point once she feels like it. Conny also subscribed to a French media news outlet but noticed at some point that it was ‘too much to even follow’, and unsubscribed. This example shows that both causes: ‘news overload’ (for intentional news avoidance) and ‘increasing media supply’ (for unintentional news avoidance) go hand in hand in some cases. Another cause that was mentioned that could fit into this model is news avoidance because of ‘self-protection’, which might be an overall strategy based on ‘news overload’, ‘increasing media supply’, and ‘news are too negative’. When it came to Covid-19 related news, Ebba said the following:

[…] and then there was of course my family who lives in Germany, I had to stop at some point to check the news in Germany every 3 hours, how many have died and so on, because I was scared for my family […]. For a while because of self-protection, there have been every now and then situations for the past 2-3 years, in which I specifically did not want to read about it [certain topics]. - Ebba

As many of the other participants, Ebba consumes her news mainly through social media and has actively chosen to follow many media outlets from Germany and Sweden, which also report on global news matters. Her partner, who tends to follow CNN or BBC and obtains his news through Youtube tends to watch them at home - streaming on the TV. In those cases, Ebba decides to leave the room, especially when it’s late to prevent resulting dreams or nightmares based on the content she might see. Furthermore, when it comes to the war taking place in Ukraine, she chooses actively when it’s time to stop reading about it as she knows it will affect her mental health in a negative way, if consumed too much.
When it comes to solutions for both intentional and unintentional news avoidance, Skovsgaard and Andersen (2020) focus solely on the perspective of what could be done for news avoiders to keep/start consuming the news. The perspective by the audience is somewhat lagging, at least multiple layers of it. There is a chance that Mark would consider himself starting to consume the news again if he could somehow trust of what is being said, this might be achieved through more ‘fact-based reporting and transparency’, but how would Mark know whether it’s facts?

As established in the previous chapter, Thomas mentioned his preference on watching commentary videos based on Polish politicians, especially if he reads about certain (political) jokes, that he himself would make. It seems as if he feels connected to those posting such content, which makes him trust in what they write. This ‘connection’ is exactly what Mark is missing. He emphasized during the interview, that he doesn’t care much about famous people or what other people are doing, it would usually come later, for example if he were to meet someone famous at an event whom he didn’t know before. They would connect and he then would later find out what this person is doing, this would spark his interest later and he would be willing to follow up on that person. For Mark a somewhat ‘deeper connection’ with the source is necessary to trust the content that is being posted. As it was stated in the previous section, Mark generally aligns with the laid-back repertoires (Boczkowski et al., 2018). As this chapter’s focus is on news avoidance, I’d like to point out that this lack of trust or rather lack of deeper connections is what drives Mark’s motivation to avoid news all together. During the interview with Elsa, it became clear that she, too, would not say that she actively avoids the news, as it’s more a lack of time and interest, plus the tendency of hers to hyper-focus on topics that prevent her from checking the news regularly. But if she would look something up, she would consider the following: "I think that's probably also why I try to pick sources that are concise. Like with covid I would go for the concise bullet point format than go into the lengthy articles.", Elsa stated.

With being hyper focused on topics, Elsa emphasized in addition that once she reads about a problem, she wants to read up on solutions and wants to try to fix it. As most things are out of our control, she refrains from checking such ‘negative news’ on a regular basis. Fitting to her news consumption behaviour, the solution of ‘news curation and slow journalism’ by Skovsgaard and Andersen (2020) seems to be the one most fitting.
David had a quite different strategy when it came to avoiding negative Covid-19 pandemic related news. Instead of following the updates about the virus, he switched to watching more science-based news content, as they provided more of ‘hopeful’ news content, such as finding vaccines and who ‘cited proper sources without making baseless claims’, according to David.

6. Discussion and Future Research

To summarize the main findings of this thesis it can be said that putting the participants causes, motivations and desires for better news content are not easily categorized, such as the intentional vs. unintentional news avoidance model by Skovsgaard and Andersen (2020). Many causes do overlap and depend on certain circumstances, which can’t all be replicated as it would be too much for this thesis and therefore require future studies to incorporate either a large-scope study or several, more detailed studies. These could focus for example on immigrants’ current news consumption behaviour in relation to those of their parents or the household they grew up in. As it has been found out in Shehata’s (2016) study, young adolescents have developed the same news consumption behaviours as their parents, despite infinite opportunities for media choice available nowadays. This has not been the case for the participants of this study, and therefore a more large-scale quantitative study could be helpful in filling the gap, or rather explaining the different outcomes. Furthermore, several comparison studies are needed that take the cultural background into account when it comes to news consumption and how it changes when an individual migrates, as different countries show different tendencies towards the usage of devices, sources, and their trust towards traditional news media (Digital News Report, 2021). The connection between immigrants’ trust and lack of knowledge about the media landscape of the new country (in this case: Sweden) that has been established in one of the last sections would also offer an angle for future research. Another aspect that offers room for future studies is the motivation and responsibility part young participants have felt in this study. It has been established that staying up to date in the news world requires time, interest, motivation, and a certain drive/discipline. Once an individual migrates into another country, it would already double the amount of time and energy that would go into obtaining the news (as they lack the
knowledge of news sources for the new country), whereas individuals who stay in the country they grew up in most likely won’t need to put as much effort into obtaining news.

Generally, further audience-based studies are needed as the model by Skovsgaard and Andersen (2020) focuses mainly on solutions that are pro-news-consumption, not considering enough the mental toll it takes on some individuals. Audience-studies should be equally prioritized as well as studies focused on media outlets and journalists, as one party cannot survive without one of the others. To find solutions that work for all three parties, all parties need to be considered. Whether this is feasible and realistically achievable is yet to be seen in future studies.

This thesis has managed to answer the research question(s) stated in the beginning of the paper and the responses are summarized in a concised manner below:

**RQ1: In what way have (young) millennials’ news consumption/avoidance behavior changed since their migration to Stockholm?**

The news consumption behaviour of the participants of this study have changed for the majority, but not for all.

One of the main changes is that those who were or are interested in learning the local language is that they incorporated Swedish news media sources into their regular news consumption routine, starting with sources that produce their content in ‘easy Swedish’. Furthermore, many (N=5) used the opportunity for some kind of a ‘new start’ since living in Sweden, where they overcame the news related routines they had back in their country of origin to establish their own ‘new’ ones. None of the participants who were used to or grew up with the routine of watching news on TV with their family is continuing to do this in Stockholm. On the other hand, those who still consume the news have switched to solely digitally sources, except for one participant (Karl), who watches Swedish news on TV quite frequently. Those who relied more on the news-find-me concept back in their home country, continued to do so living in Stockholm, especially when it comes to news content relating to their home country. When talking to their friends or family back home they would still receive news updates, or the updates would find them through their former social circle (through social media mostly).
Another distinctive finding is that most participants would know which sources to turn to for certain topics back in their home country. They knew exactly which sources could be trusted, and which not, and stated their reasons for it. None of them seemed to have been able to replicate that same knowledge when it comes to Swedish news sources, even though some of the participants have been living in Stockholm for up to seven years.

RQ2: And do their news avoidance strategies fit into the intentional/unintentional news avoidance model by Skovsgaard & Andersen (2021)?

The responses given by the participants as described in more detail under the news avoidance chapter in the analysis part of this paper, do fit well into the model. However, the line between intentional and unintentional news avoidance causes seems blurred, especially when it comes to the causes ‘news overload’, ‘news is too negative’, and ‘increasing media supply’ - indicating the infinite opportunities on where to gain news content from -, as these seem very connected to each other compared to the other two causes: ‘Low trust in news’ and ‘personalization through algorithms’, which can both stand well on their own. In regards to the former three causes, the participants often seem to react in form of a chain reaction which caused them to avoid news, that if a certain (mostly negative) topic, for example the current war taking place in Ukraine, has been consumed too much, they tend to feel mentally affected by it and perceive the news as ‘too negative’ as well as ‘too much’ and noted that it is often just this one topic every news media outlet is talking about. Based on the replies for this study, it seems that news avoidance is rather context-related and part of a process, that affects everyone - and not static.

The model also included potential solutions, however, as these are more directed to journalists and news media outlets themselves, this question has not come up in every interview, unless the interviewees mentioned possible solution strategies themselves. In only two of the eight interviews, the topic has come up on what could be improved when it comes to news distribution and reporting. One participant who seemed much less interested in news media topics, and who showed quite low trust towards news media, stated that if there would be more ‘accountability’, and the possibility to interact with the providers of the news, he might become more interested. His answers would align quite well with the suggested solution of ‘fact-based reporting and transparency’ (Skovsgaard & Anderson, 2020). In another interview, the participant stated that
even though there would be changes, she wouldn’t think her news consumption behaviour would change, as she is still staying up to date mostly based on the news-find-me concept.

What needs to be remembered is that it is not solely up to the audience to stay informed, as it takes discipline and a certain amount of knowledge (about the sources) when it comes to trusting media sources as well as knowing when one’s own limit of news content has been reached so a negative effect on their mental health can be prevented. Therefore, when it comes to solutions to decrease the news avoidance gap, a large part of responsibility falls to the policy makers (when it comes to public services) and journalists themselves (private services), who do have the possibility to realize an opportunity structure based on the other solutions stated by Skoovsgard and Andersen (2020), such as: ‘Constructive Journalism’, ‘Fact-based reporting and transparency’, ‘news curation and slow journalism’, ‘mix of news and entertainment’, and ‘public service algorithm’.

7. Conclusion

This study has not only contributed in the fields of journalism and media and communication studies, but could also serve as a case study used for future migration studies, especially when it comes to exploring immigrants’ motivation and reasons for certain habits generally or specifically relating to news consumption/avoidance. What should be remembered from this study is while it does depend on the immigrants’ own motivation to become more integrated into the Swedish society incl. learning Swedish and staying up to date, there is still room for improvement when it comes to teaching knowledge about the Swedish media landscape or informing immigrants about their possibilities of news media choice. If one doesn’t know which sources are trustworthy, how will the information that journalists need to reach the public - in order to promote civic duty - actually reach them?

Furthermore, the concept of news avoidance remains quite broad and there are many opportunities for future studies to fill certain gaps. What makes me wonder the most, is that several studies present news avoidance in a negative way and are searching for ways to ‘fix’ this increasing gap of news avoiders and news consumers, therefore, thinking of it as being a static or non-fluid attitude that needs to be taken care of or that the attitude of news avoiders needs to change. But based on the responses of the participants of this study, almost every single one of
them has come across a situation where they felt they had consumed too much or that there was an event presented in such a raw way, they had to turn away or at least take a break from it. The only two participants who stated they would not and never have turned away actively from the news were those that showed in general a low (or even non-existent) news consumption habit, as they would only look up topics they find interesting enough or where they feel the need to know more. Instead of calling them ‘news avoiders’, I’d prefer the term intentional news consumers, as they were the only ones who don’t seem to suffer from negativity that affected other people’s mental health, nor from ‘news overload/fatigue’.

Hence, I’d like to encourage researchers to stay open-minded when it comes to news avoidance and to refrain from presenting news avoiders as solely being disinterested in politics and therefore not engaging in civic duties, but perhaps ask questions in a way that open up conversation for situations which would make them consume news more. In a world that provides us with constant news information about literally anything that happens everywhere, to keep a healthy mind while staying up to date, I believe a more thorough approach towards intentional news consumption is the future.
Reference List


Appendices
Appendix 1 – Interview design

Name:
Age:
Country of Origin:

(START OF RECORDING)

1. **On Emigration:**
   → What made you move to Sweden in the first place?
   → For how long have you been living in Stockholm?

2. **On News Consumption:**

   *Since moving to Sweden:*
   → Would you consider yourself ‘being informed’ when it comes to staying up to date since you moved to Sweden?
   → What are your different routines when it comes to staying up to date nowadays?
     - What about World News or Global/International News?
     - What about Local news (Sweden & Stockholm)?
     - Which devices do you usually use for obtaining the news?
   → Which news/media topics do you usually follow more strictly?
     - Which news- or general media sources do you follow?
     - In which language(s) do you check the news?

   *Before Sweden:*
   → Would you say that you considered yourself ‘being informed’ before you moved to Sweden?
   → Did you have different routines for staying up to date in your country of origin (or the countries you’ve lived in before)?
     - What about Worlds News or Global/International News?
     - And what about local news (in the countries you lived in)?
- Which devices did you usually use for obtaining the news?

➔ Which news/media topics did you usually follow more strictly back then?

- Which news- or general media sources do you follow?
- In which language(s) did you check the news?

3. **On News Avoidance:**

➔ Can you remember a situation or time in your life where you didn’t want to stay up-to-date?

➔ In those situations, what were your strategies to avoid them?

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**Appendix 2 – Example extract of codebook**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example from data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>emigration</td>
<td>when interviewees mention reasons/context/motivation for leaving their country of origin</td>
<td>&quot;I always had the curiosity to live abroad [...] But I didn't want a big city, so I ended up choosing Stockholm&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>immigration</td>
<td>when interviewees mention reasons/context/motivation for choosing Sweden as country to move to</td>
<td>&quot;Because I mean I love the diversity and the people here. It's so like open minded country. There's so much opportunities for young people, especially immigrants.” - Kai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self-perception</td>
<td>When interviewees assess themselves whether they are staying up to date in today’s news world or not. It is about where the interviewee would place themselves, despite their actual actions or behaviours.</td>
<td>“I would think that before I moved, I was way, way less informed. Now I'm way more informed.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>device(s)</td>
<td>Whenever interviewees state on which device they consume their news on nowadays, but also back then when they lived in their country of origin.</td>
<td>“Mainly my phone [...] but sometimes I also turn on the TV, so I actually watch the local news in Sweden, so but it's fairly rare because I don't always understand what's going on, so.” [laughs]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>source(s)</td>
<td>Whenever interviewees state which news sources they use to consume the news in nowadays, but also back then when they lived in their country of origin.</td>
<td>“For example, Aftonbladet or Expressen, Dagens Nyheter, all those Swedish newsmagazines and then again Tagesschau, Spiegel TV, all those SternTV things [...]”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trust</td>
<td>When interviewees mention their trust or distrust towards (news-)sources, whether they are mainstream news sources or alternative.</td>
<td>“Because there has been a lot of scandals in Pakistan, like politics and media and media was like free and it used like I don't know. But in [...] you can't trust media in Pakistan somehow [...] it could be a false news [...]”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>news-find-me</td>
<td>When interviewees state a situation that related to them not actively seeking news out, instead relying on someone else to inform them about something (news related) that is going on.</td>
<td>“[...] big things you will hear somehow anyway from your friends or colleagues [...] but I don't go looking for it, I guess.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>communication</td>
<td>Every time interviewees explain or mention other people they talk about news with and the reasons or motivations behind it.</td>
<td>“I have a couple of friends that are more politically and also they'll occasionally talk about political news, but it doesn't seem like [...] it's not on the tips of peoples tongues as much as it is in England, I feel.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>motivation</strong></td>
<td>When interviewees state their motivations to stay informed and/or how/why they started to consume the news.</td>
<td>&quot;Because I'm I'm. I'm studying Swedish and yeah, I I'm checking the news regularly.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>avoidance</strong></td>
<td>When the interviewee states their motivation or reasons to stay away from news and/or how/why they started to avoid news.</td>
<td>“Because I don't have a lot of time, I tend to not want to read like the articles [...]’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>intentional avoidance</strong></td>
<td>When the interviewee states reasons that motivate them to intentionally avoid the news.</td>
<td>“I don't read any Swedish newspapers because [...] language barrier. [...] since so many news channels came up now [in India] competing against each other by trying to be the loudest, and I don't really like that, so I don't really follow any news channels on the TV anymore. And no Indian news channels at least [...] cause it's kind of pointless.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **unintentional avoidance** | When the interviewee indirectly states reasons that cause them to consume less news than usual. | "I don't think so. Not to the level that how to actively avoid it. [...] I mean in this political time of Argentina [...] I got tired but it was not in this way, but it was more you know like [...] we have a very corrupted system down
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>avoidance strategies</td>
<td>Strategies the interviewee uses or used to avoid news, whether it was only during a specific period/event/situation.</td>
<td>&quot;When I have the applications on my phone, I usually keep the notifications off, so I choose to see them. [...]&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knowledge</td>
<td>When interviewees mention their knowledge (or lack thereof) about certain news sources, whether it’s relating to sources they use now to obtain the news or they used to obtain the news back in their country of origin.</td>
<td>&quot;[...] the second I see an article posted by the Sun I know like: OK, no don't look at that and you know it's gonna be like messed up, but I don't have that same knowledge for Sweden. I don't really know [...] which are the better newspapers?&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consumption strategies</td>
<td>When interviewees mention their strategies on how they obtain their news.</td>
<td>&quot;[...] and when I choose to see what's going on, I go there [Aftonbladet] and I scroll, but it never takes a long time for me to check [...] I don't focus this much. [...] I don't really filter global or local [...] I just look at the big titles they have [...]&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>direct strategies</td>
<td>When interviewees mention strategies to obtain their news that directly involve news media.</td>
<td>&quot;[...] and when I choose to see what's going on, I go there [Aftonbladet] and I scroll, but it never takes a long time for me to check [...]”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>indirect strategies</td>
<td>When interviewees mention strategies to obtain their news that purposely avoid – or indirectly involve – the news media.</td>
<td>&quot;Not really, they just show up right like both youtube feed of Instagram feed, you know during the day, yeah. If things will pop up so I don't necessarily have to go looking for it,“</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
sometimes it becomes like a big thing that you know on YouTube. It's very easy to like find out oh, hang on, they they have put a new video so I watched that and then in the next recommendations you see a bunch of things that you haven't seen yet. So like, oh, hang on, I don't know about this – click.”

| social media | When interviewees mention their activities on social media, whether it is about certain content they would look up or their time spent on it, as well as motivations and reasons for usage. | "I do my own research sometimes online, but I spend a lot of time on Instagram. I think looking through all those accounts and those tips and I also follow a lot of accounts that specialize in the vegan cooking for example […]"

| other interest(s) | When interviewees mention other interests they would use general media or social media for besides mainstream news content. This would also include specific interests they consume through alternative media, which is not political related. | "I love to watch documentaries, […] and I like to watch dramas and there are some of like Pakistani dramas." |

| routine | When interviewees talk about their daily routines and in what way news consumption might be a part of their everyday life. | “[…] whenever I'm at the computer, I have it [Facebook] open somewhere.” |

| language(s) | When interviewees state the language(s) they consume news in, as well as other media content. | "[…] if it's something that relates to Sweden, I will look in Swedish. But if it's something that relates to the |
Appendix 3 – Interview consent forms

This form was handed to the interviewees (and signed by them) before the interview took place:

Consent to processing personal data in student projects at Södertörn University
I consent to Södertörn University processing the following personal data in the master thesis student project about, in accordance with the description below.

What personal data will be processed?
- name
- email address

What is the purpose of processing this personal data?
Your name and email address has and will be solely used for communication between you (the interviewee) and me (the interviewer). After that your data will NOT appear in the study, as you will be anonymized.

What sensitive personal data will be processed?
- ethnicity
- political opinions
- religious or philosophical belief

What is the purpose of processing this sensitive personal data?
You have been chosen as one of the participants for this study with an immigrant background. Your country of origin will be mentioned in my master thesis. It won’t be specifically asked about your political opinions nor religious or philosophical belief(s), but it is stated here as it might come up naturally. The answers will be kept in a concise manner when written about in my study and are only relevant if it influences your (news) media consumption.

An ethical review has been conducted by the supervisor:

Kristina Riegert,
Professor at Södertörn University
Journalism / School of Social Sciences

The ethical review has been conducted in accordance with the principles for research ethics that are set by the Swedish Research Council.

What is the legal basis for processing personal data?
Personal data is processed with **your explicit consent**. Participation in the study is entirely voluntary. You may recall your consent at any time, without stating a reason. There will be no negative consequences if you do not consent to the processing of your personal data.

**Storage and security:**
Data will be stored only for the purpose of this study in a digital manner. To protect your integrity, I will only have your responses relating to the study recorded without your personal data on the recordings. Furthermore, I will change your name to a fake name (which you may pick if you want) when referring to your responses. I will faithfully transcribe the responses but refrain from including responses which could be used to identify the interviewee.

**Storage period and deletion:** The personal and sensitive personal data will be stored (on paper separately from the recordings) until it is no longer needed and then deleted once the thesis is graded and complete.

**Transfer of personal data to a third party:** Your personal sensitive data won’t be shared with anyone else.

**What are my rights?**
According to the EU’s General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), you are entitled to know what elements of your personal data are being processed. You are also entitled to have this corrected if it is incorrect. You may also request to have it erased or limit its use, or object to the processing of personal data. You are also entitled to data portability, i.e. the right to transfer personal data from one controller (the party legally responsible for processing) to another without being prevented from doing so. You may recall your consent at any time, without stating a reason.

**Who do I contact if my data is wrong or if I want to withdraw my consent?**
If you need to have incorrect information corrected, add missing information (correction) or withdraw your consent (recall) you should contact the student and/or their supervisor (see contact details below). You can also contact Södertörn University’s data protection officer via dataskydd@sh.se.

**Data controller:** Södertörn University is legally responsible for how the student processes personal data in their essay/project. You can always contact Södertörn University via e-mail: registrator@sh.se or by calling +46 (0)8 608 4000.

**Data protection officer:** If you have questions or complaints about how your personal data is processed, you can contact Södertörn University’s data protection officer via dataskydd@sh.se.

**Complaints:** If you are unhappy with how the university has processed your personal data, you can submit a complaint to the Swedish Data Protection Authority. You can contact them by emailing datainspektionen@datainspektionen.se or calling them on +46 (0)8 657 6100.
Contact details for the student(s) and supervisor:
International Journalism Master Programme, Södertörn University. **Supervisor:** Kristina Riegert, xxx.xxx@xxx
**Student(a):** Jasmin Adolph, xxx@xxx

My signature below confirms that I have received the above information and understand how my personal data will be processed. I am aware that my participation is entirely voluntary and that I can withdraw my participation in the study without providing a reason.

Place and date:

_____________________________________________________

Signature

_____________________________________________________

Name in block capitals

___________________