



## DIGITAL COMMUNICATION FOR SOCIAL CHANGE IN SPAIN Campaigns Against Human Trafficking on the Social Network X

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### KEYWORDS

*Social media  
Engagement  
Communication  
Third Sector  
Human Trafficking  
X*

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### ABSTRACT

*The international community is united in its commitment to combatting human trafficking through communication. This study aims to examine the strategies, content, and efficacy of communications distributed on X by the Public Administration, State Security Forces, and NGOs in Spain. A total of 1236 tweets were analysed and categorised based on their primary themes, communication patterns, visual and textual components, as well as their overall reach. The findings and conclusions highlight the importance of establishing ties among agents through “tagged” or “mentions” and the use of audiovisual materials to achieve a greater impact on target audiences. These findings are particularly relevant for improving communication within the third sector, considering the limitations in human and material resources within this field.*

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## 1. Introduction

In recent years, social networks have emerged as a valuable ally in spreading awareness of social issues such as human trafficking. Various organisations utilise these communication platforms to inform and educate diverse populations, thereby contributing to its eradication and meeting international commitments. This study aims to analyse the messages disseminated by various institutions within the Public Administration, the third sector, and the State Security Forces and Corps during 2023. The goal is to elucidate the progress and outcomes of this collaborative effort.

Human trafficking was defined in the Trafficking Protocol in 2000 by the United Nations (UN) as:

The act of recruiting, transporting, transferring, harbouring, or receiving individuals through threat, coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or vulnerability, or the provision or receipt of payments or benefits to gain control over another person, with the intention of exploiting them (UNODC, 2010, p.5).

As a multidisciplinary issue, addressing it necessitates an interdisciplinary, coordinated, and integrated approach. Among other strategies, this includes conducting information and awareness campaigns aimed at increasing awareness and reducing the risk of individuals becoming victims of human trafficking, involving various state actors (OHCHR, et al., 2011).

In alignment with this multidisciplinary approach, the Spanish Ministry of the Interior crafted the National Strategic Plan against Trafficking and Exploitation of Human Beings 2021/2023. The plan aims to enhance societal awareness to improve trafficking detection and prevention, discourage the demand for these services, and facilitate case identification. Additionally, it focuses on identification, referral, protection, assistance, and recovery of victims. The plan also seeks to strengthen criminal prosecution through improved legislative, police, and judicial responses. Furthermore, it emphasises the importance of promoting cooperation and coordination among institutions nationally and internationally and with civil society. Finally, it aims to advance understanding and knowledge regarding the issue to better combat trafficking and exploitation (Ministry of the Interior, 2022).

Scholars, such as Basz (2008) argue that communication is a tool capable of inducing behavioural change and fostering political, social, and economic development. Moreover, its strategic significance is heightened when considering various formats such as communication for development or communication for solidarity (González, 2013). The former primarily focuses on international organisations, the media, and third sector organisations (Bernabé, 2001). In contrast, the latter seeks to positively alter societal realities from a humanist perspective (González, 2010), highlighting the necessity of establishing a presence on social networks (González, 2013). This presence facilitates the adoption of new narrative frameworks that move beyond stereotypical and homogenised discourses regarding social issues (Peña et al., 2023).

Social movements frequently utilise these major platforms to enhance the reach and visibility of their actions (Acosta, 2020). This form of dialogue possesses a distinct communicative potency compared to written communication, which some scholars note leads to increased audience attention, better recall, improved understanding, and adds greater credibility to the message (Carrasco, Villar, and Martín, 2018). X, formerly known as Twitter, has emerged as a channel for sharing information and fostering interactive communication. It is favoured by politicians, political parties, governments, international organisations, third sector entities, the media, and civil society.

The need for different actors to unite in combatting trafficking is not a recent concern. Studies from the early 21st century had already highlighted the engagement of governmental, intergovernmental, and non-governmental organisations, as well as media and public opinion, in shaping policy initiatives (Salt, 2000). This led to the inception of numerous communication initiatives that intertwined political, educational, communicative, and cultural dimensions (UN, 2009), primarily within the scope of the Blue Heart campaign.

While the third sector plays a pivotal role in shaping an effective discourse on trafficking (UNODC, 2019), it encounters significant challenges in communication management (Peña et al., 2023) stemming from financial constraints on organisations and institutional as well as bureaucratic hurdles (Ceballos-Castro, 2020). NGOs with limited resources struggle to secure a media presence and influence their surroundings. Often, they lack dedicated communication professionals, resulting in a low level of institutional communication professionalism and limited utilisation of emerging technologies and social

media platforms (De Cos and Mañas, 2018), which are crucial due to their cost-effectiveness (Benito, 2015) and potential for enhancing interactivity, visibility, and immediacy (Arroyo and Martín 2012).

According to previous research on social media engagement, this framework has proven effective in addressing the lack of information regarding trafficking issues, fostering an understanding of types of trafficking, involved parties, victim consequences, and their rights (Rubio et al., 2023). Notably, among the prominent contributors in these networks, especially X, are entities involved in combatting trafficking, including law enforcement, governmental bodies, media outlets, and social organisations. However, the level of involvement varies based on subject matter, the context of the message, and timing, as evidenced by fluctuating publication activities within the Spanish-speaking community (Sierra-Rodríguez et al., 2022). Additionally, elements within messages such as emojis or hashtags play a crucial role in community identification, emotional expression, and topic organisation, among other functions (Zhou and Ai, 2022).

Previous research has highlighted the significance of communication initiatives and the engagement of various agents in combatting trafficking. Therefore, this research begins with the overarching goal of analysing the strategies, content, and effectiveness of communication regarding human trafficking on X carried out by the main actors involved: NGOs, security forces, and governmental entities.

To achieve this objective, the study is divided into the following specific objectives:

1. Conduct an exploratory study to determine the context and themes of messages produced by various senders, along with their structure, textual content, and visual elements.
2. Investigate communication patterns by identifying peak traffic periods and their correlation with internationally recognised days related to trafficking.
3. Analyse the reach obtained by the different accounts and identify the strategies that have worked best on X.

The research and resulting conclusions will hold significant relevance for various institutions aiming to implement effective strategies in their communication campaigns, particularly those within the third sector. Due to limited human and material resources in communication, these institutions require knowledge of tools and resources to enhance their impact on social networks.

## 2. Design and Method

The proposed methodology for the research is founded on the framework developed by Astigueta (2022). In his study, he used the theory of social discourses as a basis, along with insights from Verón (1993, 2013), to comprehend how discourses are constructed and circulated in society. These discourses possess the ability to shape social reality, actively constructing and altering it.

This study maintains both quantitative and qualitative aspects through the analysis of content and social networks on the X platform. The methodology proposed by Bardín (1986) has been adopted for this purpose. Initially, five accounts were selected for examination, comprising entities from the national Public Administration, one international body, two from the State Security Forces and Corps, and four from third sector organisations. The aim is to extract insights from the discussions held by various actors regarding human trafficking during the period from 1 January to 31 December 2023.

**Table 1.** X accounts selected for the research

Type of agent	Actor's name	Number of followers	Number of tweets
Public Administration	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, EU and Cooperation (@MAECgob)	303.000	3
	Ministry of Equality (@IgualdadGob)	81.200	17
	Ministry of the Presidency, Justice, and the Courts (@justiciagob)	176.500	38
	Ministry of the Interior (@interiorgob)	854.600	14
	Moncloa Account (@desdelamoncloa)	791.300	8

Type of agent	Actor's name	Number of followers	Number of tweets
International Intergovernmental Organisation	United Nations Spain (@ONU_es)	2.000.000	10
	National Police (@policia)	3.900.000	32
State Security Forces and Corps	Civil Guard (@guardiacivil)	2.000.000	15
	UNHCR Spain (@ACNURspain)	49.900	7
Third Sector	CEAR (@CEARrefugio)	53.000	32
	Project Hope (@ProyecEsperanza)	2.731	455
	APRAMP (@APRAMP)	9.371	605
<b>Total Tweets</b>			1.236

Source. Authors elaboration.

Based on the sample, different units of analysis have been identified (Bardín, 1986). The study has been structured around three primary axes to tailor the design to each communicative element, as proposed by Krippendorff (1990): the context surrounding the discussed topic, the content comprising the message, and the extent of its impact.

For the initial qualitative analysis block, a coding sheet has been developed containing 15 labels representing the primary contexts identified across all the accounts:

1. Prevention, detection, and protocols for action
2. Consequences of trafficking and recovery
3. Ongoing projects of each of the actors
1. Events and activities
4. Recruitment of victims
5. Education
6. Sources of information
7. Media
8. Social and/or labour inclusion
9. Legislation
10. Migration
11. Events, arrests, and operations
12. Technology and Artificial Intelligence
13. Victims
14. Gender-based violence

After establishing the codes, all 1236 tweets from the total sample were coded using Atlas.ti software. Similarly, to examine communication patterns and ascertain if specific dates prompt increased activity (as noted by authors like Sierra-Rodríguez, 2022), the sample was segmented into months and coded, with consideration given to various international days:

1. 8th March. International Women's Day.
2. 30 July. World Day Against Trafficking in Persons.
3. 23 August. International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition.
4. 23 September. International Day Against Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking of Women and Children.
5. 18 October. European Day against Trafficking in Human Beings.
6. 25 November. International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.
7. 2 December. International Day for the Abolition of Slavery.

The second qualitative axis centres on analysing message content, examining elements that are present or potentially present within the message (Rister, 2020). This includes considerations such as the use of hashtags, incorporation of audiovisual materials such as photographs, infographics, and videos, inclusion of links, citations from other tweets, emojis, and tagging of other accounts.

To enhance the analysis of audiovisual content, a categorisation of common elements within this content type has been conducted. This categorisation encompasses aspects such as chromatic range, subjects depicted, as well as the differentiation between colour and black-and-white photographs and illustrations.

The analysis also covers the intended purpose of the message, categorising it into three possibilities: informational, awareness-raising, and call-to-action content.

The third quantitative axis focuses on analysing the reach achieved by each account and involves calculating engagement based on the number of followers for each account using the formula  $\text{Engagement} = [(\text{Total interactions} / \text{number of tweets}) / \text{total followers}] \times 100$ . Additionally, to obtain a comprehensive perspective, the number of views and the corresponding interaction rate are studied using the formula  $\text{Engagement} = [(\text{Total interactions} / \text{number of tweets}) / \text{views}] \times 100$ .

The research is also based on three main hypotheses:

- Hypothesis 1. The thematic blocks proposed in this research encompass the majority of the communication disseminated.
- Hypothesis 2: Diverse communication flows exist, partially attributed to heightened trafficking-related activity on days designated in the international calendar specifically addressing trafficking issues.
- Hypothesis 3. Visual content (images and videos) will be present in most tweets.

The following research questions were posed.

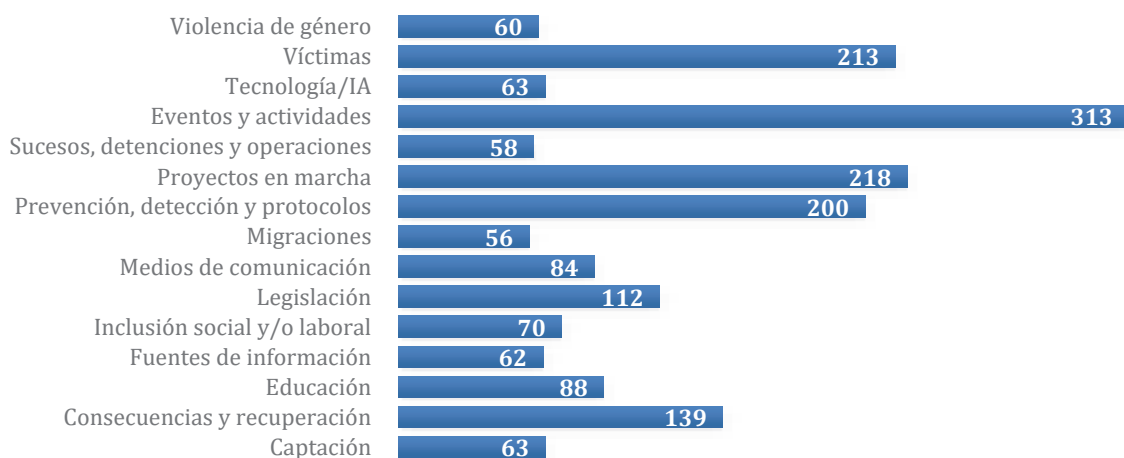
- What are the primary contexts within which the discussion about trafficking is framed among the actors that were analysed?
- What communication strategies have been the most successful in terms of outreach and dissemination?

### 3. Analysis of Results

#### 3.1. Block I: Context and Communication Patterns

The analysis illustrates that the number of tweets in each context highlights the significance of four codes: events and activities, ongoing projects, victims, and prevention, detection, and protocols. These four categories accounted for 944 of the 1236 tweets analysed, representing the majority of the communications. Following closely behind are discussions regarding consequences and recovery, as well as legislation.

**Figure 1.** Number of tweets for each context analysed



Source. Authors elaboration.

Based on this data, the various issuers have been coded based on the prevalent contexts. Legislation emerges as a prominent theme within the Public Administration group, followed by discussions on ongoing projects and prevention, detection, and protocol measures.

**Table 2.** Contextual labels in the Public Administration and the UN

Spanish Public Administration and the United Nations						
	Moncloa	Ministry of the Presidency	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Ministry of the Interior	Ministry of Equality	United Nations
<b>Recruitment</b>						
<b>Consequences of trafficking and recovery</b>					2	
<b>Education</b>		3				1
<b>Sources of information</b>	4			3		
<b>Social and/or labour inclusion</b>						
<b>Legislation</b>		23		1	5	2
<b>The media</b>						
<b>Migrations</b>				3		
<b>Prevention, detection, and protocols</b>	3	7		1	6	
<b>Ongoing projects</b>	6	15	2	3	14	
<b>Events, arrests, and operations</b>				2		
<b>Events and activities</b>			1			
<b>Technology/IA</b>	1	1		2		
<b>Victims</b>	1	2	1		3	5
<b>Gender-based violence</b>	2	1			4	

Source. Authors elaboration.

Regarding the State Security Forces and Corps, events, arrests, and operations contextualise the majority of their conversations, with 21 out of the 47 observed messages focusing on these topics.

**Table 3.** Contextual labels in the Security Forces

	Security Forces and Corps	
	Police	Guardia Civil
<b>Recruitment</b>	4	1
<b>Consequences of trafficking and recovery</b>		
<b>Education</b>	1	
<b>Sources of information</b>		1
<b>Social and/or labour inclusion</b>		
<b>Legislation</b>		
<b>The media</b>		1
<b>Migrations</b>	2	
<b>Prevention, detection, and protocols</b>	11	2
<b>Ongoing projects</b>	3	
<b>Events, arrests, and operations</b>	17	4
<b>Events and activities</b>	3	4
<b>Technology/IA</b>	3	1
<b>Victims</b>	10	1
<b>Gender-based violence</b>		

Source. Authors elaboration.



The third sector is the group that accumulates the most tweets and represents the most prevalent themes within the sample: events and activities related to trafficking, prevention, detection, and action protocols, victims, and their ongoing projects.

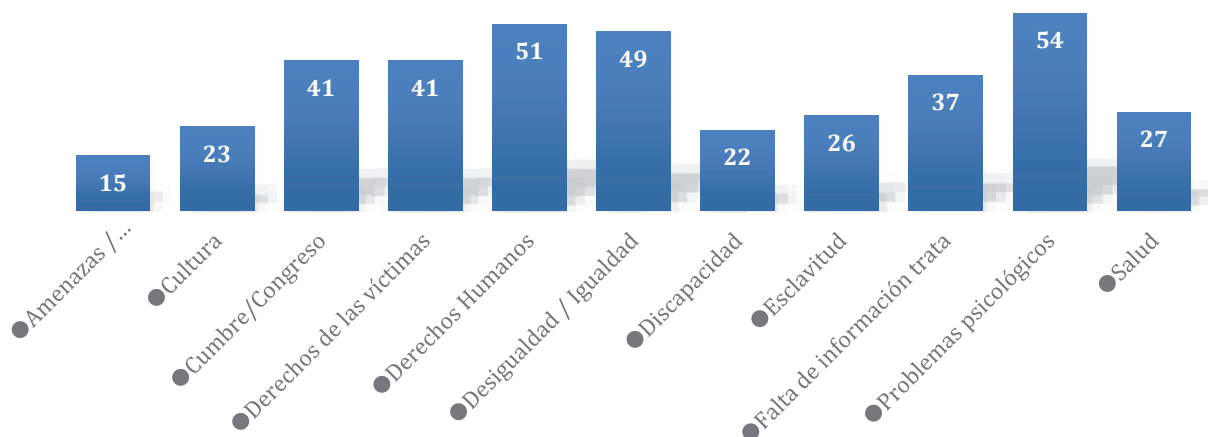
**Table 4.** Contextual labels in the third sector

	Third Sector			
	APRAMP	Project Hope	UNHCR	CEAR
<b>Recruitment</b>	37	21		
<b>Consequences of trafficking and recovery</b>	50	87		
<b>Education</b>	68	15		
<b>Sources of information</b>	31	21		2
<b>Social and/or labour inclusion</b>	62	8		
<b>Legislation</b>	29	39	1	12
<b>The media</b>	71	12		
<b>Migrations</b>	12	25	5	9
<b>Prevention, detection, and protocols</b>	68	102		
<b>Ongoing projects</b>	99	76		
<b>Events, arrests, and operations</b>	34			1
<b>Events and activities</b>	210	91	3	1
<b>Technology/IA</b>	39	16		
<b>Victims</b>	92	82		11
<b>Gender-based violence</b>	23	27	1	2

Source. Authors elaboration.

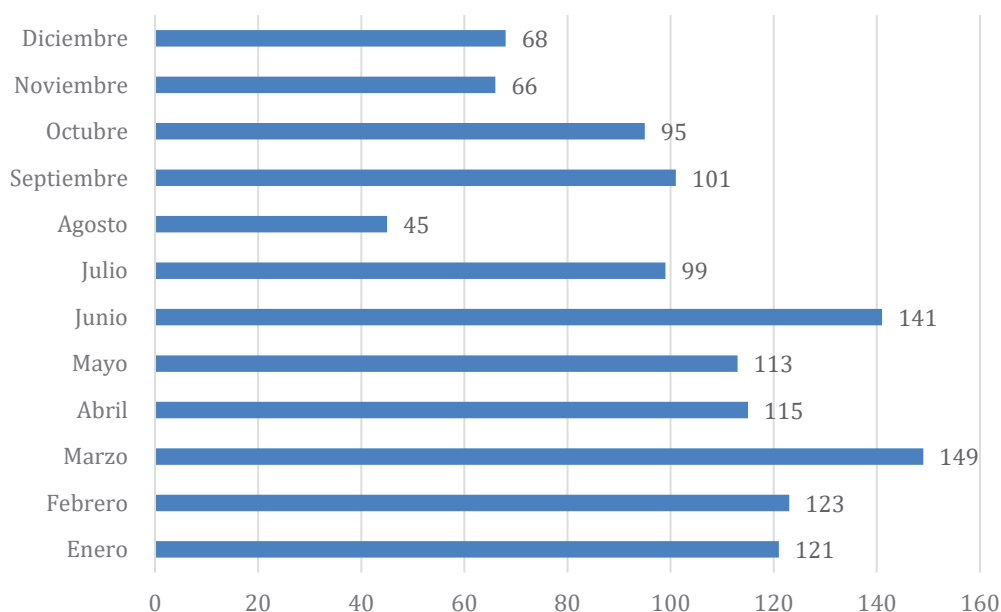
During the analysis, additional indicators were found in lower numbers but were still representative, appearing in 386 tweets. The tag of psychological problems, followed by Human Rights and gender equality, are the most prevalent among them.

**Figure 2.** Labels identified during the research



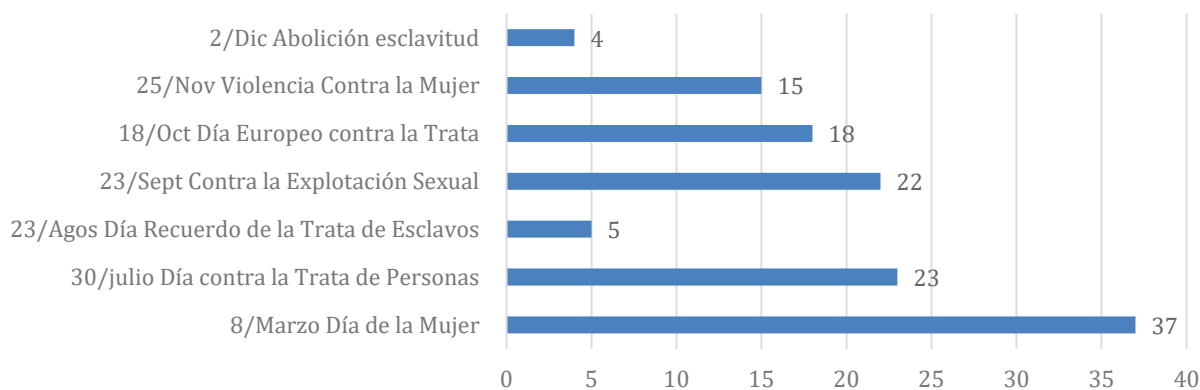
Source. Authors elaboration.

Concerning communication patterns, an examination of the timeframes in which tweets are posted reveals a discontinuous flow, as there is a notable difference in message volume between different months. March and June stand out as the months with the highest concentration of tweets, with 149 and 141 respectively, while August only has 45.

**Figure 3.** Tweets published each month

Source. Authors elaboration.

To provide insights into these findings, we examined the occurrence of tweets on international days that might align with the months exhibiting the highest activity, potentially explaining these fluctuations. Notably, the 8th of March, Women's Day, stands out with 37 tweets, constituting 24.8% of the total messages published in March, 14 more than the second-ranked day. The 30th of July, World Day Against Human Trafficking, is the most significant day in the study, representing 3.2% of the messages published in July.

**Figure 4.** Tweets posted during international days

Source. Authors elaboration.

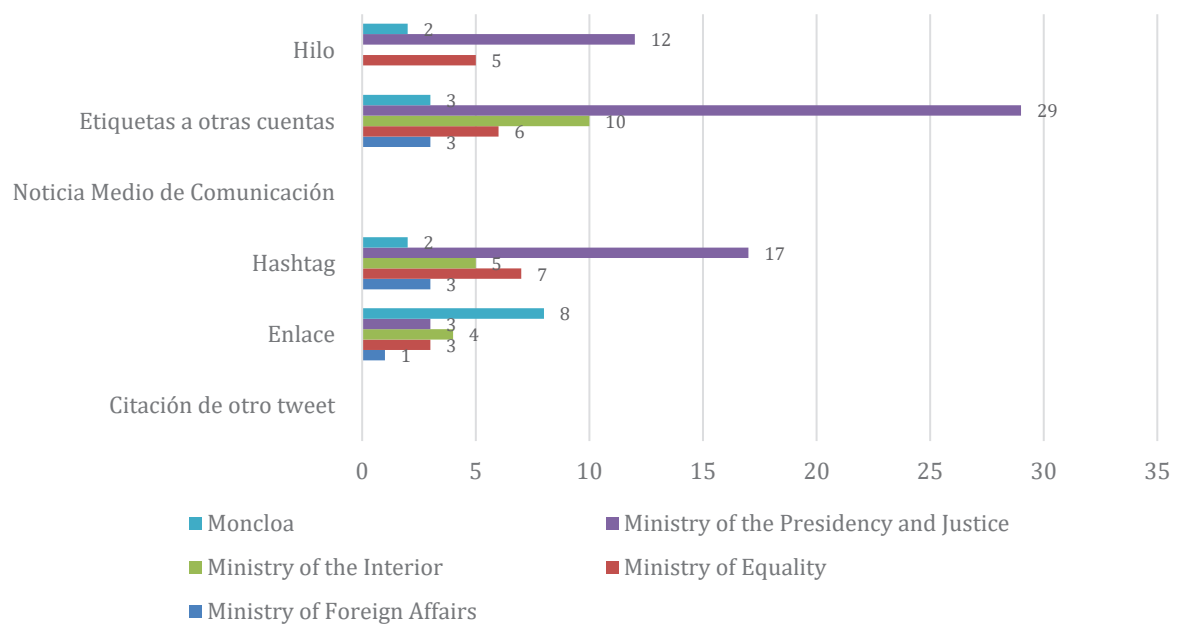
### 3.2. Block II: Visual Content Analysis

To analyse the content, tweets containing textual elements were first considered. This includes quotes from other tweets, threads, hashtags, tags to other accounts, and links, which were further categorised into links and media reports.

Tags to other accounts are the most frequently used resource by the different Public Administration issuers, being used a total of 54 times, which accounts for 67.5% of the tweets. This is followed by hashtags, which were used 34 times.



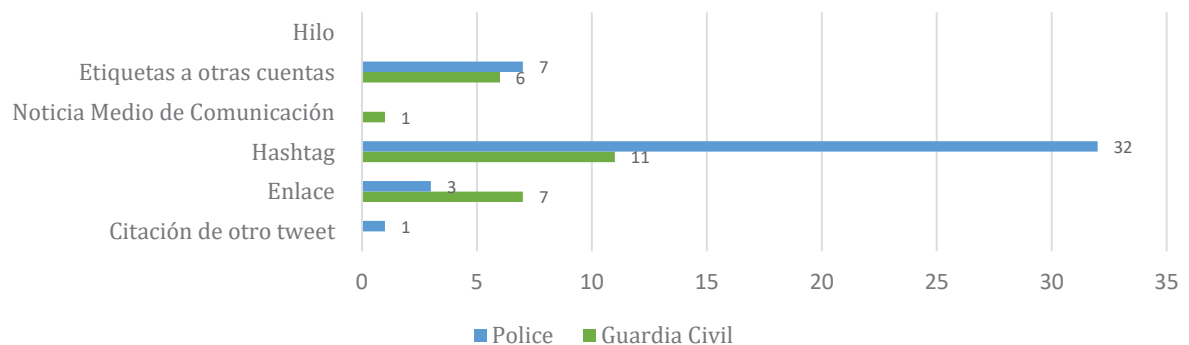
**Figure 5.** Textual elements used by the Public Administration



Source. Authors elaboration.

However, in the case of the Security Forces and Corps, the most used element is hashtags, with a total of 43, followed by tags to other accounts.

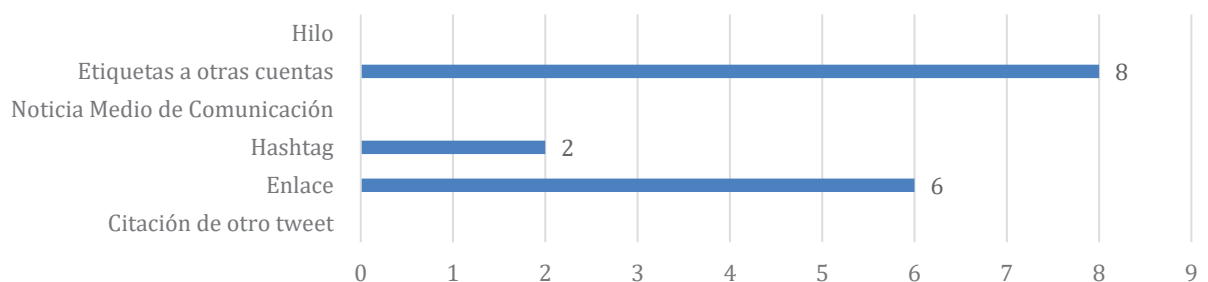
**Figure 6.** Textual elements in the Security Forces



Source. Authors elaboration.

For the UN, tags to other accounts are also the preferred element, followed by links.

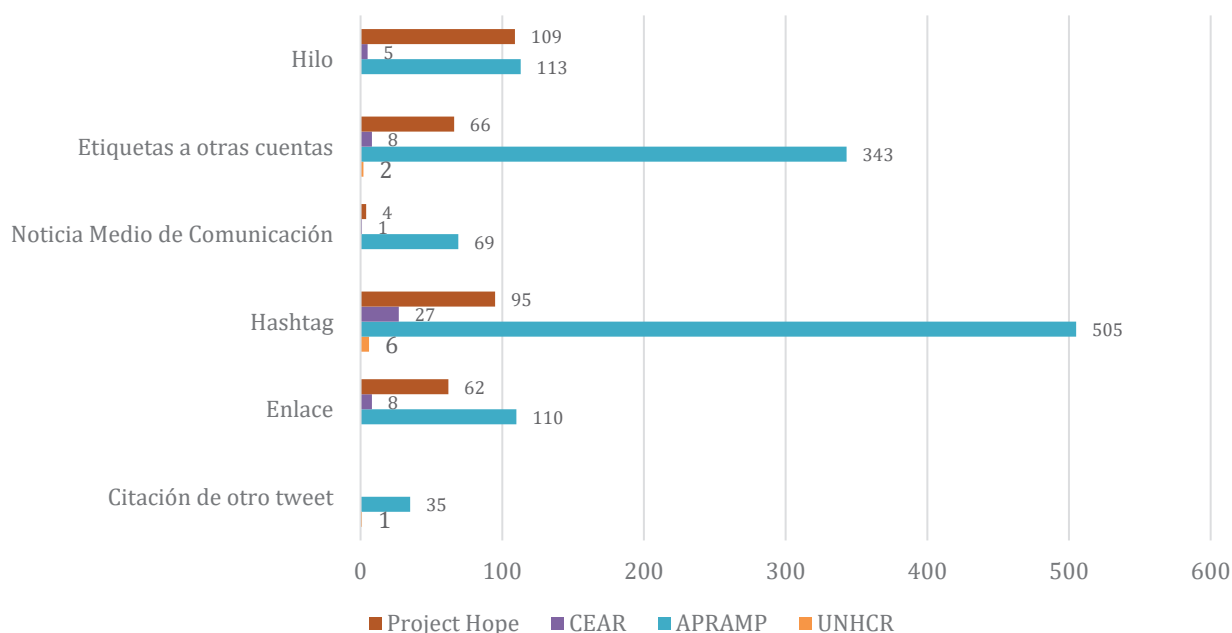
**Figure 7.** Textual elements in the UN



Source. Authors elaboration.

In the third sector, hashtags hold the top position in the ranking with 633, followed by tags to other accounts in 419 tweets. APRAMP is noted for containing 343 tweets in which it has tagged other accounts, primarily media sources (89), other third sector institutions (76), State Security Forces and Corps (70), various bodies within the central government (43), and others of regional (59) and local (22) significance. Project Hope, albeit to a lesser extent, also contributes to this result with 66 tags to other accounts, distributed among other third sector entities (31), the central government (9), autonomous governments (9), and the UN (6).

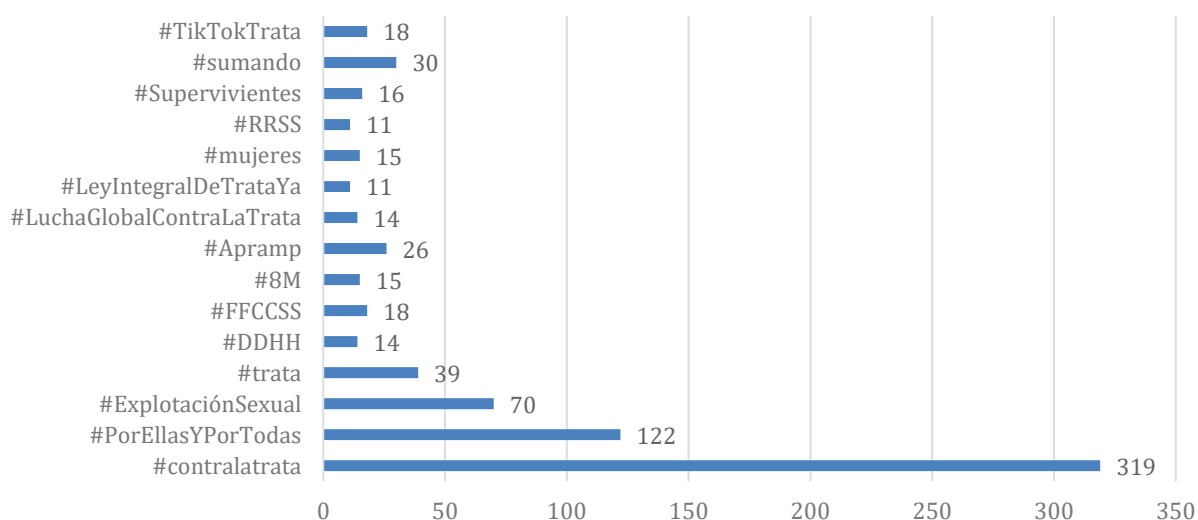
**Figure 8.** Textual elements of the third sector



Source. Authors elaboration.

Regarding hashtags, a total of 441 hashtags were used in the 1,236 tweets analysed and the 15 most frequently used hashtags across all accounts were identified. The most used hashtag was #contralatrata, which was utilised by all third sector institutions, the police, the Civil Guard, and the Ministry of the Presidency and Justice. However, the second most used hashtag on the list, #PorEllasYPorTodas, was exclusively used by APRAMP.

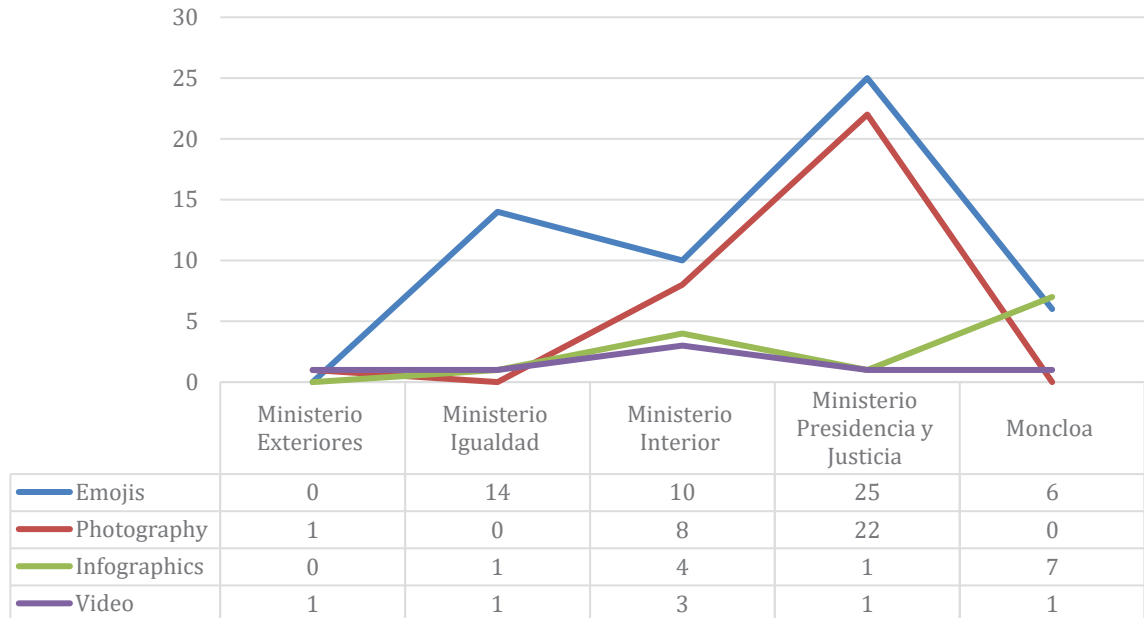
**Figure 9.** List of most used hashtags



Source. Authors elaboration.

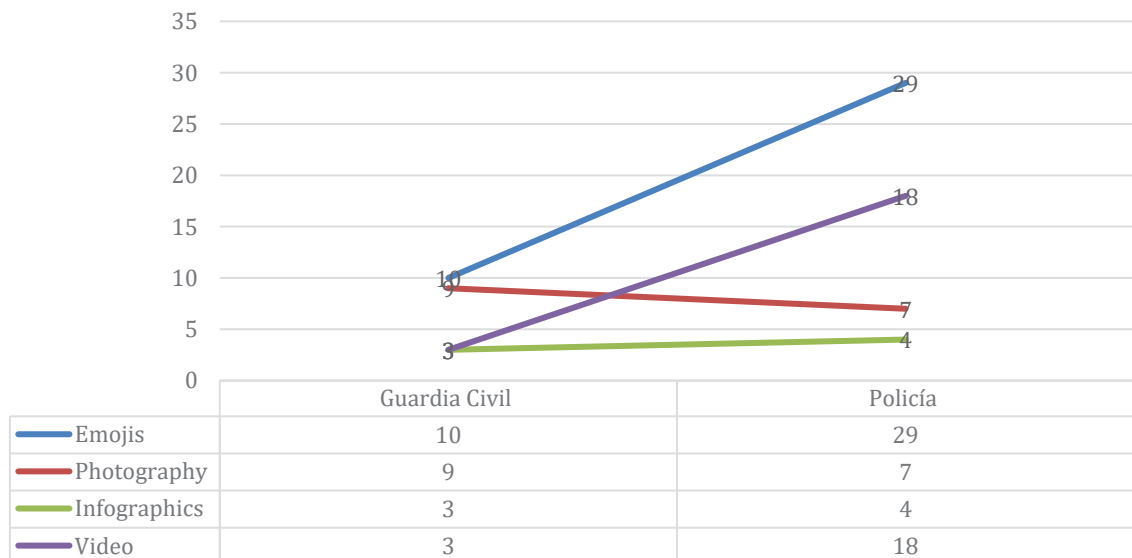
Secondly, visual elements such as photographs, infographics, videos, and emojis were analysed. The result was the number of tweets from each actor containing any of these elements. Emojis are the most commonly used visual element in tweets, appearing in 48.4% of the total, followed by photographs at 32.6%, infographics at 17.3%, and videos at 5.3% of the sample.

**Figure 10.** Visual elements in the Public Administration Sector



Source. Authors elaboration.

**Figure 11.** Visual elements in law enforcement agencies



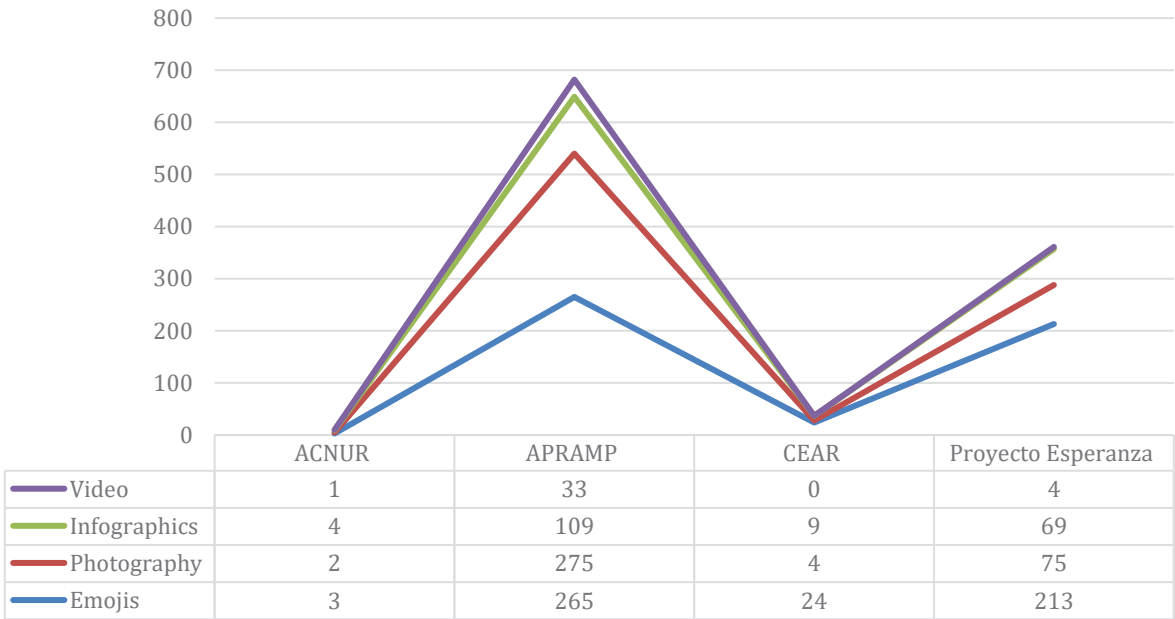
Source. Authors elaboration.

**Table 5.** Visual elements in the UN

	Emojis	Photography	Infographics	Video
United Nations	0	0	10	0

Source. Authors elaboration.

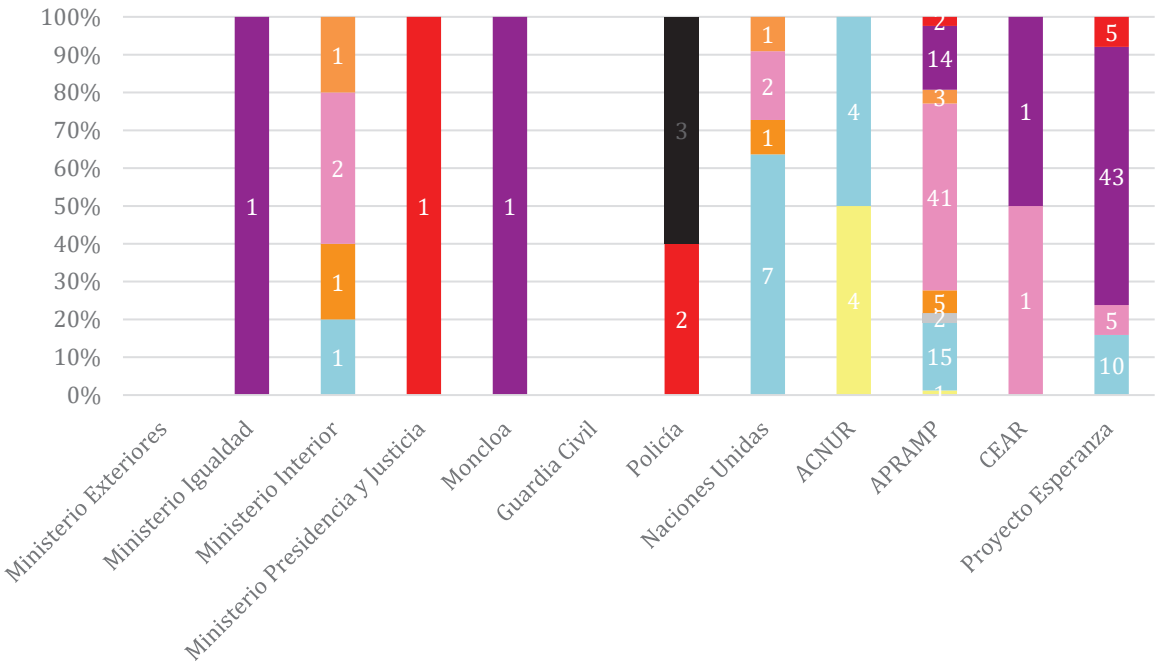
Figure 12. Visual elements in the third sector



Source. Authors elaboration.

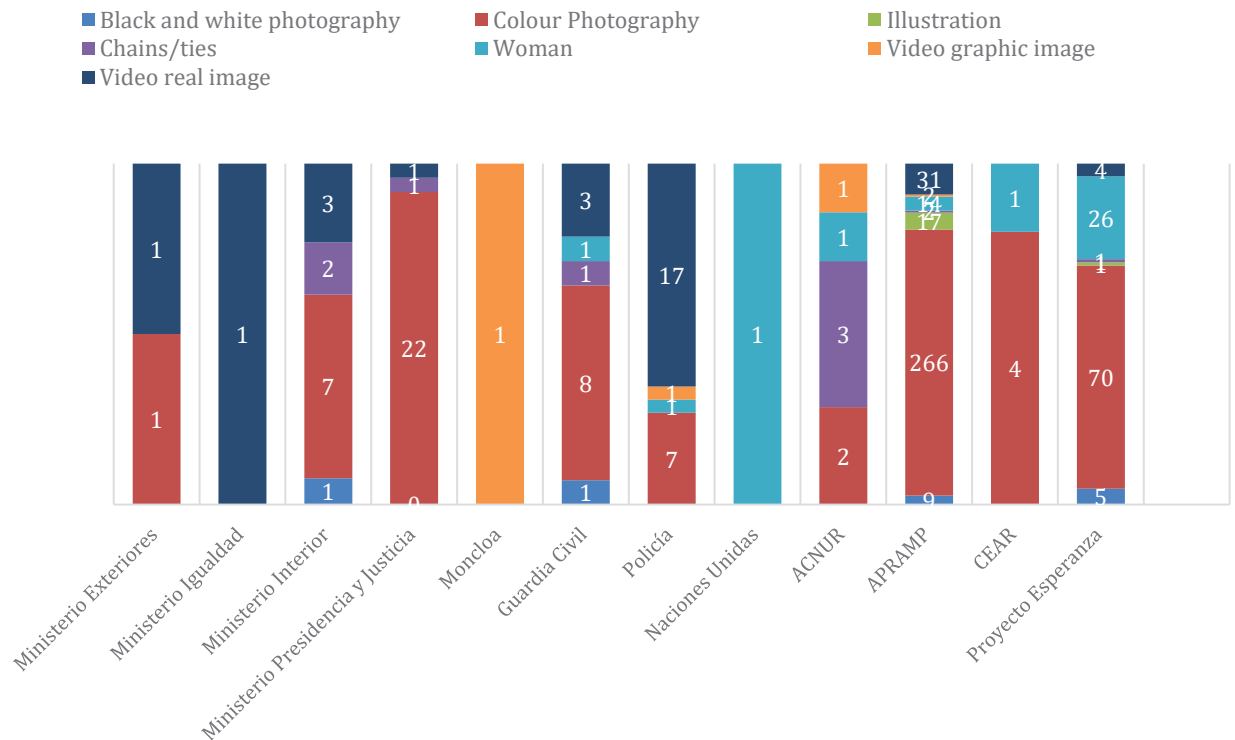
The chromatic range observed in the photographs, infographics, and videos is categorized into purple, green, pink, orange, blue, black, and black-and-white. Purple is the most prevalent, appearing in 60 of the audiovisual content, followed by pink (51), and blue (37).

Figure 13. Colour range used in the publications



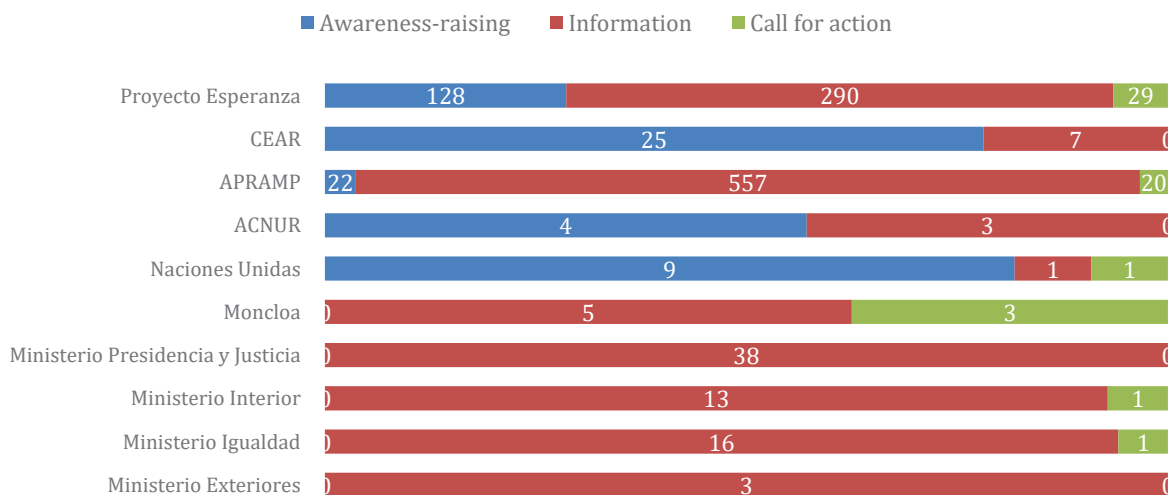
Source. Authors elaboration.

Looking further into the visual analysis, most of the photographs are in colour (96%) and 92% of the videos are real images compared to 8% which are graphic images.

**Figure 14.** Graphic and visual elements used

Source. Authors elaboration.

To ascertain the objective of the communications, the intention of each message was analysed, revealing a majority of 78.5% aimed at providing information. This was followed by 15.7% of broadcasts intended for raising awareness and 5.73% for calls to action.

**Figure 15.** Message intent in publications

Source. Authors elaboration.

### 3.3. Block III: Outreach.

To analyse the engagement of the accounts and thus the reach obtained by the messages on trafficking, we studied the number of "likes," "retweets," "comments," and "views" accumulated by the tweets during the study period.

The account that received the highest number of likes, comments, and views is that of the police, despite having a significantly lower number of tweets compared to other accounts such as APRAMP (32 tweets compared to 605). Meanwhile, Project Hope, which ranks second in terms of the number of messages, achieves lower engagement metrics than APRAMP, despite also having fewer followers (2731 versus 9381 respectively).

Nearly all the analysed accounts exhibit substantial variations in terms of the number of interactions received per tweet, except for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and UNHCR. This means that they all have different messages that have experienced significant peaks in engagement. For instance, tweets from the police range from 48 likes to 704 among the sampled messages, with the best results observed in tweets related to events, arrests, and operations and, notably, those featuring videos in their audiovisual content. This pattern is also observed with the Civil Guard, although the variation in interaction numbers for this account is less polarised.

In the Public Administration Sector, different accounts yield varying results. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs achieved its peak of 146 likes out of 203 total interactions in a single tweet about trafficking victims, which includes a video. Similarly, the Ministry of Equality sees a significant impact in the context of gender violence, especially when accompanied by infographics and tags to other accounts. The Moncloa account mirrors the Ministry of Equality's situation, achieving similar top results with closely related tweets. In contrast, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs shows comparatively lower interaction numbers, peaking at 29 likes and 18 retweets. Interestingly, the topics yielding the best results were not initially reflected in the research, focusing on summits, congresses, legislation, or prevention. Finally, the Ministry of the Interior gains traction in topics related to summits and congresses, particularly when accompanied by video content, reflecting their best engagement metrics.

The United Nations achieves its best results with themes of slavery and children as victims of trafficking, particularly when accompanied by infographics that illustrate the content of the tweet.

In the third sector, UNHCR has more interactions when discussing victims, especially with photographs rather than infographics. CEAR garners more likes and retweets with themes of migration and legislation, often combined in messages and accompanied by infographics. Project Hope achieves success with themes like information sources, consequences and recovery, and events, especially when accompanied by photographs or videos. APRAMP experienced significant peaks in interactions and views. In February, topics linked to each other, events, and technology tied to a communication campaign with notable figures resulted in increased engagement. Moreover, during the World Day Against Trafficking in Human Beings in July, APRAMP saw a substantial rise in interactions and views, reaching 61,000 views compared to the previous 10,000 in February. These discussions revolved around media initiatives and ongoing projects, stemming from the launch of a new campaign.

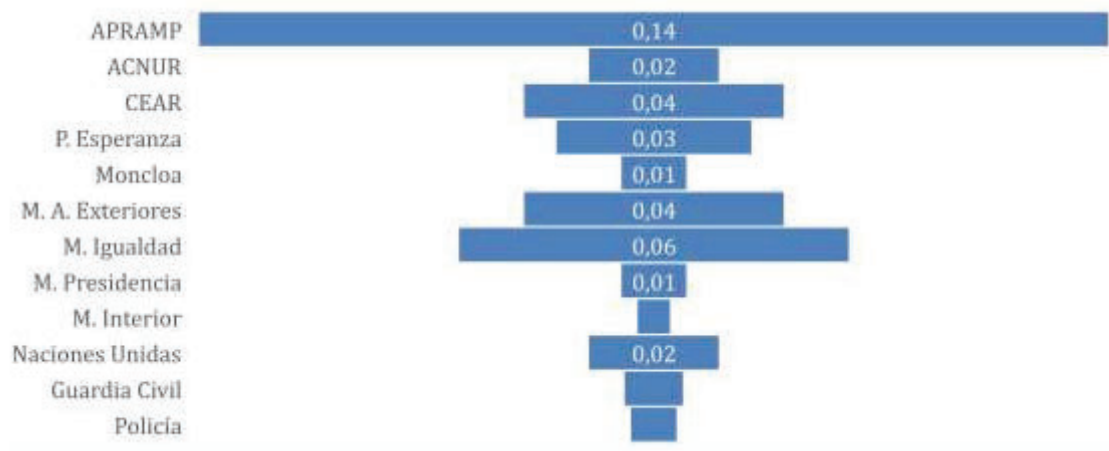
**Table 6.** Total interactions and views of the selected accounts

Organisations	N. tweets	I like it	Retweets	Comments	Visualisations
APRAMP	605	5.285	2.914	46	490617
UNHCR	7	55	27	2	5134
CEAR	32	444	324	8	45177
P. Hope	455	331	141	18	28737
Moncloa	8	388	287	53	65954
M. A. Exteriors	3	203	171	6	68300
M. Equality	17	460	321	103	55560
M. Presidency	38	217	229	339	116911
M. Inside	14	336	196	109	108947
United Nations	10	2.563	1.785	225	184661
Civil Guard	15	2.191	568	51	317900
Police	32	7.183	1.762	608	1647000
<b>Grand Total</b>	1236	19.656	8.725	1568	3134898

Source. Authors elaboration.

The interaction rate obtained for each account in relation to the total number of followers is detailed below.

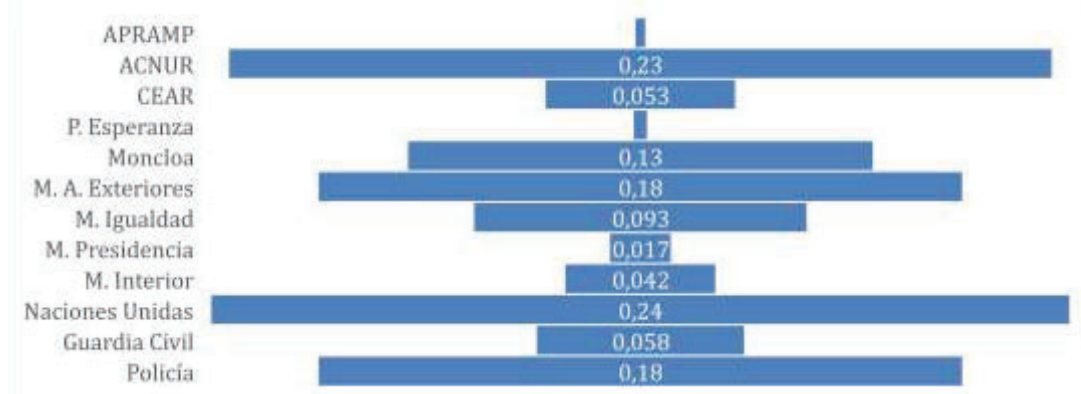
**Figure 16.** Interaction rate by followers



Source. Authors elaboration.

The following graph shows the results obtained for the interaction rate in relation to visualisations.

**Figure 17.** Interaction rate by visualisations



Source. Authors elaboration.

In the initial ranking, APRAMP emerged as the top performer by a significant margin, followed by the Ministry of Equality, CEAR, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. However, if the calculation incorporates the views" of the tweets rather than the followers of the account, the results undergo a shift. In this scenario, APRAMP obtains the least favourable figures.

#### 4. Discussion

The results pertaining to the diverse contexts in which human trafficking is discussed emphasise its prevalence across a wide range of scenarios. While certain contexts such as legislation or events, arrests, and operations are readily identifiable, others like information sources emphasise the need for novel and expanded communication channels to disseminate information to victims, potential victims, and the wider population. These varied contexts require the involvement of different actors (Sierra-Rodríguez et al., 2022), each contributing within their respective areas of expertise and sharing the knowledge gained with others in the field.

Similarly, previously established relationships with other contexts reveal new possibilities, as seen in the instance of technology and Artificial Intelligence. Traditionally viewed as a risk factor for trafficking, it has also started to emerge as a tool in recent years (Bejaró et al., 2023). Analysing the co-occurrences observed in this research, this trend becomes evident; the technology code is associated



with recruitment on 38 occasions but is also linked to other aspects addressing trafficking such as education (7), prevention (5), and social and/or labour inclusion (4).

The emergence of new contexts is another critical aspect of this research, as it reveals new paths for investigating how psychological issues, both before and after trafficking, affect victims. It also sheds light on addressing different aspects of trafficking through a lens of gender equality and human rights. These topics serve as indicators of the varied needs of individuals involved in addressing this issue.

The research revealed temporal fluctuations in publications, although they do not align with previous findings (Sierra-Rodríguez et al., 2022). Despite Anti-Trafficking in Persons Day on 30 July ranking second in this regard, July does not accumulate the most messages as expected; it ranks eighth in terms of tweet frequency. The low number of tweets in August (45 tweets) suggests that this anomaly is due to the summer season, characterised by holiday periods leading to reduced information traffic from institutions and less recipient engagement with content. Furthermore, the absence of events and activities during July and August likely contributes to the decrease in communications during these months.

In terms of visual content analysis, each broadcaster adopts its unique strategy, akin to how a newspaper follows its style guide. Just as Zhou (2022) argues that many NGOs utilise emojis to convey emotive messages, foster empathy, and raise awareness about social causes, the same trend is observed among other entities such as governments. All the analysed accounts, except for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the United Nations, incorporate emojis, aligning with the 15 topics proposed in the research. This indicates that the extensive variety of available icons allows for expressing a wide range of nuanced sentiments specific to trafficking-related messages. Moreover, the preference for using photographs and real-image videos over illustrations and animations is evident, given their greater impact on viewers.

When considering the colour range, one may initially link the prevalence of the colour purple to its association with women and feminism, especially following the positive outcomes observed on Women's Day in relation to trafficking. However, its prominence is due to the fact that it is the institutional colour of Project Hope just as pink is the colour of APRAMP.

It can be assumed that the results regarding the intention of the messages, predominantly informative in nature, align with the quest for these new narratives (Peña et al., 2023) centred on information dissemination and raising awareness about the subject without adopting a paternalistic tone. However, it is worth noting that while 92.98% of APRAMP's tweets are informative, its offline activities do have an awareness-raising objective.

The search for connections and relationships underscores the significance of tags to other accounts as the second most utilised element, emphasising the importance of building networks between institutions to enhance communication. Furthermore, considering the communication challenges encountered by the third sector (Benito, 2015; De Cos and Mañas, 2018; Peña et al., 2023), forging connections with media outlets acting as amplifiers for issues and initiatives in combatting them greatly contributes to the dissemination and outreach of the accounts.

The use of tags significantly affects the reach of the accounts. In the case of Project Hope, tweets related to events elicit a better response, potentially due to their higher frequency of tagging other organisations. This phenomenon is also observed in the context of information sources, where the account occasionally tags external actors possessing specific information on trafficking. By sharing this content, the tweet garners increased traffic, visualisations, and interactions.

In the case of APRAMP, the surge in interactions in February can be attributed to the launch of the "Tik Tok Trata" campaign on social media platforms. This campaign featured influencers and was directed by Mabel Lozano, garnering significant attention on the internet, and aiding in the viral spread of content. This underscores the critical role of well-directed collaboration among different actors within networks, which amplifies message traffic and consequently increases their reach and engagement. A similar scenario unfolded at the end of July with the launch of a campaign for the World Day Against Human Trafficking. Recipients were encouraged to participate by taking photos, sharing them on their networks, and using hashtags. These circumstances highlight what Hernanz (2022) elucidated in his research regarding the weight of each interaction. While likes are easily obtained, comments and quotes require more effort from recipients but also generate higher traffic and engagement.

In summary, the results regarding the interaction rate based on the number of followers and views indicate that APRAMP performs well in the primary ranking. However, on the secondary scale, both

APRAMP and Project Hope experience a situation where the majority of individuals who view their posts do not engage with the content. Conversely, for other issuers, it can be inferred that publications on human trafficking by the Public Administration and the State Security Forces and Corps, despite not being the primary focus of their accounts, garner interest from viewers who engage with them.

## 5. Conclusions

Several significant conclusions can be drawn regarding the development of more effective communication strategies on social networks. This insight holds particular importance not only for government institutions but also for third sector organisations, given their communication challenges and financial constraints.

Firstly, the analysis reveals that specific contexts dominate the discussions on trafficking within the selected sample, namely events and activities, ongoing projects, victims, and prevention, detection, and protocols. These themes are present in 944 out of the 1236 tweets, confirming the initial hypothesis and addressing the first research question.

Secondly, the research reveals varying communication flows across the months, with March and June having the highest tweet concentration, aligning with the second hypothesis. However, the hypothesis about increased traffic on international trafficking days did not align with the observed data, as Anti-Trafficking Day had fewer tweets compared to International Women's Day.

Thirdly, the study confirms the presence of visual elements in tweets, with emojis appearing in 48% and photographs in 32.6% of the total, supporting the third hypothesis.

Fourthly, the impact of textual and visual content on engagement metrics indicates that tags to other accounts and the presence of audiovisual content boost interactions and views. Videos and multiple photographs in a tweet tend to generate better engagement, while tweet threads show reduced interactions and views.

Fifthly, the study proposes new research directions. These include investigating additional relevant contexts in human trafficking, analysing communication from other actors such as local and regional governments, and examining the significance of Women's Day concerning human trafficking.

Finally, the study acknowledges limitations due to changes in data availability following the closure of X's public API, prompting the need to explore alternative data sources.

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