

CORECON

The Coverage and Reception of
the Russian-Ukrainian Conflict



Reimagining the global order.

Media coverage of the Munich Conference 2025

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What is the turning point?



- **a structural element that reorganizes the entire story:** a decisive clash, crisis, or decision after which the course of events takes a new direction.
- **identification of a turning point is an act of interpretation** – it depends on what the narrator considers important in a given story.
- In political and media practice, this means that **discourse actors construct turning points in order to give meaning** to chaotic events and convey a specific message to the audience.

The Munich Conference

- Regular event, organized for over 60 years, where the world leaders debate on most important safety issues;
- The symbolic meaning of the conference is a part of the Western Imaginary itself:
 - 1938 - symbol of weakness and political mistakes that is being overused in contemporary debates;
 - 2007 - the speech of Vladimir Putin is commented till now, when Putin openly rejected the international order created after 1991.
 - 2025 - J.D. Vance speech contesting the USA - Europe alliance and common ground → reconfiguration of the global order and relations.

Initial research questions



- How is the Munich Conference **constructed discursively as a turning point?**
- **What are the** past, present, and future imaginaries there?

Methodology



- **Manual data collection** - in four media outlets, based on the keywords “Munich”, “Munich Security Conference” and Polish equivalence;
- **Data preparation with Google Colab** (removing not fitting texts) and **ChatGPT** (defining stop words, merging bilingual tables, initially exploring recurring patterns) → corpus still requires cleaning (duplicates are still present);
- **Iterative approach to coding (work in progress):**
 - **Quantitative:** Sketch Engine (keywords, collocations)
 - **Qualitative:** Atlas.ti (inductive coding, of rhetorical devices, [strategic?] narratives, actors, metaphors, time frames, affects etc.)

Research material



Source	Raw	Filtered
The Guardian	87	54
The Telegraph	53	49
Rzeczpospolita	50	44
Gazeta Wyborcza	33	29
TOTAL	223	176

Basic lexical picture (with Sketch Engine)


- **Top nouns = nations**, Ukraine, USA, Europe, Russia – the four most cited entities in every outlet, signalling a geopolitical framing of the Munich 2025 story.
- **Top adjectives = national labels**, European, American, Ukrainian, Russian, German (plus Polish in Polish press) → coverage describes actors primarily through nationality, not ideology.
- **Keywords = political leaders and their roles**, Zelensky, Vance, Putin, Scholz, Hegseth.
Functional titles (leader, president, minister, vice-president) reinforce a personalized narrative.

Other top nouns and adjectives (with SE and ChatGPT categorisation)

- **Telegraph (UK): “Strength first” (GPT label)** – security nouns (*defence, security, war, NATO*) and adjectives (*military, foreign, free*) dominate; *peace* is much below them.
- **Guardian (UK): “Guarded balance” (GPT label)** – still security-tilted (*security, foreign*) but peace/value words (*peace, future, free*) break into the top 20.
- **Gazeta Wyborcza (PL): “Talk before force” (GPT label)** – peace lexicon high (*peace, peaceful, united*) and negotiation nouns present, while security terms remain visible.
- **Rzeczpospolita (PL): “Security edge, peace present” (GPT label)** – *security, NATO* lead, yet *peace & negotiation* suggest diplomacy.

Past: examples of turning point constructions



- “US is actually likely to dismantle the structures that have underpinned its foreign policy **since the Second World War** ,” said Prof Greene. That won't stop medium and smaller powers calculating just what **the new world order** would mean” (Daily Telegraph)
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Historical references



Reference	Guardian	Daily Telegraph	Gazeta Wyborcza	Rzeczpospolita	Total
Munich 1938	2	14	13	12	41
Yalta 1945	8	2	9	0	19
Cold War	5	8	7	4	24
WWII	0	7	7	0	14

Historical references



- **Munich 1938** – shorthand for appeasement, used as analogy to argue for harder power, or as a moral caution against betraying values (“Never again Munich!” *Gazeta Wyborcza*).
 - **Yalta 1945** – a critique of superpowers bargaining and making decisions on somebody’s (Ukraine) behalf “New Yalta”.
 - **Cold-War echoes** – to show analogy of the moment (similar security spendings) or to criticize erosion of the values that ‘won’ the Cold War (“Since Cold War”).
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Present: global turmoil and uncertainty

- niektóre państwa będą teraz aktywniej szukały dostępu do broni jądrowej, bo ład światowy **przechodzi olbrzymi wstrząs**. [Some countries will now more actively seek access to nuclear weapons as **the world order undergoes a huge upheaval**] (Rzeczpospolita)
- Jesteśmy na progu nowej sytuacji strategicznej w Europie i warto zacząć myśleć, jaką drogą podążać. [**We are on the threshold of a new strategic situation in Europe and it is worth starting to think about which path to follow.**] (Rzeczpospolita)
- “This is the hard reality of the new era of strongman diplomacy based around spheres of influence – influence which will now extend to ideology” (Telegraph).

Future: two main imaginaries

	JD Vance	Volodymyr Zelensky
Core threat	Internal decay of free speech and ignored voters inside the West.	Russian expansion and risk of U.S. disengagement leaves Europe militarily exposed.
Future vision	“Freedom first” – restoration of classical civil liberties; democracies should be run by, not over, their citizens.	“Armed Forces of Europe” – a continent-wide army and one EU foreign-policy voice.
Role of the U.S.	conditional partner , protects allies who protect liberty.	welcome but optional , Europe must be able to stand alone if America says “no”.

Conclusion I: methodological problems with AI usage...

- **Google Colab is good for initial data preparation & exploration** but you need to know basics of coding to verify what does it do;
- **ChatGPT might be useful for initial data exploration and initial categorization ideas**, but it might hallucinate and produce nonsense or things that do not exist (e.g., “citations” from the research material);
- More on basic AI usage in the CORECON blogpost by Deutschmann & Molek-Kozakowska 2025.

Conclusion II: constructing a turning point



Is a complex process of tying narrative elements with media frames, and power relations:

- **Narrative** - turning point is a climax of the story it helps to make sense of past, present and future imaginaries,
- **Framing** - helps exposing some events as crucial and important, when others are excluded from the discourse,
- **Critical (power)** - who is able to set the agenda, expose the event and setting up the dominant narrative, and how proliferation and establishing of some phrases serve the political interests.

The historical event becomes the turning point when we narrate it as such.



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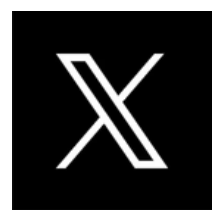
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