

# dialrel

## **Public Debates on Religious Slaughter – a Comparative Approach**

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## WP 4.2 - A Comparative report of the public debates on religious slaughter in Germany, UK, France and Norway

### Methodology:

- draws its material from a systematic empirical analysis of the media discourses and public debates on religious slaughter in France, UK, Germany and Norway (2006-08) – and trends
- exploratory mapping
- 2 - 3 newspapers, media databases and the internet.

### National reports:

Florence Bergeaud-Blackler (French report)

Adrian Evans (UK report)

Taina Bucher, Lill M. Vramo & Ellen Eser (German report)

Taina Bucher, Laura Terragni & Lill M. Vramo (Norwegian

report) 01/03/2009



# Comparative approach



- diversity in the four contexts
- variations in current practises
- ..related to variations in *demography* and *market, politics* and *history* of religious slaughter for the national contexts.

Our questions to the national reports:

- *Who are the players on the media arena?*
- *What are their positions?*
- *What are the main conflict alignments in the different contexts?*



## Similarities..

- **Integration** are part of the debate in all countries involved. Arguments that involve a framing in terms of “**us**” **versus** “**them**”
- **The market** for halal (and kosher) is reported on by the media in every participating country
- Debates on kosher are, for various reasons, largely left out



## Variations..

- Germany: issue of pre-stunning, animal welfare concerns on the one side and religious viewpoints on the other side.
- UK: questions of identity and multiculturalism, animal welfare arguments are not very visible, the market for halal, availability a main discourse/ issue related to questions of identity and multiculturalism, show no specific conflict alignments.
- Norway: high consensus among actors within the food and agricultural authority, issues of identity or multiculturalism is lacking, the debate is more centred on integration and animal welfare concerns
- France: no sign of major conflict alignments in terms of religious slaughter in the general press



## Different voices..

- In Norway market actors in halal have to a certain extent put on an informative voice in the media debate.
- In France the meat industry has kept a low profile.
- In France NGOs are key players, but are not deemed important in the general press.
- In Germany the key players in the debate have been animal welfare defendants on the one side and defenders of freedom of religion on the other.
- Animal rights organisations have not played a central role in the recent debate on religious slaughter in the Norwegian context, while actors within the food and agricultural authorities are defending a status quo



## Different channels for info..

- Different channels for information: In France, blogs and several online news sources have provided consumer and market oriented information regarding halal food
- In UK particularly market oriented debates and information reach the public through the general press



.....**more research needed**

- lack of information
- misinterpretations – leading to misunderstandings
- Results this far only suggestive

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