

# ESTABLISHING CORRELATIONS BETWEEN WHAT IS PUBLISHED AND WHAT IS COMMENTED ON: A CASE STUDY OF AUDIENCE READING AND COMMENTING HABITS IN ELPAIS.COM AND TELEGRAPH.CO.UK

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## ABSTRACT

The agenda-setting paradigm has demonstrated itself helpful for explaining why the audience pays more attention to concrete events, by means of receiving more information about them. The new digital media environment seems to be introducing some disruptions in this scenario, owing to a new relationship between the media and the audiences. The Web opens the door to the participation of the public in the selection of media contents, even in the publication of news stories and comments, or in the social interaction.

According to this scenario, this paper explores how the publics' agenda gains visibility in the online media, through their interactive mechanisms. Specifically, the study aims to determine if the publics' agenda is coherent with the online media agenda, under the hypothesis that online public opinion has become a competing agenda-setting force.

Taking into consideration two European quality online media, and using a qualitative and quantitative methodology, the study focuses on the coverage of the main news items of the homepage with the aim of examining if the media main topics coincide with the contents preferred by the audiences.

The conclusions discuss if the traditional agenda setting is still influencing what the public reads and comments on the web.

Key words: Audience, Agenda-setting, interactivity, quality online newspapers, Web 2.0

## INTRODUCTION: who sets the public agenda?

The role of the mass media in establishing what news issues are disseminated and what space and time given over to them, has been explained to date by what is known as agenda setting. This sets out what issues of the day are dealt with and sets out

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what is going to be talked about for the day and even in upcoming weeks. The constant emphasis on a determined issue tends to call attention to itself, creating concern or awareness. Nevertheless, it also means that the public only knows of or talks about what the communication media provides, ignoring anything else. It would appear that what is not directly on the media agenda does not exist or, in the best of cases, is pushed into the background.

Nevertheless, the recent appearance of social networks has notoriously influenced the theory of agenda setting, giving rise to a number of doubts regarding if it is the mass media that really sets out the social agenda, or if it is the users who decide what the most important issues of the moment are. The border between those who mark the issues of the day can no longer be distinguished; if it is the social networks such as *Twitter* via trending topics or if it is the news which achieves whatever number of "like" or "hashtag" hits that inundate our profiles and reach first positions in rankings.

At the same time, social networks have contributed to increasing the capacity of audiences to personalise the information they consume and the topics that interest them. They have facilitated the access to all this information and have even become themselves generators of content for the mentioned information media.

In recent years there have been a number of examples where the most salient news stories published by the communications media are based on the topics about which various social platforms are most talking about, thus creating a change in the direction of the process of influence, taking it from the audiences to the media. The trending topics, those most voted on and visited, and the conversations that arise in the social media end up describing a much more precise map of the items that interest the public and about which they are really talking (Orihuela, 2011).

What is proposed in this paper is to update the agenda-setting theory drawn up in the 70s by McCombs and Shaw, taking into account the new possibilities for communication arising from the Internet in general, and from social networks in particular. It has to be taken into account that the theory of agenda setting was based on the technologies available at the time it was put forward. Thus, it now behoves us to rethink this theory based on the new, current communicational context (Cerviño, 2013).

Talking about agenda setting is to speak of the power that the mass communications media in contemporary society have in influencing and determining the degree of attention that the public pays to certain issues subject to collective interest (Saperas 1987: 56). In this sense, what the theory puts forward is that the media are capable of transferring the relevance of an issue or news item which is on their agenda to the public (McCombs, 1996); grading the importance of the information they disseminate, conferring an order of priority and favouring a determined public perception of the news about public affairs (Meyer, 2009).

There exists a high correlation between the salient issues that the information media give importance to and those topics that interest their audiences (López-Escobar

et al, 1996). The communications media can point their target audience to the issues they (the citizens) ought to be thinking about, what content should be included in or excluded from their knowledge, what events should importance be given to or not, and what value given to persons and problems (Vilches, 2011: 153). Thus, the people consider some topics more important than others in direct proportion to the salience the mass media confer upon them. The selection of issues by the media is what influences the thematic perception by the public and not vice-versa.

In order to appreciate the relevance of their research, the definition of agenda setting drawn up by McCombs and Shaw should be recalled. For these authors, what is involved is the capacity of the mass media to select certain issues and discard others, and thus make the public perceive as important those issues that the media highlight as salient (1972). Originally, these authors suggested that it is the mass media that establishes the public agenda but, nonetheless, they subsequently rectified this by saying that, while the audience cannot be told what exactly to think (how to think about an issue), it is possible for the media to tell you what to think about. "Setting the agenda is the process by which the communications media frequently present and highlight certain issues, the result being that large segments of the population begin to perceive these questions as more important than other. In a few words, "When an issue is frequently covered in the media, the citizens start perceiving it as more important than the ones that get less coverage" (Coleman et al, 2008: 147).

This theory continued the thesis that Cohen (1963: 17) put forward in his research, wherein he highlighted that the mass media "may not be successful in telling people how to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about". In accord with these premises, the issues deemed salient by the mass media acquire greater importance for citizens when making their decisions (Roberts et al, 2002). McCombs and Shaw recall that there exist two clearly distinguishable theoretical levels within agenda setting. The first focuses on the issues and establishes that "the media tells us what to think about". The second analyses the aspects or attributes (framing) that journalists highlight when informing about events and points out that "the media not only tells us what things to think about but also how to think about them".

The assumption gathered from the first level of the theory – the setting out of the agendas – is that citizens tend to include in or exclude from their own knowledge that which the communications media include in or exclude from their own content. This gives rise to the phenomenon that people have a perception – a partial one – of the social reality determined by the day-to-day actions of the communications media (Weaver, 1996). At the second level, the media not only channel the attention of the audience towards certain issues, but also towards the details that reconstruct these. That is, they not only tell citizens which events are salient, but also what aspects of each event are the most important. And all this always in line with the perspective the medium professional wants to transmit, bearing in mind the editorial line set out by his or her media organisation.

### **The ability of the mass media to influence the public agenda, and the emergence of the social media**

Due to the impact of internet, and in recent years, of social networks, a new scenario has emerged in the construction of the citizens' agenda and currents of public opinion. We are living at a time in which the processes of communication flow in a different manner from the way they did throughout the XX century. There is no doubt that the mass communications media play a fundamental role in the generation and formation of public opinion. However, with the appearance of new technologies, it is more possible than ever for the receptor of information to interact with other receptors and have greater participation in this process of communications with the media and their public. This new language promotes interactions amongst users and between these and the media, new forms of participation, involving the possibility of greater implication in issues considered to be of public interest. More than ever before, a modification in the patterns of consumption of information by citizens is evident.

There currently exists a great debate around new theories regarding communications. One school of thought highlights an evolution between what was initially understood as agenda setting and what is inferred today as a consequence of the emergence of new communications tools. There are various authors that criticise the fact that agenda setting continues to confer great weight to the media, while leaving aside social and political players. In this context, Manuel Castells explains that the potential of audiences for increasing or initiating their communicative practices has grown with the rise in the autonomy of the audiences and of what is known as mass self-communication (Castells, 2009). But, even before Castells, researchers such as Lang and Lang explained that merely saying that the media establish and generate the agenda was not sufficient (1981). McCombs himself admitted that the "directionality of the influence in the formation of the agenda is really something quite difficult to determine, because citizens and social network sites are in multiple contacts (McCombs, 2005), thus the establishment of a single directionality is something highly complicated" (McCombs, 2005).

With the appearance and consolidation of the Web 2.0, the use of digital technologies modified the way people related to each other on the Internet. An important number of platforms (blogs, forums, chats, etc.), especially in recent years, have converted the web into a more interactive and participative space, with even users themselves producing content. These platforms are known as social media and, within them, communities substitute the audiences, and, within these communities, their members are connected with each other, they exchange content, opinions, and so on. Little by little, the mass media have begun to realise the importance of listening to these emerging conversations in the social media, given that, in this way, the repertory of issues is opened up and even latest ("breaking") news is discovered.

Within this social media we can situate the social networks, and highlighted amongst many of their aspects, is their communicative nature. That is, we can analyse how content is created, how messages are drawn up and structured, how the members of a network communicate or how these grow. Social networks act as a complement. Thanks to the interaction they generate, users can surf and dwell on

content beyond the issues that the media deem to be salient. The audiences, from this moment on, can publish information, express themselves, share, debate, listen and exchange opinions.

Nonetheless, not a few authors recognise that this process of the democratisation of the production of content is not free of polemic: the social networks not only contribute to changing the way we consume news, but also the way of undertaking journalism, the way of producing news. Moreover, social networks are an ideal medium for impacting on and giving rise to conversations amongst people regarding the news, besides attracting audiences to this medium.

The contents published in the social networks reflect the news produced in the mass media, but also that from open spaces - the opinions, concerns, etc. of their audiences, and even news content produced by the latter. Thus, this other content, beyond that of the mass media, also forms part of a public agenda, albeit characterised by diversity. In this context, we are witnessing an interchange of agendas, a phenomenon which McCombs himself referred to as intermedia agenda setting (2005). While the agenda of the mass media continues to be aimed at influencing the public agenda, the public agenda fed by its audiences also guides that of the mass media. Intermedia agenda setting obliges one to consider what the true role of the audiences is - citizens who see their power in a democratic context - within the configuration of the public agenda. What the audiences are saying on the social networks is beginning to have an effect on the mass media. The consolidation of the social networks has made users acquire a new role and that power which has been to date solely in the hands of media professionals is now shared amongst all.

### **Aims and case study**

This research has sought two main objectives. On the one hand, we wanted to see if there were differences between the most read news items and the most commented stories on the *Twitter* profiles of two daily newspapers: *El País* (Spain) and *The Telegraph* (UK). This enabled us to draw up a profile of the these two daily newspapers, establishing the divergences existing between those news issues about which they have most interest in making salient and those that which rouse most polemic or discussion amongst reader-consumers and that help to create debate and community through the *Twitter* social network. On the other hand, the news was categorised into sections Politics, Opinion, International, Sports, Culture, Society, Celebrities and Radio and Television. Using this classification, the second main goal of this research sought to establish the differences and similarities between the types of content most visited in the digital editions of the *El País* and *The Telegraph* and the reader profiles of both cyber dailies.

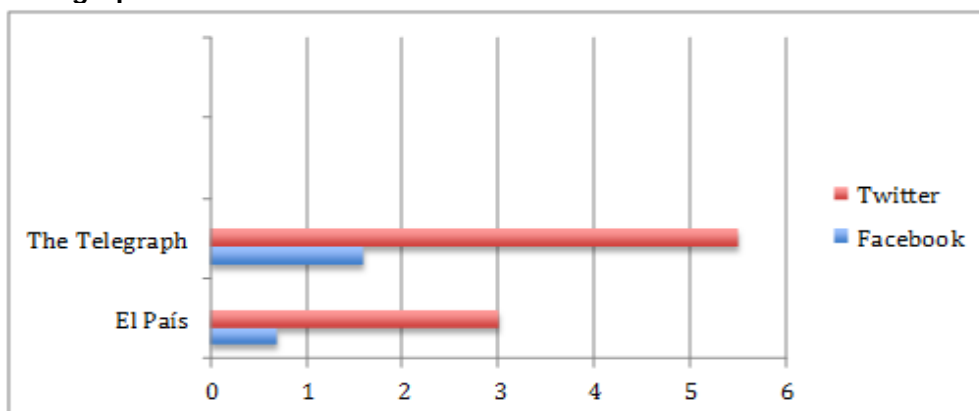
The choice of these daily newspapers responds to the comparative power wielded by two European newspapers of reference. *The Daily Telegraph* was founded in 1855 and has since become the most sold British daily, with an average circulation of 920,000 copies, comfortably surpassing the circulation figures of their most direct rivals, the *Times*, the *Independent* and *The Guardian*. Its digital edition started in 1994 and both editions, print and digital, are of a politically conservative nature. *El País* was

founded in 1976 and its circulation is about 400,000 issues with a real readership of almost two million readers, making it the largest circulation newspaper in Spain. Its incorporation into the worldwide web was in 1996, at first charging for content, but it decided to change its policy and provide free access to its digital edition given the poor results in subscribers. In this case, the profile of the reader is of a more liberal nature and of a centre-left ideology.

The choice of the *Twitter* platform responds to the fact that in both digital editions the number of followers on *Twitter* is greatly superior to that of Facebook, the second social network in number of followers. *El País* has more than three million followers on *Twitter* compared to 700,000 on Facebook. *The Telegraph* has somewhat more than five million followers on *Twitter*, while their Facebook account has somewhat more than a million and a half users.

This data can be visualised in the following graph:

**Graph 1. Numbers of followers on *Twitter* and Facebook of *El País* and The Telegraph**



### Methodology

Empirical research on the correlation between the consumption of news in online dailies and the activity of commenting on such news is still at its initial stages, and thus, the methodological approximations are highly diverse. The most recurrent methodologies have been drawn up with the goal of developing an analysis of the business strategies behind the participation provided by the conventional media through multiple channels, the analysis of the content of "journalistic" material produced by audiences through various means, or the participation of audiences through a number of different platforms. Thus, to date, most research has focused on analysing the multiplatform distribution of journalistic content (Cabrera, 2010), based on the idea that these new forms of distribution increase the possibility of dissemination and consumption of content, thereby attracting profit. However, academic studies still need further proposals regarding research on the relation between the consumption of news online, the use thereof that users subsequently make and, arising from this, the use that online news editors make thereof – in order

to achieve a more rigorous description of the influence of citizens on the agenda of the media.

Thus, in the research presented here, the application of techniques of quantitative analysis was opted for, given that this type of procedure is of utility and validity in order to generalise results and provide control over the phenomena (Hernández, Fernández and Baptista, 2002: 18). Two information sheets analysing the news gathered in the online version of the *El País* and *The Daily Telegraph* (or *The Telegraph*) newspapers were drawn up by the authors. These enumerated the ten most read news stories in each of the online newspapers and ascertained how many of these news items were subsequently commented upon by users of the *Twitter* social network medium. The research was limited to 10 news items per day for each medium, the 10 most read news stories and the most commented between the 11-07-2014 and the 20-07-2014. The information sheets were made up of tables of a different nature with the goal of comparing the coincidence between reading activity and that of comment. This was undertaken, on the one hand, to ascertain if the news coincides with respect to what the most is read by the users, and subsequently the most commented on the social network. On the other, to ascertain which area or areas (Opinion, Politics, International, Sports, Society, Culture, Celebrities, Radio and Television programmes or programming) the coincident news belongs to and which rouses most interest amongst the users of *Elpais.com* and *Telegraph.co.uk*. We could thus establish the profile of the users, their habits of consumption and their comments regarding the most topical news in these dailies.

## Results

The research, undertaken over ten days, involved enumerating the ten most read news stories of the day in the digital edition and the ten most commented on the *Twitter* profile of the media, in order to thus establish what was the proportion of coincident news, i.e. which of the most read were also the most commented on<sup>1</sup>.

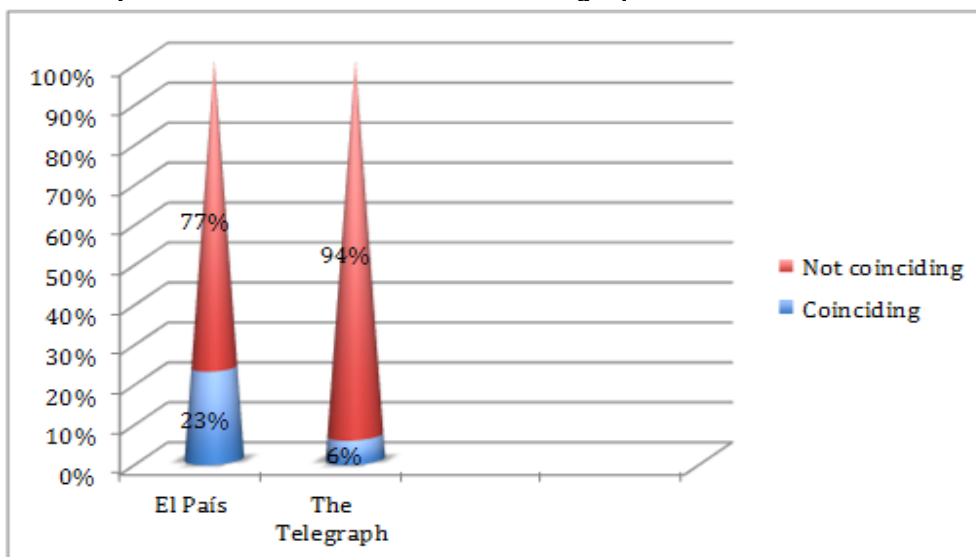
We thus obtained that, of the hundred news items most visited by users of the *El País*, on twenty-three occasions they were also the most commented on *Twitter* by the readers. On the contrary and in a striking manner, in the case of *The Telegraph*, of the ten most read items each day out of the hundred news stories included in the study, only six coincide.

The differences between the two daily newspapers can be seen in the following graph:

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<sup>1</sup> In Annex 1 tables with data from both *El País* and *The Telegraph* daily newspapers can be consulted. The news stories that appear highlighted in yellow are those which are most read and, moreover, the most commented on *Twitter*.

**Graph 2. Percentage of news items most read and most commented on the *Twitter* profiles of the *El País* and *The Telegraph***



As can be observed, in the case of *El País* the percentage of news most read coinciding with the most commented on *Twitter* quadrupled that of *The Telegraph*, telling us primarily that *El País* users show greater empathy with those questions that they consider relevant in order to be informed and with those that rouse great interest and that cause them to comment on or share this content on *Twitter*.

However, in order to be able to establish a more concrete profile, it would be interesting to know what type of content is involved in those items that coincide, if they are what we call "soft news" or, on the contrary, "hard news". To this end, we have created the following table where coincident news and the thematic block to which they belong – *Opinion, Politics, International, Sports, Society, Culture, Celebrities* and *Radio & Television* are shown

MEDIUM	HEADLINE	SECTION
El País	The neighbourhood in Valencia that could become a world example	Society
El País	Antonella, Messi's discreet fan	Celebrities
El País	Brussels accuses Valencia of manipulating its accounts over years	Politics
El País	Judge Garzón: "A pardon from this Government would denigrate me "	Politics
El País	<i>El Tcharmille</i> , the <i>maras</i> gangs from Morocco	International
El País	Jordi Ferrusola and his wife's 15 million euros in five days	Politics
El País	Israel weighs up land intervention in Gaza	International
El País	An antinationalist manifesto against Rajoy negotiating with Mas	Politics
El País	Hot houses to combat the Andean cold	Society



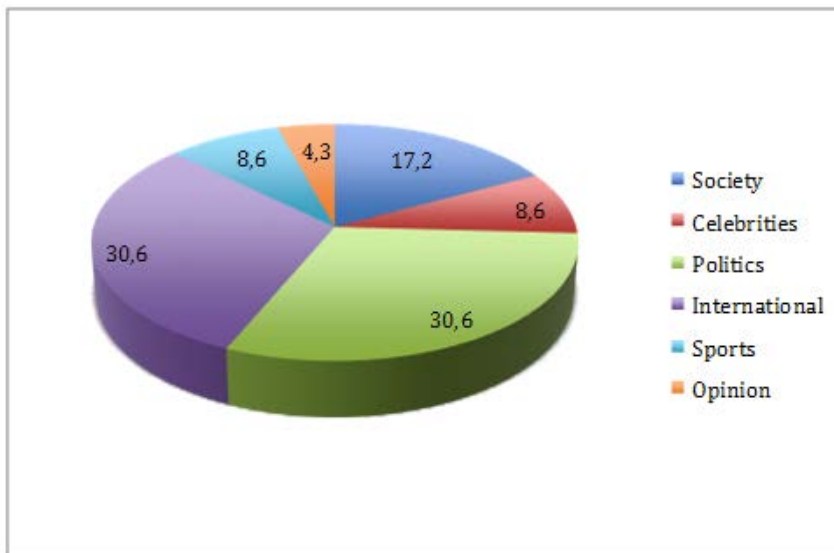
El País	German celebrations wound Argentine National pride	Sports
El País	The day the PSOE betrayed itself	Politics
El País	Malaysian plane with 295 passengers on board crashes in East Ukraine	International
El País	Israel announces truce of hours after death of four Palestinian children	International
El País	<i>Podemos</i> dynamises its rank and file before the PSOE recovers	Politics
El País	The irresistible rise of P.I.	Opinion
El País	Missile brings down Malaysian plane with 295 passengers on board in Ukraine	International
El País	Joop Lange, world AIDS expert, amongst plane's victims	International
El País	"Everything that has happened I have experienced as a well-off sentimental person"	Celebrities
El País	Carlos Slim recommends a three-day week and an eleven hours working day	Society
El País	Pressure on Putin to respond to downing of MH17	International
El País	Niki Lauda: "Ferrari has made a shit car"	Sports
El País	The third way gains ground amongst Catalans	Politics
El País	Carlos Slim recommends a three-day week and an eleven hours working day	Society
The Telegraph	Wenger hails £30m Sanchez deal as huge boost	Sports
The Telegraph	Forty-something is 'too old to get a mortgage'	Society
The Telegraph	Gotze wins the World Cup for Germany	Sports
The Telegraph	BIS chief fears fresh Lehman crisis from worldwide debt surge	Society
The Telegraph	Reshuffle: William Hague quits as a dozen ministers axed	Politics
The Telegraph	People who claim to worry about climate change use more electricity	Society

Source: authors

What is sought with this classification is to be able to define with greater precision the profile of the users of the digital editions of *El País* and *The Telegraph*, as thereby we can identify the type of content that rouses most interest amongst readers, resulting in them being informed about these issues and, moreover, in them commenting on them or sharing them on *Twitter*, sparking debate, conversation and community.

In the following graph we can observe the news that roused most interest in each of the two newspapers:

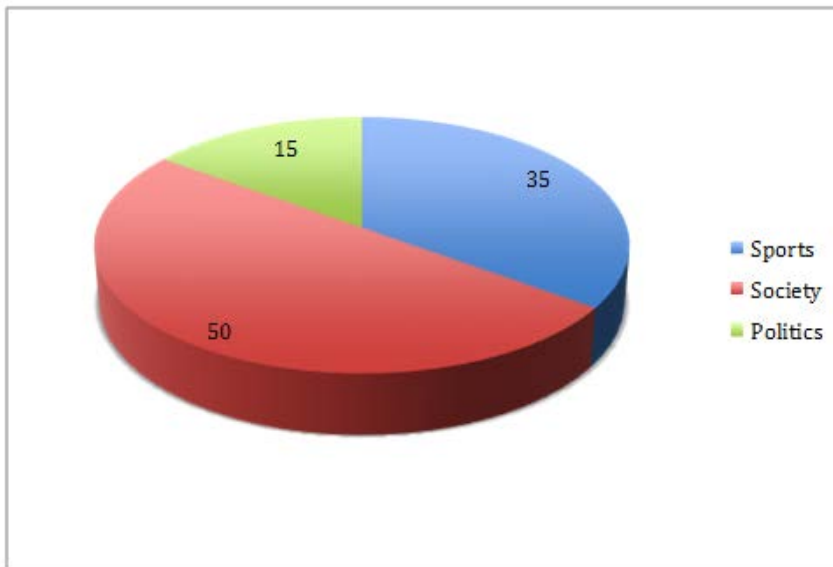
**Graph 3. Sections that rouse greatest interest amongst users of *El País***



Source: author

As can be observed in Graph III, the *el País* users show great interest in international issues and national political issues – fourteen of the twenty-three coincident news stories refer to these questions. These are followed by four news items from the Society section – 17.2% of the total number of coincident stories; it is a section which usually deals with less serious news. Then, dropping to 8.6%, the Sports and Celebrities sections appear, with two news items in each one of the sections. Finally, we have the Opinion section, being that which roused the least interest with just one news story – 4.3%. The section on Radio and Television does not have any representation, being the one that does not obtain outstanding visits from users - over the days in which the research was undertaken, it was never either the most read section nor the most followed on Twitter. Nor was cultural information amongst the issues most followed by users.

With all this data, the profile of the reader of the digital *El País* is that of a person who prefers news of an international and political nature and distances himself or herself from sensationalist news, given that only 8.6% - referring to Celebrities - of this kind of content spark their curiosity. They are less interested in news in the Society section or in Sports, an important datum taking into account that the research coincided with the World Football final. Despite this fact, the day when the greatest amount of news about this issue was posted on the web, this public showed more interest in consulting and commenting on international news, above all that referring to the conflict taking place in Gaza.

**Graph 4. Sections that rouse greatest interest amongst users of *The Telegraph***

Source: authors

In the case of *The Telegraph*, the result that most attracted attention was the poor diversity of thematic sections that managed to rouse the interest of users to read about and moreover to comment upon in the Social Network. In this case, the section with greatest acceptance amongst readers was Society, making up half of the news amongst the most read and, at the same time, with the greatest traffic on *Twitter*. This is followed at 35% by content relating to sport and, finally, political questions with 15%, and which, in reality were represented by a single news story.

In as much that this primary profile of *The Telegraph* reader tells us of their inclination towards soft and somewhat more tabloid-style news, which is usually located in the Society section, with notable interest in Sports and little in Politics. The International, Opinion, Culture, Celebrities and Radio and Television sections, over the days in which the research was undertaken, did not rouse great interest amongst the readership of this medium. All this indicates, moreover, that *The Telegraph* reader has little interest in new topics, being more conservative, the type of content that manages to attract and capture their attention being much defined.

In order to be able to establish a more rigorous comparison regarding the profiles of users of both digital media, they have also been categorised by sections<sup>2</sup>, the ten most read news stories in the digital edition, as well as the most commented or shared on *Twitter*, over each of the days of the research. In this way, we can compare the type of content preferred by the users in order to be informed and those that cause

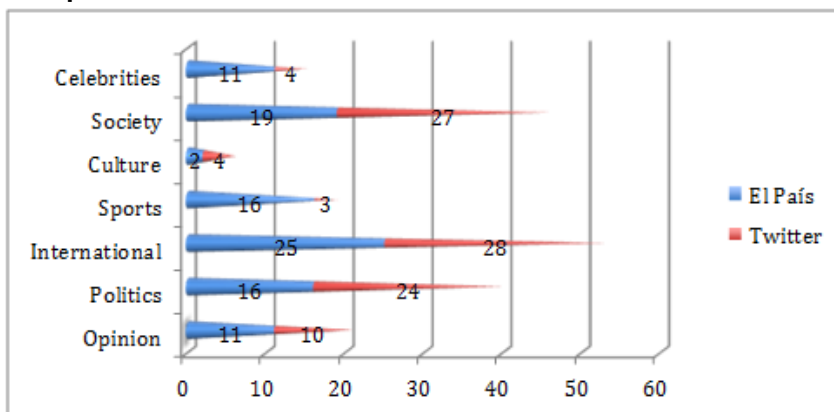
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<sup>2</sup> The tables with the results can be consulted in Annex II of this paper.

more participation on their part– in order to see if there are similarities and differences.

In the following graph the questions most followed on *Twitter* by *El País* users can be consulted:

**Graph 5. The most read content in *El País* and most followed on its *Twitter* profile**

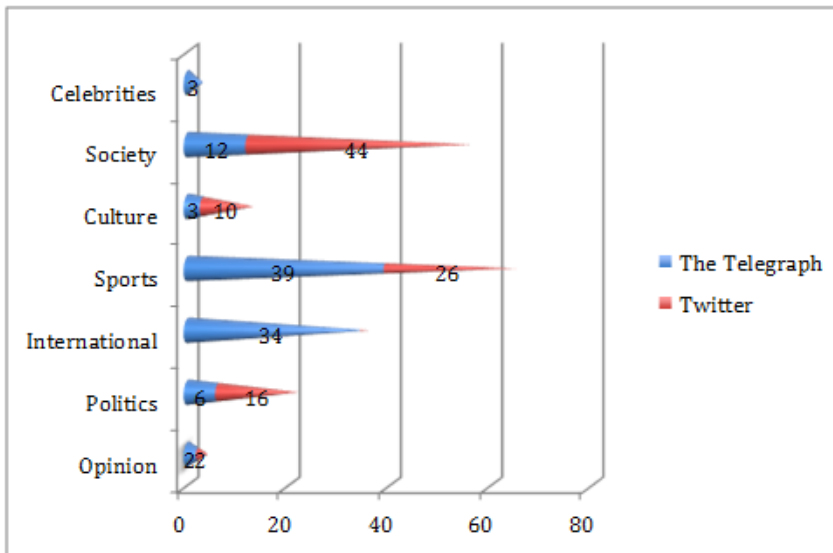


Source: authors

As can be observed in Graph V there is a synchrony between the most read news and the most commented and/or followed on *Twitter* of *El País* in its Opinion and International sections. Also, the sections on Politics and Society are quite balanced, although in both the interest that this content rouses on *Twitter* is somewhat greater than in the medium itself. On the other hand, in the Sports and Celebrities sections, the number of users of the digital edition is much greater than on *Twitter*. In the case of news about Culture, we find that the user profile on *Twitter* duplicates the readership of the digital *El País*.

If we cross this data with Graph III, where we analyse the percentage of coincident news, i.e. those items that, apart from being most read, are the most followed on the Social Network, we once again see how the sections on Politics and International are at the top, followed by Society. In such a way that, a priori, it can be established that the reader of *El País* shows a clear inclination for important current affairs – those relating to International, Politics, Opinion and Society and that relegate to secondary importance, both in the digital edition and on *Twitter*, content relating to Sports or news about famous persons or of an anecdotal nature.

In the next Graph we can see the same data, but in reference to *The Telegraph*:

**Graph 6. The most read content in *The Telegraph* and most followed on its *Twitter* profile**

Source: author

What is most outstanding in the case of *The Telegraph* is the fact that there is no one section of news that is most read and, at the same time, has greatest movement and most conversation generated on *Twitter*, with the exception of Opinion - but this has little acceptance in either format. This being the case, we find that Politics and Culture are issues that the users of this daily newspaper follow with greater frequency on *Twitter* than by reading this information in the medium itself. At the other end of the spectrum, news on International, Sports and Social events have more users in the online edition than in the Social Network, outstanding being the case of international themes. The latter are the most read on the web (39) and, nonetheless, hardly register on *Twitter* (2).

Thus, the data define for us a user that distinguishes between those questions that they wish to be informed of, showing special interest in International and Sports events, and those which spark debate, being issues of Society and Sports that rouse greatest participation. If, to these data, we add the content of graph IV about the most coincident topics, we have the result that Sports and social topics are those that coincide to the greatest extent. The section on Politics is one of the most coincident sections, but is not in general read or shared/commented on.

## CONCLUSIONS

In general there are no relevant coincidences between the most read and the most commented news in the days chosen for the research analysis, and when they do exist, the editorial profile of each of the two daily newspapers has an abysmal difference. In the popular imagination *El País* has been considered as a Spanish centre-left newspaper of social-democratic tendencies, a daily that provides political and international news of equality (created in 1976, it was the first one with a clear democratic vision within a context where the rest of the newspapers came from a long history of Francoism). This corresponds to that obtained with the empirical data that the most read and the most commented news always coincides with that belonging to the political arena, more concretely, national politics. Online edition readers receive the news and if they find this very close to their more immediate reality, they refer to the *Twitter* account in order to personalise it. We can thus conclude that the profile of the Elpais.com user is a reader with interests that are, above all, in political, international and cultural events, and these are precisely those news items posted in this space and that receives most attention on the *Twitter* Social Network.

*The Telegraph*, on the other hand, was founded by a group of persons of a conservative bent, in fact the newspaper, being very close to the Conservative (Tory) political party, is known as "The Torygraph". Today, it maintains its broadsheet format as a serious daily, while, in the way of selecting news issues, flirts with the tabloid genre – a sign of this being the amount of front page "soft news" of a morbid nature or simply anecdotal commentary, entertainment and infotainment, people, couples' issues, models or artists' lifestyles. This phenomenon is directly related to the fact that, in this case, when news stories coincide in being the most read and the most commented, they are the ones from the Sports or Society sections. This is reflected in the gathered data pointing to the Telegraph.co.uk profile being that of a user who is most interested in "soft news" such as Sports or Lifestyles, i.e. in those issues which have a minimum influence on the democratic decisions of a country, preferring more sensational material, albeit located in the Society section. All this, moreover, points to the reader of *The Telegraph* having little interest in new topics, being more conservative and having a highly defined type of content that manages to capture their attention.

Also, the empirical data gathered confirms that, while in the Elpais.com, there exists influence between the most read and the most commented, in Thetelegraph.co.uk these variables are more independent. Although we would need more case studies to confirm the hypothesis, from this primary research, we can conclude that this phenomenon is due to the fact that, while consumers of "hard news" (that having democratic consequences for the society these users share), are faithful to their source of information – in this case what is provided by the *El País* – but are even more faithful to the influence of these news items in their immediate social surroundings, and this is why they wish to offer their vision of events. The most assiduous or most interested followers of "soft news" (news that primarily deals with commentary, entertainment, arts and lifestyle) do not have this commitment to their immediate surrounding society in such a solid way, and therefore the regularity with which they offer their particular vision of a news story is less. It has already been

claimed that softening the news is a technique by the media to help keep an attention-deficit public on board with the news. Thus, the commentary created by the user being more linked to an entertaining version of the news (infotainment) can be assured – i.e. ensuring that users largely consume Sports and Society news but never hard news, politically speaking, that may spark a serious discussion and that could give rise to severe criticism of the way the newspaper organises the news.

As a follow-on of this modest study, the research will be extended in the future, analysing how the agenda setting and editorial decisions are affected by readers commenting on more or less determined news, thus defining the type of commitment that the medium presents to its reader-consumers.

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**Annex I. Most visited and most commented news on Twitter**

<b>El País (11/07/14)</b>	
<b>Lo más visto</b>	<b>Lo más comentado en Twitter</b>
De seguidora de la selección belga a modelo	Gaza se resigna a una larga ofensiva de Israel
<b>El barrio de Valencia que puede convertirse en ejemplo mundial</b>	Un centenar de muertos en cuatro días de ofensiva de Israel a Gaza
¿Es mejor nadar o salir a caminar?	Bruselas investiga a Valencia por manipular los datos del déficit
Santamaría carga contra Podemos: “dicen lo que la gente quiere oír”	La revolución renovable de Uruguay
Forges	Jaume Matas entrará en prisión tras denegarle el indulto en Gobierno
Aguirre reta a Iglesias a dar a las víctimas el dinero recaudado	<b>El barrio de Valencia que puede convertirse en ejemplo mundial</b>
El Gobierno alemán exige la salida del jefe de la CIA de Berlín	“Tenemos que arreglar el sistema migratorio entre todos, como sea”
El Roto	El Tribunal de Cuentas expedienta a IU por violar la ley de financiación
Mulaya y el negocio de las marcas chinas que copian al “low cost”	El candidato tímido que promete una conmoción
“Fue un apagón inexplicable”	Putin busca en Cuba una base para su expansión económica

<b>EL PAÍS (12/07/14)</b>	
<b>Lo más visto</b>	<b>Lo más comentado en Twitter</b>
De seguidora de la selección belga a modelo	Las guarderías públicas son un lujo en algunas autonomías
La canción que irrita a Brasil	<b>Bruselas acusa a Valencia de manipular sus cuentas durante años</b>
<b>Antonella, la discreta hinchita de Messi</b>	Muere Tommy Ramone, el último miembro de los Ramones originales
Jaume Matas entrará en prisión tras denegarle el indulto en Gobierno	El comercio ilegal se extiende cada vez más a especies amenazadas
El barrio de Valencia que puede convertirse en un ejemplo mundial	Rajoy estudia una fórmula para que sea alcalde todo el que alcance el 40%
Los siete peores disgustos que te puede dar un hotel	<b>Garzón: “Un indulto de este Gobierno me denigraría”</b>
Mulaya y el negocio de las marcas chinas que copian al “low cost”	Procesados 11 exjefes de Mutua Universal por desviar 200 millones
<b>Bruselas acusa a Valencia de manipular sus cuentas durante años</b>	<b>Antonella, la discreta hinchita de Messi</b>
Esther Cañadas huye de su sombra en Ibiza	¿Por qué al sol leemos diferente?
<b>Garzón: “Un indulto de este Gobierno me denigraría”</b>	Decidir la sanidad que queremos

<b>El País (13/07/14)</b>	
<b>Lo más visto</b>	<b>Lo más comentado en Twitter</b>
Brasil es el equipo pesadilla	Marinos israelíes chocan con militantes de Hamás en Gaza
<b>El Tcharmille, las maras de Marruecos</b>	<b>El Tcharmille, las maras de Marruecos</b>
250 litros de gasolina por el precio de una	La careta del gigante

coca-cola	
Los "dabbawalas" solo se equivocan en las películas	El hombre que engañó a todo el mundo
Los 15 millones de Jordi Ferrusola y su esposa en cinco días	Montoro: "Lo de subir impuestos se me da fatal"
Tres finales en una	¿Educación o mercado?
De seguidora de la selección belga a modelo	Los 15 millones de Jordi Ferrusola y su esposa en cinco días
La Complutense ofrece a Iglesias un puesto honorífico	Nace una red de apoyo para quien viaje a abortar al extranjero
Forges	Adiós, resaca, adiós
Israel sopesa una intervención terrestre en Gaza	Israel sopesa una intervención terrestre en Gaza

<b>El País (14/07/14)</b>	
<b>Lo más visto</b>	<b>Lo más comentado en Twitter</b>
Sánchez promete la victoria al PSOE	"Los que dicen que ser homosexual es una enfermedad están enfermos"
Messi, Balón de Oro sin brillo	Trabajar para ser pobre
Alemania gana como nunca	Saltan las alarmas en el sector editorial al retroceder 20 años
La ambición de Pedro	Fallece la Nobel Nadine Gordimer, la voz del apartheid
Y después de Brasil, Maracanã	Interior justifica la medalla policial a la Virgen remontándose a 1938
Adiós, resaca, adiós	10.000 palestinos huyen ante la amenaza de Israel
Forges	El valor de la humildad
El Roto	El FMI sugiere bajar el salario mínimo para reducir el paro juvenil
El Tcharmille, las maras de Marruecos	CIU coloca a un imputado como alcalde de Torredembarra
El primer muro de Occidente	Los policías llevan la cámara al hombro

(el día que más deporte se lee, se comentan cuestiones de mayor calado)

<b>El País (15/07/14)</b>	
<b>Lo más visto</b>	<b>Lo más comentado en Twitter</b>
Los beneficios de dormir desnudo	El FMI sugiere bajar el salario mínimo para reducir el paro juvenil
Un manifiesto antinacionalista se opone a que Rajoy negocie con Mas	Un manifiesto antinacionalista se opone a que Rajoy negocie con Mas
El Balón de Oro a Messi sorprendió a Battler	Rebelión europea para rebajar el caro fármaco contra la hepatitis C
Cómo deberíamos embarcar en los aviones, según la ciencia	Democracia vs transformismo
Un Estado independiente catalán sería inviable sin el euro	Educación reduce 500 plazas en centros públicos
El club de los ricos con yate	Trabajar para ser pobre
Forges	2.600 dólares por bailar sobre la tumba de Diego Rivera
Casas calientes contra el frío andino	Casas calientes contra el frío andino

“Preparé el tour como nunca”	El Constitucional avala partes centrales de la reforma laboral
Un miura rezagado provoca el pánico y dos heridos	Con la coleta llegó el canguelo

<b>El País (16/07/14)</b>	
<b>Lo más visto</b>	<b>Lo más comentado en Twitter</b>
Los alemanes se rinden ante la novia de Gotze, el héroe de la final	La celebración alemana hiere el orgullo nacional argentino
La celebración alemana hiere el orgullo nacional argentino	Mueren cuatro niños en la playa de Gaza tras un ataque israelí
Los beneficios de dormir desnudo	Esa locura tan argentina
Una declaración con Vargas Llosa y López Illana pide acción a Rajoy	Ingresa en prisión un activista del 15-M por participar en un piquete
En empresario condenado por narco vende su casa por 30 millones	El día en que el PSOE se traicionó
¿Es éste el cuerpo de un atleta?	Los países emergentes aprueban su banco y un fondo de reserva
El día en que el PSOE se traicionó	La Complutense se plantea cobrar alquiler a la Iglesia por sus capillas
Del Bosque seguirá al frente de la selección	Las rentas altas declaradas caen en picado tras la subida fiscal
Cómo deberíamos embarcar en un avión, según la ciencia	Condena al partido de Le Pen por llamar mono a una ministra
Detenidos tres marineros del buque Elcano por tráfico de drogas	La UE rechaza la propuesta para reducir el precio del fármaco contra la hepatitis C

<b>El País (17/07/14)</b>	
<b>Lo más visto</b>	<b>Lo más comentado en Twitter</b>
Un avión malasio con 295 pasajeros se estrella al Este de Ucrania	Un avión malasio con 295 pasajeros se estrella al Este de Ucrania
Adiós estrella del porno, hola actriz del método	Un vertido de petróleo afecta a una reserva de Gran Canaria
Rescatados medio millar de jóvenes esclavizados en México	Israel inicia la ofensiva terrestre de la franja de Gaza
¿Es éste el cuerpo de un atleta?	La ayuda a Catalunya Banc solo se recuperará si Blackstone gana el 13%
Israel anuncia una tregua de horas tras la muerte de cuatro niños palestinos	La deuda pública marca un nuevo máximo al borde del billón de euros
Atlético, Barca y Madrid: tres formas de cambiar de piel	Jugando con su enfermedad
Podemos urge a sus bases antes de que el PSOE se recupere	Colapso en las urgencias de Bellvitge
Forges	Israel anuncia una tregua de horas tras la muerte de cuatro niños palestinos
¿Coche blanco o coche negro?	La experiencia profesional contará para ser profesor a falta de méritos
Los futbolistas alemanes se burlan de la derrota argentina	Podemos urge a sus bases antes de que el PSOE se recupere

<b>El País (18/07/14)</b>	
<b>Lo más visto</b>	<b>Lo más comentado en Twitter</b>
La irresistible ascensión de P.I.	La irresistible ascensión de P.I.
Un misil derriba un avión malasio con 298 pasajeros en Ucrania	El tribunal de la UE considera abusiva la reforma hipotecaria
Los prorrusos dificultan el acceso de los observadores de la OSCE	El Superior fuerza el despido de la hija enchufada del alcalde de Ourense
Joop Lange, experto mundial sobre el SIDA, entre las víctimas del avión	Héroes
Un harakiri mediático consentido	El género no marcado
La grasa buena provoca la extrema delgadez de los enfermos de cáncer	"Todo lo que ha ocurrido lo viví como un nuevo rico sentimental"
En busca de los culpables	Joep Lange, experto mundial sobre el SIDA, entre las víctimas del avión
El avión derribado en Ucrania	Arrestado el teniente autor de un libro sobre abusos en el Ejército
Las mejores playas de Portugal	Un misil derriba un avión malasio con 298 pasajeros en Ucrania
Israel lanza una ofensiva terrestre sobre Gaza tras el fin de una tregua	Reus prohíbe el velo integral en los espacios públicos

<b>El País (19/07/14)</b>	
<b>Lo más visto</b>	<b>Lo más comentado en Twitter</b>
Obama apunta a la complicidad rusa en el derribo del avión de Ucrania	La película secreta de Woody Allen
La irresistible ascensión de P.I.	Los muertos en Gaza superan los 330 y los israelíes mantienen posiciones
Los prorrusos dificultan el acceso de los observadores de la OSCE	La lucha contra el VIH en América Latina se estanca
Dormir sin calor (ni aire acondicionado)	Retiradas 15 toneladas de petróleo en dos días del vertido en Canarias
Pistolas humeantes que incriminan a los rebeldes prorrusos del derribo del MH17	EEUU y la UE extienden cuatro meses el diálogo nuclear con Irán
"Todo lo ocurrido lo viví como un rico sentimental"	Carlos Slim recomienda trabajos de tres días a la semana y once horas
Carlos Slim recomienda trabajos de tres días a la semana y once horas	La sanidad pública pierde poder en el control de las bajas laborales
Buk, un producto de la guerra fría	"Todo lo ocurrido lo viví como un rico sentimental"
Merkel sobre el referéndum: "Opino como el gobierno español"	Merkel y Putin acuerdan abrir una investigación sobre el avión derribado
Charo López, se acabó el pecado	China lanza un salvavidas económico a Argentina

<b>El País (20/07/14)</b>	
<b>Lo más visto</b>	<b>Lo más comentado en Twitter</b>
Dormir sin calor (ni aire acondicionado)	La tercera vía se afianza entre los catalanes
Recreación del derribo del avión de Malaysia Airlines por un misil	Muere Rubén Alves, uno de los autores más leídos en Brasil
Aumenta la presión para que Putin responda por el derribo del MH17	Tregua de dos horas en un barrio muy castigado en Gaza

Niki Lauda: "Ferrari ha hecho un coche de mierda"	Niki Lauda: "Ferrari ha hecho un coche de mierda"
Charo López, se acabó el pecado	España, a la cola en segundas oportunidades para los empresarios
No somos Andorra, ni Mónaco, ni Suiza	Carlos Slim recomienda trabajos de tres días a la semana y once horas
La tercera vía se afianza entre los catalanes	El último resistente
"No pienso ir a Ucrania. Vería a los asesinos de familia paseando"	El hombre llega a la luna: 45 aniversario
Avión de pasajeros derribado en Ucrania	Aumenta la presión para que Putin responda por el derribo del MH17
Carlos Slim recomienda trabajos de tres días a la semana y once horas	De la Guerra Fría a la paz caliente

23 de 100, 23% de coincidencia.

<b>The Telegraph (11/07/14)</b>	
<b>Lo más visto</b>	<b>Lo más comentado</b>
Buzz Aldrin 'saw UFO' during 1969 Apollo 11 flight	The public sector strike shows just how much times have changed
'Violent' Dawn of Apes trailer shocks in half time	Liverpool agree £75m fee to sell Suarez to Barca
Australian judge says incest may no longer be a taboo	The NHS - Britain's national religion - doesn't have a prayer
Nine things to decide the World Cup final	Parents given criminal records for family holiday during term time
Wenger hails £30m Sanchez deal as huge boost	Ballroom may soon be strictly off limits for same-sex pairs
Outcry after socialist paper mocks death of Eton schoolboy in polar bear attack	Obesity surgery could be offered to a million more people on NHS
The inside story of what went wrong for Brazil	Wenger hails £30m Sanchez deal as huge boost
Fellaini shaves off his afro	The UK and 50 years of public sector over-reach
Forty-somethings 'too old to get a mortgage'	Forty-somethings 'too old to get a mortgage'
Germany strike fear into rivals' hearts	Public sector should stop selfish strikes and help the economic recovery

<b>The Telegraph (12/07/14)</b>	
<b>Lo más visto</b>	<b>Lo más comentado</b>
Brazil v Holland: as it happened	British guilt over jihadist is for dummies
Robben rules out United move after offer	NS&I to bar Scottish savers if they vote for independence
Rampant Dutch pile misery on hosts	It's thanks to the EU we've got HMS White Elephant
Juventus lining up £20 million bid for Paulinho	Rampant Dutch pile misery on hosts
Eminem: 'fans should demand their money back'	Ed Miliband still looks like a man trying to square a circle
Facebook can hurt your reputation and wallet	Speak up for the Union
Tories discuss stripping benefits claimants who	Spot of bother over Damien Hirst wall art

refuse treatment for depression	painting
Vladimir Putin meets Fidel Castro in Cuba	The British public is all too aware of the Islamist terror threat
Argentina place their faith in Messi	NHS bureaucracy was created under Labour
Tony Blair must explain IRA 'comfort letter' deals, say MPs	Real threat to a UK recovery

<b>The Telegraph (13/07/14)</b>	
<b>Lo más visto</b>	<b>Lo más comentado</b>
Germany v Argentina: as it happened	BIS chief fears fresh Lehman crisis from worldwide debt surge
Gotze wins the World Cup for Germany	Gotze wins the World Cup for Germany
BIS chief fears fresh Lehman crisis from worldwide debt surge	Ban on holidays in term time penalises key workers
Schweinsteiger drives Germans to deserved glory	Eleven reasons to go to Germany
Messi's Golden Ball award was a bizarre decision	Giving the Devil his due
Eye tests 'could spot' early Alzheimer's disease	Power grab for taxman criticised as 'sinister'
Israeli troops wounded in first ground incursion in Gaza	It's thanks to the EU we've got HMS White Elephant
BT to show Van Gaal's first United game	We have the edge over Germany – just (but don't mention the football)
Low told Gotze: Show you're better than Messi	Parliament's art is 'too white and male'
Robben rules out United move after offer	We must tread carefully along the path to assisted dying

<b>The Telegraph (14/07/14)</b>	
<b>Lo más visto</b>	<b>Lo más comentado</b>
Messi angered by missed opportunity	BIS chief fears fresh Lehman crisis
Reshuffle: William Hague quits as a dozen ministers axed	Reshuffle: William Hague quits as a dozen ministers axed
Captain Vermaelen's United move in balance	People who claim to worry about climate change use more electricity
Oscar Pistorius gets into fight at nightclub	Messi's Golden Ball award was a bizarre decision
Father claims desert land to make his daughter a princess	Climate change sceptics 'must be heard on the BBC'
People who claim to worry about climate change use more electricity	Ban on holidays in term time penalises key workers
How Germany plotted the perfect campaign	Giving the Devil his due
Arsenal chase Khedira and Bender	Gotze wins the World Cup for Germany
Blatter questions Messi's Golden Ball	United agree £750m Adidas deal
Barton comes out of international retirement	Eleven reasons to go to Germany

<b>The Telegraph (15/07/14)</b>	
<b>Lo más visto</b>	<b>Lo más comentado</b>
Brazilian who turned 126 years old last week could be oldest living person	BIS chief fears fresh Lehman crisis
Walcott remark my only regret in 20 brilliant years	William Hague quits as a dozen ministers axed in reshuffle
McDouble is the 'cheapest, most nutritious food ever'	People who claim to worry about climate change use more electricity
Camilla collapses as insect lands on Prince Charles's pants	Messi award was bizarre
So, why did Chelsea go cold on the Markovic deal?	Climate change sceptics 'must be heard on the BBC'
Liverpool sign Markovic but fail in Davies bid	Ban on holidays in term time penalises key workers
Liverpool to come to Reus' rescue	Giving the Devil his due
England fury as Anderson is accused of abuse	Gotze wins the World Cup for Germany
Juncker deals blow to Alex Salmond's EU claims	United agree £750m Adidas deal
Ten dating mistakes that men make	Eleven reasons to go to Germany

<b>The Telegraph (16/07/14)</b>	
Malaysia Airlines plane crashes on Ukraine-Russia border - live	BIS chief fears fresh Lehman crisis
America's shift towards recovery will test us all	William Hague quits as a dozen ministers axed in reshuffle
Heatwave health warning to stay indoors	People who claim to worry about climate change use more electricity
Belgian town blasts out music to drive out gypsies	Messi award was bizarre
Nicky Morgan should read this (plagiarised) letter and then sack the headteacher who wrote it	Climate change sceptics 'must be heard on the BBC'
The Open 2014: live	Ban on holidays in term time penalises key workers
Four Palestinian children playing on Gaza beach killed by Israeli ship	Giving the Devil his due
Mystery giant hole appears in Siberia	Gotze wins the World Cup for Germany
Mystery crater baffles scientists	United agree £750m Adidas deal
Özil donates £350k to Brazilian children	Eleven reasons to go to Germany

<b>The Telegraph (17/07/14)</b>	
Obama: Putin has the power to stop this	BIS chief fears fresh Lehman crisis
Couple missed Malaysia Airlines flight that crashed because of lack of seats	William Hague quits as a dozen ministers axed in reshuffle

Leading HIV researchers lost as flight MH17 is downed in Ukraine	People who claim to worry about climate change use more electricity
Corpses and body parts strewn amid MH17 wreckage	Messi award was bizarre
MH17 victims include students, football fans and health worker	Climate change sceptics 'must be heard on the BBC'
Watch live from Gaza City	Ban on holidays in term time penalises key workers
Video believed to show crashed Malaysian Airlines	Giving the Devil his due
Flight MH17 black box may already be in Moscow	Gotze wins the World Cup for Germany
If my flight to Malaysia disappears, this is what it looks like	United agree £750m Adidas deal
Video shows MH17 passengers before crash	Eleven reasons to go to Germany

<b>The Telegraph (18/07/14)</b>	
Dutch prime minister says Putin has 'one last chance to show he means to help'	BIS chief fears fresh Lehman crisis
Thousands sign petition to save 'world's saddest animal'	William Hague quits as a dozen ministers axed in reshuffle
Christians lie and wives must have sex or go to hell, Trojan Horse pupils told	People who claim to worry about climate change use more electricity
England v India, day three: live	Messi award was bizarre
'Russian gangsters killed our loved ones'	Climate change sceptics 'must be heard on the BBC'
Crashed MH17 flight 'was 300 miles off typical course'	Ban on holidays in term time penalises key workers
Russian government edits Wikipedia on flight MH17	Giving the Devil his due
MH17: what we know two days after Malaysia Airlines crash over Ukraine	Gotze wins the World Cup for Germany
Mourinho mocks Arsenal over Fabregas	United agree £750m Adidas deal
Malaysia Airlines crash - July 18 as it happened	Eleven reasons to go to Germany

<b>The Telegraph (19/07/14)</b>	
Arsenal have to splash out £24m for Carvalho	BIS chief fears fresh Lehman crisis
Frustrated husband creates spreadsheet of wife's excuses for no sex	William Hague quits as a dozen ministers axed in reshuffle
MH17: Dutch investigators inspect makeshift morgue	People who claim to worry about climate change use more electricity
Malaysia Airlines crash: families fear dead being held as bargaining chips	Messi award was bizarre
Salah facing Egyptian military service	Climate change sceptics 'must be heard on the BBC'
Python farewell: 'poignant'	Ban on holidays in term time penalises key workers



This one's for you, Mum: McIlroy win a family affair	Giving the Devil his due
Rodriguez closes in on £63m Real move	Gotze wins the World Cup for Germany
Donkey suicide bomb stopped by Israeli troops in Gaza	United agree £750m Adidas deal
Warm weather to continue, says Met Office	Eleven reasons to go to Germany

<b>The Telegraph (20/07/14)</b>	
Lampard under fire in New York for 9/11 insensitivity	BIS chief fears fresh Lehman crisis
Frustrated husband creates spreadsheet of wife's excuses for no sex	William Hague quits as a dozen ministers axed in reshuffle
MH17: 'Stop arming Ukrainian rebels or face economic sanctions', foreign ministers tell Russia	People who claim to worry about climate change use more electricity
How not to ask your wife for sex	Messi award was bizarre
Prince George's first birthday: don't send gifts	Climate change sceptics 'must be heard on the BBC'
Hey, Minister, remember me? I'm the one you called a slut	Ban on holidays in term time penalises key workers
Cook's comments sounded like a cry for help	Giving the Devil his due
Liverpool close in on Spain U20 star	Gotze wins the World Cup for Germany
By defying the West, bully-boy Putin could lead Russia to ruin	United agree £750m Adidas deal
Spurs eye £25m Griezmann as Bale successor	Eleven reasons to go to Germany

## Annex 2. Classification by theme of the most visited and most commented news on Twitter

EL PAÍS								
Fecha	Opini ón	Polít ica	Internacion al	Deport es	Cultur a	Socieda d	Celebriti es	Programaci ón Radio y tv
11/07	2	2	1	1	-	3	1	-
11/07	-	4	5	-	-	1	-	-
12/07	-	3	1	1	-	2	3	-
12/07	1	3	-	-	1	4	1	-
13/07	1	2	3	2	1	-	1	-
13/07	3	2	3	-	-	2	-	-
14/07	3	2	1	3	1	-	-	-
14/07	1	3	1	-	2	3	-	-
15/07	1	2	-	2	-	4	1	-
15/07	1	4	2	-	-	3	-	-
16/07	-	2	-	3	-	4	1	-
16/07	-	2	4	2	-	2	-	-
17/07	1	1	3	3	-	1	1	-
17/07	-	3	3	-	-	4	-	-
18/07	1	-	7	-	-	1	1	-
18/07	3	1	3	-	-	2	1	-
19/07	1	1	4	-	-	2	2	-
19/07	-	1	5	-	-	2	2	-
20/07	1	1	4	1	-	2	1	-
20/07	1	1	2	1	1	4	-	-

THE TELEGRAPH								
Fecha	Opini ón	Polític a	Internacion al	Deport es	Cultur a	Socieda d	Celebriti es	Programaci ón Radio y tv
11/07	-	-	2	4	1	2	-	-
11/07	-	1	-	2	1	6	-	-
12/07	-	3	-	5	1	1	-	-
12/07	1	6	-	1	1	1	-	-
13/07	-	-	2	7	-	1	-	-
13/07	1	2	1	2	1	3	-	-
14/07	-	1	2	6	-	1	-	-
14/07	-	1	1	3	1	4	-	-
15/07	1	1	1	5	-	1	1	-
15/07	-	1	-	3	1	5	-	-
16/07	1	-	6	2	-	1	-	-
16/07	-	1	-	3	1	5	-	-
17/07	-	-	10	-	-	-	-	-
17/07	-	1	-	3	1	5	-	-
18/07	-	1	6	2	-	1	-	-
18/07	-	1	-	3	1	5	-	-
19/07	-	-	3	4	1	2	-	-
19/07	-	1	-	3	1	5	-	-
20/07	-	-	2	4	-	2	2	-
20/07	-	1	-	3	1	5	-	-

Green = Most Viewed

Orange = Most Commented