

MAKING QUEER CONTENT VISIBLE: MEDIA FRAMING OF QUEERNESS IN SERBIA

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Abstract

This *Perspective* portrays the challenges and needs of the queer population in Serbian public discourse. Since the first Belgrade Pride in 2001, members of the LGBT+ community have encountered rejection from different sources. Although it is generally acknowledged that politics and mass media play an important role in the way that societies come to terms with queerness, there is little empirical knowledge about whether and how mass media actually contribute to the process of raising awareness and legitimation and increasing visibility. The study aims to assess changes in the online framing of the Serbian newspaper *blic* by analyzing the Belgrade Pride of each year from 2014 to 2024. The concept of media framing analysis is employed to elucidate the structural and dynamic interactions between the LGBT+ community and the (in)tolerant segment of the Serbian society. Furthermore, the aim of the analysis is to identify the various frames utilized in the media coverage, with a particular focus on the reporting and the actors that shape the discourse surrounding queerness. The primary argument is that, although the reporting has not resulted in significant shifts in framing, it provides a lens through which discussions about LGBT+ visibility and representation in Serbia can be conducted.

1 Introduction

I love Serbia. It is a beautiful and hospitable country in the heart of Europe, the home of my ancestors and family, and I have many fond childhood memories of it. The country, which has been a candidate for EU membership since 2012, is developing steadily, but there are often obstacles that slow it down. One such example is the questioning of traditional norms and values. Queerness is a difficult topic in Serbia. Even in my family it is considered a taboo subject. My family avoids talking about it and prefers keeping quiet, which includes me—I keep quiet. I don't dare talk to them about it. What if they reject my attitude and opinion? What if they reject *me*? Looking at the representation of queerness in the media does not improve the difficult situation. As this *Perspective* will show, the LGBT+¹ community in Serbia faces rejection from various actors. To find out how Serbian society perceives, understands, and reacts to queerness, I use the concept of media framing from media, communication, and sociological research. As media scholar Robert Entman puts it:

Framing essentially involves selection and salience. To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.²

Therefore, people employ frames of reference or interpretation in order to categorize, interpret, and evaluate facts, events, or actors.³ The utilization of such frames by parties, different groups, social movements, or even journalists is referred to as framing.⁴ The resulting effects on recipients are in turn categorized as framing effects.⁵ This means that the way information is presented can significantly influence people and the way they think about and interpret the world around them. Frames themselves are a kind of interpretive lens through which information is processed. These lenses can be understood as cognitive structures that guide an individual's understanding and response to new information. The concept was popularized by the book *Frame Analysis*, by sociologist Erving Goffman, who argued that people use frames to organize their experiences and make sense of the world.⁶ Framing, in this sense, is the (subjective) selection and emphasis of certain aspects of reality while omitting or downplaying others. Media framing is therefore a powerful tool for influencing public (political) discourse and thus also social reality.

The concept of value frames is an appropriate lens through which to examine my study, which to date has been primarily situated within the domain of experimental media effects research.⁷ The field of value framing is significantly shaped by the disciplines of cognitive psychology and persuasion research.⁸ In general, values are regarded as “abstract blueprints of socially desirable states that appear as prescriptive statements in moral discourses.”⁹ Schwartz defines values as desirable, transsituational goals that vary in importance and serve as guiding principles in people's lives.¹⁰ In this context, a comprehensive understanding of the subject necessitates engaging with insights from political science. Political values can be defined as the ideas that are recognized as common by the members of a political community about the goals to be striven for in political coexistence and the means appropriate for achieving these goals.¹¹ In light of these considerations, it becomes evident that the concept of values occupies a central position within the theoretical framework of abstract frames, as exemplified by the aforementioned value frames. This observation aligns with the insights offered by political science and sociology, which posit that values constitute a fundamental aspect of political and social culture.¹²

To analyze the media framing of queerness in Serbia, I look at the web archive of the popular Serbian daily tabloid *blic*. Founded in 1996, it is one of the most widely read newspapers, both in print and online, and is considered a pro-government paper

favoring President Aleksandar Vučić's Serbian Progressive Party.¹³ It addresses a range of subjects, including politics, economics, lifestyle, and current affairs. A survey from 2008 indicates that the public perceives the newspaper as a publication primarily for younger readers.¹⁴ The data studied in this *_Perspective* covers the period from 2014 to 2024, focusing exclusively on the reporting of the day of Belgrade Pride¹⁵ each year. The day of the Pride parade is one of the most important events of the year—perhaps even the most important one—for the queer community. On this day, they have the opportunity to show themselves freely and safely on the streets of Belgrade, interacting with others, and openly expressing their identities. However, this day has never been safe for Pride participants. At the first Belgrade Pride in 2001, participants were ambushed and beaten up by a group of hooligans and supporters of right-wing organizations. The police force was too small and unprepared—it failed to respond adequately to the outburst of violence.¹⁶ Several people were injured and there was no official response from the government to investigate the perpetrators. The violent attacks were repeated during Pride 2010. The Prides in 2009, 2011, 2012, and 2013 were cancelled and banned by the authorities “for security reasons.”¹⁷ With the exception of the year 2020 in which Pride did not take place due to the coronavirus pandemic, the queer community has celebrated Belgrade Pride yearly since 2014.

2_Framing Belgrade Pride: An Analysis of Media Representation on *blic.rs*

For my research, I will focus on the online articles on the website *blic.rs*¹⁸ and use two keywords in order to narrow down the scope of my material: ‘Prajd’ [engl. Pride] and ‘Parada Ponosa’ [engl. Pride Parade]. Framing in the media often manifests itself in the choice of a few key words, phrases, and images that reinforce a particular portrayal of reality and a particular feeling about it, as well as in the omission of other elements that might suggest a different perspective or create a different mood.¹⁹ Framing can also be observed in the choice of who and what is quoted and where that quote is placed in the story.²⁰ The keywords at issue, ‘Prajd’ and ‘Parada Ponosa,’ are most frequently used in the media as synonyms for Belgrade Pride, which usually takes place in September and is preceded by a Pride Week. In Fig. 1, I have listed the number of articles found that contain the two specified keywords in the title or the article text. There are 85 articles in total, demonstrating that the keyword ‘Prajd’ was used in the majority of *blic* reports during the time studied (35).

Year	Keyword 'Prajd'	Keyword 'Parada Ponosa'	Both Keywords in the Same Article	Total Articles for Each Year
2014	-	-	-	-
2015	4	4	3	11
2016	7	5	9	21
2017	1	3	6	10
2018	1	4	1	6
2019	6	1	3	10
2020	-	-	-	-
2021	1	-	3	4
2022	10	5	2	17
2023	2	-	1	3
2024	3	-	-	3
Total	35	22	28	85

= Analysis of 85 Articles in Total

Fig. 1: List of the number of articles on *blic.rs* about Belgrade Pride from 2014 to 2024 containing the keywords 'Prajd' and 'Parada Ponosa' in the title or text (Table by author)

The fluctuation in the number of articles, particularly the significant decrease in 2023 and 2024, is indeed noteworthy and warrants further consideration. One potential area to investigate is whether the decrease corresponds with any changes in the political, social, or cultural context surrounding LGBT+ issues in Serbia during those years. For example, shifts in public discourse, the political landscape, or the status of LGBT+ rights may have impacted the prominence of Pride events in media reporting. Additionally, it would be relevant to assess whether other events or topics took precedence in the media during these years, possibly contributing to the reduced focus on Belgrade Pride. Moreover, the reduced coverage in 2023 and 2024 may also reflect a change in media strategies or editorial priorities at *blic*, which could have been influenced by a variety of factors, including shifting audience interests or editorial directives.

Thus, while *blic* is responsible for frame building,²¹ i.e. how Pride and queerness are portrayed in its online coverage, frame setting²² is understood as a cognitive process

of the reader that plays a crucial role in shaping public opinion, as it influences the way Serbian society interprets and reacts to information.

Nevertheless, I would like to examine what positions exist on Pride and the queer community within the reporting in *blic*. The following questions are of interest: Which actors are being interviewed by *blic* and influence the discourse around Pride and thus the queer community? What do the different actors refer to and what arguments do they use for their points of view? How much space is given to them in the coverage and how are they presented by the newspaper? Which are the frames used by *blic*?

Before I continue with my analysis, out of respect and solidarity, I would first like to address the basic demands that the queer community in Serbia has been making for many years now. In cooperation with the Pride Info Centre in Belgrade, Belgrade Pride has published on its website eight demands that are publicly reiterated at every Pride:

1. Adoption of the Law on Same-Sex Unions.
2. Adoption of the Law on Gender Identity and the Rights of Intersex Persons, and an improvement in services available to trans people.
3. Fast and adequate reaction from state authorities, as well as public condemnation by government representatives, of hate speech and hate-motivated crimes against the LGBTQIA+ community.
4. Recognition of the LGBT+ community in local action plans as one of the particularly sensitive social populations.
5. An apology to all Serbian citizens who have been prosecuted or in any way discriminated against prior to 1994 due to their sexual orientation or gender identity.
6. Youth education about sexual orientation and gender identity.
7. Free and easily accessible pre-exposure and post-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP and PEP).
8. Urgent standardization of the Field Collaborator service by the Ministry of Labor, Employment, Veterans, and Social Affairs.²³

3_Support for the Queer Community in Serbia

Overall, *blic* paints a largely positive picture of the last ten years of Pride, perceiving it as an established event in Serbia. In comparison, not a single article on the day of the parade can be found from 2014. Only a brief article was published one day after the parade. In it, the representatives of the organizing team, Boban Stojanović and Goran Miletić, summed up the parade as follows:

After all the efforts, considering that images and videos of the 2001 one were circulating for ten years, and that 2010 passed ingloriously in the context of

violence, we can be satisfied with what happened yesterday. [...] Yesterday showed that the state can find a way, when it wants to.²⁴

The Pride organizers' assessment is a sobering one. In 2014, the fundamental objective of Pride was not celebration but survival—ensuring that the queer community could gather in public without facing the threat of violence. The gratitude expressed toward the government for facilitating a predominantly non-violent Pride event highlights that, at this stage, the minimum expectation was simply to exist without harm. The community could only begin to consider celebration or collective joy once basic safety had been ensured. Consequently, the demands of the queer community in 2014 were limited to this fundamental need for security. The situation appears to have been more favorable in 2015. As reported in one article, the citizens of Belgrade could be proud that Pride proceeded without violence or significant incidents.²⁵ This is also evidenced by the cheerful photos taken in the capital. The use of positive verbs and adjectives such as 'proud' or 'cheerful' serves to portray the event as a success.

Each year, Belgrade Pride is accompanied by a 'Pride Godmother,' who serves as a guardian of the LGBT+ community and its fight for equal rights. The Godmother officially opens the Pride event by giving a speech to the participants. Most of the people chosen for this role are women from the arts, working in the music or film industries. However, well-known female journalists such as Suzana Trninić have also been appointed Godmother and permitted to contribute their stances in relation to queerness in Serbia in the reporting of *blic*. Additionally, numerous other supporters who espouse the values of Belgrade Pride have been given a platform in the reporting. All individuals listed below participated in the Pride walks of the past decade and were subsequently interviewed at the event:

- UNICEF Representative in Serbia, Michel Saint-Lot²⁶
- Then ambassadors of Germany, Great Britain, and the U.S.²⁷
- (now ex-)Mayor of Belgrade Siniša Mali²⁸
- Commissioner for the Protection of Equality of the Republic of Serbia, Brankica Janković²⁹
- Head of the European Union Delegation to the Republic of Serbia, Michael Davenport³⁰
- Many more Serbian musicians, journalists, actresses, and Serbian ministers³¹

Some have made it clear that they support the LGBT+ community and are influential in shaping the queer discourse. In 2015, two Prides happened simultaneously for the first time. In addition to the traditional Belgrade Pride, the first Transgender Pride was held, with the participation of one of the most prominent transgender women in the Balkans, Helena Vuković. She is a retired transgender army officer and LGBT+ activist who is dedicated to making the challenges of the trans community more visible. Trans people are one of the minorities in Serbia that face the most discrimination.³² It is this very issue that *blic* highlights in its 2015 coverage. Notably, the newspaper uses female pronouns to position Helena in a queer context.³³ Thus, a value-laden framing is used here through language and images that contain implicit or explicit value judgments.³⁴ This type of framing can evoke strong emotional responses and influence public attitudes and behaviors. Nevertheless, the obstacles faced by transgender individuals have hardly been addressed by *blic* in the coverage of Pride in the following years.³⁵

Instead, other minorities and problems have been brought into focus. Zlatomir Jovanović, the representative of the Roma community, said that both Roma and transgender people “must be seen in the local community and employed in public institutions.”³⁶ Almost a decade later, Pride once again addressed the stigmatization of the Roma minority in Serbia. The Pride Godmother for 2024 was the Serbian singer Zejna, who is of Romani origin. In addition to her “masterful performance, good energy and powerful voice,”³⁷ as the newspaper reports, she also spoke out about the fact that she continued to face discrimination and negative comments as a Roma woman.³⁸ In thematic framing, queerness is presented in a broader context and often linked to wider social, political, or economic factors (such as the discrimination against ethnic Roma). Such framing encourages the audience to consider the systemic causes and possible solutions to a problem.³⁹ While *blic* draws attention to the marginalization of transsexuals and Roma, it lacks clear positioning and (messaging that would provide) further impetus for change and acceptance of minority groups within society.

To date, as mentioned above, Godmothers have been prominent female figures from the Serbian public sphere, such as the actress Mirjana Karanović, singers Jelena Karleuša, Nataša Bekvalac, and Zejna, and journalist Suzana Trninić. All Godmothers are given the opportunity to express themselves in the articles and take a clear pro-queer position. In 2016, Mirjana Karanović was asked by a fellow citizen how she, as such a great actress, could support gays. *blic* described the interaction as an

“unpleasantness” that “our actress” had experienced.⁴⁰ The newspaper appears to have condemned the fellow citizen’s statement while distancing itself from it by using the pronoun “our” and thus positioning itself on the actress’s side.

Pride participants, such as transgender woman Zoi, also often have their say. She attended Pride 2018 to have fun and enjoy the event as part of the community.⁴¹ As with Helena, *blic* represents Zoi’s gender identity and gives her the opportunity to openly express her fears. Once again, a value-laden framing through language is used here.

In 2016, Ana Brnabić, who was then Minister of State Administration and Local Self-Government and openly gay (in 2017 she was appointed Serbia’s first female and queer Prime Minister), participated in Pride for the first time and expressed her support for the community.⁴² Several *blic* articles were dedicated to her throughout 2016 and 2017. This is likely due to Brnabić’s status as a prominent figure in two ways. On the one hand, she is considered a member of the queer community. On the other, she serves as a link between the queer community and the government through her previous role as Prime Minister and now President of the National Assembly. She believes that Serbia has come a long way from the outright discrimination and stigmatization of people, which has been reflected in hate speech and physical violence in the past.⁴³ She considers it her duty to raise awareness of the LGBT+ community in Serbia and claims that Serbia is not a homophobic Balkan country.⁴⁴ The queer community are presented here as a kind of ‘freedom fighters’ who have fought their way into the public consciousness despite discrimination and violence. As a result, the *blic* news coverage of Brnabić can evoke positive associations and generate public sympathy in the debate around LGBT+ in Serbia.

One of the primary focal points of annual reporting on the subject in *blic* is the description of a notable improvement in the atmosphere, which is perceived to be more relaxed and cheerful year on year. Participants arrive with children and dogs, and local cafés remain open for business as usual.⁴⁵ People go for coffee and to the market, as the streets are no longer as cordoned off as they once were.⁴⁶ While a considerable number of police and security personnel were present in 2015, the necessity for protection has diminished from year to year.⁴⁷ For example, the coverage of Pride 2016 shows people on balconies blowing kisses and calling greetings to the crowd, as observed by *blic* correspondents.⁴⁸ Additionally, photographic collections

documenting Pride events held from 2015 to 2019 have been published on the website.⁴⁹ The participants are shown as free and happy, dancing and singing during the walk. This displays a positive image of the city's inhabitants and places the focus on the celebratory aspects of Pride. In 2018, *blic* reported that the atmosphere resembled a masked ball, and the costumed members of the LGBT+ population stood out.⁵⁰ In 2024, Pride was compared to a carnival parade while the participants danced to turbofolk music blasting from the truck.⁵¹ The description of the atmosphere is thus clearly accompanied by a value-laden framing.

One 2018 article is particularly noteworthy for its positive overtones, documenting the history of Pride in Belgrade from 2001 to date in numerous images and texts.⁵² In the live ticker of Pride 2022, a video showed the history of the LGBT+ flag and explained why it consists of six colors.⁵³ Both the article and the video, have the potential to serve as educational tools, raising awareness of the queer community in Serbia. This marks a clear shift from earlier media coverage, which often treated Pride merely as a 'happening,' to a more nuanced approach that perceives the queer community as a political actor, with agency and a voice in broader societal discussions. Unfortunately, these are the only two articles by *blic*, written on the newspaper's own initiative, attempting to educate and actively reframing queerness and its representation in Serbian society.

The year 2022 is of historic importance for the LGBT+ community in Serbia and the entire Balkan region. With 6,000 participants, Europride replaced Belgrade Pride and was considered the most significant Pride event to date, largely due to its international scope.⁵⁴ As Serbian Prime Minister Ana Brnabić has made clear, this was the inaugural Europride event held outside the European Economic Area, as well as the first such event in Southeast Europe.⁵⁵ *blic* reports that, after initial difficulties and obstacles, Europride was only approved due to intense international pressure.⁵⁶ After the event, the newspaper described a Europride with a cheerful atmosphere and a wide variety of people and flags from across Europe.⁵⁷ It thus made reference to diversity and its apparent visibility, awareness of, and acceptance in Belgrade, which, however, was opposed by several thousand anti-Pride protesters. The newspaper notes the prohibition of this anti-globalist counter-Pride-protest on several occasions and refers to its organization's procession as a "so-called" family walk.⁵⁸ The term "so-called"⁵⁹—"takozvana" in Serbian—is frequently employed by the government in reference to

Kosovo. Serbia does not recognize Kosovo as an independent state and expresses this by adding ‘so-called’ before referring to it. The word thus symbolizes a clear distancing, in our case a distancing from the counter-protests of the anti-globalists.

In its Europride coverage, *blic* focuses on one photo in particular and describes the image of a mother and her son, which “rightly garnered the most sympathy, where you can see them walking together and supporting each other.”⁶⁰ The statement concludes with an exclamation mark, followed by the picture of the two as the most beautiful moment of Pride. This reporting element can also be seen as a value-laden frame.⁶¹

4_Opponents of Pride and the Queer Community in Serbia

Not only Pride supporters and advocates are given a voice in *blic*’s reporting. Three actors in particular have emerged as prominent opponents of Pride over the past decade: right-wing organizations and violent groups, representatives and members of the Orthodox Church, and the current Serbian President, Aleksandar Vučić.

blic also shows photos and videos of the violence against Pride participants, whose movements in the streets (as part of the parade) are stopped by the police.⁶² While *blic* explicitly reports that the violence is perpetrated by right-wing extremists—as they are referred to in the reporting—it is often not clearly specified whether these ‘extremists’ are also members of the church. In 2019, for instance, proponents of right-wing groups laid down in the middle of the street as a sign of revolt. They sang national folk songs and held up the Serbian flag, Christian crosses and other symbols, as well as banners reading “Immorality and gay shame, never again in my lifetime.”⁶³

Additionally, members of the Orthodox Church engage in annual demonstrations against Pride Parade. Photos show several citizens in front of the Church of St. Mark with banners reading “Shame never in public life.”⁶⁴ Such events are frequently organized by the monk Antonije, who has since been expelled from the Church. In addition to the queer community, he also targets Jews and Freemasons, who in his opinion are “guilty of all evil,” and thus spreads hatred against anyone who is not an “orthodox Christian.”⁶⁵ He and other clergymen go so far as to claim: “The air itself stinks, we have to incense it and clean the streets of this scum that has made our wonderful city stink.”⁶⁶ As *blic* notes, “the controversial former monk” was often in conflict with the law in earlier years, which has contributed to his negative reputation.⁶⁷ By including the phrase “controversial excommunicated monk” in the article, the

newspaper devalues his position of power as a former ordained minister and thus diminishes the value of his quoted statements in relation to Pride and its participants. It openly distances itself from the clergyman by denouncing his past actions and thereby publicly delegitimizing him.

In 2015, the refugee crisis in Europe was a topic of significant discussion and concern within Serbian politics and society. Within *blic* reporting, Pride Godmother, Serbian actress Biljana Srbljanović called upon the audience to demonstrate solidarity with migrants.⁶⁸ Flags with the words “Peace” and “Solidarity with refugees” could also be seen in 2016.⁶⁹ In addition to Pride, the refugee crisis thus came to the fore. The remarks made by Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić on the subject of the refugee crisis have been perceived as unfavorable towards refugees in Serbia: “The country is not in favor of walls, but neither is it a parking lot for displaced persons.”⁷⁰ He criminalized them and described them as very aggressive, causing problems especially in Belgrade.⁷¹ While Pride itself fades into the background in the reporting, it is simultaneously contextualized within a broader framework and linked to the refugee crisis as a significant political phenomenon, which represents an instance of thematic framing. It prompts the reader to engage in critical reflection on the refugee crisis as a social issue in Serbia and on potential political and social solutions to it.

Additionally, Vučić issued an assessment of the queer community at Pride 2016. By presence of state and city officials (namely, Ana Brnabić), the government, as Vučić claimed, showed that it took responsibility and cared for everyone’s safety. He added that he was personally not a supporter of the LGBT+ ways and, mocking the event, stated that he would not have participated even if he had been invited: “If I had time, I’d rather go to the wedding of Bata Gašić’s son, which gathered four or five times more (wedding) guests than Pride.”⁷² *blic*, as a pro-government newspaper, provided the President with a platform to ridicule the relatively low number of participants in the Pride event. The number of Pride participants is undoubtedly important in terms of their visibility to the Serbian public, but not decisive. Many people within the LGBT+ community are still afraid of coming out and being seen in society. This can to some extent be attributed to the Serbian President, whose public statements have the potential to influence the perceptions and experiences of members of the LGBT+ community. It is the only *blic* article about Vučić’s position and attitude towards Pride and the queer community.

In this way, the reporting on Vučić in *blic* links two marginalized groups, framing the discourse according to theme, which are highlighted by hate speech in the quotes, which indicates evaluative framing. While the refugee crisis in Serbia is criminalized, his clear rejection and inappropriate jokes about the Pride community indicate discriminatory attitudes. Highlighting his statements in *blic* can shape the public's understanding and attitude towards queerness and possibly also influence political decisions, as evidenced by the unsuccessful legislation regarding the queer community's demands to date.

5_Pride 2024: A Perspective

For the first time in the history of Pride, in 2024, *all eight demands of the LGBT+ community* were posted online on *blic* and appear under the keywords examined.⁷³ In my estimation, this represents a significant advancement in terms of visibility and acceptance of the queer community in Serbia. Until 2024, *blic* had only been reporting a selection of the demands, with the adoption of the law on same-sex partnerships being the most prominent. However, in the 2024 article(s), the demands are preceded by plenty of pictures and comments. Further wishes of the LGBT+ community are positioned last in the article. As in previous years, the atmosphere at Pride is portrayed as joyful and relaxed. *blic* also reports that two young men got engaged on the day, which drew an applause from the crowd. Additionally, the statement by the 2023 Pride Godmother, Croatian singer Ida Prester, is noteworthy: "Change has been on its way, perhaps not as quickly as the activists wanted, but it is important that Pride has gone on for ten years without incidents."⁷⁴

Analyzing the pride coverage of 2024, we can see different forms of framing again. On the one hand, there is the first publicly presented queer engagement and a largely non-violent Pride, which is framed by *blic* as a positive development. On the other hand, the core issue of the queer community, the reason for the existence of Pride, namely *their demands*, is only mentioned at the bottom of the article. This attitude is arguably the root of the problem, as Prester quotes it here. It is, of course, important that Pride is non-violent. Nevertheless, the community has the same wishes as ten years ago. Why do the demands come last in the text? Pride participants are still being subjected to verbal and physical violence. Why are its perpetrators not being

prosecuted? Queer community members still have to fight for their rights. Why are their demands not being responded to?

6 Conclusion

Busse and Teubert rightly emphasize that discourses are “diachronic in their very conception.”⁷⁵ Consequently, frames that are processed within discourses are not fixed and unchanging. Forms of framing are also diverse and conceptualized as a dynamic process, often changing. In conclusion, the reporting of *blic* reflects a positive image of the queer community. The articles feature a diverse range of voices, representing a multitude of individuals from various sectors of society and the political sphere who express support for Pride, thereby influencing the prevailing discourse. Their framing ranges from value-laden, conveyed through language, images, and statements that contain implicit or explicit value judgments, to thematic that moves beyond Pride to depict other political and social problems, such as discrimination against minorities and the refugee crisis.

Opponents of Pride are vilified in *blic*, as are the delegitimized clergyman or the right-wing groups that appear to be violent. Only President Vučić’s statements are legitimized by the newspaper without comment. Although the newspaper positions itself as pro-queer through its reporting, a certain distance or restraint can still be observed. Too little active educational work is done to raise social awareness of the existence of a queer community. After ten years of Belgrade Pride, queerness is unfortunately still a controversial topic in Serbia in 2024.

I would like *blic* to be more courageous in its positive reporting on Pride and to have the confidence to express a clearer opinion, perhaps also with the support of the government, which, even after ten years, has still not taken a single step towards acceptance and inclusion of queerness in the laws of Serbia. But as the adage goes: hope dies last. I want to believe that in the coming years, everything that started with the first Belgrade Pride in 2001 will be realized for the queer community. Pride stands for so much more than just a colorful (and, as *blic* notes, carnival-like) parade. It is a symbol of diversity, tolerance, and love, which are essential elements currently lacking in Serbian society. Because love is love, it knows no gender.

Endnotes

- ¹ The acronym LGBT+ is employed as a concise designation for all genders, gender identities, and sexual orientations. This is done deliberately to ensure consistency with the format used in *blic.rs* articles.
- ² Robert M. Entman, “Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm,” *Journal of Communication* 43, no. 4 (1993): 51–58, here 52. Doi: [10.1111/j.1460-2466.1993.tb01304.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.1993.tb01304.x).
- ³ Cf. Entman, “Framing,” 52; Todd Gitlin, *The Whole World Is Watching: Mass Media in the Making & Unmaking of the New Left* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1980), 7–8; Erving Goffman, *Rahmen-Analyse: Ein Versuch über die Organisation von Alltagserfahrungen* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1993), 19; William A. Gamson and Andre Modigliani, “Media Discourse and Public Opinion on Nuclear Power: A Constructionist Approach,” *American Journal of Sociology* 95, no. 1 (1989), 1–37, here: 3.
- ⁴ David A. Snow and Robert D. Benford, “Ideology, Frame Resonance, and Participant Mobilization,” in *From Structure to Action: Comparing Social Movement Research Across Cultures*, eds. Bert Klandermans et. al. (Greenwich: JAI Press, 1988), 197–211, here: 198.
- ⁵ Vincent Price and David Tewksbury, “News Values and Public Opinion: A Theoretical Account of Media Priming and Framing,” in: *Progress in Communication Sciences: Advances in Persuasion*, eds. George A. Barrett and Franklin J. Boster (Greenwich: Ablex, 1997), 173–212, here: 198.
- ⁶ Erving Goffman, *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), 21.
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- 68 Tanjug, “Biljana Srbljanović: Parada ponosa postala naša tradicija i ponos.”
- 69 Blic, B. Bogosav, Tanjug, Beta, D. Tulimirović, and N. Stojanović, “(UŽIVO) PORUKA SA PRAJDA .”
- 70 “Vučić: Radije bih išao na svadbu Gašićevog sina nego na Paradu ponosa,” in *blic.rs*, September 18, 2016, <<https://www.blic.rs/vesti/politika/vucic-radije-bih-isao-na-svadbu-gasicevog-sina-nego-na-paradu-ponosa/gpf5831>>.
- 71 “Vučić.”
- 72 “Da sam imao vremena išao bih na svadbu sina Bate Gašića, koji je okupio četiri ili pet puta više svatova nego što je bilo na šetnji,” own translation; see “Vučić.” Bratislav Gašić is a politician and currently the minister of defense in Serbia.
- 73 Rajčetić, “BEOGRAD PRAJD 2024”
- 74 “Promene su dolazile, možda ne tako brzo kao što su aktivisti želeli, ali bitno je da je deset godina prajd bez incidenata,” own translation; Stevica Rajčetić, “BEOGRAD PRAJD 2024,” in *blic.rs*, September 7, 2024, <<https://www.blic.rs/vesti/beograd/gej-parada-u-beogradu-poceo-prajd-2024-policija-na-ulicama-centar-grad-a-zatvoren-za/1mbyc11>>.
- 75 Dietrich Busse and Wolfgang Teubert, “Ist Diskurs ein sprachwissenschaftliches Objekt? Zur Methodenfrage der historischen Semantik,” in *Begriffsgeschichte und Diskursgeschichte. Methodenfragen und Forschungsergebnisse der historischen Semantik*, eds. Dietrich Busse, Fritz Hermanns and Wolfgang Teubert (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1994), 10–28, here: 24.