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Naja Thaulov CAMISA

Born on 11 September 1990 in Slagelse, Denmark

EU MIGRATION POLICIES IN CRISIS: THE IMPACT OF THE MEDIA ON THE EUROPEAN MIGRATION GOVERNANCE PROCESS IN TIMES OF PERCEIVED CRISIS (2013-2017)

Dissertation defence committee

Dr Birte Nienaber, dissertation supervisor
Professor, Université du Luxembourg

Dr Marcello Maneri
Professor, University of Milano-Bicocca

Dr Isabelle Albert, Chairman
Professor, Université du Luxembourg

Dr Anna-Lena Högenauer
Professor, Université du Luxembourg

Dr Blanca Garcés-Mascareñas
Senior Research Fellow, CIDOB

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ABSTRACT

Migration has been a defining feature of the 21st century amidst the permanent rising trend in the movement of people, which culminated with the so-called "refugee crisis" in 2015. During this time, critical questions emerged relating to the political influence of media framing on migration. This study investigates the impact of the media on European migration policymaking between 2013 and 2017 – a period which was characterized by high media salience and rapid political and institutional responses to migration.

Employing a mixed methods research design, the study combines a quantitative content analysis, regression modelling, and a qualitative comparative analysis to examine the framing dynamics across traditional media, social media and within European Parliamentary debates. The analysis identified key turning points in the discussions, including the tragic drowning of Alan Kurdi and the Paris terrorist attacks, which catalyzed a shift towards a frame consonance, with securitization emerging as the hegemonic frame. The regression model revealed that Members of the Parliament were more likely to adopt a frame within the plenary debates, if it appeared within the media in the preceding month, demonstrating the significant role both the traditional and social media can play in shaping political discourse. The qualitative analysis further revealed how pervasive securitized language in the media, subtly directed debates and policy deliverables within the recast processes of the Dublin Regulation, where legislative amendments increasingly emphasized border controls, enhanced enforcement and deterrence, although the final output still retained or heightened certain procedural safeguards.

Overall, this research has strived to challenge conventional perspectives on the relationship between the media and political sphere, by providing a comprehensive account of how media frames intersect with and shape the EU policymaking process. This study demonstrates that the media do more than simply report on migration – they actively construct narratives that influence the political landscape, thus providing critical insights into the significance of media framing, particularly during periods of perceived crisis. While acknowledging that media influence operates within a complex interplay of political, social, and economic factors, the results underscore its pivotal role in defining migration debates across the media and political sphere. This emphasizes the necessity of balancing security imperatives with the development of a coherent, rights-based asylum system, based on a balanced and informed migration debate.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

"Migration and issues surrounding immigrants and refugees are defining features of the 21st century. More people live outside their country of birth today than in any other period of human history, and these levels are expected to continue to rise in the future" (IOM, 2011 in Esses et al. 2013: 519)

Migration[1] has always been a crucial part of human history. People have migrated as long as the world has been inhabited for a plethora of reasons, including in search of food or due to conflicts and wars. It has also been an important component in shaping Europe as we know it today. Despite this long history, migration has become an increasingly contentious political topic within the past two decades, inter alia due to the permanent rising trend in the movement of people. By the end of 2023, over 117 million people were forcibly displaced worldwide (UNHCR), while 272 million people were estimated to be international migrants in 2019 (Strömbäck et al. 2021: 211). For the European Union (EU), the topic of migration reached a climactic political point in 2015, when the EU faced the largest inflow of refugees since World War II, with more than 1.3 million refugees arriving at the EU borders, which created what was quickly labeled Europe's "refugee crisis" (Lee & Nerghes 2019: 275). This so-called "crisis" highlighted systemic deficiencies in the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), which challenged both its design and adequacy (Niemann & Zaun 2017: 3).

Migration therefore quickly moved to the top of the European political agenda, with questions arising on how to deal with these migratory movements both practically and politically, while the EU Member States struggled to find durable solutions to the increased number of people crossing

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[1]For reasons of brevity, the term migrant will be used to describe the movement of people or a group of people across an international border, which includes all types of migration, including but not limited to; refugees, asylum-seekers and immigrants. This decision is shaped by the definition of migration as provided by IOM in their International Law series, which defines migration as *"The movement of a person or a group of persons, either across an international border, or within a State. It is a population movement, encompassing any kind of movement of people, whatever its length, composition and causes; it includes migration of refugees, displaced persons, economic migrants, and persons moving for other purposes, including family reunification."* (IOM, 2011)

the European borders (Glorius 2018: 1). It quickly became common to describe these migratory movements to and within the EU as a crisis, both in the media and by politicians alike. This description was further validated when the European Agenda on Migration was presented by the European Commission in May 2015, which continuously addressed the current migratory situation as a "crisis", drawing on a discourse focusing on "illegal" migration and trafficking, while promoting various forms of border policing in an attempt to curb the current flow of migrants to Europe. Migration thus took center stage in both the political debates, but also in the media, with some even beginning to paint these arrivals as threats to national security and cultural homogeneity within the European Member States. This crisis narrative inter alia paved the way for right-wing parties to capitalize on voters concerns in relation to migration in many Member States over this period, creating a *"context in which right-wing voices and ideas are normalised and then amplified far further than their actual organic reach" (Bamberg 2019: 13).* These factors made addressing a normative question such as asylum, which is directly linked to state sovereignty, problematic. The perceived threat of, and inability to control migration challenged EU integration, and could have fueled restrictive and control-oriented policy preferences. Furthermore, the perceived public anxiety legitimized extraordinary measures to "tackle the crisis", including further border controls and cooperation with third countries to slow down the arrival of migrants to the EU. This ad hoc policymaking and short-term emergency measures experienced at the height of the so-called "crisis", has raised serious concerns about the fundamental rights compliance of the EU during this time (Niemann & Zaun 2017: 4), further proving that a harmonized European asylum system only existed on paper.

This portrayal of migration as a crisis created a climate of uncertainty, leaving ample room for the mass media to play a key role in framing the discourse about migration as events unfolded. The media is often described as a key player in solidifying this connection between migration and the crisis concept, which is a framing process that takes place between a number of actors, including the politicians, the general public and the media. Within this process, researchers such as Su-Jung Lee and Adina Nerghes have concluded that the media contributes to the construction of the public understanding of migration (Lee & Nerghes 2019: 275). The public perception in turn plays a significant role in the process of policymaking, as the public opinion may not determine policy outcomes, but it sets the boundaries within which policymakers can shape their

policy responses, as was concluded by Erica Consterdine in 2018 (Consterdine 2018: 5). Since the narrative about migration in the media has become increasingly negative over the past decades (Esses et al. 2013: 519), the normalization of threat and security frames has helped steer the debate away from the normative core of the asylum concept, and towards the need to regain control over the EU's external borders, reinforcing a securitized view of migrants and the act of migration in general. The crisis narrative can further consolidate and maintain the framing of migrants as possible threats to security, and the migratory movements as an unprecedented emergency which needs to be addressed through the adoption of exceptional measures (Davitti, 2018). In academia, it is commonly agreed that employing a crisis narrative within policymaking can intensify or even normalize the use of exceptional or defensive instruments, which in migratory policymaking can include the use of push-backs, detention or accelerated asylum procedures (Sahin-Mencütek et al. 2022). Furthermore, since emergencies or crises are often believed to require immediate action, policymakers will tend to prioritize short-term, rather than long-term solutions (Davitti, 2018).

Henceforth, when discussing short-term solutions, this research will reference EU migration policies, that are developed with a focus on immediate actions, such as placing an unbalanced focus on strengthening border controls and security, temporary relocation mechanisms, and cooperation with third countries. These policies fail to incorporate comprehensive, balanced and sustainable policy approaches that address not only security concerns, but also economic needs and humanitarian responsibilities. It is this author's belief that a long-term migration strategy should also include, and more significantly focus on legal pathways, alongside any border control initiatives, while always ensuring and strengthening the asylum and refugee protection system. Any relocation mechanism should be permanent through. inter alia. a redistribution mechanism, based on a fair and consistent system for any schemes to have a long-term impact. Furthermore, rather than promoting cooperation with third countries focused on externalization, any policies with longer-term goals should include points addressing the root causes of migration and supporting climate adaptation initiatives. Most importantly, this author believes that no migration strategy will be fully effective nor sustainable, without a truly unified EU-wide Migration Governance System, to avoid fragmented national approaches.

The so-called "crisis", which was at its height in 2015 and 2016, revealed an incomplete Common European Asylum System, and tested the character and capacity of the EU Member States in providing adequate protection to everyone arriving at their borders. The increasing migratory movements also revealed insufficient transpositions of the Directives introduced in the CEAS, and a lack of overall harmonization between the Member States, which stood in the way of a stronger and more homogeneous common asylum system. However, providing adequate amendments to the sovereignty sensitive policy areas of migration and asylum proved to be complex, which was only exacerbated by the introduction of the crisis narrative, and the increased politicization of the area of migration, which was also experienced at this time. Some scholars have even argued that rather than a crisis of migration, this was a crisis of policies (De Genova 2017: 68), such as Nicholas De Genova, who argued that the EU was strained by its short-sighted migration and border policies (Ibid). This perception was also shared by Natascha Zaun, arguing that "*the failure of the EU to build effective co-operation on asylum policies and introduce a fair distribution scheme for asylum-seekers lie at the heart of the humanitarian crises*" *(Zaun 2017: 255).* Furthermore, the incapacity or unwillingness of the Member States to cooperate in this area, is a large component in creating the so-called "crisis", which should be dubbed the crisis of the CEAS, rather than a refugee crisis.

All factors outlined above, contributes to the need to understand what impact the mass media have had on the EU policymaking during the time of the so-called "refugee crisis", and which obstacles a coherent reform of the CEAS might have faced. This is especially needed as, despite the recent fractures and regionalization, we still live in a globalized world, where migration is expected to only increase. It is therefore important to understand the inter-connections influencing the EU's ability to promote safe migration, provide protection and prepare for similar challenges in the future, as well as the impact the media may have had on the EU's reform of the CEAS at the time. Therefore, studying and understanding how migrants were represented in the media, and whether this had an impact on policymaking in this area is crucial, as previous studies have concluded that the media have a necessary role in cultivating crisis mentalities and propagating stereotypes (Green & Pécoud, 2023). This means that the way the media describes a topic such as migration can influence how this topic will be understood by the readers, be it the public or the political leaders. Thus, analyzing the media framing and its effects during the

highly politicized context of migration during the time of the so-called "refugee crisis" could offer important insights into the political consequences of the media's use of frames in times of perceived crisis, and whether such frames could have had implications on the subsequent policymaking within the field of migration and asylum in the EU. In this regard, previous studies have implied that both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the media coverage can have contingent effects on the agenda-setting, but whether these affect the policymaking process remains unanswered.

The intersection between the media and migration has previously received significant scholarly attention, through a diverse set of theoretical approaches and empirical investigations. Previous research has inter alia investigated the representation of migration in the media, and the media's influence on agenda setting, concluding that the media do have an effect on the political agenda (Herrero-Jiménez et al., 2018). However, previous studies have reached different conclusions regarding the strength of this impact (Dekker & Scholten, 2017), and whether the aspect of quantity or quality of the media coverage has the most contingent effect when setting and influencing political agendas. This brings forth the issue of framing concerns when interpreting the impact. Dekker and Scholten attribute the media with an essential political role within agenda-setting, concluding that *"Issue frames in the media can support current policies, but also be critical and push for policy change" (Dekker and Scholten, 2017).* Less research, however, has been conducted to analyze the direct media influence on policy delivery. Therefore, more research is needed to understand the mass media's role in the active policy formation process in relation to migration in the EU. This study will thus broaden the focus and go beyond traditional agenda-setting theories by involving both the "symbolic" and "substantial" political agendas, where the first refers to the discourse, and the second to the decisions made by policymakers (Walgrave & Van Aelst, 2006: 94). It also seeks to expand the ongoing debates, by specifically focusing on the media's impact on the EU migration and asylum policy discussions and developments at the European Parliamentary level. This will be done by testing the hypothesis that *"The media's framing of migration has impacted the reform process of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), leading to policy outcomes that did not promote a coherent long-term migration strategy within the European Union during the so-called 'refugee crisis'."*

The social construction of threats has previously been studied using the analytical framework of the securitization theory, introduced by the Copenhagen School, namely Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde in 1998. This theory posits that security issues emerge or disappear through competing securitization and desecuritization discourses (Buzan et al., 1998), which will also be applied within this study. The study adopts this framework to consider the role of the media in the construction of security threats, while its central role in today's society will be reflected through the application of the mediatization theory, examining both traditional and social media, and their potential broader political impact. Employing an embedded constructivist approach, this research will study how the framing of migration in the media influenced the European Parliamentary political debates and practices in relation to migration immediately before, under and after the so-called "crisis" in 2015. Furthermore, to fully research the impact of the media and to test the hypothesis, additional essential theoretical paradigms and concepts will be used, including the theories of framing, agenda-setting and the issue-attention cycle.

Please note, that although highly relevant for the contemporary understanding of European migration policymaking, specifically in times of crisis, this research will not approach the topic of the "Ukraine Refugee Crisis", which began in Europe in February 2022, following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and remains ongoing at the time of writing. To date, over 6 million refugees fleeing Ukraine have been received and recorded within the EU. Although this situation is highly relevant in relation to the context of this analysis, it falls outside the timeframe for the research and will thus not be included. Nonetheless, a discussion on the contrasts between the two crises will be included in the discussion and conclusion chapter at the end of the thesis.

1.2 Research Gap

In contemporary migration studies, the ever-increasing role of digital communication technologies, particularly the intersection between the media and migration, has been the object of significant scholarly attention, through a number of diverse theoretical approaches and empirical investigations. In this regard, there is no lack of research on the representation of migrants in the media nor the study of the media's framing of migration. A conspicuous body of literature has been published on the topic, in particular focusing on times of high media salience, such as, for example, during the so-called "refugee crisis", specifically between 2015 and 2016.

This research most often focuses on the dimensions relating to the framing of migration, the possible framing changes and the quantity of articles published. In other words, previous research has often sought to quantitatively uncover how migration is portrayed, rather than the qualitative impact of this portrayal. Thus, while there is extensive existing research relating to the media framing of migration within the European context, there is less research that directly links this framing to legal and policy outcomes governing migration and asylum procedures within the EU. An investigation into how migration is framed in the media, as well as its direct or indirect influence on parliamentary debates and decisions, will therefore address a gap in the understanding of the interactions between media narratives and European policymaking.

While considerable work has been done on the role of traditional media in framing migration, as well as the changes in these frames (Berry et. al., 2016; Georgiou & Zaborowski, 2017; Triandafyllidou, 2018), most of these studies have focused on either national cases or comparative case studies of a number of national media outlets. Limited attention has been paid to how Eurocentric or international media outlets has framed migration, thus neglecting the wider perspectives within an EU-wide debate, by often limiting the previous studies to a national perspective. An understanding of these differences could offer new insights into the debate relating to the framing of migration. It could also offer a more nuanced understanding of the possible effects on EU migration policies, adding a European political perspective within the debate. Although the EU Member States does have an interconnected nature, researching the framing on the national level, may not necessarily transcend directly onto the European sphere, and applying a national-level framing analysis to the multilayered EU structure could possibly miss nuances, which would impact how EU policies are formed. Furthermore, prior studies have often been conducted as either longitudinal studies spanning over a decade, without significant depth placed on specific events or smaller framing shifts, in order to capture the bigger pictures (Strömbäck et al., 2021), or applied to a short time-frame, with a larger focus on singular events and significant framing shifts over short periods, such as, for example, between 2015 and 2016, at the height of the so-called "crisis" (Georgiou & Zaborowski, 2017). Applying a longitudinal study that aims to also capture the immediate pre- and post- crisis environment, and its subsequent political developments, can therefore provide a more detailed analysis of specific events, and how the different phases of the so-called "crisis" influenced the shifts in the framing

of migration. This will fill a temporal dimension gap, offering insights into how media framing has evolved during these critical years. By expanding both the period and the area of the research, this analysis will thus offer a broader perspective compared to existing research on the topic.

Numerous studies have also been carried out relating to the role of social media in political discourse and within the migration framing debates (Strömbäck et al., 2021; Arlt & Wolling, 2016; Parisi & Rega, 2011). However, less attention has been paid to the interaction between traditional and social media, for example through comparative studies. This research gap is particularly notable when considering their potential collective impact. Therefore, another avenue in which this research will seek to distinguish itself from previous framing studies, is by involving both traditional and social media within the analysis. In this case, the social media platforms will be represented by the involvement of Twitter[2]. Social media platforms such as Twitter generally surpass print newspapers or online newspapers in terms of reach and audience, which means that involving both media sources is instrumental in understanding the actual impact of the media within contemporary society, as it would be arbitrary to separate the two.

Approaching this topic from the perspective of how both social media and traditional media have contributed to the EU migration debates during the time of research, will offer fresh insights into the role of the wider media ecology in shaping EU migration policy debates and possible policy outcomes, which is something that has yet to be explored in-depth. While significant research exists on the media's influence on public opinion formation (see for example Consterdine, 2018), limited research has been conducted on whether this influence also extends to politicians, and consequently the policies that are debated and agreed upon in Parliament. This is especially interesting during a time with high migration salience in the media, in a political environment shaped by polarizing opinions on the topic. Previous scholarly work has agreed that policy

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[2] Following the acquisition of Twitter by Elon Musk in 2022, Twitter was made private and merged under a new company named X Corp, and Twitter was officially rebranded as X in April 2023. However, this acquisition and changes to the platform took place after the period of research and has therefore no influence on this analysis. During the entirety of the researched period, the platform was still named Twitter, and was owned by the founders Jack Dorsey, Noah Glass, Biz Stone and Evan Williams. It will thus continue to be named as Twitter henceforth within this research, for the sake of clarity. Furthermore, the data collection from the platform Twitter API was also conducted prior to this acquisition, and it should thus not have any bearings at any point within this analysis.

formations do not occur in a vacuum but are rather a result of inter-relational discursive processes, and that the understanding of migration is formed through a process of construction and reconstruction (Brouwer et al. 2017: 102). This construction is reinforced through the interaction between the political, public and media discourses, and according to Alexander Caviedes, the media can pressure policymakers into action by continuously linking it to a social ill, thus becoming perceived as a "crisis" in need of political action (Caviedes 2015: 900). The increased politicization of migration and the context surrounding the "crisis" (Pruitt, 2019), therefore makes researching the related implications on the policymaking processes highly relevant, as previous studies, such as Bleiker et al. from 2013 have found that the media's portrayal of migrants as a security issue, could prompt the introduction of extraordinary legislative measures (Bleiker et al., 2013). However, what precisely this impact entails, or which measures that have been introduced as a result thereof, remain largely eluded.

Furthermore, within the study of European migration and asylum policies, existing literature often concludes that the policymaking processes and outputs have failed to achieve their overall objectives. However, what impacts these processes has largely remained an underexplored subject prior to this research. This area is particularly interesting, due to its potential to generate important insights into the policy-formation process, and to enable a better understanding of the drivers behind policy outputs and outcomes in migration governance at the European level. This is also one of the reasons why the Dublin Regulation and its recast procedure were chosen as the case studies for the qualitative policy analysis. These were selected, not only because of the timing of the two recast procedures, which falls right before, during and after the period of research, but also due to it being a recurrent theme in the CEAS literature, which often describes the Regulation as insufficient from its inception (Battjes 2018: 18).

In sum, significant attention has been paid to analyzing the media outputs, as well as in-depth accounts of the consequences of this framing, such as its influence on the public attitude towards migration, and within the political agenda-setting process, while less research has approached the impact within the context of decision-making and governance. Therefore, despite the large body of literature written on the framing of migration, especially during the "refugee crisis", a knowledge gap remains regarding the political impact of this framing. Furthermore, previous

studies have either been largely issue-specific or conducted over decades, lacking the longitudinal advantage foreseen in this research, to account for the variations in framing and the assessment of medium to long-term media effects. Another common trend across the existing literature is the tendency to approach this topic either purely qualitatively or quantitatively. This research will thus aim to build upon the existing body of literature, arguing that, despite the high relevance of these approaches, a mixed methods research design will further the knowledge already accumulated within this particular field, and provide the possibility to extrapolate new information in a diverse and all-encompassing approach, to create new insights into the framing processes of migration, and the potential pressures this can place within the EU decision-making process. This approach will thus attempt to move away from a static conceptualization of associations, to produce a more dynamic framework to examine and understand possible correlations, as the media effects cannot be viewed as a linear process, but rather a complex causal interaction, with multiple contingencies and feedback effects. Therefore, this research will seek to broaden the already rich literature relating to the media's framing of migration, as well as its impact on migration policymaking, by going beyond the symbolic European Parliamentary political agenda, to also include the substantive policy practices and deliveries.

1.3 Research Question

Although there is no lack of research relating to the representation of migrants and migration in the media, more research is still needed to understand the mass media's role in the active policy formation processes relating to migration and asylum in the EU. To approach this topic, a hypothesis was identified and developed to guide the analysis. This research project will therefore test the hypothesis that *"The media's framing of migration has impacted the reform process of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), leading to policy outcomes that did not promote a coherent long-term migration strategy within the European Union during the so-called 'refugee crisis'".* This hypothesis thus assumes that negative media coverage will precede restrictive policies, promoting short-term solutions, rather than a long-term common European migration strategy.

To effectively test the hypothesis, three sub-questions have been developed to guide each of the analysis chapters.

1. How did the traditional- and social media, as well as Members of the European Parliament frame migration before, during and immediately after the so-called "refugee crisis"?

2. Was the symbolic political agenda susceptible to the way migration was framed in the traditional and social media between 2013 and 2017?

3. Did the framing of migration impact the substantive political agendas of the European Parliament during the period of research?

The design of this research pivots on the desire to approach the impact of migration framing differently than previous scholarly work on the topic, to bring forth new approaches that will help understand what impact the media can have, when framing a topic such as migration during times of perceived crisis. The mixed methods research design foreseen is clearly reflected in the formulation of the three sub-questions, around which this analysis is structured. The first two questions will be approached through quantitatively exploring framing and measuring correlations through the use of a regression analysis, while the third research question will be approached by qualitatively analyzing the impact of the media framing on the policy deliveries discussed and agreed upon within the Parliament. This research will be grounded in a constructivist standpoint, through the central concept, that all actors are part of the active process of constructing knowledge and shaping frames.

1.4 Research Contributions to the Existing Field of Knowledge

With its innovative approach, this research will contribute to the interdisciplinary study of migration framing and European policy analysis, expanding the existing body of literature by combining traditional and social media, with the study of the political processes in the context of European migration policymaking. Through its research design, this study will bring forth a conceptual contribution to these fields, by providing a new framework for analyzing framing, as well as its potential political impact on multiple levels. This design will move the approach away from the more commonly used mono methodology and instead employ a mixed methods research design to adapt the approach to also be applied within the EU political framework. This methodology has thus been developed to study how migration was framed longitudinally, but

also how the MEPs relate and adapt to this framing within the Parliamentary debates, not as passive recipients, but rather as active participants in the shaping of these frames.

The contribution of this research will therefore be empirical, methodological and theoretical, through its innovative approach to the study of framing, and its impact. Although the applied research model precludes a definitive causality, it does provide enough evidence to support a theoretical assumption on the influence of the media. Furthermore, applying a qualitative analysis to support the other research findings fills a methodological gap, moving the research away from a solely quantitatively focused study of media framing, towards also grasping the concrete impact of this framing. Additionally, the integration and combination of both the framing theory and the securitization concept brings forth methodological and operationalization advantages, such as identifying and measuring the prevalence of competing securitizing frames.

Through its adoption of the aforementioned approaches, this research seeks to contribute interdisciplinary in a number of strands within contemporary migration literature, including most centrally, framing and migration policymaking. It will contribute to the ongoing debate within migration scholarship relating to the important role of framing, connecting the analysis on frame emergence to a broader debate on decision-making and tangible political outcomes, thus also contributing to the European migration policymaking debates. By situating itself within both framing and policy studies, this analysis aims to create a bridge between these two strands of literature. Thus, while migration policies and politics in general are often analyzed separately from other strands of migration scholarship, this research is designed to investigate the interconnections between the strands, by asking key questions relating to both how migration was discussed, but also, with what impact.

The approach of this study has been designed to expand and deepen the understanding of migration framing, including its contribution through the application of a comparative analysis which will include multiple media outlets and a cross-platform analysis. This will allow the research to go beyond the traditional approach of analyzing the framing within national and regional outlets, to include a broader and more global perspective in the framing debate. This is inter alia done by investigating the interaction between the different media platforms, how the

frames are utilized, and where they are first introduced. This approach will continue to deepen the link between its contribution within framing studies and political science, by connecting the media framing to Parliamentary debates relating to the Dublin Regulation. This is an interesting avenue of research, not only due to the Regulations role of determining which EU Member State is responsible for processing an asylum application, but also due to it being a point of contention in both European politics and wider migration scholarship. This study seeks to broaden this discussion, by contributing to the debate surrounding the reform of the Dublin system, providing a broader understanding of the media's role in fostering political polarization and the impact of the different frames employed in migration discussions. Introducing a media framing analysis within the study of migration policies, would thus offer a more nuanced, sociopolitical understanding of how the migration policies are shaped through narratives. This will contextualize the EU migration governance process within a broader framework, through its critical perspective on how media framing has influenced these structures, while contributing to the broader debate on the power of the media within the contemporary political landscape.

In the context of the strands relating to policymaking, existing literature has often focused on condemning the European migration governance system for its failures. Rather than contributing to this approach, this research will instead aim to understand how these failures may have been produced, through the interpretation of the general environment surrounding these structures, and the external variables potentially affecting the governance system. Adopting this conceptual approach will thus seek to enhance the understanding of the EU migration governance processes and its system, involving both internal and external actors at different levels, moving the existing literature beyond the descriptive accounts of the governance framework, to also incorporate a multi-level analysis developing a more explanatory approach. Furthermore, this analysis will mainly focus on the early stages of the policymaking process, rather than the implementation on the ground, as most previous scholarships have, thus providing new insights through a dynamic study of the governance processes, rather than a static analysis of the outputs.

In sum, this study will provide valuable insights into the relationship between media framing and political decision-making, specifically in the context of European migration policies. This interdisciplinary approach will contribute to existing academic literature by offering a new

perspective on how media shapes the political landscape, bridging the gap between the different literature strands. Thus, by researching both how the framing of migration changed throughout the course of the "crisis" and with what effect, this research will distinguish itself from existing work, by also focusing on the policy formation process and the media's role within, making a distinctive contribution within both strands of literature. These contributions will be sought through the application of an innovative mixed methods research approach, which has been specifically designed to complement and build upon existing findings within the study of frames and migration governance.

1.5 Thesis Structure

This thesis is divided into nine chapters, structured to address the hypothesis and previously defined research questions. Chapter Two establishes the empirical context for this research within the European Union framework. This chapter will briefly introduce the structure of the EU, laying the foundations for understanding how EU policies are shaped, and contextualize the European Parliament, detailing its functions and internal processes. This chapter will also introduce the European migration and asylum system, discussing how migration became an EU competence. These contextual factors are presented to empirically place this research within the European policymaking sphere.

Chapter Three builds on this empirical context, presenting and discussing the so-called "refugee crisis" of 2015, and how this was approached by the EU at the time. This will be followed by a discussion on the meaning of crisis and a presentation of a working definition of the crisis concept. As this research will be drawing on the crisis rhetoric throughout, it is instrumental to define the concept, in order to create the foundation for the rest of the study. This chapter will thus discuss how the crisis concept will be defined and applied within the analysis, and in relation to migration.

Chapter Four provides a review of the existing literature, which will create the foundation for the theoretical framework needed to answer the research questions. This chapter will conduct a more articulated review of the existing literature on the media framing of the "refugee crisis" and migration in general. The findings from this review will help situate the current analysis within

the contemporary literature on the topic and further identify the research gap. Moreover, the chapter will also provide the theoretical foundation for the analysis by introducing the main theoretical concepts from scholarship on the theory of framing as well as the securitization theory, as presented by the Copenhagen School. It will also introduce the concepts of agenda-setting, Anthony Down's issue-attention cycle, and literature relating to mediatization, which will all be applied within the analysis.

Chapter Five will focus on the methodological choices made, in order to shape the analysis. This chapter will thus define the ontological premises of the research, and how this will be acquired. It will introduce and justify the conceptual tools that will be used to investigate the research questions and elaborate on the methodological approaches that will be adopted within the thesis, specifically the choice of a mixed methods research design. These choices will be justified, and the broader research design will be discussed and illustrated, including a presentation of the limitations inherent in these choices. This chapter will further present the choice of sources for the analysis and the subsequent data collection. Lastly, the methods used to operationalize this methodology will also be outlined.

The analysis will be conducted in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight, each addressing one of the three sub-questions, respectively and collectively addressing the overarching hypothesis. Chapter Six will present the first part of the analysis, which will focus on the study of frames, and will address the first research question *"How did traditional and social media, as well as Members of the European Parliament frame migration before, during and immediately after the so-called 'refugee crisis'?"*. This chapter operationalize various methodological approaches, to uncover the dynamics of the coverage on migration during the period of research, building on the data collection and coding scheme produced in the previous chapter. This part of the analysis will quantitatively explore the issue-attention to the topic of migration, its sentiment, salience and the overall framing within the three data sources, traditional media, Twitter and the Parliamentary debates. Furthermore, it will research how the "crisis" was constructed through numbers, narratives and framings, and discuss the findings, drawing on the theories as presented in Chapter Four, while building towards the next steps of the analysis.

Chapter Seven will approach the question of who leads whom, by seeking to answer the second sub-question *"Was the symbolic political agenda susceptible to the way migration was framed in the traditional and social media between 2013 and 2017?"*. This chapter will conduct and present the second part of the analysis, which will quantitatively explore the framing and sentiment across the three variables. This will be done, through a regression analysis, seeking to trace the use of framing and sentiment, within the three variables. This chapter will introduce the different steps taken to determine the most suitable regression model, including a discussion of alternative models. Subsequently, the final regression analysis is conducted, and the statistical probability measurements are presented and discussed, leading to the last part of the analysis.

The third and last part of the analysis will be addressed in Chapter Eight and will approach the third sub-question *"Did the framing of migration impact the substantive political agendas of the European Parliament during the period of research?"*. The previous chapters addressed the quantitative part of the analysis, whereas this chapter will approach the qualitative analysis of the European Parliament policy deliveries relating to the two recast procedures of the Dublin Regulation, taking place in 2013 and 2016 respectively. These data sets are presented as part of a comparative analysis, using a qualitative and manual content analysis, seeking to trace how the frames defined and measured in the previous chapters were transposed into different spheres, and possibly measured within the policymaking process and outcomes. This chapter also includes a discussion of the political dynamics within the Parliament, the role and influence of the political groups, and the different party stances relating to migration. The chapter will conclude with a discussion of all findings.

The final chapter, namely Chapter Nine, will address the overarching hypothesis and research questions, thus concluding the thesis. This chapter will integrate the analysis conducted in the previous three chapters and draw conclusions. It will synthesize the empirical and conceptual findings, while addressing both the hypothesis and each of the sub-questions of the research individually. Furthermore, this chapter will also reflect on the implications and the contribution to the broader literature and consider the potential for avenues of further future research. It will also offer a policy discussion, not in the form of policy recommendations, but rather a reflection

on how this research can help understand the processes of policymaking, including the role the media plays within it, and the implications of such.

2. THE EUROPEAN UNION AND ITS ASYLUM AND MIGRATION POLICIES

2.1 The European Union

The European Union is a complex political organization that plays a significant role in shaping and implementing policies in its 27 Member States in many policy areas, including that of asylum and migration. The policymaking process within the EU is complex, involving a number of different institutions and actors with diverse interests and external influences, and the need for a consensus between these makes the process both intricate and challenging. The European Parliament is one actor within this process that plays a crucial role. It is composed of directly elected representatives from each Member State and is a co-legislator with the European Council, as decided under the ordinary legislative procedure, rationalized under the Treaty of Lisbon in 2007. The role of the Parliament has reflected the changing nature of the EU over the years, and since its establishment, it has undergone significant expansions, as the integration deepened which has left the Parliament with a pivotal role in shaping EU policies and practices. However, even within the Parliament, the policymaking process is not without its challenges, as it is composed of a group of MEPs representing diverse interests and perspectives, coming from not only different Member States, but also different ideological leanings.

The complex structure of European policymaking is nowhere more evident than in the area of migration and asylum. The interconnected nature between the EU Member States makes a unified approach to migration a necessity, however, it is also a complex policy area, due to its sovereignty sensitive nature. In the EU, the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) is the legal framework that covers all aspects of the asylum process, recognizing that the EU Member States have a shared responsibility in welcoming asylum seekers and migrants, and setting out common standards to ensure that people arriving in the EU will receive equal treatment in all its participating Member States. However, the durability of this system has been tested on several occasions and the so-called "refugee crisis" in 2015 highlighted systemic deficiencies inherent in the current CEAS (Niemann & Zaun 2017: 3), which challenged its design and adequacy. These challenges include a lack of harmonization between the Member States, which stands in the way of a strong and homogeneous EU asylum and migration system. However, migration and asylum

policies are complex, and reaching agreements between the different institutions, the Member States and policymakers remains challenging.

Understanding how these policies are shaped and the complex structures that are present in the multilayered decision-making process within the EU is crucial, when studying the media's impact on the EU migration and asylum policies. Therefore, when developing this research framework, the contextualization of the EU, the European Parliament and the development of EU migration and asylum policies between 2013 and 2017 is essential. This chapter will thus explore the EU, and in particular the European Parliament and its processes, as well as the process of migration becoming an EU competence.

2.2 The European Decision-Making Process

Since the merging of the three separate communities – the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the European Economic Community (EEC), and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) in 1967, Member States have gradually transferred areas of authority to the EU level. This has made the EU what it is today, which is less than a state but more than a traditional international organization, able to adopt and implement policies affecting its Member States (Wallace et al. 2015: 4). The European Community officially became the European Union in 1992, through the signing of the Maastricht Treaty, called the Treaty on European Union (TEU) as a way of binding the Member States closer together under a single framework. Since then, the European Union has continued to develop and as the EU integration process deepened, so did the competencies placed at the supranational levels, which increased the powers of the EU to create policies on behalf of its Member States.

Today, the political structure of the Union is characterized by multiple levels of governance, with a multitude of actors, through a horizontally separated division of power, in three branches with legislative, executive, and judicial functions respectively, while the Member States still remain central actors through both the European Parliament and the European Council (Chari & Kritzinger 2006: 2), as illustrated in Figure 1 below. This figure exemplifies the multi-layered governance structure, which is used in the development and reporting on migration and asylum

policies within the Union to this day. This is also part of the structure in which Regulations and Directives are discussed and agreed upon, within the Ordinary Legislative Procedure.

Figure 1: The European Union governance structure. Source: Figure created by author, partially derived from Yearwood et al. 2015
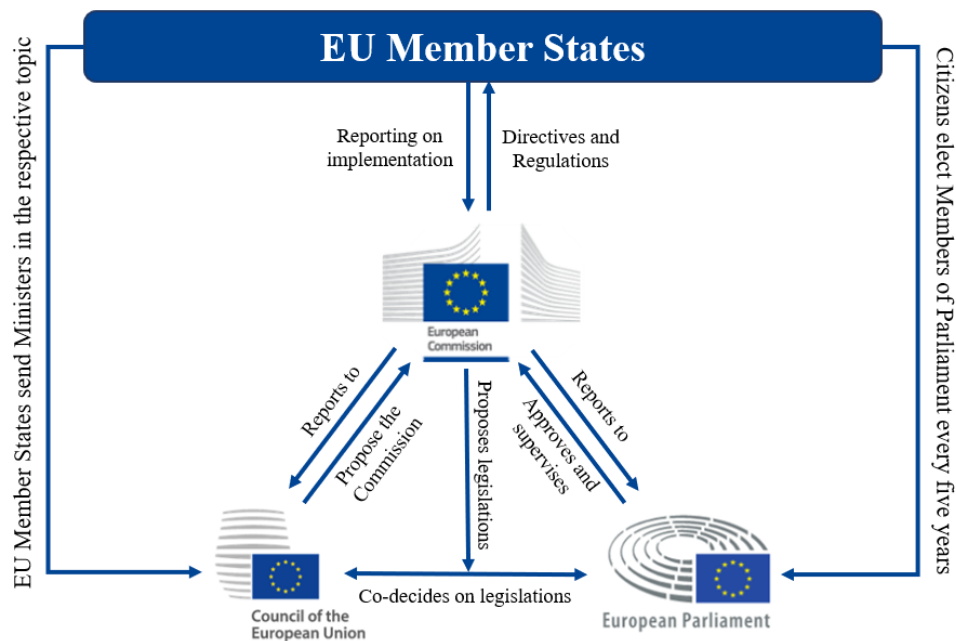
2.2.1 The Increasing Influence of the European Parliament

The European Parliament is the EU institution that has experienced the greatest change since the Union's establishment (Scully et al. 2012: 671), also in regard to its role in the formulation of EU migration and asylum policies. Originally, it was an assembly of delegates from the national parliaments, with few powers other than acting as a consultative body. Since then, the role of the Parliament has significantly changed, becoming a genuine legislative and budgetary authority, with an audible voice in EU policymaking and the only EU source of democratic legitimacy (Wallace et al. 2015: 87). This change has been a gradual process, which began in the 1970s, when the Parliament gained powers over parts of the EU budget, expanding in the 1980s and 1990s, when the Parliament acquired substantial legislative powers from successive treaty reforms. This was further rationalized under the Treaty of Lisbon from 2007 (which is also known as the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU)) Article 294, making the Parliament an equal legislator with the Council under the Ordinary Legislative Procedure.

The first European Parliamentary election took place in 1979, with 410 Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) elected from its 10 EU Member States, and from 51 different national political parties (Hix et al. 2009: 821). The successive enlargement process of the Union has significantly increased this number, and for the legislative period from 2014 to 2019, which covers the main period of research, the Parliament was made up of 751 MEPs from 28 Member States[3] and over 170 national parties, making it a large and diverse body (Scully et al. 2012: 670). During this period, the MEPs were divided into seven ideologically defined transnational party groups, which, according to Simon Hix *"have become powerful actors, able to marshal their troops in support of the policy positions of the group leaders" (Hix et al. 2009: 821)* and is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: The European Parliament's seven political groups: 2014-2019 (European Parliament, 2024)

Political group	Members
Group of the European People's Party (EPP)	221
Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament (S&D)	191
European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR)	70
Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE)	67
Confederal Group of the European United Left – Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL)	52
Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance (Greens/EFA)	50
Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy Group (EFDD)	48
Non-attached Members (NI)	52

The Parliament is also divided into specialized standing and temporary committees, that have played a central role in its functioning since its establishment. As explained by Gail McElroy *"the antecedent of the modern Parliament, recognized that committees would help alleviate the problems inherent in coordinating work in an assembly that was scheduled to meet in plenary only a handful of times a year" (McElroy 2006: 8).* The committee system has since expanded

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[3] Following the EU referendum of the 23 June 2016, which resulted in the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the EU, also called Brexit, this number decreased to reflect the withdrawal, and for the legislative period of 2019 to 2024 the number of MEPs were 704, from its 27 Member States.

significantly, with 20 standing committees usually consisting of between 25 and 81 members. These committee posts are highly valued by the MEPs, who believe that the committee system is a focal point of power and an important component in the legislative process of the Parliament (Ibid. 9). The committee working with issues relating to migration during the period of research was the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE).

While the Parliament resembles a traditional parliament, with significant policymaking powers, it is not involved in all areas of political procedures, such as a traditional Parliament would be. Some have argued that for the European Union to overcome its democratic deficit, the European Parliament must have its powers enhanced to include all legislative procedures (Neutel, 2015), including initiative powers. It can thus be concluded that, although the Parliament plays a central role in shaping some legislative outcomes in the EU, which is a topic that has been greatly demonstrated in scholarly literature, its ability to influence the legislative agenda-setting process remains limited and mostly remains as a competence of the Commission and is thus an area which has been less researched. Michael Webb and Amie Kreppel approached this gap in an article from 2021 (Webb & Kreppel, 2021), measuring the use of the Own Initiative Reports (EPOIR) in the European Parliament, to facilitate inter-institutional dialogue on future legislations. The EPOIR is a formal expression of the Parliament's policy preferences, and an important informal tool for the Parliament to signal its political priorities to the Commission (Ibid. 305). The research of Webb and Kreppel set out to understand the informal agenda-setting influence of the Parliament, and the Commission's willingness to listen (Ibid. 308), providing valuable insights into the ability of the Parliament to use these informal tools to shape the EU agenda. Their findings suggest that the Parliament is able to exert some level of influence on the content of the Commission's pre-legislative proposals, using EPOIR as a signaling tool on the topics of interest (Ibid. 318), although concluding that more research in this area is needed.

2.2.2 Plenary Sessions and Complex Agenda-setting

Before examining the Parliamentary debates and their outcomes, it is crucial to understand when and how the MEPs participate in plenary sessions, which is where the legislative debates take place. The plenary sessions are among the most important activities of the Parliament, and they are held once a month for four days in Strasbourg, with additional sessions taking place in

Brussels when needed (Proksch & Slapin 2010: 590). These plenary sessions are important arenas in which MEPs can ask questions, express criticisms, or take positions to influence EU politics, mainly through their debates on legislative and non-legislative reports.

The agenda for these plenary sessions is comprised of a wide range of issues, competing to receive attention from the MEPs. A number of studies have shown that there are three factors that play a role in determining whether an issue will receive attention at these sessions:

1. The characteristic of the issue, such as whether it has been discussed before, if it impacts a large group of people, or if it has severe indicators;
2. The way the media reacts to the issue, which kind of coverage it receives, which traditional media outlets report on it, and how it is treated by the media;
3. The political context, whether it is during an election or whether the issue is closely related to the political actor or party ideology (Berganza et al. 2014: 4).

This list does not include venues and frames, which are two other factors that are important for an issue to enter the Parliamentary agenda. For an issue to arrive at an EU venue, the venue needs to be sufficiently capable of dealing with it. Furthermore, the issue should be framed in a way that legitimizes why it must be dealt with at the EU level. When an issue manages to reach the agenda of a plenary session, the MEPs will then produce competing frames to present it, often choosing to use frames that will advance their own or party interests.

However, for an MEP to be allowed to present and produce these frames, they need to be allocated speaking time. The speaking time at the plenary sessions is allocated through a fixed order of turn and is strictly structured, allowing only limited room for actual interaction between the MEPs (Högenauer 2017: 1094). The speaking time in plenary is first allocated to key actors, such as representatives from the Commission, Council, or a special rapporteur, which is then followed by speaking time for the representatives of each group. The remaining time is regulated by Rule 162 of the Parliament's Rules of Procedure (Ibid.), dividing this section equally based on the party groups and size. The President can give the floor to MEPs who indicate that they wish to put a question to another MEP following a speech, by using a "blue card" system, however a

question can last no longer than half a minute, and the number of blue cards is restricted, or the system can even be suspended (Högenauer, 2017).

2.2.2.1 Position Taking within the European Political Party System

Over the years, substantial scholarly work has investigated the functioning of the Parliament, and especially the behavior and voting of MEPs have received significant attention. This is an interesting point of research, since the Parliament can block and amend most EU laws, meaning that the individual political behavior of MEPs can affect EU citizens. Furthermore, the MEPs are a largely heterogeneous group, selected by their national parties and citizens of the Member States, organized into political groups based on ideological preferences and committees, which means that each MEP is exposed to multiple outside influences, with diverse policy preferences, national interests as well as EU party politics.

Most research into the subject has found that MEPs respond to two main entities: the national parties, which control the selection of candidates for the Parliamentary elections, and the transnational political groups, which control the leadership in the Parliament, including committee assignments, speaking times, and the agenda (Hix 2002: 688). Hix concluded that MEPs define their behavior based on three main areas of interest, namely: re-election, obtaining higher office and securing policies (Hix 2004: 203), explaining MEP voting behavior through either:

- Personal policy preferences: Voting purely on the basis of personal ideological beliefs
- European party discipline: Voting following the instructions of the party leadership
- National party discipline: Voting based on possible re-election (Hix 2002: 691-692)

Thus, the national parties will seek to position themselves within the Parliament through the actions of their elected MEPs (Proksch & Slapin 2010: 589), inter alia through the MEPs' ambition of re-election. The European Parliament elections are unique, as there are no European parties in the national elections, and the MEPs are running under their national party label, focusing on national issues during campaigns, thus forging a weak connection between the voters and the actual work of the Parliament (Faas 2003: 844). According to Roger Scully, the MEP will

retain these close ties with their national party during their term, therefore remaining primarily a nationally based politician, still subject to influences from home (Scully 1998: 94). According to Hix, this will continue to be the case as long as the national parties have control of the candidate selection for the European elections (Hix, 2004).

However, Hix has further concluded that the cohesion of the European party groups has increased proportionally over the years through the parties' power to control offices and policy outcomes (Ibid. 204), which creates a conflicting environment for the MEPs, torn between their representation in the national parties and in the transnational party groups (Högenauer 2017: 1091). This divided loyalty could pose a challenge, especially in cases with conflicting viewpoints, in which case the MEP would face a choice of voting with their national party or with their Parliament political group. However, despite these divided loyalties, national parties usually join the European party group that matches their ideology, meaning that the national parties are often well matched with the politics of the transnational party group.

Voting behavior has been one of the primary areas of research when studying the behavior of MEPs, and less focus has been placed on speeches given by the MEPs at the plenary sessions. Although voting behavior can directly affect a legislative outcome, speeches allow for a more detailed explanation of positioning and can provide interesting insights into the workings of position taking, as concluded by Slapin and Proksch in 2010 (Slapin & Proksch 2010: 336). Furthermore, in contrast to the highly regulated plenary debate schedules, there are very few limitations to the type of argumentation an MEP can bring to their allocated speaking time. The MEPs face no institutional constraints or limiting conditions to the type of argumentation to be used, and the only restricting factor is the relevance of their presented standpoint to the initial practical argumentation put forward by the rapporteur (Garssen 2016: 31). This allows the MEPs extensive freedom when forming their speeches and arguments. This is a time for the MEP to represent, claim, or justify their position, and previous research has actually suggested that a stronger national component can be detected in the plenary speeches, rather than in the voting behavior of the MEPs (Slapin & Proksch 2010: 336).

Furthermore, outside of being strictly structured, the plenary debates are also an arena that takes place in a complex situational and rhetorical setting, due to its dual nature of being a political debate but also a publicly streamed medium (Fløttum 2013: 43). The political framing used in the Parliamentary debates is thus part of a complex reciprocal relationship between the media and decision-makers, and a complete separation of the two would be arbitrary. Researching the media effect on EU policymaking, should seek to trace the different stages of the policy formulation, to capture the way the individual policy proposal is framed at different process stages and the effects of the framing on the discussions. This would define the symbolic decision-making process, whereas the substantial decision-making could be traced through the actual outcome of the debates. Researching and understanding this process has become highly relevant, as the Parliament has become an increasingly important political actor, providing real and tangible policy outcomes, affecting the everyday lives of EU citizens and the migrants arriving or living in Europe (Larsson 2015: 152).

2.2.3 The Politicization of EU Integration

In the last two decades, EU policymaking in general has witnessed significant changes, and according to Edoardo Bressanelli and colleagues, *"gone are the times when EU decision-making resembled 'policy without politics'" (Bressanelli et al., 2020)*. This process was witnessed, while the durability of the Union was tested through a string of crises beginning in the early 2000s. In 2007, the EU, like most of the world, faced a financial crisis, which was followed by a recession in most Member States. This brought with it other challenges, including a rising "Euroscepticism", an increase in populist nationalist parties and xenophobic tendencies in the Member States, and as concluded by Helen Wallace and colleagues *"Years of economic hardship and decreasing public support for the EU, in turn, have led to increasing speculation about the possible abandonment of the euro and even the disintegration of the Union" (Wallace et al. 2015: 485).* This prompted an expedited politicization of Europe, that made its policies more visible within the Member States. According to Hutter and colleagues, a topic can only be politicized if it is raised by political actors in the public debate (Hutter et al. 2016: 8), with salience as one of the basic dimensions. Hutter and Grande explain that polarization of conflict among the political actors is a key aspect of this politicization, continuing to explain that the *"most polarizing constellation can be found when two camps advocate completely opposing*

issue positions with about the same intensity" (Hutter & Grande 2014: 1004). This approach is in line with the one presented by Pieter De Wilde in 2011, who argues that a topic can only become politicized when there are at least two different opinions on the subject (De Wilde 2011: 567), and the more an issue is discussed, the more politicized it will become (Ibid.).

This politicization process has put EU actors under considerable pressure due to increased public scrutiny of the institution, but according to Bressanelli et al., this has also offered new opportunities for the EU (Bressanelli et al. 2020). EU policymaking thus continues to develop against these challenges, impeding some policy arenas while spurring policy innovation and cooperation in others, in response to both the functional demands of the Union and systemic pressures. Therefore, going beyond the general observation that EU integration has meant the increasing transfer of powers from the Member States to the supranational institutions, it is crucial to understand the particular institutional conditions in place when policies are created. As previously concluded by Bonjour and colleagues, this includes which actors and mechanisms drive or hinder policy emergence and change, and how the actors employ different degrees of influence in EU policymaking (Bonjour et al. 2018).

During this process, Member States have especially remained hesitant about a centralization of social and foreign policies (Chari & Kritzinger 2006: 4), with issues that are more likely to be seen as impinging on territorial integrity, affecting a crucial part of traditional sovereignty, experiencing slower integration, thus remaining largely within the remit of the national governments. Member States have thus remained more cautious in pursuing EU-wide norms in these areas, and regulations have proved more difficult to agree upon (Ibid. 152). Even though new EU policies are still introduced in these areas, there is a lack of harmonization between the Member States, and the final word in adapting and adopting these policies largely remain with the national governments (Ibid. 180). Some scholars such as Fernanda Neutel have even suggested that the European political system remains unfinished and incomplete (Neutel, 2015), especially in the area of social policies, which remains largely within the remit of the Member States. This structure has created an unconventional political environment, which has left the European Union at a crossroads, and according to Neutel *"the institutions need more democratic mechanisms, policies should be expanded and a new relationship with the citizens should be put*

in place." (Neutel, 2015). She thus argues that for the EU to adequately respond to contemporary challenges, deep structural changes are needed.

The current political architecture of the EU, could thus leave the Union with a problem of legitimacy, which Nicola Chelotti and Volkan Gul argue emerged after the introduction of the Maastricht Treaty (1992), as until its introduction, *"there was no concern for legitimacy because the EU was thought to be accepted on the basis of technocratic success or 'permissive consent'"* *(Chelotti & Gul, 2015).* This problem of legitimacy only becomes exacerbated in times of increased Euroscepticism, and when Europeanization takes place in areas that are perceived as being exclusive competencies of the Member States. This is, inter alia, evident within EU migration and asylum policies. In this area, scholarly research has focused on the difficulty of the supranational institutions in enforcing constraints on the Member States and the inability of the EU to shift the policy core of the migration policies to the EU venue (Bonjour et al. 2018: 409). The area of EU migration policies still follows the traditional community method of common policies, rather than being an exclusive competency of the European Union, and the area still tends to privilege intergovernmental bargains over supranational actors (Guiraudon 2000: 256). Member States thus remain the most important actors in the negotiations, and although more competencies in this area have been transferred to the EU venue, it still remains largely a domestic public policy issue, mainly due to its sovereignty sensitive nature.

2.3 EU Asylum and Migration Policies: From the Maastricht Treaty to the Common European Asylum System

Generally, the global refugee regime has undergone significant transformations in the past decades, and issues relating to asylum and migration have gained the status of high politics worldwide (Lavenex 2001: 74). However, protecting forcibly displaced people is an older phenomenon, and the legal codification relating to the protection of refugees evolved shortly after the Second World War. This resulted in the 1951 Geneva Refugee Convention and its New York Protocol of 1967, which remain the main source of legal protection of refugees to this day. Furthermore, the right to seek asylum is a fundamental human right, included in the 1948 Declaration of Human Rights. The Geneva Refugee Convention provides a refugee definition or inclusion clause in its Article 1, however, it does not provide guidance for the signatory countries

on how to determine whether a person should be granted refugee status (Wagner et al. 2019: 14). As explained by Cathryn Costello and Emily Hancox, *"When we look at the international refugee regime (…) it does not contain procedural rules for determining who is a refugee. It assumes that the refugee population is readily identifiable, and accords them status, a defined package of rights"* (Costello & Hancox 2016: 379). Signatories have therefore developed their own regulations and procedures on how to determine and grant refugee status. So, while the legal definition of who is a refugee is guided by the 1951 Refugee Convention, the interpretation and application take place at the national level, reflecting national interests, which can change over time (Crawley & Skleparis 2018: 51). This means that the otherwise objective category of who is a refugee is, in fact, under constant formation in response to political interests and the evolution of national policies.

In the EU, migration has been part of the integration project since the establishment of the European Communities in the 1950s (Ibid. 83), developing slowly but gradually over the years. Initially, decisions relating to the entry and stay of foreigners were perceived as questions lying at the core of national sovereignty and were therefore mostly left to the national ministries (Guiraudon 2000: 252). However, in recent years, migratory developments have prompted higher EU cooperation, and in the past twenty years, the area of Justice and Home Affairs has become an important component in the European integration process (Wallace et al. 2015: 367).

The introduction of the Schengen Agreement between 1985 and 1990 created a need for intergovernmental cooperation on issues relating to asylum and migration within the European Communities, as a result of the functional spillovers following the abolition of the internal borders (Van Oort et al. 2018: 11). Although the 1985 Schengen Agreement only contained three articles relating to immigration, the issue was at the forefront in the implementation process. The debates at this time also experienced changes in the problematization of migration, moving the debate toward the protection of public order and the preservation of domestic stability (Huysmans 2000: 756). This was, inter alia, evident in the 1990 Convention Applying the Schengen Agreement (of June 1985), connecting immigration and asylum with issues such as terrorism, transnational crime, and border controls (Lodge, 1993; Huysmans 2000), by locating the policies relating to migration in the institutional framework within the protection of internal

security. This ultimately formed a link between the abolition of internal border controls and the need for strengthening external border controls, beginning what has later been labeled a fortress mentality.

According to Leila Hadj-Abdou, the changing political context within the EU has crucially shaped the dynamics in the migration field, both at the EU and national levels (Hadj-Abdou 2021: 5), and a significant Europeanization of the migration policies followed the immigration momentum developed by the Schengen Agreement. The Maastricht Treaty was introduced shortly thereafter, which placed migration and asylum in the Third Pillar relating to Justice and Home Affairs, treating the issue of migration as a subject of intergovernmental regulation (Huysmans 2000: 755). The early 1990s also saw the establishment of the cornerstone of the EU's asylum and migration system, namely the Dublin regime, which allocates the responsibility for dealing with asylum seekers within the EU, ensuring that only one Member State is responsible for the examination of an asylum application. This is usually determined by the first country of entry principle and was initially established to prevent multiple applications or so-called "asylum shopping" (Battjes 2018: 6). The Dublin Convention (1990) was signed as an intergovernmental treaty outside the EU's legal framework but was later incorporated into EU law through the Dublin II Regulation in 2003.

It quickly became apparent that the Maastricht Treaty was ineffective in dealing with issues such as migration and asylum, and the Treaty of Amsterdam was introduced in 1997, calling for the establishment of an "area of freedom, security and justice", increasing the use of the EU venues for migration and asylum policies (Scipioni 2018: 1361). With the entry into force of the Treaty of Amsterdam, the area of migration and asylum shifted from the intergovernmental third pillar to the first pillar of the community (Van Oort et al. 2018: 11). The Treaty of Amsterdam began the development of the harmonization process, by providing the legal basis for the creation of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), and the CEAS was later introduced in October 1999 by the Tampere Conclusions. The CEAS was set to be implemented in phases, beginning with the Tampere Programme from 1999 to 2004 (Wagner et al. 2019: 14). This program explicitly repeated the EU Member States' commitment to a full and inclusive application of the 1951 Geneva Convention; however, it included no deadline to apply refugee "burden-sharing"

(Guiraudon 2000: 253). During the first phase, a set of common minimum standards for all Member States was defined through the adoption of six major instruments, including the EURODAC Regulation, the Temporary Protection Directive, the Reception Conditions Directive, the Dublin Regulation, the Qualification Directive, and the Asylum Procedures Directive (Guiraudon 2000: 253).

The first phase of CEAS was widely criticized for failing to achieve common standards in the Member States (Van Oort et al. 2018: 11-12), and the second phase was introduced by the Hague Programme in 2004. This highlighted the necessity to develop the instruments further in order to meet the expectations of creating an effective and genuine common asylum system in the EU. The Hague Programme was set to run from 2005 to 2009, and the implementation of the current CEAS instruments continued. The Commission published the first recast proposals at the end of the second phase of CEAS in 2008, with two main aims; to ensure high treatment standards of asylum seekers in relation to reception, and to limit secondary movements of asylum seekers within the EU (Tsourdi 2016: 274). The recast package also included a directive proposing to establish the European Asylum and Support Office (EASO), to ensure cooperation between Member States in areas relating to asylum (Wagner et al. 2019: 23).

In 2007, during the second phase of the CEAS, the Treaty of Lisbon (TFEU) was introduced. The TFEU took important steps in the development of the CEAS by further strengthening the EU competence in the area of Justice and Home Affairs (Van Oort et al. 2018: 12). The TFEU formalized the goals for an integrated border management system of the external borders and proposed policies relating to asylum and immigration. The goal of the EU's "common immigration policy" was to ensure *"at all stages, the efficient management of migration flows, fair treatment of third-country nationals residing legally in member states, and the prevention of, and enhanced measures to combat, illegal immigration and trafficking in human beings" (Article 79 in TFEU).* However, issues such as the right to determine the volumes of immigrants to the Member States remained within the national remit.

With the introduction of both the Amsterdam and Lisbon Treaties, a gradual communitarization process was initiated, which meant that the Member States lost their veto powers, giving the

Parliament full involvement in the legislative procedure on equal footing with the Council, meaning that the Member States lost their previous full control over EU migration policies (Bonjour et al. 2018: 411).

The third phase of the CEAS was initiated by the Stockholm Programme in 2010, shortly after the TFEU went into force, reaffirming *"the goal of creating a common area of protection and solidarity based on a common asylum procedure and a uniform status for those granted international protection" (Ibid.).* Amendments to the CEAS instruments were initiated, which culminated in a Recast Qualification Directive (adopted in 2011), Dublin III Regulation, Recast EURODAC Regulation, Recast Reception Conditions Directive, and a Recast Asylum Procedures Directive, all of which were adopted in 2013. The Recast Directives were never evaluated due to the emergency brought on by the so-called "refugee crisis" in 2015 (Ibid.), but scholars and NGOs alike have criticized their ambition, stating that they only brought moderate improvements to the first phase of the CEAS.

A new recast procedure was announced only a few years later, in the European Agenda on Migration presented by the Commission in May 2015, as a response to the increasing migratory pressure experienced in Europe at the time. The Commission thus presented another comprehensive reform package of the CEAS instruments in 2016, while many Member States were still transposing the second phase instruments. This reform package included the Dublin IV Regulation, Eurodac Regulation, EASO Regulation, Asylum Procedures Regulation, Qualification Regulation, a recast Reception Conditions Directive, and the EU Resettlement Framework (Wagner et al. 2019: 16). By proposing to change several Directives into Regulations, making them legally binding according to Article 288 TFEU, the Commission presented a higher expectation of convergence and a hope of advancement for the harmonization of the Common European Asylum System. This would be a large and complicated step, which would need to take into account the differences in the national asylum procedures, and these proposals have yet to be adopted (Van Oort et al. 2018: 33). The road to the CEAS is presented in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: The road to the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). Source: Figure created by author, partially derived from EASO, 2021

1999-2005: First phase of the CEAS

1990 Dublin Convention

1999 Tampere Council Conclusions
2000 Eurodac Regulation
2001 Temporary Protection Directive
2003 Reception Conditions Directive & Dublin II Regulation
2004 Qualification Directive
2005 Asylum Procedures Directive

2006-2013: Second phase of the CEAS

EASO Regulation 2010
Recast Qualification Directive 2011
Recast Asylum Procedures Directive 2013
Recast Reception Conditions Directive
Recast Eurodac Regulation
Dublin III Regulation

2015-2020: European Agenda on Migration

The European Commission presents two reform packages:

Proposal for the reform of the Dublin system
Proposal for a revised Eurodac Regulation
Proposal for transforming EASO to a European Union Agency for Asylum
Proposal for a Qualification Regulation
Proposal for an Asylum Procedures Regulation
Proposal for a revised Reception Conditions Directive

Pact on Migration and Asylum

Even though the areas of migration and asylum have seen many changes within the EU over the past 60 years, the integration of this particular area has continued to be characterized by a hesitant approach to common supranational legislations from the Member States, in part due to the sovereignty sensitive nature of the issue. This has resulted in delayed decision-making processes, vague legal texts, and gaps in the implementation, and an overall weak harmonization of EU Directives in the Member States (Wallace et al. 2015: 379). The continuous internal resistance toward stronger legislative integration in this area, coupled with increasing immigration pressure, has moved the emphasis of cooperation outside of the Union toward engaging transit and origin countries to manage the flow of migrants. These cooperation agreements have mainly focused on readmission and the promotion of asylum and reception capacities in countries of transit (Wallace et al. 2015: 381).

One place where harmonization thus seems to be successful is in the EU strategy of border controls and deterrence. The inability to establish a fair mechanism for distributing migrants across the Union has made reliance on stronger external border policies and agreements with third countries inevitable. However, these strategies could contribute to the use of smugglers by refugees seeking to exercise their right to seek protection – a right they should be granted when they reach EU territory. The current CEAS creates structural and legal limits for what the EU will be able to achieve, as EU policies on migration and asylum have been inherently incomplete since their configuration, and the incapacity or unwillingness of the EU Member States to cooperate in this area is a major component in creating these structural limitations.

2.3.1 A Truly Common European Asylum System?

The CEAS was established almost three decades ago, and much literature has since been published on this topic. Reinhard Schweitzer and colleagues prepared a review and analysis of recent literature on the CEAS in 2018 in the scope of the CEASEVAL project. In their review, they identified a number of key themes present in the existing CEAS literature, which included *"the harmonisation and transposition of CEAS, solidarity and responsibility sharing, externalization and solidarity with third countries, politicisation of the Refugee Crisis, multi level governance and the role of non state actors" (Schweitzer et al. 2018: 1)*. They came to the conclusion that although there is already a vast body of existing literature on the CEAS *"more in depth analysis across different administrative levels, including case studies as well as comparative research is needed to fully understand the complex dynamics underlying the development of a (more) common approach and policy in the field of asylum" (Ibid.)*.

A key theme in existing CEAS literature is the harmonization of asylum policies and practices, often highlighting issues related to inconsistent interpretations of the common legal norms, differences in protection standards, and a strong divergence in recognition rates of asylum applications. These are all underlying drivers of possible secondary movements and are in stark contrast to the general idea of the CEAS (Schweitzer et al. 2018: 11). Martin Wagner and colleagues argue that disparities in harmonization could be caused by some Member States' reluctance to revisit some of their established domestic policies, failing to ensure a system in line with the CEAS Directives (Wagner et al. 2019: 19), while others have failed to transpose

provisions of the acquis altogether. This is, for example, the case with the obligation *"to establish a mechanism to identify asylum seekers with special needs (…) has still not been incorporated in domestic legislation in Germany and Sweden" (Ibid. 20)*.

To ensure a sustainable and equitable asylum system, mutual recognition of positive asylum decisions is necessary (Gomes et al. 2019: 26), as explained by Wagner *"If all Member States apply the same procedure, to the applied theory, there should no longer be any differences in recognition rates between EU Member States" (Wagner et al. 2019: 5)*. However, the recognition rate by nationality is one of the most commonly used indicators for assessing the legal harmonization of the CEAS, and this continues to differ greatly between Member States, standing as a clear manifestation of the failure to establish a truly common asylum system (Chetail et al. 2016: 15). These divergent recognition rates, coupled with the fact that asylum seekers only have one chance to lodge an asylum claim within the EU, with no mutual recognition of refugee status, have been subject to much external criticism. UNHCR for example stated that the *"chance of an individual asylum-seeker to find protection in the EU can vary nearly seventy-fold, depending on where he or she applies" (Ibid.)*, which can best be described as an asylum lottery. According to recognition rate data from EASO from 2016, substantial disparities between Member States is revealed, as presented by Hans van Oort and colleagues, finding that the *"median recognition rate for applicants with Syrian nationality is 97%, but varies between countries from 10% to 100%. A similar picture applies to Eritrean applicants for whom the median recognition rate amounts to 89% and varies from 47% to 100%." (Van Oort et al. 2018: 60)*. The refugee recognition rate for Syrians, for example varied greatly in 2016, from 100% in Ireland to only 0.9% in Spain, which overwhelmingly chose to grant subsidiary protection. These differences in the protection status granted may have a far-reaching impact on the lives of the beneficiaries, in terms of rights and integration prospects (Ibid.).

Another recurring theme in the CEAS literature is the Dublin Regulation, which is often described as insufficient from its inception (Battjes 2018: 18). Criticism mainly focuses on the lack of burden-sharing rationale in the design of the Regulation, the failure to take into account the differences between Member States, and its disregard for the preferences and personal interests of asylum seekers (Van Oort et al. 2018: 6). These weaknesses led to a disproportionate

burden for the Member States located at the EU's external borders, as well as being drivers of secondary movements, undermining the goal of the CEAS. Hemme Battjes further argues that the Dublin III Regulation even seems geared toward making the Member State where the asylum seeker entered responsible for the asylum application (Battjes 2018: 18). If this was the ultimate goal, Greece would have been responsible for approximately 80% of the one million asylum applications launched within the EU in 2015. This system disregards a Member State's ability to handle the inflow of asylum seekers, as well as the macroeconomic situation of the country in question. This has led many scholars to criticize the Dublin system, with inter alia Schweitzer et al. describing it as *"not only presented as the corner stone of the CEAS, but often also as the main reason for its failure" (Schweitzer et al. 2018: 13),* as it has proved ineffective in situations of sudden and geographically concentrated arrivals of asylum seekers.

When the Dublin system was first designed, it was intended for 12 relatively homogeneous countries, which is no longer the case. Today, 32 countries participate in the Dublin system, with diverse economic and social conditions, which is not reflected in the amended versions of the Regulation. This is described by Van Oort and colleagues as a system that continues to work with the underlying assumption that asylum seekers will receive the same level of protection and reception capacities and standards in all countries participating in it (Van Oort et al. 2018: 16). The differences in standards between the Member States can therefore have serious consequences for the functioning of the Dublin system, as well as the overall CEAS. This was experienced during the landmark case of M.S.S. v. Belgium and Greece from 2011, where the European Court of Human Rights suspended all Dublin transfers to Greece due to the serious risk of violating fundamental human rights (Ibid. 21).

2.3.2 Challenges to the EU Migration System

Although migration has increasingly become an EU competence, the EU asylum and migration system remains riddled with problems that are holding back its development, adequate use, and harmonization between the Member States. Furthermore, the contentious reform process, which is still far from complete, has confirmed the difficulties associated with restructuring such a politically sensitive area, and after years of predominantly negative political framing, decision-makers now find themselves constantly under fire from both anti-immigration oppositions and

the public. This has further complicated the process of EU solidarity, causing a shift toward the perception that the EU has *"to be defended against migration"* (*Gomes & Doomernik 2019: 14).* The gap between the strong and weak regulating Member States has become more pronounced, and the responsibility for search and rescue at sea, border controls and protection remain with a small number of states of first entry, including Italy, Greece and Hungary. This persistent and uneven distribution of migrants has left the European asylum and migration system in a fragile state, and many Member States have witnessed a resurgence of national viewpoints.

Previous literature has drawn on perspectives such as liberal intergovernmentalism and game theory, to discuss the asymmetry of interests and negotiation powers between the EU Member States, thereby treating refugee protection as a public good, which can involve spillover effects and trigger free-riding between countries, exemplifying the complex dynamics underlying the discussions at the European level (Schweitzer et al. 2018: 14). This dynamic has only been complicated further by several EU enlargements, adding new Member States with different geographical and economic realities, which has strongly affected the cooperation on asylum matters (Wagner et al. 2018: 8). The Member States seem to seek state-centric solutions rather than solidarity, mirroring the countries' reluctance to concede powers over the admission of foreigners to their sovereign territories (Schweitzer et al. 2018: 18). This approach is reflected in the relationship and negotiations between and within the EU institutions as well. Ambiguity in the CEAS thus often becomes the price for reaching an agreement between the Member States in the Council and the Parliament, limiting the progress that can be made (Wagner et al. 2019: 17).

To reach agreements, a key feature of EU negotiations relating to asylum and migration is thus the tendency to settle for the lowest common denominator and minimum standards, which, according to Marco Scipioni, has locked this particular policy area into a path of incremental changes (Scipioni 2018: 1361). Furthermore, while increasing EU rules are put in place in this area, the national administrations mainly remain in charge of their implementation, often leaving EU migration policies with compliance problems that stand in the way of EU policy effectiveness (Scipioni 2018: 1365). Niemann and Zaun further argue that the *"harmonization of asylum policies in the EU has barely led to the implementation of minimum protection standards in the EU, let alone common standards" (Niemann & Zaun 2017: 12).* If the CEAS is seeking to

establish a uniform status and a common procedure across the Member States, research agrees that neither the original nor the recast packages will be able to deliver on this (Chetail et al. 2016: 27). Vincent Chetail and colleagues have described how the recast package was a modest step toward the establishment of a truly uniform asylum system, but not the last step in the process (Ibid.). They further argue that, despite these changes being welcomed, none of them addresses the more serious access challenges inherent in the system, such as the absence of safe routes to seek asylum within the EU. Van Oort et al. support this claim, going further by arguing that even when an applicant reaches EU territory, access to the application procedure can still be challenging, both due to the increased number of asylum applicants and the procedural structures in place (Van Oort et al. 2018: 35). In September 2020, Commission President Ursula von der Leyen presented a New Pact on Migration and Asylum, replacing the European Agenda on Migration, which presented the new Commission's policy priorities on migration, borders, and asylum. This Pact falls outside the period researched and will thus not be included in the main analysis, however, it should be mentioned, as it is part of the greater CEAS reform process. The Pact was formally adopted by the Parliament and Council in May 2024, and it entered into force in June of that year. At the time of writing, it had yet to be fully applied, as it will enter into application after two years. It thus remains to be seen whether this will maintain the status quo or make real changes within the EU migration policy area.

Another challenge to the EU migration regime is the overall political discourse surrounding migration, which has long been contentious. As Lavenex explained *"Essentially, a 'realist frame of internal security' competes with a 'liberal frame of humanitarianism' in the realm of refugee and asylum at the European level" (Lavenex, 2001).* This discourse has changed over the years, but the securitarian perspective we experience in political dialogue today began in the mid-1990s, following the rising number of asylum-seekers arriving at the EU borders. Frames such as "asylum-shopping" and "immigration risks" became normalized and have continued into today's political framing of migration. The current migratory movements have been labeled as a crisis consistently since its beginning in 2015, which is a highly ideologically charged frame, developed in parallel at the political and media level to legitimize urgency and special measures. The emergence of this crisis frame, and its possible impacts will be discussed in the following chapter.

3. MIGRATION AS A CRISIS

3.1 The EU under Pressure – The 2015 "Refugee Crisis"

In the past decades, drawing on crisis rhetoric when discussing migration has become increasingly common. This is especially evident, when migration happens outside regulated schemes and controlled pathways, and when migrants are seen as disrupting order (Sahin-Mencütek et al. 2022). The framing of migration as a crisis has reinforced a securitized view of migrants and migration in general, moving the topic to the top of the European political agenda. This political attention reached its peak when the so-called "refugee crisis" in Europe began in 2015, when over 1.8 million irregular border crossings were detected at the EU's external borders and over 1.2 million asylum applications were launched within the EU. This chapter will thus present and build the empirical context of this so-called "refugee crisis", which was a period when the use of the term crisis was normalized in discussions about migrants within the EU. After the empirical context has been presented, the crisis concept will be introduced in order to discuss what this normalization means, which will subsequently be discussed more specifically in relation to migration. This chapter will thus create a foundation for the rest of this study, where the concept of crisis and the idea of a perceived crisis will be applied and discussed throughout.

The so-called "refugee crisis" came in the wake of several other crises within the EU, beginning shortly after the TFEU was signed, when the collapse of the investment bank Lehman Brothers in 2008 triggered a financial crisis that heavily affected the economy in most EU Member States. This crisis caused, not only a recession in most Member States, but also affected the policymaking process in areas such as migration and asylum, as *"some member states with tight budgetary constraints found it more difficult to sustain the functioning of their asylum systems and procedures" (Trauner 2016: 313).* The 2008 financial crisis was quickly followed by the wake of the Arab Spring (2010-2011), which brought with it new fears of large-scale immigration toward the EU, affecting two of the cornerstones of the EU's asylum and migration system. First, Denmark and France decided to reintroduce border checks in 2011, violating the rules of the Schengen Agreement. Later, the CJEU blocked transfers of asylum-seekers to Greece, suspending the Dublin Regulation and, with it, the core of the CEAS (Wallace et al. 2015: 380).

The number of migrants arriving in Europe continued to increase over the following years, with many attempting to cross the Mediterranean Sea from Libya seeking to reach Italy. On this dangerous route 3,300 migrants went missing or were confirmed to have died in 2014 (Strömbäck et al. 2021: 3). The number of migrants continued to increase and in 2015, over one million people applied for asylum within the EU, while the tragic loss of lives on the sea routes toward Europe also continued. By 2016, the number of confirmed drownings reached 5,100 that year alone (Strömbäck et al. 2021: 3). Some of these shipwrecks resulted in both media coverage and public outcries, while others went unreported (Ibid.). The worst border-crossing shipwreck on record took place in April 2015, when more than 800 migrants were confirmed to have tragically died in the Mediterranean Sea (De Genova 2017: 2). This shipwreck triggered a political frenzy both in the EU and nationally with Member State governments, with politicians attempting to address the escalating situation. In response, the Commission presented the European Agenda on Migration in May 2015. This Agenda was designed to address both the immediate challenges in the Mediterranean and marked the beginning of a third recast procedure of the CEAS legal instruments, which were subsequently introduced in 2016, aiming to unburden the Member States at the external borders.

3.1.1 The Introduction of the European Agenda on Migration – a New "Crisis" Narrative

The European Agenda on Migration presented a new narrative, addressing the current migratory situation in Europe as a "crisis", using a discourse focused on "illegal" migration and "traffickers", while promoting various forms of border policing, serving to challenge the current flow in human mobility. The Agenda introduced a new "Hotspot" approach where the agencies EASO, Frontex, and Europol would assist frontline Member States in identifying, registering and fingerprinting migrants as they arrived at the shores in Italy and Greece. It was presented as one of the cornerstones of EU support to the Member States facing disproportionate migratory pressure, with the main aim of increasing the efficiency of their reception capabilities. The objectives of this approach were vaguely formalized, with no specific legal framework and unclear structures (Van Oort et al. 2018: 47), and the key ideas were scattered among a number of ambiguously formulated communication documents.

Since its establishment, the hotspot approach has been subject to extensive criticism from scholars and NGOs alike. Van Oort and colleagues argued that this approach was not a new solution and that it was designed to actually shift back the control and responsibility to the frontline states, making Italy and Greece responsible for almost all arrivals to the EU (Van Oort et al. 2018: 49). Furthermore, the approach was accused of delaying the examination of asylum claims, thereby preventing effective access to the asylum procedure, in stark contrast to its objectives (Ibid. 51). Some even went as far as portraying the hotspots as detention camps on EU territory (Bousiou & Papada, 2020), and NGOs and human rights organizations consistently highlighted issues with human rights violations. Scholars have also argued that securitizing practices were embedded in this approach. For example, Maciej Stępka described the hotspot approach as "*one of the most prominent examples of risk-based policy responses employed by the EU and framed as an instrument for regaining control over inflows of irregular migrants into the EU" (Stępka 2022: 134).* This view is also shared by Alexandra Bousiou and Evie Papada, who argued that it *"is the most authoritative crisis policy response" (Bousiou & Papada 2020: 139),* linking it with the diagnostics of a migration crisis, which, according to Stępka explicitly securitizes both irregular migrants and asylum seekers, by reframing them as objects of risk (Stępka 2022: 152). This ultimately shifts the core toward assigning irregular migrants into categories, rather than providing humanitarian assistance.

Measures such as the hotspot approach find their legal basis in the Article 78(3) of the TFEU, which states that:

> In the event of one or more Member States being confronted by an emergency situation characterised by a sudden inflow of nationals of third countries, the Council, on a proposal from the Commission and after consulting the European Parliament, may adopt provisional measures for the benefit of the Member State(s) concerned (TFEU, Article 78(3)).

However, this article does not provide any guidance on how to assess an emergency or specify any length of such authority. This raises serious questions, for example in relation to the legitimacy of such emergency measures, and whether the EU asylum and migration policies are

adequate. By introducing the idea of a refugee "crisis", the Commission provided a strong political impetus for the EU, which opened spaces for new policies such as the hotspot approach, with an excessive emphasis on controlling migration (Davitti, 2018).

The Agenda also included temporary relocation and resettlement schemes, which were to be determined by quotas defined by a redistribution key, based on criteria relating to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), size of population, unemployment rates, and past numbers of asylum seekers and resettled refugees. The Justice and Home Affairs Council agreed to resettle 22,504 displaced persons in clear need of international protection from outside the EU, despite a Commission recommendation for a new EU resettlement scheme of at least 50,000 vulnerable people (Baumgartner & Wagner 2018: 10). Two Council Decisions relating to relocation were also agreed, with the aim of relocating a total of 160,000 applicants for international protection from Greece and Italy, through a temporary relocation mechanism over the course of two years (Baumgartner & Wagner 2018: 10). This number was later reduced to 106,000, and was only partially met within the deadline, demonstrating a lack of responsibility sharing between the Member States. Countries such as Poland, Hungary, and Slovakia refused to participate in the mandatory allocation of applicants altogether (Van Oort et al. 2018: 28), creating conflict between a number of Member States and the Commission, which resulted in several infringement procedures launched in 2017 due to non-compliance with legal obligations by the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland (Stępka 2022: 149).

The Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia have, since 1991 formed a strategic alliance called the Visegrád Group, and during 2015 these four countries were at the forefront of an anti-immigration coalition, opposing the harmonization of EU policies on migration and asylum, which has hindered the elaboration of several EU migration policies (Cantat et al. 2023). Hungary in particular played a key role during the 2015 "refugee crisis", with its strategic position on the Balkan Route, which was followed by migrants aspiring to reach Europe, moving through Turkey and Greece (Ibid.). Most of these migrants did not wish to stay in Hungary, but it still created a political crisis in the country during 2015, which was used by far-right political parties to promote anti-immigrant policies, including the construction of a wall between Hungary and Serbia.

Despite the new measures introduced by the Agenda, the European migration system continued to face problems. The Dublin Regulation was continuously accused of exacerbating the distributional imbalance between its Member States, and countries at the external borders, such as Italy and Greece, which felt this pressure. The lack of legal guidelines regulating the new Hotspot approach risked undermining the fundamental rights of migrants, while at the same time failing to deliver on its promise of relieving the pressure on Italy and Greece. The asylum applications also remained unbalanced between the Member States. For example, Germany received over 2.3 million asylum applications between 2010 and 2019, followed by countries such as France, Italy, and Sweden, which also received large numbers of asylum applications in this period, countries such as Slovenia, Croatia and Slovakia, received fewer than 20,000 applications during the same time (Strömbäck et al. 2021: 10). The continued sustained pressure on the EU external borders and the lack of a harmonized response by its Member States led to a series of national responses. One such response was the implementation of the fence between Hungary and Serbia in June 2015. This was a turning point of the "crisis", closing the Balkan Route from Greece. During this time, several Member States *unilaterally decided to apply exception terms which the Schengen Borders Code provides" (Evrard et al. 2018)* restricting the movement of people. But instead of halting the arrivals, the routes were simply diversified.

To manage the sustained migratory pressure, the EU turned its focus to the external borders again, attempting to tackle the pressure through border management. This strategy reached its peak in March 2016, when the EU-Turkey Statement was agreed upon to decrease border crossings from Turkey into the EU through Greece. This agreement meant that, as of 20 March 2016, any irregular migrant arriving in Greece could be sent back to Turkey if they did not apply for asylum or if the asylum application was rejected. Furthermore, for each Syrian "migrant" sent back to Turkey from Greece, a Syrian refugee would be resettled from Turkey to the EU. In addition to the readmission agreement, Turkey would also implement tougher actions to prevent irregular border crossings, supported by EUR 3 billion from the EU (Žagar et al. 2018: 23). This agreement has been the target of much criticism since its inception, as doubts have been raised about the asylum protection standards available in Turkey. Despite the reform of the Turkish asylum law in 2013, allowing Syrians to be considered under temporary protection, non-Syrians are still left without protection of their rights, as Turkey never signed the 1967 Protocol and thus

only recognizes refugees from Europe under the 1951 Geneva Convention (Niemann & Zaun 2017: 9). Despite the concerns of NGOs and scholars alike, the Commission labeled the initiative largely a success in reducing the number of arrivals, while it continued building on the idea of control, deterrence, and containment (Stępka, 2022), continuing the securitizing practice described when discussing the hotspot approach. Furthermore, legally, the EU-Turkey Statement was defined as a political declaration rather than a policy, which means that it was not institutionalized, therefore not legally binding, nor subject to Parliamentary scrutiny, as described by Stępka (Stępka 2022: 144).

The "crisis" in 2015 and 2016 highlighted some of the systemic deficiencies inherent in the CEAS, revealing an incomplete asylum system testing the character and capacity of the EU Member States in providing adequate protection to people arriving at its borders. This revealed insufficient transposition of Directives and a lack of harmonization, which stand in the way of a stronger and more homogeneous asylum system. In fact, one of the most frequently cited issues in relation to the EU asylum system, and the failure of the EU to successfully handle the "refugee crisis", is the degree of harmonization of asylum practices across the Member States. Existing literature has provided continuous evidence of inconsistent interpretations of the CEAS Directives, resulting in varying protection standards and large inconsistencies in the recognition rate, affecting the trend of irregular secondary movements inside the EU (Schweitzer et al. 2018: 11). Thus, as argued by Scipioni, *"the combination of low harmonization, weak monitoring, low solidarity and lack of strong institutions in EU migration policy became increasingly unsustainable during the 2015 crisis" (Scipioni, 2018: 1365).* However, amending sovereignty sensitive policy areas such as migration and asylum is complex, and this is only exacerbated by the introduction of a crisis narrative, and the increased politicization in the area of migration experienced at the time. As argued by Tanja Börzel in 2016:

> (T)he migration flows have seen an even more intensified, one-sided politicization than the euro crisis where populist forces in the Member States, at times joining forces, appeal to illiberal, nationalist and exclusionary ideas of Europe. By justifying national unilateralism as a response to the absence of, and to generate pressure for, a joint European approach (Börzel, 2016).

3.2 The Meaning of Crisis

This so-called "refugee crisis", presented a normalization of the use of a crisis narrative when discussing migration, both within the EU and globally. To research the use of such narratives, the concept of crisis must first be elaborated and discussed. However, within existing academic literature, the concept of crisis is not readily defined, and is surrounded by an array of different definitions, as noted by Timothy Coombs in 2012, *"There is no one, universally accepted definition of crisis" (Coombs 2012: 18).* The etymological root of the word stems from Greek, where the term and nature of a crisis refer to a critical or turning point, which implies a threat, but also an opportunity. In contemporary usage, the crisis concept is often used by policymakers, in relation to situations where vital decisions and changes must be made. However, the concept may cover a wide variety of adversity, including natural disasters, financial meltdowns, terrorist attacks, epidemics, or as in this case, waves of migration. What these events all have in common is that they create a condition which makes urgent decision-making necessary. As described by Zeynep Şahin Mencütek and colleagues in 2022 *"A crisis is commonly identified as an extraordinary event leading to increased but temporal instability and uncertainty in the pre-existing status quo or perceived 'normality'" (Sahin-Mencütek et al., 2022).* Within the plethora of different conceptualizations of the crisis concept, the academic literature appears to agree that a crisis marks a potentially disruptive phase of events within the normal evolution of a system (Kreuder-Sonnen, 2018), thus generally remaining in line with the etymological root of the word.

According to Jürgen Habermas, a crisis is often viewed as a critical turning point in history (Habermas, 1976), conceptualized in relation to entire social systems as a point in time, when status-quo is under threat (Lindley, 2014). This follows the general consensus within academia, that the main facets making up a crisis are serious disruptions and collective stress that affect daily life. However, how a crisis is understood and conceptualized differs according to different theoretical perceptions, as exemplified by Jan Hupkens and colleagues in the statement that *"those taking a so-called objectivist perspective consider that one can identify a crisis based on objective criteria and arguments. In other words, the threat exists independently of how it is perceived (...) Constructivists on the contrary see crises primarily as a socially constructed process." (Hupkens et al., 2023).* Thus, constructivists argue that a crisis is considered a crisis only in the eye of the beholder, implying that political actors, the public, or the media, do not

simply respond to a crisis, but rather identify and define it, through the use of crisis framing. The constructivist understanding of the crisis concept, can thus be argued to stem from a similar approach as securitization theory, which builds on the assumption that existential threats are discursively constructed (Buzan et al., 1998). If one follows this approach, there are essentially no security or non-security issues, but rather issues that are either securitized or non-securitized (Ibid.).

In this conceptualization, complex power relations define and identify a threat, and interactive acts of framing by key actors will link this threat and events together to construct a crisis, *"imposing a form of cognitive order on instability, and rationalising it as exceptional" (Broome et al., 2012).* For constructivists, political actors and the media thus play an active role in the construction of the crisis, for example through the use of "moral panic" (Cohen, 2002), where these actors will identify a condition and frame a threat to the basic societal values and interests (Lindley, 2014). The reality of a crisis is thus not a given but rather defined through acts of framing and interpretation (McConnell, 2020), thus making perception a necessary condition for crises.

One thing all approaches have in common when dealing with the crisis concept, is that a crisis is seen as marking a shift from standard operating procedures, thus marking a transition or divergence from the perceived norm (Phillips & Rimkunas, 1978). This transition has the power to open political opportunities, as a threat will impose expectations from the public on the political actors to find a solution. This expectation will create political pressure and can possibly generate a situation where the public becomes less concerned about procedural standards, and more concerned with effectively alleviating the perceived crisis (Kreuder-Sonne, 2018). In times of crisis, policymakers will thus often become more concerned with bringing order and normality, rather than ensuring compliance with formalized rules, in their aim to restore the pre-crisis status quo (Sahin-Mencütek et al. 2022). This was also described by Anna Lindley in 2014, as *"crisis is often conceptualised within this framework as a disruption best managed by deepening neoliberal reform, rather than fundamentally challenging to the overall development vision" (Lindley, 2014).* A crisis situation could thus allow the authorities the space needed to

adopt any far-reaching measures that would otherwise have been impossible to agree upon in a pre-crisis setting (Kreuder-Sonne, 2018).

Henceforth, this research will seek to adopt a similar approach to the crisis concept as deployed by Hupkens and colleagues, taking a position between the objectivist and constructivist understandings, where both facts and evidence, as well as perception, play a significant role in the process of producing and acknowledging a crisis, with an understanding that these concepts are often mutually interactive. However, the constructivist approach will be more pronounced, as it will be assumed that disruptive events will need to be perceived as a crisis for it to become one, and that this perception will often be created in the interaction between the political elite, the media and the public. This study will thus follow a similar approach as Christian Kreuder-Sonne from 2018 (Kreuder-Sonne, 2018), where a crisis will be understood as a broader-based intersubjective perception of a threat, urgency, or uncertainty, irrespective of whether these are measurable against external standards.

Scholars have recently argued that the term crisis is overused in today's society, and especially within the European setting (Sahin-Mencütek et al., 2022), which could have contributed to diffusing its meaning, as this could make crises the norm, rather than the exception. Some scholars have even gone so far as to argue, that the EU has become caught up in a polycrisis environment in the past two decades (Hupkens et al. 2023), including the 2008 financial crisis, the 2015 refugee crisis, and most recently the Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine. Gerard Delanty even argued that the project of European integration has never been entirely crisis-free since its inception, continuing to state that *there was never a preordained path to what can no longer be called 'a project'" (Delanty, 2014)*. This sentiment was echoed by Philomena Murray and Michael Longo, who specified that the EU was created out of the crisis of war and conflict (Murray & Longo 2015: 67). This perception has prompted conclusions that the term crisis and crisis management in general have become household concepts and terminology within the EU, and in academic literature discussing EU settings, referring to *"how the EU and its member states are dealing with or "governing" this almost permanent state of crisis" (Hupkens et al., 2023)*. This became especially prominent following the financial crisis, where the concept appears to be used both in policy settings, but also in the media and academia on a

regular basis. Several previous studies have explored how the idea of a permacrisis has impacted the overall process and development of European integration, its institutions and decision-making processes. Hupkens and colleagues also reflected on the meaning of crisis within the particular setting of the EU polity, given its unique role, which is not a state but still operating in a multinational context (Hupkens et al., 2023). Thus, when discussing crisis and its political implications at the EU level, it may imply the activation of governance activities from a number of different actors, ranging from the Member States to the Council, Commission, and Parliament, as all these actors share the role of authority.

Although the EU has been facing crisis for decades, with some arguing that it is the natural way of development, *"the most recent series of crises has attained a new quality since it may challenge the very foundations of the project of European Integration" (Börzel, 2016).* Börzel argues that these problems, and the failure of the EU to adopt and implement common solutions, are rooted in political controversies, stemming from issues such as, which Member State should bear the cost, which are often arguments driven by populist parties. The growing populism throughout Europe thus impedes on the national governments' ability to agree on workable policies at the EU level (Börzel, 2016). This has led scholars such as Murray and Longo to argue that *"Perhaps the starkest change in the history of European integration is the fact that the EU is increasingly being perceived as the cause of the crisis" (Murray & Longo 2015: 67),* meaning that the narrative of the EU has changed. This perception has become increasingly clear in recent crises faced by the EU, starting with the collapse of the Lehman Brothers bank in 2008, leading scholars such as Börzel to argue that:

> Europe has failed to govern the multiple crises because the European Union has been too weak to prevent the breakdown of banks, contain sovereign debt, generate economic growth (…) Some even argue that the EU has not only failed to provide solutions but that is actually part of the problem undermining the capacity of its Member States to effectively and democratically govern their markets and societies in the 21st century (Börzel, 2016)

This perception has led some Member States to argue for less Europe, rather than more, to effectively deal with the various crises faced by the Member States and the Union (Ibid.). Furthermore, for an institution with a complex structure such as the EU to respond to crisis, several political layers and entities would need to get involved, which generally is a slow process. However, Hupkens and colleagues observed that both the level of governance and the mechanisms used to address the situation within the EU change during a crisis (Hupkens et al. 2023). This is, for example, evident with the Ordinary Legislative Procedure, which in crisis situations has been deemed too slow and involves too many different actors and levels. Thus, in times of pressure, the Ordinary Legislative Procedure has often been replaced by intergovernmental decision-making and mini summits. Furthermore, due to its political identity, which is less pronounced than that of traditional nation-states, the EU measures adopted during crisis management have often been perceived as less legitimate, than measures adopted and implemented by the individual Member States, due to the lack of consensus between the 27 Member States regarding the hierarchical order of values and how these translate into policy measures, according to Hupkens and colleagues (Hupkens et al., 2023). This could be exploited by national policymakers to either discard or strengthen certain values and approaches in times of crisis. Thus, when researching crisis at the EU level, certain attention must be paid to the particularities of the EU context, and its multiple levels of governance and influences, as well as its large number of different stakeholders. This complex interaction between the different actors, and the issues that a crisis can bring at the EU level, became increasingly apparent during the so-called "refugee crisis" as presented at the beginning of this chapter. Although migrants had been the target of attention and moral panic across Europe on several occasions since the early 1990s (Cohen, 2002), it only became more pronounced after 2015.

3.3 Migration as Crisis

Following the constructivist approach, the crisis concept is often understood as a narrative device that justifies extraordinary measures, or political practices out of the ordinary (Cantat et al., 2023). This became evident in the so-called "refugee crisis" in 2015, when the policy measures were designed to address a complex movement structure that spilled over jurisdictional boundaries between, not only the Member States of the EU, but also countries outside the Union. The structure of this "crisis" thus opened doors for policy change, by redefining institutional

roles and transforming pre-existing rules and norms, inter alia through the emergence of new discursive frames (Sahin-Mencütek et al., 2022). This "crisis" could thus be argued to have developed in parallel between the objectivist approach of measurable exceptional migratory movements outside the realm of normal developments, and the constructivist approach of framing the movements as a threat to political and societal structures (Lindley, 2014). The 2015 "refugee crisis", thus quickly evolved to be understood as a threat or crisis, that jeopardized social systems, human welfare and *"undermining the integrity of the nation-state and bounded identities." (Lindley, 2014)*.

This so-called "refugee crisis" has since 2015 been the object of extensive research. However, the association between migration and the crisis frame is not a new phenomenon and can be traced back long before 2015. This association between migration patterns or migrant arrivals and the crisis concept builds on a history of political crises and migratory movements within an ever-changing geopolitical environment (Cantat et al., 2023), dating back to the aftermath of the two World Wars, when Europe faced massive displacements. This section will thus briefly expand upon earlier works and concepts that underlie the understanding of global migratory movements within a crisis framework. According to the work of Aristide Zolberg and colleagues from 1989, there were three significantly identifiable moments in the 20th century when migratory movements were defined as crises (Zolberg et al., 1989). The first emerged between the two World Wars, the second immediately in the aftermath of the Second World War, and the third started in the 1950s as a result of geopolitical changes surrounding the end of colonialism, and the creation of independent nation states (Cantat et al., 2023). Another geopolitical change occurred shortly after the work of Zolberg and colleagues was published (Cantat et al., 2023), at the end of the Cold War, which led to another profound geopolitical change that impacted migration immensely. It was during this time, that the notion of a "global migration crisis" was first introduced by Myron Weiner, who was one of the first scholars to link migration to important consequences for international security (Weiner, 1995). Weiner first coined the concept of a "migration crisis" in 1995, in his book *"Global Migration Crisis: Challenge to States and to Human Rights",* and this has since then been one of the most used frames when discussing migration to and within Europe, but also globally. This book was published in the wake of the geopolitical change marked by the end of the Cold War, which has been concluded by many

scholars to have drastically changed migration *"from a security threat exclusively focused on territorial security to a much greater focus on the security of societies" (Ünal & Öner 2021: 164).*

Since this book was published, the connection between migration and the crisis frame has continued to develop together and has become deeply intertwined. One of the most recent uses of the crisis narrative, as mentioned, was during the so-called "crisis" between 2015 and 2016, which is also the focal point for this research. The disruption experienced within Europe, in part due to the large migratory movements in the period between 2015 and 2016, led many, including politicians and the media, to label this a migration or refugee "crisis". During this "crisis" the EU Member States became uncertain about their abilities to control the external borders of Schengen, which ultimately raised concerns about the European project and its integration, shifting the migration discussion from the national to the transnational venue, and becoming more than just a question of how to receive a large number of migrants.

Migration thus became a matter of high politics, and framing migration as a crisis became increasingly dominant within media, political, and academic discourses (Cantat et al., 2020). Juxtaposing migration to the idea of orderly, safe and regular migration within global policymaking became increasingly evident when the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration was adopted in 2018, and understanding migration as crisis had become omnipresent in both the public and policy discourse when understanding migratory movements (Krzyżanowski et al., 2018, Sahin-Mencütek et al., 2022). Thus, over the past decades, migration according to Céline Cantat and colleagues, has *"become inseparable from a narrative of Crisis" (Cantat et al., 2023).*

Cantat and colleagues continue by exemplifying that the relationship between migration and crisis is a complex one, as on one hand, a crisis can push people to migrate, while *"whatever their causes, certain migration patterns lead to situations of crisis in receiving regions, as they have become associated with sensitive issues such as security and border governance, ethnic/cultural identity and integration, or socioeconomic challenges" (Cantat et al., 2023).* They continue to conclude that this perception has gone so far, that migration at times is

perceived as the main cause behind economic and political difficulties for the receiving countries (Cantat et al., 2023).

Perceptions thus become central when discussing migration as a crisis, and Cantat and colleagues conclude that *"the perception of migration as crisis remains partly disconnected from "real world" realities" (Cantat et al., 2023).* This is especially evident, as some types of migration are disconnected from the crisis frame completely, such as skilled migration and educational migration, which are generally understood as unproblematic, and detached from the crisis notion. Cantat and colleagues thus argue that the notion of migration as crisis is instead a symptom of a deeper crisis within state and sovereignty, following a similar approach as Didier Bigo from 2002, focusing on policymakers and their fears of losing the symbolic control over territorial borders (Bigo, 2002). To regain border controls, policymakers will thus engage in a process of securitizing migration, reframing migration as a threat and justifying extraordinary measures to deal with the so-called threat, which has thus contributed to the institutionalization of migration as a crisis (Cantat et al., 2023), and *"once framed as a threat to state sovereignty, migration also becomes entangled with other security concerns, such as the global war on terror since the 2000s" (Ibid.).*

The "migration as a crisis" approach builds upon the constructivist assumption that reality can be approached in different ways, and actors will act in accordance with their individual interests (Cantat et al., 2023), which thus means that the meaning of the "crisis" changes, depending on the constructing actor, as well as the course of the events unfolding. Over the course of a crisis, the dominant frames can be altered and defined through disruptive events, and the success of the individual frame depend on the timing of its origination and introduction. This frame is then facilitated by the media, the public and politicians, through presentation, but also interpretation and understanding, in order to reach a frame crystallization (Snow et al. 1986). However, the use of the crisis frame also carries a significant securitizing effect, which suggests that the Union is facing an existential threat, which could have stark consequences for the policies the public will be willing to accept and possibly alter the perception of migration in general. The concept of migration as a crisis thus becomes a symptom of several deeper issues relating to the EU and its Member States. It reflects the uncertainty migration presents to the sovereignty of the Member

States, but also the protection offered to the migrants arriving in Europe, raising the same issues today, as Weiner did in 1995 as a "Challenge to States and to Human Rights". This is ultimately part of a bigger process of securitization of migration, which has been taking place in Europe for decades. The crisis frame is thus used by the EU and its Member States in an attempt to recapture control, while securitizing migrants through reframing them as a threat, to justify extraordinary measures in an attempt to regain the perceived loss of control. The connection between migration and the crisis and threat frames is thus deeply embedded in the EU approach to migration. However, this approach is flawed in its conception, since it relies on an assumption that migration takes place outside the norm, although the reality is that migration is a structural feature of our society, as well as a core institution of how the world was shaped.

The dual nature of this crisis, embedded in the idea of protecting and governing our sovereign borders and the protection of the people on the move has challenged the political strategies introduced in this period. As concluded by Cantat and colleagues *"policy responses to situations of migration crisis tend to overlook the respect for fundamental rights and for the rule of law on the basis that the extraordinary nature of the situation would call for temporarily suspending these norms." (Cantat et al., 2023).* Thus, the aim of this research is not to discuss the concept of the migration crisis in detail, nor argue for or against this approach, but rather to understand what impact this framing has had on the politics taking place immediately before, during, and after the so-called "crisis" of 2015, in order to test the hypothesis.

3.4 The Framing of a Crisis and the State of Exception

When more than one million migrants crossed the Mediterranean Sea during the summer of 2015, politicians and the media alike were quick to label it a "refugee crisis". Some traditional media outlets even went as far as describing these arrivals as existential or biblical (Almustafa, 2022). The topic of migration thus took center stage both in the media and during political debates at the time, and some started painting these arrivals as threats to national security and cultural homogeneity within the European Member States. However, scholars have since contemplated whether this actually was a crisis of policies rather than a crisis of migration, such as concluded by Nicholas De Genova in 2017, who stated that the EU was strained by its short-sighted migration and border policies (De Genova 2017: 68). Cantat and colleagues later reached

a similar conclusion in 2023, when they argued that *"the narrow control-oriented nature of migration policies in the Global North makes them unfit to address some of the key challenges raised by migration, including the protection of migrants/refugees" (Cantat et al., 2023).* They further argued that contemporary migration policies pursue unrealistic objectives, which instead create a state of permanent crisis (Ibid.). Most scholars thus agree that the core of what was labeled the EU "refugee crisis", was in fact, a crisis of the EU migration policies. The contemporary CEAS structure creates structural and legal limits for what the EU will be able to achieve, as the policies relating to migration and asylum have been inherently incomplete since their configuration. Furthermore, the incapacity or unwillingness of the Member States to cooperate in this area is a large component in creating the so-called "crisis", which, as presented in the introduction, should be dubbed the crisis of the CEAS, rather than a refugee crisis.

Some scholars have argued that the EU used the increasing number of shipwrecks and migratory arrivals as an opportunity to frame these flows as an emergency, or even a threat, which could only be addressed through the adoption of exceptional measures (Davitti, 2018). This image of migrants as a crisis is consolidated and maintained by the framing of migrants as possible security threats, and migratory movements as an unprecedented emergency. Employing this crisis mode in policy governance can intensify or normalize the use of exceptional and defensive instruments, such as, for example the use of push-backs, detention or accelerated asylum procedures (Sahin-Mencütek et al., 2022), and since emergencies require immediate actions, the policymakers will prioritize short-term rather than long-term solutions (Davitti, 2018).

By normalizing this state of exception, the crisis frame can facilitate passive strategies that maintain the status quo, which possibly affects the Member States' willingness to approach the so-called "crisis", leading to short-term reactiveness (Gomes et al. 2019: 20). Furthermore, according to Bastian Vollmer, the European governments implicitly admitted the failures of the current migration system, through the "lost control" claim, which gained momentum during the "crisis" (Vollmer 2021: 148). This crisis frame has further influenced the political surroundings, contributing to mainstream political actors shifting their communications on migration toward the right (Bamberg 2019: 13). The calls from right-wing populists for more restrictive policies to tackle the "crisis" grew louder, while mainstream political actors increasingly felt the need to

change their discourse. This right-wing political discourse reinforced the already established crisis frame, gradually becoming mainstream (Ibid.). However, this possible securitization of migration should not be reduced to only the actions of the right-wing parties within Europe, but one thing is certain, the securitization of migration has made the act of migrating more dangerous (Gomes & Doomernik 2019: 14).

Solidifying this connection between migration and the crisis concept has been long under way, by multiple actors, including the national governments and the media. The stakes in the CEAS crisis are high, and finding a durable solution to similar challenges in the future is crucial in order to distribute the inflow evenly and safeguard the human rights of all migrants arriving in Europe, regardless of status and label. Furthermore, another similar "crisis" could have the potential to cause disintegration within the Union, through the closing of borders, suspending the Schengen agreement. Thus, the inability to agree on common responsibility-sharing between the Member States threatens European integration, and bears the potential to entail a spill-back (Zaun 2017: 260).

Studying and understanding the representation of migration in the media and its impact on the policymaking approach is therefore crucial, as previous studies have found the media to have a necessary role in propagating stereotypes and cultivating crisis mentalities (Green & Pécoud, 2023), and the *"choice of words, for example in media or political language, can thus influence the lens through which certain patterns of mobility will be apprehended – and therefore the political responses that will be elaborated" (Ibid.).* Analyzing the media frames and their effects during the highly politicized context of migration during the so-called "refugee crisis", could offer important insights into the political consequences of the media's use of frames in times of perceived crises, and whether such frames could have any implications on the subsequent policymaking within the field of migration and asylum. Previous studies have suggested that both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the media coverage can have contingent effects on at least the agenda setting, but whether these factors will influence the policymaking process as well will be tested in the forthcoming analysis.

4. THEORETICAL AND CONECPTUAL FRAMEWORK

4.1 Framing Migration in the Media and its Political Impact

Within migration studies, the past two decades have experienced a proliferation of research, both relating to the intersection between the media and migration, and within the area of EU migration policies and practices. This academic interest only increased, as the Union dealt with the challenges presented by the surge in global migration, where the 2015 "refugee crisis" emerged as a critical juncture. During this time, the unprecedented migration flows were accompanied by intense media scrutiny, which quickly resulted in the introduction of a crisis frame. This frame, coupled with high media salience, exacerbated the high levels of perceived public anxiety relating to the issue of migration towards and within the EU at the time (Consterdine 2018: 1). These factors propelled the topic of migration to the top of the EU political agenda, where the EU leaders found themselves either unable or unwilling to take a coherent approach to the people arriving at its borders.

Therefore, through an embedded constructivist approach, this research will study the impact of the framing of migration in the media on Parliamentary political practices, through a combination of securitization and mediatization theories and framing. Furthermore, to fully analyze the impact of the media and to test the hypothesis, essential theoretical paradigms and concepts will be addressed, including the theories of agenda-setting and the issue-attention cycle. The theory of securitization will provide a critical constructivist approach to how security issues evolve, while the scholarship on framing and framing effects can offer a way to overcome the limitations of this theory. This chapter will thus build the analytical framework, providing contextual factors and empirically framing the research. This will be done through a discussion of the key concepts of agenda-setting, the issue-attention cycle, mediatization and securitization, closing the chapter by discussing framing theory, focusing on the development of migration frames in contemporary media. This chapter will also present the existing literature on the topic, situating this research within the broader academic field while discussing the identified research gap.

4.2 The Theory of Agenda-Setting

When researching the media's impact on the EU decision-making process, political agenda-building is an integral variable. In this context, the agenda-setting concept will be used as defined by Sebastiaan Princen, *"as the set of issues that receive serious consideration in a political system" (Princen et al. 2009: 19)*. The agenda-building concept first emerged when Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw (1972) linked issue salience in the media to public concerns, which led to the formulation of the agenda-setting hypothesis (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). The traditional agenda-setting hypothesis is based on a signal-response model, where an increase in media attention and news salience will lead to an issue moving higher on the public agenda. Before McCombs and Shaw, Bernard Cohen (1963) had worked on a similar theory, during his research on the influence of the press on public opinion in relation to foreign affairs, which led to the statement that the press *"may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about" (Cohen, 1963: 13)*.

Agenda-setting theories have received increasing attention within political science in recent years, with media political agenda-setting specifically referring to the impact of traditional media coverage on political priorities (Langer & Gruber, 2021). However, most studies of agenda-setting have remained overwhelmingly within the US political context, and theorists have only recently started focusing on the agenda-setting processes in EU countries, with a pronounced focus on single country research. Only a few scholars have studied agenda-setting within the EU political system, despite the critical decision-making role played by its institutions, producing and deciding collective policies. Many debates within the EU, including the one on migration, could benefit from an agenda-setting discussion to better understand the policymaking process in the EU political arena, especially as some factors will differ from single country studies when studying agenda-setting processes at the EU level. An issue can gain access to the EU political agenda more easily than in the national system, due to the increased number of access points (Princen 2007: 33), including through the Council, the Parliament, and the Commission. Despite the Commission's right of initiative, Webb and Kreppel found that venues such as EPOIR create indirect possibilities for other actors such as the Parliament to also shape the EU political agenda (Webb & Kreppel 2021: 307). However, this system also makes for a larger number of veto

players, with the ability to block a proposal at any point in the process. This means that it is relatively easy to get an issue on the agenda, but the decision-making process and implementation of policies is more complicated than at the national level. When an issue is moved from the national to the EU venue, political actors will often have a set of motives for doing so, for example in order to circumvent domestic constraints (Princen et al. 2009: 28). Moving domestic issues from the Member States to the EU venue will involve new actors, leading to a conflict expansion, which could thus change the way in which an issue will be discussed or dealt with (Princen 2007: 31-32). Furthermore, the framing of issues is of particular importance at the EU level, as an issue needs to be presented in such a way, as to fit within the EU remit, for example through its cross-border nature or by affecting multiple Member States.

Migration is a topic which can offer useful insights into the process of agenda-setting, due to the significant variations in salience over the years. While issues relating to migration tend to be more visible in specific periods, previous research has concluded that the topic has generally risen in media visibility over the past decade, particularly between 2012 and 2015 (Allen 2019: 24). During this period, William Allen found that especially broadsheets have linked the issue to governmental or policy attributes, which has been challenged by the rising concerns about the rate of migration (Ibid. 64).

In order to explore the relationship between migration and policymaking, Robert Picard concluded that four fundamental factors must be present: the media, public opinion, politics, and policy (Picard 2014: 4). The media's role in forming or influencing public concern on policies can be captured through the theory of agenda-setting. In his study from 2014, Picard found a high positive correlation between media coverage and public concern; however, this correlation was non-static, with some periods experiencing high media coverage, coupled with a decline in public concern. However, a growing body of literature tends to conclude that the quantity of media coverage relating to migration will have an impact on the public's attitude towards migration (Boomgaarden & Vliegenthart, 2009; McLaren et al., 2018; Strömbäck et al., 2021). Findings further suggest that the increased media coverage in general raised the salience of the issue, while also generating increased anti-immigrant party support (Meltzer et al. 2020: 3393). Other findings suggest that when measuring the impact, it is not only the quantity of the

coverage that matters, but also the issue attributes that are used by the media when communicating about migration (McLaren et al. 2018: 189). As concluded by, inter alia Christine Meltzer and colleagues, migration is often presented in relation to other topics such as culture or security, and these framing choices can steer the way the topic will appear in the mind of the public (Meltzer et al., 2020). Furthermore, most research suggests that the framing on migration often tend to lean towards the use of negative framing attributes (Ibid. 3393). Framing, and more particularly the framing relating to migration will be discussed further later in this chapter.

In relation to the media, public opinion, and political attention, Picard's research revealed mixed results, indicating that the simple claim that public pressure will produce policies, cannot provide a robust explanation of the policy dynamics. Instead, more factors must be included, independent from public pressure, leading Picard to a similar conclusion as Cohen, that the *"media are highly influential in suggesting what topics and issues to think about, but less so in influencing opinions about them" (Picard 2014: 21).* His research therefore confirms that deeper and more complex dynamics must be involved, when asserting a cause-and-effect relationship between the media and policy developments, including factors such as international events, migration trends, legal pressures, etc. (Ibid. 22). Unraveling the complexity in migration policymaking will thus require a greater understanding of the roles played by a multitude of underlying variables, which are not necessarily considered in the current debates. This was also confirmed by Banu Akdenizli and colleagues suggesting that the politics of news and media have little impact on policy outcomes; rather the exposure, longevity, and prominence of the media coverage can leverage policymakers' actions (Akdenizli, 2009). Earlier studies of migration agenda-setting and policymaking have also shown that the scope of the debate, the degree of openness and the level of politicization can have an influence on the policies sought (Scholten & Timmermans 2010: 528).

How an issue such as migration first reaches the media agenda is explained by McCombs as resulting from *"the norms and traditions of journalism, the daily interactions among news organizations themselves, and the continuous interactions of news organizations with numerous sources and their agendas." (McCombs 2005: 549),* or the news value of the issue. The study of news values is widely credited to Johan Galtung and Mari Holmboe Ruge (1965), who put forth

twelve factors that would heighten the probability that a given event would become news. This included the threshold, frequency, negativity, unexpectedness, unambiguity, personalization, meaningfulness, reference to elite nations, reference to elite persons, consonance, continuity, and composition (Galtung & Ruge, 1965). Tony Harcup and Deidre O'Neill have tested the work of Galtung and Ruge (Harcup & O'Neill 2001: 279), concluding that the study of news values offers only a partial explanation of the news decisions, as news values involve subjective judgement and cannot truly be based on objective criteria. Sensationalist stories or the perceived appeal to the target audience are most likely to be pursued, rather than the quality of newsworthiness or importance, which is especially pertinent when dealing with online news (Ibid. 1473).

The new communication technologies have also expanded the reach and participation of media, and new frameworks are required to capture this multilevel media environment, and to reconsider the traditional role of journalists as gatekeepers and the audience as passive receivers. In this regard, previous agenda-setting theories have only been partially successful when explaining the contemporary media environment, which would require a combination of approaches. For the news values to reflect this modern media environment, Harcup and O'Neill proposed an update, where potential news stories would need to satisfy one or more of these values in order to reach the media agenda. These factors include exclusivity, bad news, conflict, surprise, audio-visuals, shareability, entertainment, drama, follow-up, the power elite, relevance, magnitude, celebrity, good news, and news organization's agenda (Ibid. 1483). In their study from 2013 on migrants and media news-making practices, Eda Gemi and colleagues found that *"the media in general are news driven, they are event driven" (Gemi et al. 2013: 270),* and the news making was concluded to follow this general pattern. This conclusion was reached through their in-depth interviews with journalists working directly on the issue of migration. According to this study, migration news is often reactive, and it has to meet several criteria in order to become news. It has to be spectacular, interesting, of high visibility, and challenging to people, and interest in the story tends to be higher when it includes a national element (Gemi et al. 2013: 270). Furthermore, they found that the interests of the traditional media in gaining and keeping their readers created a bias, which pushed migration-related news stories towards sensationalism,

creating a disproportionate coverage of the events involving migration and negative coverage (Ibid. 271).

It is generally concluded that the influence of the media does not exist as a linear relationship, but rather in a feedback cycle, where the media agenda is informed by the public and policy priorities, and these priorities are in turn informed by the media agenda. These priorities are defined at different levels, as suggested by Stephen Hilgartner and Charles Bosk, who stressed the importance of the "arenas" in which social problems are defined (Hilgartner & Bosk 1988: 55). These arenas include branches of government, the courts, the traditional media, political campaign organizations, social action groups and the research community (Ibid. 58-59), and it is here that social problems are discussed, selected, defined, dramatized, and presented to the public. A social problem is defined by Malcolm Spector and John Kitsuse (1973) as *"contingent on the organization of group activities with reference to defining some putative condition as a problem, and asserting the need for eradicating, ameliorating, or otherwise changing that condition" (Kitsuse & Spector 1973: 415).* The existence of this social problem is thus dependent on the continued existence of a group or agency defining it as a problem (Ibid. 417), and the way the traditional media will handle it is important for the continued development of that social issue, to transform it into a public issue (Ibid. 151).

For this issue to reach the political agenda, several factors must be in place. According to Rosa Berganza and Adolfo Carratalá, three factors will especially contribute to the success of an issue reaching the political agenda: "*1) the characteristics of the items: 2) the media coverage: and 3) the political context in which the debate takes place" (Berganza et al. 2014: 3).* Other scholars such as Christoffer Green-Pedersen and Rune Stubager also placed significant emphasis on the political context in agenda-setting processes, arguing that the capacity of the mass media to influence the political agenda is conditioned upon the interests of the political parties (Green-Pedersen & Stubager 2010: 663). Therefore, understanding party politics is a crucial component in understanding the dynamics between the media and politics, which includes issue ownership. This is also highly relevant when researching the European Parliament and its party politics, as previously described. The theory of issue ownership indicates that the salience of migration in the news is most likely to be beneficial for anti-immigration parties and will have a positive

bearing on the level of anti-immigrant party support (Damstra et al., 2019; Boomgaarden & Vliegenthart, 2007). This means that these parties will have a strong incentive to keep the issue on the media agenda, especially during elections. This can, for example, be seen on right-leaning politicians' social media accounts and their communication strategies, which will often tailor migration-related communication in a way that reflects their known strengths (Heidenreich & Eberl 2021: 143). Left-leaning parties are, for example, more likely to discuss migration in terms of its benefits. This led Tobias Heidenreich and Jakob-Moritz Eberl to conclude that *"depending on what issues parties tend to own, it can be expected to have an impact on how political elites frame the migration topic in their social media communication" (Ibid. 144).* In this debate, it is thus instrumental to understand that the political voice is often actor-centered narratives, created by political actors, using the media to advance their position.

It can therefore be concluded that the media agenda, public agenda, outside events and policy agenda are all part of a multidirectional model in agenda-setting. The influence can, and will, apply in both directions, although more recent studies have argued for a stronger media effect than political (Langer and Gruber, 2021). This is exemplified in Figure 3 below, through a multidirectional model for agenda-setting.

Figure 3: The multidirectional model of agenda-setting. Source: Figure created by author, partially derived from Allen, 2019
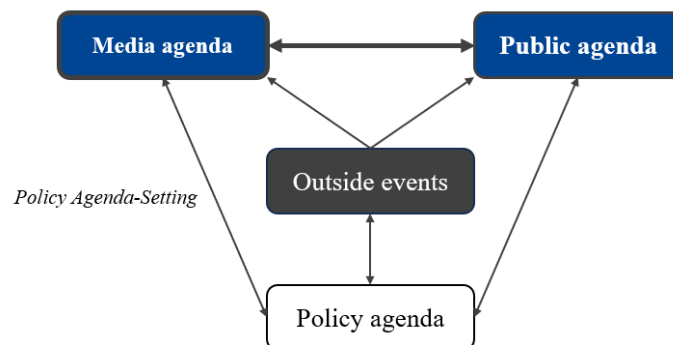
Furthermore, in the agenda-setting debate, and for this research, a distinction should be made in relation to the so-called symbolic and substantive political agendas, where the former refers to

agendas with no real policy consequence, and the latter refers to concrete policy deliverables. While Walgrave and colleagues argue that the symbolic political agendas are more reactive to media coverage, this study will also investigate to what degree the substantive political agenda is (Walgrave et. al. 2008: 817). Previous research on the traditional media's role in influencing the political decision-making process has returned with contradictory results. Several studies have concluded that there is a relation between the quantity of media attention for specific policy issues and the prioritization of said issue on the policy agenda (Soroka, 2003; Yanovitzky, 2002; Dekker & Scholten, 2017). However, these studies have reached different conclusions in relation to the strength of this effect and recent studies suggest that involving only the salience through the quantity of media attention, will not fully account for the changes on the policy agenda, as the qualitative aspects of the media coverage are also a contingent factor (Walgrave & Van Aelst, 2006). Previous studies have even found that negative coverage is more likely to spark political reactions compared to positive news (Vliegenthart et al., 2016).

4.3 The Issue-Attention Cycle

Bryan Jones and Frank Baumgartner have stated that the human cognitive processing capacities are constrained by a bottleneck of short-term memory, which allows us to attend to only limited elements of the environment at any given time (Jones & Baumgartner 2005: 20), making attention a limited resource. They further argued that *"[e]motion is the gateway to selective attention: when emotion is roused, attention follows" (Ibid.)*. This emotion can be roused through the media, as many scholars agree that the media have a central role in determining the relative importance of an issue to the public (Wood & Peake, 1998; Hall, 2002), through, inter alia, the representation and significance in coverage.

To understand the process of how an issue gains and loses its importance, both to the public and to decision-makers, Anthony Downs' "issue-attention cycle" concept will be used. Downs presented this concept in the article *"Up and Down with Ecology"* (1972), researching social and environmental issues in the US. Downs used the issue-attention cycle theory to describe how the public attend to most issues in a cyclical process, where a problem *"leaps into prominence, remains there for a short time, and then, though still largely unresolved, gradually fades from the centre of public attention" (Downs 1972: 38)*. This theory was used to describe the stages of a

social problem and how the issue-attention moves from public opinion through the media, reaching the political arena (Berkhout et al. 2011: 4). Some of these problems will remain on the agenda until action is taken, while others will disappear when public attention is shifted (Kaye 1994: 144). Downs divided this cycle into five cyclic stages, which may vary in length depending on the issue being discussed, and are presented as follows:

1. The pre-problem stage: The issue has yet to capture the interest of the public, and will only be an issue for a small group, such as experts or interest groups
2. Alarmed discovery and euphoric enthusiasm: Public discovery of an issue, for example through the media
3. Realizing the cost of significant progress: The issue will gain mass attention both in the media- and political arena, for example due to the results of a big event, the public realizes that solving the issue will have substantial costs
4. Gradual decline of intense public interest: The issue loses its novelty to both the media and the public. According to Down's three reactions can occur at this stage: discouragement, sense of threat or boredom
5. The post-problem stage: The issue is managed, but with possible recurrences over time (Downs, 1972; Hall, 2002).

Migration is a topic which can be plotted into Downs' theory of the issue-attention cycle. The media's coverage of migration tends to be episodic, often with extensive attention devoted during times of mass arrivals or international conflicts. This emphasis on particular episodes means that most media attention to migration will happen during times of perceived crisis, where the discourse will tend to focus on issues relating to legitimacy and security (Lawlor & Tolley 2017: 972). This discourse will often involve a public struggle for definitions, through claim-making and frame sponsoring (Horsti 2013: 79). The actors involved, such as the Member States, EU agencies, non-state organizations and the migrants themselves will all take part in this discursive struggle of defining migration (Ibid.). Furthermore, according to Downs, public interest will often tend to fluctuate, even when it involves a societal problem (Downs, 1972), which is also the case for the issue of migration. While migration has developed to become an important issue in Europe, and therefore also on the public agenda over the past decade, attention to the issue has

fluctuated, and it is a continuing task for those involved to keep placing the issue on the public and institutional agendas through claim-making, to prevent the interest from shifting away. This idea is concurrent with other studies, for example from Greussing and Boomgaarden (2017), concluding that each stage of the "crisis" called for particular media functions and variations in the semantic meaning of the most dominant frames, which over the course of the "refugee crisis" in 2015 saw framing patterns changing throughout the media landscape (Greussing & Boomgaarden 2017: 1753).

Shifting the focus to studies relating to issue-attention at the EU level, previous researchers have mainly focused on actor-centered, rather than generic approaches, as the EU is lacking an autonomous public sphere, as concluded by Michal Ovádek et al. in 2020 (Ovádek et al. 2020: 206). Petya Alexandrova and colleagues built the European Union Policy Agendas Project (Alexandrova et al., 2014), which is the most comprehensive project researching issue-attention at the EU level, finding that EU institutions are typically self-focused when articulating policy priorities. This was concluded, based on a comparison of the Commission and Council documents representing their policy priorities, which also reflects their position in the policymaking process. The European Union Policy Agendas Project was built on the Policy Agendas Project by Frank Baumgartner and Bryan Jones, arguing that *"attention to issues can be measured via the occurrence of these issues in policy texts and documents. The number of references to a certain issue in texts and documents is taken as an indicator of its status on the agenda" (Alexandrova et al. 2014: 155).* However, in contrast to this project, this study will instead focus on the Parliament and its policy priorities and deliveries in comparison to the media agenda, rather than the Commission and Council, while following a similar strategy.

In the original theory developed by Downs, the main focus was placed on the nature of public attention, rather than on the response of decision-makers, although this aspect of the process deserves to be elaborated on. As explained by Itzhak Yanovitzky (2002), *"a conceptual framework that separates media effects on policy makers' attention to issues from effects on their actual behavior (or policy actions) may be key for studying the dynamic relationship between information in the media and policy responses" (Yanovitzky 2002: 422).* Yanovitzky thus studied the impact of news coverage on decision-makers, and the traditional media effect on the

cognitive elements of policy attention, from the effects on the behavioral elements of policy actions in the US on drunk-driving policies between 1978 and 1995 (Ibid.). He found that heightened traditional media attention to the issue at the beginning of the issue-attention cycle led to greater policy attention, which pressured the decision-makers to generate immediate but short-term solutions, whereas when the media attention slowed down, the policy preferences would gradually shift to longer-term solutions (Yanovitzky 2002: 422). Yanovitzky concluded that *"the effect of media coverage of issues on policy making is likely to be manifested in two forms: the timing of intensive issue-related policy making and the type of policy choices pursued by policy makers" (Ibid. 425).* These findings correspond to observations in other studies that a limited debate on migration policies facilitates an extension of rights, whereas a debate expansion can lead to the reduction of migrants' rights (Scholten & Timmermans 2010: 541). This is an area of research which deserves further attention and is highly interesting in relation to the so-called "refugee crisis", which experienced great fluctuations in media attention, while many policy initiatives were presented and debated.

4.4 Mediatization

Yanovitzky argued that *"policy makers tend to interpret sudden fluctuations in media attention as a cue for action" (Yanovitzky 2002: 425),* meaning that heightened media attention may act as an attraction of the attention of decision-makers to certain issues, while the narrative used in the media could impact policy-change. The theory of mediatization goes beyond this, placing its focus on the more complex process of how the media can shape and reshape both society and politics. Today, politicians are under increased pressure to adapt to the logic of the media (Van Santen et al. 2013: 2), and scholars have argued that this process has affected political behavior and outputs (Ibid.). This has been labeled the mediatization of politics, which is described as "*a long-term process through which political actors and institutions have become increasingly dependent on the media" (Van Santen et al. 2013: 2).*

Jesper Strömbäck is one scholar who has dedicated extensive research to the concept and has made significant contributions. Following his logic, mediated politics refers to the process by which the media becomes the most important source of information between politicians and the public (Strömbäck 2008: 230). The public depends on the media for information about politics,

while politicians depend on the media for information about opinions and trends in society. More precisely, something is mediated *"whenever the mass media are the main channels through which politics is communicated and when, as a consequence, the depictions of "reality" that are conveyed through the mass media presumably have an impact on how people perceive "reality." (Strömbäck 2008: 230).*

Mediatization, on the other hand, describes the process of increasing media influence in all aspects of politics and decision-making, which according to Strömbäck occurs in four phases:

1. The first phase of mediatization: Mass media will constitute the most important source of information and communication channel between the public and political institutions. This phase is also when politics will be mediated, which is a prerequisite for the following phases.
2. The second phase of mediatization: The mass media have become more independent from governmental bodies, and will be governed by the media logic, rather than political logic. This will subsequently lead to an increase of influence on the institutional level
3. The third phase of mediatization: The independence of the mass media further increases. Political and other actors will have to adapt to the media, rather than the other way around.
4. The fourth phase of mediatization: Political and social actors now not only adapt to the media logic but also internalize these and allow the media logic and standards of newsworthiness to become a part of the governing process (Strömbäck 2008: 240).

Through mediatization, the *"mediated reality becomes more important than the actual reality, in the sense that it is the mediated reality that people have access to and react to" (Strömbäck 2008: 238).* Furthermore, within this process, the new media environment has had a significant impact on how the public and politicians consume and relate to the news. The disintermediation process facilitated by new communication technologies has allowed political actors to directly communicate with citizens, thus overcoming the traditional mediation practice of the mass media (Parisi & Rega 2011: 1). However, as Rosella Rega and Lorenza Parisi concluded in 2011, *"disintermediation of political communication through social media does not necessarily mean*

to eliminate mediation roles. On the contrary, we observe the rise of new mediators, seizing politician's messages and redirecting this flow through their online activities within their relational network" (Parisi & Rega 2011: 13), suggesting a re-intermediation of political communication. Citizens, interest groups, and social movements therefore participate in this multidirectional relationship by sharing political news, expressing opinions and commenting on political issues, increasing the interaction and political participation of the networked public (Elridge et al. 2019: 282). The press is therefore no longer the sole intermediary between political actors and the public, due to this process, which allows political actors to go beyond the traditional media, leaving journalists outside the mediation of politics (Elridge et al. 2019: 275). Adam Shehata and Jesper Strömbäck further found that it does not matter from which technical platform people receive their information, what matters instead is how important the mass media is as an institution for information about politics and society, and how we use the internet to find information. They continue to conclude that "*the Internet does not necessarily herald the demise of mediated politics, nor of the mediatization of politics. It might rather herald the re-mediation of politics"* (Shehata & Strömbäck 2014: 109). People will thus receive their news from traditional, digital, and social media outlets, with a similar impact.

Due to its contemporary role, the media and the mediated discourse thus have to be considered when studying the debate on migration, as the knowledge received by the public on migration is essential when making rational choices in regard to policies relating to migration (Meltzer & Schemer 2021: 174). This can for example, be seen in the conceptualization of migration in recent years. Migration has become a highly politicized topic, and according to Michał Krzyżanowski this has happened especially through ideologization and by making politics the main arena dictating the public views on migration (Krzyżanowski et al. 2018: 15). Ronald Hartwell explained politicization as the process of making *"all questions political questions, all issues political issues, all values political values and all decisions political decisions"* (Hartwell 1979: 14). In this process, there has been continuous merging and competing terms used to describe migration, often leading to negative framing, with migration frequently being described as a problem which should be "tackled" (Ibid.). Krzyżanowski explained that this *"would eventually have a very significant spillover effect onto other areas of the public sphere with, in particular, the media discourses often following political agendas' patterns of negative*

politicization" (Krzyżanowski et al. 2018: 15-16). This has resulted in various discursive shifts, which can be identified in the contemporary mediated and mediatized politics, building on the anti-migration rhetoric that has quickly become politically potent (Ibid. 77).

Mediatization has thus become one of the main carriers of contemporary migration discourse and its long-term politicization, which according to Krzyżanowski and colleagues, has changed how politics works, by altering *"political practices into a process of mediated attention-seeking, rather than of political representation and policy making" (Ibid. 16).* The opportunity of mediation has therefore altered the logic of constructing political messages in relation to migration, and the mediatization process can capture how mainstream politics have sought negative and simplistic explanations to migration. These discursive shifts can show how and when the political discourses change and become politicized, and often simultaneously mediatized (Ibid. 79). These discursive shifts are often used and mediated to pre-legitimize a change in policy, which *"has helped mainstream politics to gain legitimacy for its changing policies while at the same time still keeping its moderate image" (Ibid. 17).*

4.4.1 Mediatization in the Contemporary Media Landscape

When studying mediatization today, the media landscape cannot be treated as a homogenous ensemble, as the public now receives their news both from traditional, online, and social media sources, as described above. The rise of the latter has been argued to have had a profound impact on various aspects of society, including opinion formation, but also within politics and migration (Bozdag & Smets, 2017). These social media platforms have become powerful tools for shaping public opinion and disseminating information, and needs to be considered in the mediatization process, as well as when defining contemporary social problems.

These platforms have changed the rules of social interaction, which has allowed the public to participate in and challenge media and political frames by introducing new perspectives in the debate (Lee & Nerghes 2019: 276). Social media networks also have the potential to reinforce or change opinions or even impact behavior, and are used by politicians as important tools, both in campaigning and for sharing their opinions. However, social media platforms have also become a place that allows for the spread of populism and far-right narratives, as the networked nature of

social media allows sympathizers to find each other faster (Harrison 2016: 13). This was, for example, concluded by Dorothee Arlt and Jens Wolling, *"while indirect effects of social media on hostile media perceptions is small the frequent users of social media have more negative attitudes towards refugees" (Arlt & Wolling 2016: 18).* The research that is available on this subject also suggests that these platforms can foster anti-immigration discourses which are potentially more negative than in traditional media (Strömbäck et al. 2021: 14). However, it should be noted that this negativity can be both shaped by anti-immigration discourses and in relation to the political handling of situations of migration. Strömbäck and colleagues argued that *"one important reason might be that migration discourses on social media are often dominated by parties from the ideological extremes and that anti-immigration parties and groups, have been quite successful in their strategic use of social media" (Ibid.).* Research has further suggested that populist parties can cause more interaction with their social media content than politicians from other parties, and that messages relying on emotional or negative tones are generally associated with more interactions (Heidenreich & Eberl 2021: 145).

Social media is also an integral part of the study of mediatization, as Shehata and Strömbäck suggest that the new online environment lowers the barrier for accessing political news, as exposure to this can be a byproduct of using social media for other purposes (Shehata & Strömbäck 2021: 126). They explain this idea as *"news from traditional news media somehow "trickle-down" to users of social media." (Ibid).* This would mean that citizens, who might lack interest in political news in general will still receive it indirectly. However, in contrast, other studies have suggested that those who receive their news from Twitter might not represent the general population (Bennett 2018: 144), which thus means that it is still necessary to compare findings from Twitter with more mainstream news channels, to ensure representative findings. As concluded by Shehata and Strömbäck, it would thus be a mistake to *"equate the rising importance of the Internet as a source of information about politics and society with a declining importance of traditional news media." (Shehata & Strömbäck 2014: 107).* People tend to turn to the digital versions of traditional mass media as sources of information, which means that social media does not substitute traditional media but rather adds to the digital media landscape as an arena of information flows where information mixes and changes the individual's information consumption pattern (Ibid.), creating a mediated multiple-step flow of information.

Therefore, the traditional mainstream media has not lost its gatekeeping role, but it has instead changed. Networked actors can now appropriate news content, which some researchers have argued can amplify, sustain, or potentially morph news stories through re-circulation, reworking and reframing on the online networks (Al-Rawi 2017: 874). Some have even argued that a disintermediation has taken place, changing the role of traditional media as the intermediary between political affairs and public concerns, allowing political actors to adopt the media logic themselves and communicate directly with the public. However, social media has also started a reintermediation process, as argued by Shehata and Strömbäck (2014), by giving the public the possibility to promote political information, using their online social media presence to express opinions and comment on political issues (Parisi & Rega 2011: 10). This mediatization of political communication has allowed the discursive space of political activities to become hybrid, and several actors can now propose political agendas and frame and re-frame, which might be different from the ones fostered by the traditional media. As explained by Scott Elridge and colleagues:

> this ability of political actors to reach beyond news media has not only left journalistic actors outside the mediation of politics, it has also resulted in journalists acting more as interlocutor than intermediary. They are resigned at times to an outsider position, reacting to rather than establishing the salient discussions of politics (Elridge et al. 2019: 275).

Studies specifically investigating Twitter and the impact of user perspectives in the frames on the migration debate during the "crisis" have been more limited than for traditional media. However, the studies available have found that social media largely relies on similar frames as found in traditional media, from frames of solidarity to xenophobia and fear (Gualda & Rebollo 2016, Lee & Nerghes 2019). These findings suggest that the salience and framing on social media networks are comparable to the salience and framing on traditional news channels, confirming that the contemporary media environment is *"'hybrid", where discourses within different media intermingle with and influence discourses on other media" (Heidenreich & Eberl 2021: 153).* Journalists are especially interested in trending topics, and news on social media is therefore likely to spill over into the traditional media system, where posts and tweets are now also used in

news reporting. Lee and Nerghes tested the complementarity between social and traditional media frames, which revealed that the two environments were primarily complementary rather than competing in nature. Most frames were present on both traditional and social media platforms and the debates on social media were often dominated by the news media sources, strengthening particular viewpoints while allowing for more perspectives to emerge (Pöyhtäri et al. 2019: 18). Heidenreich and Eberl found that the overall salience of the migration topic on social media channels of the political elite was more pronounced in countries which experienced a positive net migration rate such as Germany, Sweden, and the UK (Heidenreich & Eberl 2021: 151). Their results further showed that the security frame was the most dominant used by the European political elites on social media, which tended to create more user participation. This is also in line with the issue ownership argument, described by Heidenreich and Eberl as:

> overall, right-leaning parties use more frames when communicating about the impact of migration – a finding that may be due to the fact that these parties consider themselves as owners of the migration issue and thus may want to connect any and all political debates in some way to the topic of migration (Ibid. 152).

However, findings remain fragmented in this area, and a more nuanced understanding of the creation of frames in the current media environment and the interaction between traditional media and social media platforms is necessary. Twitter can be a useful site for critical analysis of political discourse, as a tweet is part of both the production, consumption, and distribution of frames. The normative implications of these developments need to be understood when viewing political debates and media impact, as social media channels are no longer just a space for entertainment and connectivity but have evolved into platforms for political discourse and identity making (Ekman 2019: 607). In order to understand the development of migration attitudes and political developments, social media networks must be recognized in remediating and recontextualizing the mainstream news on the issues relating to migration (Ibid.).

Even though social media platforms have become an integral part of the contemporary media landscape, it is not without problems, including the spread of bots and fake news. Although fake news has existed before the emergence of social media, the lack of editorial oversight has

allowed for easier distribution, and the platforms have amplified the possibility of spreading fake news faster and to a larger audience. The concept of fake news especially gained traction and public interest following the 2016 US election (Vargo et al. 2018). Hunt Allcott and Matthew Gentzkow defined fake news as *"news stories that have no factual basis but are presented as news" (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017: 5).* A number of studies have investigated both the agenda setting power of bots and fake news, and their effect on public opinion formation. However, the findings have been inconsistent (Albright, 2016; Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017; Pescetelli et al. 2022). In a study by Niccolo Pescetelli and colleagues from 2022, it was highlighted that consuming fake or hyper-partisan content was expected to have a relatively rare effect on opinion formation, as *"interactions with highly partisan accounts were most common among respondents with already strong ideological alignment with those opinions" (Pescetelli et al. 2022: 2).* Their conclusions thus suggest that the use of hyper-partisan bots and the sharing of fake news would have either a minimal or no specific effect. However, this does not mean that the use of bots and fake news are not relevant in a study relying on social media platforms. Thus, the interaction of these is necessary to keep in mind when analyzing the findings from Twitter.

4.5 Securitization

In the context of legitimizing change in politics as a response to a perceived social problem, one cannot avoid discussing the process of securitization. This concept was presented by Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde in 1998 (the so-called Copenhagen School), in the book *"Security: A New Framework for Analysis",* as a rejection of the traditionalist approach of restricting security to the military sector, instead offering a constructivist approach to security, explaining securitization as a more extreme version of politicization (Buzan et al. 1998: 23). The core idea of this approach is that there is no objective security issue, and that they instead are socially constructed through the process of securitization (Ibid.). This construction takes place through the use of speech acts, and the theory of securitization is thus strongly grounded in a linguistic approach (Ibid. 26).

The process of securitization was created to be applied to any public issue, through the representation as an existential threat, requiring emergency measures in order to be dealt with, thereby justifying actions outside the normal bounds of political procedures (Buzan et al. 1998.

24). This process can be initiated by any social entity, and the *"criteria of securitization is constituted by the intersubjective establishment of an existential threat with a saliency sufficient to have substantial political effects" (Ibid. 25).* Securitization then occurs when an issue is presented as an existential threat, and is complete if the audience accepts this claim, and emergency measures are accepted in order to deal with it.

The theory of securitization has gained significant ground since its introduction, however, the arguments have also faced significant scholarly scrutiny, which has revealed various limitations. One of these limitations is the over-emphasis the Copenhagen School has placed on discourse and speech acts, leaving out the important elements of nondiscursive practices, which inter alia can be seen in the development of public policies and the practices of the military and police, which are all elements that can contribute to the securitization process. In general, the Copenhagen School has placed little focus on the implications policy instruments can present when tackling a public problem (Léonard & Kaunert 2022: 1420). This research will thus broaden the original idea of security as an existential threat as presented by the Copenhagen School, moving towards the more inclusive understanding of security as presented by Sarah Léonard and Christian Kaunert in 2022, in their work on securitization of asylum and migration within the EU. Here, security is instead understood as a continuum from normalcy, with the potential to become an existential threat. Thus, making the process a range, rather than an absolute, presenting a spiraling process of securitization, where the intensity of the issue can increase and decrease (Ibid. 1420). So, although this research will draw upon elements from the original idea of securitization as presented by the Copenhagen School, it will move away from the limited view on security, to adopt a broader and more flexible conceptualization.

When specifically discussing migration, Buzan and colleagues have placed the issue within the sphere of societal security, as a threat to the EU integration process, through the construction of "us" and "them". Various other scholars have also made the link between migration and security in this political context (Bigo, 2002; Buzan et al., 1998; Huysmans, 2000). Furthermore, the practice of securitization does not need to be based on an actual existential threat but can be placed upon a perceived threat as well. The securitizing actor can use securitization to gain control of an issue, thus making the act political (Ünal & Öner 2021: 166). Scholars such as Bigo

have explained this social construction of migration as a threat, as politicians' fear of losing their symbolic control over the territorial boundaries (Bigo 2002: 65). For Bigo, the securitization of migration emerges from the successful speech acts of political leaders, framing the state as a body endangered by migration, socially constructing the politicization of migration (Ibid. 68). The political arena is therefore at the center of establishing the relation between security and migration, making this relationship fully and immediately political (Ibid. 71), used to mobilize political responses. In this process, the discourse concerning the human rights of asylum seekers is, also de facto part of the securitization process of migration by supporting the structure of differentiating between genuine asylum seekers and illegal migrants, helping to condemn the migrant as a security threat, justifying border controls (Bigo 2002: 79).

Within the EU venue, some scholars have concluded that there has been a successful securitization of both migration and asylum (Léonard and Kaunert 2020). Valeria Bello (2022) argues that this securitization, and migration emerging as a security issue within Europe, can be traced back to the end of the Cold War, which was followed by a globalization that brought wider social and political shifts. This process, as explained by Bello, stands in contrast to the original idea of the Copenhagen School, introducing a more nuanced ontology of how this social construction is shaped (Bello 2022: 1329). This approach instead supports the idea of a spiraling securitization process when discussing migration, which she believes takes place through both speech acts as well as nondiscursive constructions, as previously discussed.

This is inter alia evident in the development of EU migration policies, where the threat of migration slowly has been embedded as the hegemonic discourse. In this regard, the Schengen Agreement from 1985 could be perceived to mark the beginning of this process, as it deeply impacted the EU policies that followed, placing migration in the area of internal security. This would mean that the securitization of migration in the EU started its process more than four decades ago. The policies that have followed the Schengen Agreement continue to reproduce the focus on security when discussing migration, for example in the Amsterdam Treaty, which states that the *"free movement of persons can be only assured in conjunction with appropriate security measures with respect to external border controls, asylum, immigration and the prevention and combating of crime" (European Union, 1997: 8).* This approach was also imbedded in the

TFEU, which continued to open new venues for securitization, connecting the movement of people with the idea of "illegal immigration", and appointing an increased role to Frontex (which was later renamed the European Border and Coast Guard Agency). Léonard and Kaunert (2020) have argued that an agency such as Frontex has significantly contributed to this securitization through their practices. This is also argued by Valeria Bello, who believes that Frontex is a key actor in securitizing migration through their practices of border control, but also through the clear securitized language used in their reports, which often depict migrants as completely dehumanized (Bello 2022: 1335).

In general, migration continues to be linked with security issues such as organized crime, terrorism and smuggling, discursively constructed by both the political elite, media and governments (Jaskulowski 2019: 711), building on the inevitability of increased border controls and the necessary cooperation with third countries in order to manage this threat and maintain public order and domestic stability, maintaining the regulations of migration within the institutional framework dealing with internal security of the Union (Huysmans 2000: 756-757). This process takes place both at national and European level, and the cross-border nature of the threat strengthens the need for European cooperation in dealing with its external borders, while also transnationalizing itself beyond the borders of the Member States (Bigo 2002: 83). The contribution of securitization to the issue of migration is, as previously mentioned, therefore not only linked to the speech act (Pugh & Moya 2020: 7), but also the policies and accepted practices legitimized through framing. This framing has been found to be used to shift migration from a humanitarian or economic phenomenon to a security threat, justifying possible extraordinary state practices to protect their citizens (Buzan et al., 1998; Pugh & Moya, 2020). This thus makes it possible to conclude that the EU practices are part of a spiraling progression of migration as a security threat. This process has thus linked migration to the political project of EU integration, through the interrelation between the problem of migration and the free movement of people (Huysmans 2000: 760), and by maintaining policies relating to migration within the internal security framework, the securitization of migration within the EU is sustained. However, this securitization cannot only be reduced to the actions of a few anti-immigration parties, but has been a process involving multiple actors, ranging from national governments, the media, and interest groups, through the structural effect of a multiplicity of practices (Ibid. 758).

The process of securitization of migrants in Europe is thus a good example of going beyond the traditional theory and idea of the Copenhagen School, as this process rather mobilizes fear through both framing, as well as political and institutional practices. This research will thus follow the logic of Maciej Stępka, who combined the constructivist approach of securitization with the interpretative approach of framing theory. This moves the approach away from being strictly speech act-driven, to include also framing for its inter-subjective practice of meaning making, which can trigger a security-oriented mind-set as well as shape perceptions. Combining these approaches will open the theory of securitization into a more iterative construction of security (Ibid), allowing the possibility of looking at this process in a more diverse and proliferative way.

The "refugee crisis" is also critical when studying the connection between migration and security in Europe contemporarily, as it is possible to follow the developments and changes in specific frames while they transform in different venues, such as the European Parliament and the media. Notions such as irregular or illegal migrants have become more prominent since the "crisis", which deeply connects and keeps the migrant within a security frame, and this connection has become an institutionalized mode of policymaking (Stępka 2022: 79), which can have far reaching consequences within EU institutions when formulating the EU migration policies. According to Stępka, this has allowed moving migration from intergovernmental into supranational and decentralized modes of governance (Stępka 2022: 83), enabling migration management at the EU venue, while maintaining it in the security arena, through both the discursive and practical practices.

4.6 Framing Migration

People constantly interpret and reinterpret the world around them (Benczes & Ságvári 2022: 416), and this process is guided by the frames encountered. These frames are presented from a number of different venues, including politicians and the media, and are essential within the securitization process. The media is an actor with a powerful position in this regard, as it determines which information the public receives and how this information is framed (De Vreese 2005: 51). Framing is the process of how an issue is presented and defined, and it is a concept

that has gained momentum in both communication and political sciences in recent decades. Despite its vaguely defined nature, media scholars often refer to framing as the power of the media to influence how the public comprehends an issue, by using interpretive frames in reporting (Entman, 1993; Iyengar, 1991). A scholar who is often used when explaining framing is Robert Entman, who stated, *"to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text" (Entman, 1993: 20).* According to Entman, the frames serve four functions, which are to define the problems, diagnose the causes, making evaluative judgements and suggesting solutions (Entman, 1993). Entman's definition is complementary to the agenda-setting theory, by relying on the concept of salience, and both framing and agenda-setting theories call attention to the attributes in the content of a message. This suggests that framing is a way to provide a meaning to an issue during the communicative process. This process should be perceived as non-static and dynamic, involving frame-building and frame-setting, which can differ over the course of an issue. The frame-building process is taking place in a continuous interaction between the media and the elite (Gans, 1979), which will then result in a frame. When a frame is defined, the frame-setting process will start, which is the interaction between the frames and the receivers' prior knowledge and predispositions (De Vreese, 2005: 52). What the media show, and how they present it thus matters, and the primary purpose of a framing analysis is to search for the latent meaning embedded in the news stories, through the representation of an issue (Emes 2023: 36).

The process of how frames may affect the interpretation and evaluation of an issue is highly researched. Most scholars distinguish between the individual and the societal level of framing effects, explained by Claes De Vreese as *"individual level consequence may be altered attitudes about an issue based on exposure to certain frames. On the societal level, frames may contribute to shaping social level processes such as political socialization, decision-making, and collective actions." (De Vreese 2005: 52).* If a receiver is unfamiliar with a topic, they are more likely to be affected by the frame used to describe the issue (Entman, 1995). Policymakers are a specific group that have a strong incentive to process and react to the information the media presents immediately, as unresponsiveness can compromise their political position, making frames an instrument of discursive political power. The degree of influence will also depend on where the frame is received from; whether it is a tabloid or quality magazine; the political leaning of the

traditional media; whether it is an editorial meant to persuade or a news story, which is believed to be more factual. For example, tabloids are argued to contribute more to frames of criminality when reporting on migration through the idea of sensationalization, compared to broadsheets (Maneri 2023: 61). The media can thus not be treated as homogeneous, both due to the ideology and political leaning of a given paper, and since journalists have been found to impose their own cognitive frames when writing a story (Klein & Amis, 2021).

Most research can agree that citizens learn about politics and current political affairs from the mass media (Shehata & Strömbäck 2021: 127), and according to Strömbäck and colleagues, in the last decade *"few issues have dominated the public, media and political agendas across Europe as much as immigration" (Strömbäck et al. 2021: 3).* For most people, the media is therefore the most important point of information when dealing with a national and international topic such as migration, and the media thus play a crucial role in linking migration to the lived reality of the public as well as the politics surrounding the issue (Eberl & Galyga 2021: 105). So, while the quantitative aspect of the visibility of a topic such as migration is important, so is the qualitative parameter of how migration is talked about (Heidenreich et al. 2020). In previous studies of media and migration, this qualitative parameter often makes a central distinction between the issue-specific and generic news frames (Eberl et al. 2018: 211). The generic frames are argued to be routines of journalism, such as the victimization or negativity frames, while issue-specific frames are intrinsically related to specific topics of immigration, such as welfare or security (Eberl et al., 2018; de Vreese 2005). Most previous studies on migration news coverage have focused on these issue-specific frames and there is a general consensus amongst the scholars working on this issue, that journalists tend to rely on a predominantly negative framing when discussing migration (Benczes & Ságvári 2022: 414).

The framing of migration and migrants in particular has been characterized by a permanent epistemic instability (De Genova 2017: 9), which can be used by the mass media to generate a crisis mentality, such as the one experienced during the 2015 "refugee crisis". This was driven, not only by the increase of migrants arriving in Europe, but also by the visibility of migrants in the media and political discourses (Berry et al. 2016: 4). How migration is represented and discursively shaped in the media matters, as the media will actively contribute to and construct

the meaning and public understanding of events (Hall, 1997), while also participating in the shaping of the European political discourse surrounding migration (Boswell, 2012; Boomgaarden and Vliegenthart, 2009; Caviedes, 2015). It is thus impossible to ignore the role of the mass media in influencing the public and political attitudes towards migration, with their ability to promote agendas and frame debates. As Anna Triandafyllidou concluded:

> From seeking to manage and to channel the flows distributing responsibility through quotas in the spring and fall of 2015, to the construction of the refugee flows as an effective emergency, a crisis that called for more drastic measures. These policy developments were obviously in an interactive relationship with developing media, political discourses, and civil society mobilizations around the refugee crisis (Triandafyllidou 2018: 207).

4.6.1 Changes in the Framing of Migration

As mentioned, most previous research has found that the traditional media coverage relating to migration has been dominated by a negative frame the past decades. These frames have been found to differ between media genres, from quality newspapers to tabloids, and a few studies have found that political bias could also influence the traditional media's reporting on migration. Jakob-Moritz Eberl and Sebastian Galyga found that conservative news outlets tend to over-emphasize the negative impact of migration. Especially right-leaning news outlets focus strongly on the economic and security frame, while left-leaning news outlets favor the welfare frame (Eberl & Galyga 2021: 118). Even if the differences observed in their study were marginal, they were still statistically significant.

This predominantly negative frame relating to migrants used in mainstream media is not new, and as previously mentioned, can be traced back to the early 1990s, originating at the end of the Cold War in many of the European Member States (Berry et. al. 2016: 15). The negative frame experienced in the 1990s was characterized by a claim of "lost control", fueled by the fear over unwanted irregular migrants using the asylum-seeking process as a pathway to Europe. This was reflected in the media through the increasing use of "bogus asylum" and "economic asylum" discourses and frames (Vollmer 2011: 318), and over time, a connotation between asylum

seekers, the abuse of the European asylum system and economic migration began to form (Nickles 2007: 42). The EU expansion in 2004 shifted the focus from asylum seekers to economic migration from accession countries, rearticulating the frame of anxiety over the pressures on public services, competition for jobs and organized crime (Berry et. al. 2016: 16). The 2008 financial crisis and the subsequent pursuit of austerity measures further fueled an anti-immigration discourse, in an environment conducive to scapegoating, leading to a "paranoid nationalism" (Berry et. al. 2016: 17). Strömbäck and colleagues (2021) found that between the years 2003 and 2017, the salience of the migration coverage fluctuated, with an average of 11.6% of all articles relating to migration (Strömbäck et al. 2021: 216). It was further found that the salience, not surprisingly, peaked during the so-called "crisis" between 2015 and 2016, especially in the countries which were directly affected by it (Ibid.). The salience of the issue was highest in Hungary during 2015, which was followed by Germany and Sweden. Most of these articles related to migration into the EU, with less than 5% of the articles relating to intra-EU migration (Ibid.).

Previous studies have further found, that during the "crisis", there were considerable temporal and spatial variations in the individual frames used, suggesting that the frame shifted in accordance with triggering events. This is confirmed by the findings of inter alia Boomgaarden and Vliegenthart (2007) and Strömbäck et al. (2021), arguing that media coverage on migration tends to be event driven, both by single and chain events. Data from Esther Greussing and Hajo Boomgarden (2017) have shown that in the initial pre-problem stage of the 2015 "refugee crisis", framing was characterized on the one hand by quality papers referring to the background/victimization and securitization frames, while the tabloid papers made the criminality frame more salient. These divergent framing practices subsequently aligned in the alarmed discovery stage from April onwards (Greussing and Boomgarden 2017: 1758). This stage began with a humanitarian crisis frame or victimization frame, often in reference to several tragic events, including the shipwreck in the Mediterranean in April, the discovery of a truck on an Austrian motorway with the bodies of 71 people in August, and the picture of the drowned Syrian Kurdish child Alan Kurdi off the Turkish coast, which were all tragic events that led to a wave of empathy and solidarity (Triandafyllidou 2018: 202). This empathetic frame in the early stages gradually experienced a discursive shift, moving towards the settlement, reception, and

distribution of the people arriving, and securitization and economization frames began dominating the coverage until later that year. This was then replaced by suspicion and in some cases hostility in late 2015 and throughout 2016 following the peak of the "refugee crisis". The discourse was later dominated by a border and security/threat frame fueled by events such as Hungary building a fence along its borders with Serbia and the Paris terrorist attack in November 2015. These findings were confirmed by similar studies conducted by Georgiou and Zaborowski (2017) and Schweitzer et al. (2018), who found that temporal frame variations went from an initial humanitarian and empathetic frame towards a more hostile and suspicious frame (Schweitzer et al. 2018: 17). Georgiou and Zaborowski further identified three key periods in 2015, in which the framing changed:

- Period 1 (July 2015): Careful tolerance
- Period 2 (September 2015): Ecstatic humanitarianism
- Period 3 (November 2015): Fear and securitization (Georgiou & Zaborowski, 2017).

The most comprehensive report found was produced by the Ethical Journalism Network (EU 2017), which studied the dominant media narratives on migration in 17 countries in the EU, the Middle East and North Africa. This report supports the findings of several other studies (such as Greussing & Boomgaarden, 2017 and Georgiou & Zaborowski, 2017), that the frame shifted over time, from an empathetic solidarity frame, towards a negative securitization frame, referencing threats of terrorism and anti-social behavior. The report continued to comment that: *"the issue of terminology – and migration as a whole being predominantly reported as, and thus becoming, almost a synonym for irregular (im)migration – might be the biggest challenge when it comes towards more balanced reporting on migration" (EU 2017: 1, in Consterdine 2018: 17-18).* This process contributed to politicizing migration, giving way to the rise of right-leaning and populist parties across the EU. As concluded by Strömbäck et al. (2021), *"the meaning of the term 'refugee crisis' changed from being discussed as a crisis for refugees to being discussed as a crisis for the countries that refugees were coming to" (Strömbäck et al. 2021: 4).*

While many of the aforementioned frames are reproduced in all EU countries, the selection of importance and emphasis greatly vary, reflecting the regional contextualization, such as

geographical placement as a frontline or final destination state, as well as the historical and political context (Triandafyllidou 2018: 207). Several cross-national studies have been conducted to analyze this variation in media representation of migration and the "refugee crisis". One study was conducted by Georgiou and Zaborowski (2017) in eight Member States, which presented a number of key findings. They concluded that the European press in fact played a *"central role in framing refugee arrivals in 2015 as a crisis for Europe – new arrivals were seen as outsiders and different from Europeans" (Georgiou & Zaborowski 2017: 3).* They further found significant differences between the media coverage in West and East Europe, as well as receiving and non-receiving countries. These country specific frame variations could be reflecting the countries' different political agendas, and whether the countries are sending or receiving migrants in the observed periods (Eberl et al. 2018: 216). Another cross-national study was conducted by Mike Berry and colleagues (2015) exploring the traditional media coverage in Spain, Italy, Germany, the UK, and Sweden between 2014 and 2015. This report also confirmed the significant differences between countries, for example in the terminology used when discussing the people migrating. Italy and the UK mostly used the term "migrant", while Spain predominantly used "immigrant". Germany and Sweden however overwhelmingly used the terms "asylum-seeker" and "refugee" (Berry et al. 2016: 1).

While the traditional media in all the countries studied featured anti-migrant perspectives, the Swedish press was found to be the most positive towards migrants, and the UK press the most negative and polarized. This finding was further confirmed by Joana Kosho, who concluded that the most common word used by the British press in relation to migrants was "illegal" (Kosho 2016: 89). Strömbäck and colleagues found that, especially in the UK, Hungary and Poland, there was a very low semantic variance when discussing the issue of migration. In these countries, journalists had a limited repertoire in relation to migration, and the illegality theme was most predominant. In general, terms such as irregular and illegal were most commonly used across all EU countries when discussing migrants in the media (Strömbäck et al. 2021: 217). This study further found that when the traditional media referenced refugees, the most common modifiers were geographical and numerical. Eberl and Galyga concluded that the limited framing repertoire *"results in journalistic reporting that consciously or unconsciously reproduces and reinforces dominant, and mostly negative, frames." (Eberl & Galyga 2021: 108).*

Berry and colleagues further concluded that the press in all five Member States studied, agreed that the EU response to the "crisis" was widely inadequate, however, the EU was still believed to be the most important institution in solving the so-called "crisis". Especially countries such as Italy and Spain followed a similar pattern highlighting EU responsibility to help deal with the large number of asylum seekers, often stressing the other Member States' unwillingness to share the burden for the reception of migrants. In contrast, in Germany and Sweden the press printed extensive criticism over the unwillingness of the other EU Member States in sharing the burden through resettlement and relocation, reflecting their roles as key countries of final destination (Berry et al. 2016: 10).

4.6.2 Hegemonic Frames and their Importance

As shown above, the labels used to describe human mobility have fluctuated greatly over the years, especially during the "crisis". The following section will thus turn the attention toward the more hegemonic frames used in media rhetoric in the past decade. Triandafyllidou (2018) argues that there were two competing interpretive frames that emerged during the "crisis": the moralization frame and the threat frame (Triandafyllidou 2018: 211). The moralizing frame placed the responsibility of the flows on wars, conflict, and violence in the countries of origin, framing the people moving as victims deprived of agency (Ibid.). This frame also puts emphasis on the European humanitarian values of providing protection to people fleeing persecution. The moralization frame centered around solidarity, while the threat frame promoted division. The threat frame used an "us" versus "them" dichotomy to spark division between those that are perceived to belong and those that do not. It was further used to give a sense of uncontrollability to the movement of people, not unlike a natural disaster. Triandafyllidou concluded that the

> threat frame mobilizes both feelings of uncertainty and divisions within Europe. By contrast to the moralization frame which refers to shared European values and to a common representation of us and them together, in solidarity and even empathy, the threat frame uses opposition to argue that this is a zero sum game: what migrants/refugees "achieve" comes at the expense of the natives who welcome them (Triandafyllidou 2018: 212).

A vast amount of research has concluded that media frames were dominated by problem orientation (Triantafyllidou, 2018, Esses et. al., 2013), consistently finding the security, threat, and economization frames as the most prominent. These frames were used to highlight illegality, terrorism, and crime on one side, and on the other focus on the threat of draining public resources in the host societies. The humanitarian or moralizing frame was much less prominent in the studied period around the peak of the "crisis". Esses and colleagues argue that highlighting the threat frame most prominently when discussing migration in the media can cause a dehumanization of the migrant group. The dehumanization will create an "ingroup" and an "outgroup" that will be used to justify exclusion and mistreatment (Esses et al. 2013: 531). This threat frame was reproduced in European media through statements such as claiming that migrants were spreading infectious diseases and that terrorists were attempting to gain entry to the EU disguised as refugees. It is therefore possible to conclude that the framing of migrants during most stages of the "crisis" was determined more by the neoliberal securitization agenda rather than by humanitarian concerns.

Galyga and Lind conducted a study in 2020, using collocation and the probabilistic co-occurrence of lexical items (Galyga & Lind 2021: 129). This analysis found that migrants most commonly were modified as illegal or irregular, which represents a strong othering and dehumanization, stressing a non-belonging (Ibid. 135). This dehumanization can be linked to the work of the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben (1998). Agamben argues that the political rhetoric in the media shows how migrants function as an "inclusive exclusion" of bare life through the creation of a fearful Other, who has the ambiguous role as a threat and a victim. The "Other" is relegated to inhabit a camp, representing a permanent state of exception as homo sacer (Harrison 2016: 13). This separates the migrant as a figure of fear and threat to the European society. This process is both produced and reproduced by the media and the state, legitimizing these security concerns to the public. The exclusion of this Other will extend beyond the European society, to spheres of human values and moral obligations (Agamben & Heller-Roazen 1998: 171). As explained by Agamben *"He who has been banned is not, in fact, simply set outside the law and made indifferent to it but rather abandoned by it, that is, exposed and threatened on the threshold in which life and law (...) become indistinguishable" (Agamben & Heller-Roazen 1998. 28).* This process could for example be seen in the "crisis", when the EU

suspended essential civil liberties to the inhabitants of the camps in the hotspots and the fortification of the external borders of Fortress Europe, which became a zone of irreducible indistinction (Ibid. 29).

The work of Agamben, although useful, also limits the debate to the considerations relating to sovereign power and the politics of rights (Harrison 2016: 2), and other factors should be included to complement the migration debate. The approach of Agamben also tends to conflate human rights with the rights of citizens, while disregarding the protection provided through the Refugee Conventions. However, the epistemic crisis relating to migration and the issue of terminology reducing all migratory movements to the same status, qualifies under Agamben's idea of the reduction to bare life. The issue surrounding migration in Europe will not be effectively solved, as long as migrants remain reduced to homo sacer, almost status-less, with no country willing to accept them.

Another dominant pattern found in many empirical studies of media and migration, is the continuous conflation of the terms refugees, asylum seekers and economic migrants. As concluded by Heaven Crawley and Dimitris Skleparis, the

> categories 'refugee' and 'migrant' do not simply exist but rather are made. Choosing to label – or equally not label – someone as a 'refugee' is a powerful, and deeply political, process, one by which policy agendas are established and which position people as objects of policy in a particular way (Crawley and Skleparis 2018: 52).

This was for example evident in the "crisis" where labels could be employed to fragment the international protection regime, by limiting responsibility. The research of Crawley and Skleparis further suggest that

> the categories dominating political, policy and media debates associated with Europe's 'migration crisis' are not simply inadequate tools for capturing the complex drivers of migration across the Mediterranean but also serve to perpetuate and reinforce a simplistic

dichotomy which is used to distinguish, divide and discriminate between those on the move (Crawley and Skleparis 2018: 52).

However, when discussing policies, and the possible impact the media can have on these, the category a person is placed in will have an immense impact on their legal rights and status and the *"choice of words, for example in media or political language, can thus influence the lens through which certain patterns of mobility will be apprehended—and therefore the political responses that will be elaborated" (Green & Pécoud 2023).*

Studying the conflation of the terms migrant and refugee is important, both in relation to accuracy in coverage and potential impact on public attitude. The terms refugee and migrant are inherently different, which should be specified in the media, and most importantly by politicians, as improper use can lead to misperceptions of individuals, and possibly create political biases (Hoewe 2018: 479). Prior research has found that the media does an inefficient job in portraying the actual complexities of the migrant groups (Gabrielatos & Baker, 2008; Esses et al., 2013; Hoewe, 2018). One such study was conducted by Costas Gabrielatos and Paul Baker, in a quantitative based content analysis of the traditional media representation of refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants in the UK. They concluded that the terminology is continuously conflated and confused. They further found that the media is contributing to the moral panic around migration, through a dominant panic discourse in the UK press (Gabrielatos & Baker 2008: 3). Other studies, such as one conducted by Igor Žagar and colleagues (2018) has come to a similar conclusion, that the majority of media use the terms migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, illegal foreigners, and economic migrants interchangeably, without a reflection on the meaning of the diverse terminology or the differentiation between people (Žagar et al. 2018: 190). The figure of the refugee has thus been refashioned from an object of compassion and protection to a potential threat of terrorism, and the term asylum seeker increasingly invokes the idea of an alleged "bogus" asylum seeker, undeserving of benefits and protection (De Genova 2017: 7).

The use of these very diverse frames has constructed an ambivalent portrayal of migrants as both invaders and innocent victims and the media has taken part in the construction of these. Such contradictions have led to polarized discourses, fueling the political debate between the right-

wing nationalist- and the liberal-humanitarian discourse (Harrison, 2016). This particular approach in framing has been described by Triandafyllidou as a rationality frame, which is used as an interpretive frame identifying the problem, while referring to rationality in order to justify decisions (Triandafyllidou 2018: 215). This approach leads to a question, which is a common theme in the literature on media and migration, namely the interaction between the political sphere and media framing, and who actually controls the agenda. Scholars such as Conny Roggeband and Rens Vliegenthart (2007) have worked extensively on this question, in their study of the relationship between the Dutch parliament and the traditional media in relation to migration and integration between 1995-2004. They concluded that there was relatively little correlation between the two spheres, with divergent shifts in framing and frame variation (Roggeband & Vliegenthart 2007: 24). However, in the "refugee crisis" ten years later, it has been argued that the political discourse mirrored the media discourse, following a similar frame trajectory as exemplified above, shifting from a moralistic frame in the early discovery stage, towards a securitization or threat frame shortly following the alarmed discovery stage (Consterdine 2018: 23). This shift is also apparent in the legislative documents developed in the EU during the "crisis", where the EU initially began by managing the flows through distribution and quotas, quickly moving towards an effective emergency requiring exceptional measures and strengthened border controls. However, the question remains, who introduced these frames first.

4.6.3 Media Framing and Policymaking

Dekker and Scholten distinguish several factors in the media's coverage on policy issues relating to migration, that could contribute to a possible frame change on the political agenda (Dekker & Scholten, 2017), including:

1. The quantity of media attention: This factor is part of the central idea in traditional agenda-setting studies, which believes that the more salient an issue is, the higher is the likelihood that it will have an agenda-setting effect.
2. The framing of the issue: If the framing in the media is similar to the issue framing on the policy agenda, it is a *"frame agreement"* while if the framing differs, it is a *"frame contestation"*. According to Dekker and Scholten, if a frame contestation is experienced,

the media is critical towards the current policy frames and is more likely to lead to a policy change (Dekker & Scholten, 2017).

Dekker and Scholten further explain that the *"prevalence of frames in media coverage ranges from domination of one frame (frame consonance) to the coexistence of several frames that are given roughly equal attention (frame dissonance)" (Ibid.)*. To have a frame consonance, a frame needs to be dominant throughout a broad selection of media outlets and publications, and the study hypothesize that a change in policy is more likely when the media coverage is overwhelmingly experiencing a frame consonance, while reporting using a singular frame over a longer timer period is more likely to influence the policy decisions (Ibid).

To analyze how these frames are presented by the media and responded to by MEPs in the Parliament, understanding the complex relationship between the media, politicians and policymaking is crucial (Boswell & Smellie 2023: 17). These three venues are governed by different logics, with politicians seeking re-election, their venue is mainly communicative, relying on public support and to further individual agendas, while policymaking is more coordinative, working towards policy construction and a goal of implementing policies (Boswell & Smellie, 2023; Garcés-Mascareñas & Pastore, 2022; Schmidt, 2008). Each venue will thus also have its own relationship to the media, with politicians being more reactive as well as a part of a two-way relationship (Maneri, 2023). Politicians are believed to have significant influence in shaping the way the media describes an issue, while the media influences how the news are selected, and which frames are used when the news are presented. Furthermore, the politicians will use the media to monitor public attitudes and also react to the frames presented (Boswell & Smellie 2023: 10). How a political actor will react depends on their individual interests and goals. This thus place a distinction between the policy and political sphere (Garcés-Mascareñas & Pastore 2022: 9), which is especially evident in the case of the EU, where the two spheres are rather disconnected, through its policymaking taking place on multiple levels, with a larger number of actors involved in the process, both political and non-political.

This leads to the conclusion that the relationship between the media, politics and public opinion is best described as a political communication triangle. The media is a component in shaping

public attitudes, with established literature overwhelmingly agreeing that the media framing of migration is a contributing factor in the shaping of public attitudes towards migrants and migration (Consterdine, 2018; Greussing & Boomgarden, 2017). However, as demonstrated above, the media does not develop frames in isolation from the wider politics of migration, and most research agree that the political and media discourse are highly interlinked, which creates a "causality dilemma" between the two (Schweitzer et al. 2018: 17). However, whether they construct the frame or reinforce it, the contemporary media ecology is a critical player by raising awareness of topics, conveying developments and issues, and revealing an issue salience to the public (Picard 2014: 3). Despite these mutually reinforcing roles, it has also been found that the impact of the media on the public and politics is greatest when the overall policy of an issue is unclear, with no parliamentary consensus on how to approach the issue (Wolfsfeld 2014). This could be argued for the "refugee crisis", as the use of skillfully mediated shifting frames could ensue a change in policies on migration easier due to the alleged pressure of the "crisis". The media narrative could therefore have had a greater impact in the perceived crisis-environment in which it was deployed rather than if it had been introduced in an environment with a clear political strategy in place (Krzyżanowski et al. 2018: 7).

There is no lack of research on the representation of migrants in the media, however more research is needed to clarify the conditions the media attention and framing have on hindering or helping active policy formations on migration in Europe, as well as overall EU related studies. Policy formations do not occur in a vacuum, but they are a result of inter-relational discursive processes, in which the migrants are constructed and reconstructed (Brouwer et al. 2017: 102). This social construction of the migratory threat is reinforced by the interaction between the political, public and media discourses and as mentioned in the introductory chapter, the media's role within this interaction is best described with a quote by Caviedes, as "*the more often the press mentions a particular issue and links it to a social ill, the more likely that issue is to be considered a "crisis" meriting political action and resolution" (Caviedes 2015: 900).*

4.7 Discussion of Research Gap

During the so-called "crisis", the EU leaders struggled to coherently approach the increasing number of people arriving in Europe. Durable solutions were instead substituted by ad hoc

policymaking and short-term emergency measures, thus making reforming an area such as migration and asylum, which has always been characterized by a hesitant approach to common supranational legislations, difficult. This hesitation has possibly resulted in delayed decision-making processes, vaguely defined legal texts and gaps in the implementation and overall harmonization of Directives in the Member States. The "crisis" thus quickly challenged both the design and adequacy of the CEAS. The incapability of cooperating in the area of migration has proven to be a large component in creating the so-called "crisis", and lessons learned suggest that the current EU asylum system is still not prepared for similar future challenges, despite the fact, that we live in a world, where migration is expected to only increase. It is therefore important to understand what impact the media have had in influencing the EU's ability to promote safe migration and provide for a coherent reform of the CEAS.

Although, as previously mentioned, there is no lack of research on the representation of migrants in the media, more research is still needed to clarify the conditions the media attention and framing have on hindering or helping active policy formations on migration in Europe, as well as within EU policy related studies. Furthermore, most research relating to migration narratives and framing has so far focused on single country studies or single country comparative studies, while research specifically approaching the Eurocentric studies has been scarce. Most previous research however suggest that the media indeed matter for the political agenda, but we are still lacking knowledge about concrete influence, which in the case of the EU, could benefit specifically from a Eurocentric- and international comparative perspective, rather than a single country methodology, to provide a more holistic picture of European media frames on migration and its effects. Furthermore, previous studies are very issue-specific, lacking the longitudinal advantage that is foreseen in this research, which will include both the pre- and post- "crisis" landscape, as it remains crucial to understand the variations relying on an assessment of long-term media effects.

To study these effects, this research will move beyond the traditional idea of agenda-setting to determine how an issue arrives on the agenda and to understand the impact on the policymaking process. This will require a combination of approaches. The salience, and thus the quantity of media attention, is required to research the likelihood of an issue achieving an agenda-setting

effect. Furthermore, to deepen this discussion, the concept of framing will be deployed, as it is not only relevant what the media writes about, but it is equally important how they write about it. The quantity of media coverage is generally assumed to correspond with issue salience on the political agenda, while the frames are assumed to correspond with the changes on the political agenda. This research will therefore involve both the amount of coverage produced on this specific issue and the normative question of how this issue is covered by the media, and how these different frames may affect the choices of policymakers.

The issue-attention cycle will be drawn upon, as frame salience and dynamics are believed to shift during the course of a crisis. This research will thus be specifically interested in the change of framing during an issue-attention cycle, as previous studies have shown that each stage will call for a particular dominant frame and a variation in the semantic meaning over time. Previously, scholars have investigated something similar (Snow, Vliegenthart & Corrigall-Brown, 2007), finding that an increased number of frames are present when an issue is at its highest intensity within the media and regarding public attention. When the issue loses its novelty, a consensus in the media will be reached on how to frame and understand the issue, which is called a "frame crystallization", and occurs when only a limited number of frames are used (Greussing & Boomgarden 2017: 1753). The research will therefore test the hypothesis in a dynamic and comparative manner, expanding the period of analysis to capture shifts in frames and their impact, taking into account the interrelated discursive process between the political, public and media actors, all constructing and reconstructing the migration frames together, drawing on the theoretical concepts as introduced in this chapter, and illustrated below in Figure 4. This figure introduces the connectivity between the theoretical concepts that will be deployed during the analysis, with an assumption that framing will have a direct impact on agenda-setting and the Securitization process, and a strong but less direct impact on the issue-attention cycle, which is also in large degree determined by quantity and salience. The other arrows indicate the more indirect impacts that are expected between the other components.

Figure 4: The theoretical concepts. Source: Figure created by author based on own research
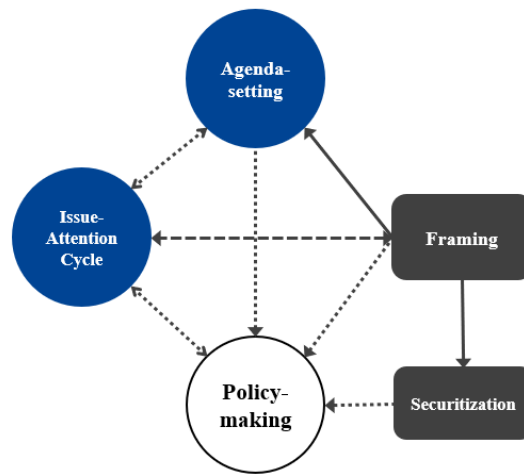
In this process, involving both traditional and social media is crucial, as a complete separation between the two is no longer realistic. This bi-directional exchange between news outlets and Twitter users is a dynamic interplay, in which frames are co-created, as proven within this theoretical and conceptual chapter. It is thus essential to involve both variables in contemporary studies, and to establish the differences and similarities of frames across these information channels. Twitter was considered as a highly relevant social media channel for this research, due to its open nature for data gathering, but also as the platform has a high number of politically active users, both from the political, media and public arena.

This research will thus attempt to move away from a static conceptualization of associations, to produce a more dynamic framework to examine and understand this correlation, as the media effect cannot be viewed as a linear process, but rather a complex causal interaction, with multiple contingencies and feedback effects. Both policy attention and actions are theoretically important when seeking to understand media effects on the process, which is why both concepts are included in the analysis. Policy attention will represent the more immediate response of policymakers to an increased level of media attention and varying frames, while policy actions will measure the impact on the behavior of the policymakers. Most previous studies can agree that heightened media attention to an issue will usually lead to increased policy attention. However, less research has focused on the dynamic mechanisms that lead media attention and

framing from influencing the media attention to impacting policy actions, and the studies that have researched this have presented contradictory results. It is important to note, that there will be no simple answer to the question of who leads whom in the debate of media and political impact, and the findings may vary between issues and contexts. Therefore, this research will not seek to answer the overarching question on media's impact on policymaking but rather limit the field of study to EU migration policymaking within the set timeframe, and more specifically the impact on the Dublin Regulation and its recast procedures, taking place during the time of investigation.

The epistemological starting point for this research is thus constitutive insofar as it is assumed that the media matter for both policy debates and decision-making within the European Union. Through a constructivist approach, this research will seek to broaden the already rich literature relating to the media's framing of migration, and its impact on migration policymaking, by going beyond the symbolic European Parliamentary political agenda to also include the substantive policy practices and deliveries. This will include a combination of the theory of securitization and framing, where the first will provide a critical constructivist approach to how an issue such as migration is securitized, while the latter will offer a way to overcome some limitations inherent in the study of securitization and provide for a more open approach to the topic.

5. METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

5.1 Studying Media Impact in the EU – an Introduction to the Methodology

How the media frames evolve, and impact EU politics and policymaking will be researched using a mixed methods research design, for which the approach and methodology will be outlined in this chapter. Furthermore, the study will be based on extant literature on securitization, agenda-setting, issue-attention and framing, and will include a number of components from these theories in the analysis, including issue salience and issue framing. Firstly, issue salience will be included, as it is the central component in traditional agenda-setting studies, believing that a higher media salience equates to a higher likelihood of an issue achieving a policy agenda-setting effect (Dekker & Scholten, 2017). Secondly, this analysis will also include issue frames and framing theory, as it is hypothesized to be central when discussing the effect of the media on policy agendas and policy change. In order to include both perspectives in the analysis, this study will move away from a traditional agenda-setting macro-approach, which is usually based only on time-series data, and instead seek to combine several methods, to both explore causality, but also ensure the complexity needed when approaching the interaction between the media and policymaking. Furthermore, very little is still known in relation to the dynamics of media discourses and their impact relating to the so-called European "refugee crisis" in general, and even less in terms of systematic and comparative analysis (Heidenreich et al. 2019: 74). Therefore, the following chapters will present a comprehensive analysis on the dynamics of the media coverage and their impact on political discussions and decisions, based on EU and international media.

This study will thus seek to contribute theoretically, through an understanding of the impact of the salience and frames on the EU policymaking over the five-year period defined, including both frame dissonance and frame consonance. Furthermore, it will contribute methodologically by qualitatively and quantitatively exploring the contingent impact of both issues on the policy agenda and deliveries by the Parliament. This will be done through a compilation of three large-scale corpora of news articles from five leading EU online newspapers, tweets, and European Parliamentary debates. These corpora will be analyzed using the previously introduced theories, to extract and discuss patterns and underlying frames used when describing migration, including

the coding of these frames. This will then lead to a regression analysis that will be conducted to reveal the possible relationship or correlation between these three variables. The analysis will be concluded with a chapter analyzing the alignments and divergences between the frames used in the media and the EU political venue, to assess the media's possible impact, through a qualitative methodology inspired by comparative analysis. Although this approach might not reveal a causal relationship in itself, the combination of methods, including variables such as the political context, the analysis of media attention and frames and the political discussions during the five-year period, will make it possible to deduct a probable causality. In this regard, it is important to note, as previously mentioned, that the relationship between the media and the political venue is highly complex and multidirectional, which will need to be taken into account throughout all steps of the analysis.

5.2 Data Collection

How the sources for the analysis were chosen, and the data processed and coded will be exemplified in this chapter. Firstly, the period of research was defined, to be between 01 January 2013 and 31 December 2017. Including data from this time period allows for a longitudinal investigation of possible frame variations during the different stages of the so-called "crisis", as it captures both two years before and after what was considered the height of the "crisis" in 2015. The research will thus expand on the period of analysis, compared to similar previous studies, to more comprehensively capture possible shifts in frames, and which possible impact these have had on the policy deliveries during this time, in a dynamic and comparative manner. However, although the timeframe has been expanded, compared to similar studies, it still remains short enough to allow this research to discuss specific events, and their impact on the changes in frames.

To do this, it was decided that the corpora should be divided into three variables, including a number of online newspapers and periodicals, a social media site and relevant European Parliamentary debate minutes. The specification of the decisions and considerations made for these three variables will follow later in this chapter. To identify the relevant articles, social media posts and debate minutes, a wide search criteria was sought, in order to create a reliable sample, aiming to capture all stories relating to migrants, refugees, immigrants or asylum seekers

arriving, traveling to, or living within the EU and stories about European immigration or asylum policies. For clarification, migration will in this regard be understood as *"a population movement encompassing any kind of movement of people, whatever its length, composition and causes" (IOM, 2011),* and it will include all areas of migration, including but not limited to; economic migrants, transit migrants, family migration, and the forcibly displaced. Furthermore, this research will focus on migration policy narratives that do not explicitly differentiate between the different types of migration, but in the given period researched, implicitly and dominantly target migration of asylum seekers and irregular migration to, or migrants with irregular status within the EU. For this purpose, irregular migration refers to *the "movement of persons that takes place outside the laws, regulations or international agreements governing the entry into or exits from the state of origin, transit or destination" (IOM, 2021).* Lastly, asylum seekers will be understood as those individuals seeking international protection due to fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinions in their country of citizenship or residence (Sahin-Mencütek 2020:1).

A Boolean search string was therefore developed to include words either based on the stem of asyl, refugee, immigr, migrant or a combination of these, including insensitive terms, which resulted in the final search string:

> (atleast3 refugee* or atleast3 asylum* or atleast3 immigr* or atleast3 migrant* or atleast3 illegal migr* or atleast3 illegal immigra* or atleast3 irregular migr* or atleast3 irregular immigra*) and (europe or eu or greece or italy or Schengen or turkey[4] or Balkan route)

This search string ensures sensitivity and specificity for the traditional media collected, and that only items whose primary theme related to the issue of migration was included in the final data collection. All search terms should occur at least three times in each article collected, anywhere in the heading(s), main text or caption, and it should include at least one of the stems as well as a geographical marker to ensure that the focus of the story is on issues of migration in relation to

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[4] The search string included the then commonly known Turkey, rather than Türkiye, as the official request to change this spelling was not submitted to the UN before December 2021 and would thus not have been reflected in the data collected for this research, which spanned between 2013 and 2017.

Europe. The selection of articles based on the above search string using certain stem keywords, which are linked to the broadly defined issue of migration and being geographically marked in Europe, should ensure a corpus which is relatively monothematic, which is key for the analysis, and the process of identifying frames and framing shifts.

5.2.1 Defining the Sources - Questionnaire for the Members of the European Parliament

To ensure that the sources used for the two first variables, newspapers and social media, would be of relevance to this study, a questionnaire was distributed to the Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) on their online media use and preferences. This questionnaire was active from October 2021 to December 2021 and was sent to all MEPs serving under the legislative period of 2019 to 2024, which at the time of distribution counted 703 MEPs. The questionnaire was sent through personally addressed emails and included two personal reminders sent after three and six weeks respectively. However, getting engagement from MEPs on surveys and the like are generally considered challenging, and it was thus deemed adequate to use the 73 answers received (10% of the MEPs) from 18 different countries (67% of all the Member States), as an indicator for media preferences for all MEPs.

The questionnaire asked the following questions:
- Q1. When reading online news, which of the following do you frequent most regularly?
- Q2. Which online news outlet do you read most regularly?
- Q3. How often do you read these news outlets?
- Q4. Which of these social media websites do you frequent most regularly?
- Q5. In your professional role, which is the most influential media source for EU news?

The full list of answers to these questions can be found in Appendix A, *Findings from Questionnaire for Members of the European Parliament – Online media use and preferences.* The answers will be used to shape the analysis, by guiding the definition of the sources to be used in the data collection. As regards to the countries of the participating MEPs, 43 chose to disclose their Member State in the questionnaire, and they are represented as follows, listed in numerical and alphabetical order in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Nationality of MEPs participating in questionnaire (European Parliament, 2024a)

Nationality	Number of participants	Member State seats in Parliament	% of MEPs per country
German	7	96	7.3%
French	6	79	7.6%
Danish	4	14	28.6%
Italian	4	76	5.3%
Portuguese	4	21	19%
Belgian	3	21	14.3%
Austrian	2	19	10.5%
Dutch	2	29	6.9%
Spanish	2	59	3.4%
Czech	1	21	4.8%
Finish	1	14	7.1%
Irish	1	13	7.7%
Lithuanian	1	11	9%
Maltese	1	6	16.7%
Polish	1	51	2%
Romanian	1	33	3%
Slovenian	1	8	12.5%
Swedish	1	21	4.8%

MEPs from 18 countries took part in the questionnaire, which means that 67% of all Member States are represented. The number of MEPs per country is also distributed relatively evenly, when considering the total number of seats per Member States as defined in the Lisbon Treaty Article 9 A. According to this, the seats are distributed degressively proportional to the population of the respective Member State, with Germany having most seats per country, reaching the maximum number of seats allowed, as per the Lisbon Treaty, with 96 seats. Outliers' worth mentioning is the high number of Danish and Portuguese MEPs participating in the questionnaire considering the number of MEPs representing the country at the Parliament, as well as the low number of Spanish, Romanian and Polish MEPs participating, when compared to their total number of seats. One factor which could influence the high number of Danish MEPs participating in the questionnaire, could be due to the nationality of the author, and could thus

create a bias in the representation of the nationalities within the questionnaire. However, since this number still remains relatively low, it was deemed to not have a significant impact on the overall findings.

5.2.2 Traditional Media Corpora

For the purpose of defining the first part of the data collection, choosing the online newspaper sources to be included in the traditional media corpus, a combination of considerations was made. Firstly, the answers from the MEPs to Q1, Q2 and Q5 from the questionnaire were used, in a combination with considerations relating to the needs of the analysis. Given that the primary focus of the analysis is on the media impact on EU policymaking, the news sources chosen should cover EU news and decision-making continuously, and the sources should be followed by EU decision-makers. Choosing sources that were most frequently mentioned by MEPs in the questionnaire ensures that the news sources chosen are followed by the relevant decision-makers, while choosing broadsheet international and EU online news sources ensures that the sources cover the interest of all of the EU, rather than having a country specific focus. This deduction led to a decision of including five English speaking international and EU based news sources. Before including these sources in the final data collection, they were screened to ensure that they would live up to the following characteristics, summarized as: representing traditional online media and EU topics; a considerable online audience size (daily circulation/reach, determined through media analysis using hyperstat.com and Eurotopics.net); and availability (due to the dependency of media archives). These steps resulted in choosing the following sources for the final data collection of the traditional media corpus[5]:

- **Politico EU** (Liberal - Politico.eu receives approximately 287K visitors and 529,746 page impressions per day)
- **Financial Times** (Liberal – Ft.com receives approximately 1.3M visitors and 2,877,740 page impressions per day)
- **Euractiv** (Euractiv.com receives approximately 26K visitors and 46,143 page impressions per day)

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[5] Based on Hyperstat statistics retrieved on 19 February 2025

- **Euronews** (Euronews.com receives approximately 1M visitors and 1,757,099 page impressions per day)
- **The Economist** (Liberal – Economist.com receives approximately 527.9K visitors and 1,369,387 page impressions per day)

The findings from the questionnaire and the choice of including these 5 broadsheet online news sources also aligned with previous research, from for example Burson-Marsteller, which ran a Brussels Media Consumption Survey back in 2018, where they labeled Politico *"the most influential publication on European affairs" (COMRES, 2018).* Furthermore, these sources will separate the research from previous research, as most studies investigating similar topics have relied on a single country focus of national media sources, which cannot necessarily capture the bigger picture for the EU institutions and their daily work.

However, a few considerations should be made, and limitations noted, before proceeding with the choice of including only international English-speaking broadsheet news sources. As argued by Hansen and colleagues in 2021, there is an arguable elite bias in making this choice, as including tabloids might have given a wider sense of what the EU public was reading at the time (Hansen et al., 2021). Tabloid and broadsheet news sources differ in several key aspects, where tabloids often prioritize the content that provides entertainment to the reader, as well as a sense of sensationalism (Love, 2016), drawing on the readers emotions (Baker, 2010), broadsheets are believed to employ a more restrained reporting approach. The overall difference between the two styles thus often lies in the content focus and reporting style. So, although including both could have been an interesting approach, which could provide valuable insights to the topic, this analysis will rely only on the five mentioned broadsheet news sources, due to both practical and resource considerations, but also due to the research focus, which will benefit more from including EU and internationally based news sources, rather than national tabloids. This was also decided, by taking into account the answers provided by the MEPs to the questionnaire, to ensure that the news sources included were actually regularly read by the relevant decision-makers.

The data from four out of five sources, namely the Financial Times, Euractiv, Euronews and the Economist were all gathered through the online interface Factiva, which is an all-online archival

service that covers many international periodicals and other publications and was chosen due to its ability to deliver full-text versions of newspaper content in standardized formats, that enable a large-scale data collection. All sections of the chosen newspapers were included in the search, as it is difficult to presume where migration-related content will appear in each publication. This database is a reliable academic database that is available for inter alia scientific research. However, as for Politico Europe, data was not available on any of the major online interfaces, and the articles were thus retrieved using Politico's own website search engine. It is important to note that this search engine was not as advanced as the one used on Factiva and using a Boolean search string was thus not possible. Therefore, all articles gathered from Politico Europe has been based on simple search strings of refugee*, asyl*, immigr*, migrant* and migr*, and has been manually checked to ensure that they live up to the other search criteria included in the Boolean search string for the other sources. Furthermore, it is also important to note that Politico Europe was not established before April 2015, when it took over from a periodical called European Voice. Any article published prior to this date was available through Politico Europe's search engine on their website, but are linked to the European Voice, although this will have no impact on either the data collection or analysis.

Before processing the final results of the first stage of the data collection, a deduplication procedure was applied, to eliminate exact replications and duplicate articles, that may arise for several reasons, including faulty archiving (Eberl et al. 2019: 24). This process resulted in a total of (N) 9,759 online newspaper articles from the five chosen news outlets, and (N) 7,781,113 words, as shown in Table 3. Financial Times is by far taking up the highest percentage of the total corpus, both when evaluating the percentage of N articles and N words. For qualitative validation purposes, ten random articles of each source for each year were read.

Table 3: Traditional media corpora (Own research)

Description of traditional media corpora	
Search string	(atleast3 refugee* or atleast3 asylum* or atleast3 immigr* or atleast3 migrant* or atleast3 illegal migr* or atleast3 illegal immigra* or atleast3 irregular migr* or atleast3 irregular immigra*) and (europe or eu or greece or italy or Schengen or turkey or Balkan route)

Media outlets	N (articles)	% of corpus	N (words)	% of corpus
Politico EU	1,099	11.26%	691,261	8.88%
Financial Times	4,979	51.02%	4,548,978	58.46%
Euractiv	2,286	23.42%	1,870,034	24.03%
Euronews	358	3.67%	307,976	3.96%
The Economist	1,037	10.63%	362,864	4.67%

5.2.3 Twitter Corpora

Due to the increasing importance of understanding how political issues are being discussed on all media platforms, including a social media site in an analysis such as this one is crucial (Shehata & Strömbäck 2021: 125). To represent the social media part of the data collection, Twitter was selected, inter alia due to its open access approach, MEPs answers to Q4 of the questionnaire relating to their social media preference, and due to Twitters ability to capture rapid public reactions.

For analytical purposes, Twitter as a platform is highly interesting, with more than 320 million active users and more than 500 million daily posts, at the time of research. Furthermore, it is considered to be a leading global social media site, especially for political discussions and for accessing news[6] (Walsh 2020: 1138). The relevance of Twitter in an analysis as this one, was further elaborated by Marcello Maneri, that argued that Twitter is the platform most *"integrated with mainstream media, as politicians, journalists, writers, bloggers, and social media teams use Twitter to promote their views and impose them on newspapers and TV news programmes, making it one of the main backbones of the hybrid media system"* (Maneri 2023: 11).

Twitter as a platform allows its users a rapid dissemination of information, as it does not have the barriers that exist for other media, allowing its users to freely express themselves in micro-blogging form. Tweets are considered quick and short updates, which until 2017 was constrained to up to 140 characters per tweet, creating an innovative communication method. Furthermore,

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[6] These statements were all accurate at the time of research and writing. However, it should here be noted, that points may have changed at the time of publication, due to the change in ownership and rebranding of this social media platform. But, as previously mentioned, this change will have no bearing within this analysis, and the rebranding will thus not be reflected, as these all took place after the period of research, as well as the time of data collection.

the use of hashtags (represented by the symbol #), can help associate the individual tweet with content of the same topic by categorizing the tweets using such hashtag, by the keyword. Including hashtags in the analysis have been found to provide valuable information about the tweet, as it can reflect the overall sentiment, and can serve as a strong indicator of whether it was written sarcastically or not (Bozdag & Smets, 2017), which can otherwise be difficult to determine on social media platforms such as Twitter. Another aspect of the tweet that can be useful in an analysis is the use of retweets. Retweets allow users to publicly share another tweet, which can help forward the news and share the content more widely, as a way of either validating the content of the tweet, or in order to engage or argue with it. However, research has previously found, that a retweet is fast and convenient, but rarely influenced by factors such as the source of the original tweet, and its reliability (Ibid.). Therefore, when collecting the Twitter corpus, there are several key aspects that should be included and the N corpora for Twitter in this analysis thus also includes metadata, such as sender's information, retweets, likes and hashtags. Retweets and likes will be retained, as they are critical in the information dissemination and as an indication of interest in a tweet. These interactions will be defined as the publicly observable reactions to the content, while interactions such as comments and elaborated retweets will not be included in the analysis, to avoid biases from heavy user commenting and the like (Heidenreich & Eberl 2021: 146).

The search string used on Twitter is based on the Boolean search string used for collecting the traditional online media sources, as follows: *(refugee* or asylum* or immigr* or migrant* or illegal migr* or illegal immigra* or irregular migr* or irregular immigra*) and (europe or eu or greece or italy or Schengen or turkey or Balkan route),* and tweets were collected using the Twitter Application Programming Interface (API). This search string, contrary to the media data collection search string, does not include the least number of times that the search terms must occur, as this would be counterproductive when searching for relevant tweets, due to their limited length.

It was further chosen to collect the 1,000 most retweeted tweets relating to the topic, to cover 200 per year from 2013 to 2017. This was chosen, for a number of reasons, including the fact that, while advances have been made in machine-learning, pattern recognition and sentiment

analysis, automated approaches can loose the deeper meanings of certain communications, including tweets, which could be written with a sarcastic tone, or other nuances, such as who the sender of the tweets is, that machine-learning programmes has yet to capture (Altheide & Schneider, 2013). Therefore, to rigorously and systematically map the thematic framing of the social media corpus, this research also employs a qualitative approach, through manual coding of the 1,000 collected tweets. Furthermore, the measures of responsiveness, including the number of likes, retweets and comments were stored as a proxy measure of visibility, reach and impact for these tweets.

However, to avoid skewness in the data and to run validity checks, all tweets relating to the topic were also collected. As shown in Table 4, this resulted in 800,589 tweets, and 19,633,408 words, or 18,066 words when analyzing the 1,000 most retweeted tweets. For qualitative validation purposes, 30 random tweets for each year were read.

Table 4: Twitter corpora (Own research)

Description of Twitter corpora		
Search string	(refugee* or asylum* or immigr* or migrant* or illegal migr* or illegal immigra* or irregular migr* or irregular immigra*) and (europe or eu or greece or italy or Schengen or turkey or Balkan route)	
Description	N (tweets)	N (words)
Most retweeted tweets	1,000	18,066
All tweets	800,589	19,633,408

5.2.4 European Parliamentary Debates Corpora

The last part of the three-part large-scale data collection is the collection of the European Parliamentary Debate minutes, including written and oral questions. All text was web scrapped from the official Parliament website in their original language, except for multilingual texts, where English was selected, in HTML and PDF format, including metadata; Parliament, date and type of document. It should be noted that the number of questions that can be asked is limited,

especially in regards to oral questions. For reference, there are three categories of Parliamentary questions included:

1. Questions for oral answer dealt with during plenary sittings (Rule 136)
2. Questions for Question Time asked during the period set aside for questions during plenary sittings (Rule 137)
3. Written questions with a request for a written answer (Rule 138) (European Parliament, 2019).

Another type of question includes the Parliamentary Questions, which are questions addressed to other European Union Institutions and bodies from the MEPs. These are a direct form of Parliamentary scrutiny of other EU institutions.

MEPs speak in their respective languages, and from November 2012 onwards, Parliamentary debates are no longer translated into English. However, using machine translations for multilingual corpora into English has been proven useful in previous studies (e.g. De Vries, Schoonvelde & Schumacher, 2018), despite the possible grammatical errors that can occur. Since this study will rely mainly on lemmatized words in a bag-of-word approach, word order in the document is less important than the frequency of which specific sentiment-bearing words occur (Heidenreich et al 2022: 8). Furthermore, today, machine translations have been demonstrated to reach almost human translation quality and are now widely employed when working with multilingual automated content analysis in the social sciences (Lind et al., 2021; Heidenreich et al., 2022). Therefore, all debates were translated into English using DeepL translations for most of the 27 official languages, except for Croatian, Irish and Maltese, which were not available through this platform. For these three languages Google Translate was used. After the data collection, all Parliamentary debates were thus subsequently translated for verifications, and the data was manually read and cleaned to ensure that only the debates relating to migration, living up to the Boolean search strings used in previous searches, was included in the final analysis, as the European Parliamentary website allow only for a more limited search string. Furthermore, a random sample of translations were externally validated by mother tongue speakers.

This process resulted in 315 debates and 3,290,693 words, as shown in Table 5. This N corpora will represent the policy attention to the issue.

Table 5: European Parliamentary debates corpora (Own research)

Description of European Parliamentary debates corpora		
Search string	(refugee* or asylum* or immigr* or migrant* or illegal migr* or illegal immigra* or irregular migr* or irregular immigra*) and (europe or eu or greece or italy or Schengen or turkey or Balkan route)	
Description	N (debates)	N (words)
EU Parliamentary debates	315	3,290,693

5.2.5 Data Management

The collected data was stored in separate files for each calendar month, divided by the year, as the analysis relies on the data set as monthly data. This decision was made, due to the assumption that media attention is cyclical (Downs, 1972) and that media influence will take place in short time intervals, since previous studies have found that politicians react to the media, either immediately after, or not at all, due to the risk of losing momentum (Walgrave et al., 2008; Vliegenthart et al., 2016). There is a number of ways that politicians can react to media coverage, and these reactions are not believed to happen automatically, but rather as a selective way of using media coverage to inter alia advance once own agenda in politics. Reactions can thus be immediate, through statements made using different channels, including personal social media sites, where politicians can comment, share, or write about news stories. Another, less immediate, way of reacting to the media, is during Parliamentary debates, which will be the focus of this research. Thus, since the European Parliament plenaries take place once a month, over a four-day period, the data should be compared and analyzed monthly and diachronically.

5.3 The Added Value of a Mixed Methods Research Design

The analysis will rely on a mixed methods research design, combining both quantitative systematic data gathering and a qualitative interpretive analysis, rooted in the constructivist approach. This is done to produce multiple sources of evidence when seeking to explain the

possible impact media has on migration policies, triangulating the findings to offset limitations. This approach also recognizes the fact that the framing of migration cannot be captured alone by an automatic content analysis, as concluded by previous similar studies (Pugh & Moya 2020: 9), and thus needs more evidence captured through a dynamic analysis based on multiple comparative steps.

Prior to the analysis of the corpus, a number of pre-processing steps were applied to the data, to ensure that the further analysis would only include the corpus that represented the meaning of the texts. The first step included the application of pre-processing techniques that would reduce the complexity of the language within the texts, including the removal of English known stopwords, names and punctuations. For this purpose, the Natural Language Toolkit list (NLTK), which includes a list of stopwords such as a, an, in, etc., was used. This list was also manually modified to fit with the needs of the analysis, as using a generic list could have negative consequences on the performance of inter alia the sentiment analysis, as a standard list removes words such as not, couldn't etc. The full list of 201 words included in the final stopword list can be found in Appendix B, *the Natural Language Toolkit list of stop-words*. Following the removal of the stopwords, the nouns and verbs were reduced to their word stem through lemmatization. This was applied, to identify semantically identical words, reducing the complexity of the corpus, by mapping words that refer to the same base, or dictionary form of a word, which is known as the lemma. For example, when confronted with the word saw, lemmatization will attempt to return the word to either see or saw, depending on whether the word was used as a verb or a noun (Grimmer & Stewart 2013: 6).

To perform these pre-processing steps, MAXDictio was used. MAXDictio is a plug-in software, which is accessed and run through the MAXQDA Analytics Pro platform and is a state-of-the-art text analysis software that allow to easily analyze texts through its quantitative and qualitative text analysis tools. MAXDictio allows data that has been collected from different locations to be analyzed both separately and together, all managed in the MAXDictio document system, that can be arranged in groups. For the purpose of this analysis, these groups were divided between the three variables, in years and months. For the pre-processing steps, the software allows the user to apply stopword lists and lemmatize the grouped text corpus, and for the further analysis, it

includes several relevant features, such as word frequencies, word clouds, text comparison charts, dictionary-based content analysis and a word combination analysis.

Figure 5: Steps for data processing and analysis. Source: Figure created by author based on own research
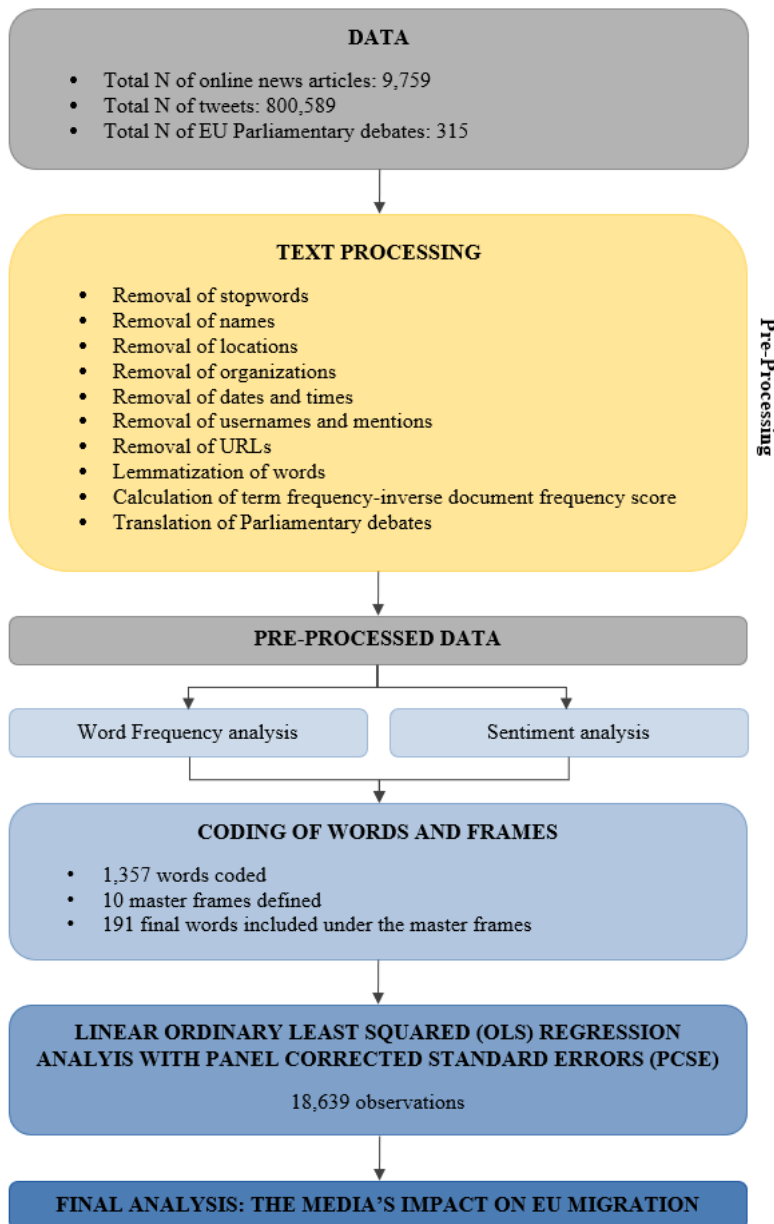
Following the pre-processing of the data, the keywords were defined through a machine-based automated content analysis. These keywords were then manually checked for relevance, and a collocate analysis was applied to allow for a more discursive analysis of the words. Following these steps, the most dominant frames were defined. This particular approach was built on several prior studies, which have been working with a similar methodological framework, first introduced by Van Group in 2010 (Van Gorp, 2010; Greussing & Boomgaarden, 2017; Pugh & Moya, 2020). This approach relies on a mixed method research design, through a combination of inductive and deductive framing analysis.

Firstly, the research followed the structure of a similar analysis conducted by Greussing and Boomgaarden in 2017, by creating a catalogue of the most dominant frames, which were identified in an inductive manner, taking into account all 9,793 articles in the database. The same process was subsequently conducted for the N corpora of tweets and N corpora of Parliamentary debates, while the 1,000 most retweeted tweets were manually coded. These frames were then added in the coding sheets, to serve as the dependent variable in order to examine the media's impact on the Parliamentary debates in a dynamic and comparative manner. The full process has been exemplified in Figure 5, which also includes the subsequent steps of the analysis process, namely the linear ordinary least squared (OLS) regression analysis with panel corrected standard errors (PCSE), that will be applied to reveal possible correlations between the three variables, based on the framing analysis conducted. The final step of the analysis will include an examination of the alignments and divergences between the frames used in the media and the EU political venue, to assess the media's possible impact, building on all the previous analysis steps. This part of the analysis will include a qualitative comparative analysis inspired methodology, which will enable the analysis to take into account multiple cases, in a complex setting, which can be used to explain why possible changes happen within the policy process in the Parliament, allowing the analysis to discern relationships between conditions and outcomes. This is a theory-driven approach, meaning that it is driven by an initial theory of change, in relation to which aspects of the interventions and contexts matter. It is thus important, when determining whether said condition is present, to have a precise definition of that condition, including the circumstances as to when this condition will be considered to be present, in the given analysis. This approach was originally developed by Charles Ragin in 1987 (Ragin, 1987).

5.3.1 Quantitative Framing Analysis

The first step of the inductive framing analysis is the definition of keywords, which were derived through a frequency-based comparison, using a machine-based automated content analysis. For this purpose, a word is defined as a sequence of characters, which will be split by a whitespace, and is stripped of non-word characters. This part of the analysis was conducted by means of the computer-assisted text analysis tools provided by MAXDictio, including word frequencies software, dictionary-based content analysis and word combination analysis. These features can

efficiently reveal systematic patterns in large data sets, while also taking into account the dynamics of news frames over time (Greussing & Boomgaarden 2017: 1754).

Although word frequency analysis is understood as being one of the more basic applications in quantitative framing analysis, it is a good starting point for a large-scale text corpus, as it reveals the most frequently occurring words, and how often these specific words appear (Ibid.). Thus, when beginning an analysis of a text corpus as large as this one, producing a word frequency analysis is a good place to start. This approach can provide insights into hidden trends in especially large data sets, and this automated frequency analysis, which builds on the bag-of-word representation of the corpus, can reveal the semantic context which is embedded in the more latent dimensions of the texts, offering valuable information for the subsequent steps in the analysis. The word frequency analysis was thus applied firstly to the 9,759 articles included from the traditional media corpora, followed by the 800,589 tweets and 315 Parliamentary debates.

After the word frequencies were revealed, the term frequency-inverse document frequency score was calculated. "*Tf-idf is a statistical measure for which the importance of a word increases proportionally to the frequency of the word in one document but is adjusted by the number of times the word appears in the entire corpus*" *(Greussing & Boomgaarden 2017: 1755),* as described by inter alia Greussing and Boomgaarden in 2017 (Jones 1972; Robertson 2004, Greussing & Boomgaarden 2017).

Calculating term frequency-inverse document frequency score:

$$TF = \frac{number\ of\ times\ the\ term\ appears\ in\ the\ document}{total\ number\ of\ terms\ in\ the\ document}$$

$$IDF = \log\left(\frac{number\ of\ the\ documents\ in\ the\ corpus}{number\ of\ documents\ in\ the\ corpus\ contain\ the\ term}\right)$$

$$TF - IDF = TF * IDF$$

These steps resulted in the identification of N words of the most frequently used words in the corpus, in which the stopwords, names of persons, locations, organizations, dates and times were all excluded, as per the pre-processing steps previously applied. However, this bag-of-words model does not account for any structures present in the natural language, and results in a large number of words being reported as frequent. Therefore, to reduce this large number of words, the words that were far too general to add analytical value were manually removed at this step (Greussing & Boomgaarden, 2017). The remaining words were manually coded, to indicate whether the word related to migration, or could be relevant in the context of migration, starting from the most frequently used word. For the 1,357 words coded as relevant, the ones mentioned in at least three other months during the year in question were analyzed, and the 500 most frequently used words living up to these parameters for all five years were included as frames, to be used as variables and added to the coding sheet. For this purpose, and for the rest of the analysis, frames will be understood and defined as the conceptual tools which the media use to convey and interpret information, which help to structure the news discourse.

Following this first step of the quantitative analysis, a subsequent collocate analysis was conducted, to allow for a more discursive analysis of the frames deducted in the previous step. Collocates are described as words that appear near another word, thus providing a way of understanding meanings and associations, statistically determined, referring to the co-occurrence between two or more words within a prespecified span above chance (Gabrielatos & Baker 2008: 10). For the purpose of this analysis, the collocate analysis was set to include the 2 words to both the left and right of the word in question, while the analysis focused mainly on the one word appearing directly before and after the keyword, as this will often be the adjectives directly describing the word of interest (Brouwer et al. 2017: 104). This step was also conducted using MAXDictio, that provides the possibility of identifying statistically significant collocates, efficiently converting the original data set of the most frequently used words into a smaller number of two-or more- word collocations, showing the most typical collocations and word combinations of each word in the text corpus.

Conducting a collocation analysis allows the research to go further than a content analysis, as it provides the most salient and obvious lexical patterns inherent in the corpus, as found by Paul

Baker in 2006. This was further elaborated by McLaren et al. explaining that words that co-occur more often than one can expect based on chance, can be argued to represent the possible issue of focus for a news story (McLaren et al. 2018: 181). Furthermore, the collocation analysis contributes to the meaning, and allow for a semantic analysis of the word, giving information about the most frequent or salient ideas associated to this word, for example when talking about migrants, collocates such as "illegal" or "irregular" is often associated. If these words continue to appear frequently together over a longer period of time, it might eventually prime the reader to think of one concept, even if the other is not present. This is described as words becoming a fixed lexical form, thereby becoming the accepted and natural way of describing an issue (Greussing & Boomgaarden, 2017). As described by Greussing and Boomgaarden, this is important, as a long-established discourse or specific word combination becomes *"conventionalised over time, and no longer need to be explicitly mentioned in full to convey a message or specific meaning" (Greussing & Boomgaarden, 2017),* thus making a word frequency and collocation analysis interesting tools, to reveal the most common words used when discussing migration.

The steps described above were thus conducted seeking to reveal latent frames and word networks, in order to find quantitative evidence of linguistic patterns repeatedly used in the construction of migrants during the five years in question. Furthermore, predictive validity was evaluated, following the approach of Heidenreich et al., examining the trends of the topic over time, within the corpora included, while comparing them to corresponding events within the EU, or other relevant issues (Heidenreich et al. 2019: 175).

5.3.2 Sentiment Analysis

Another quantitative step conducted was the application of an automatic sentiment analysis, which was applied using the dictionary-based content analysis feature of MAXDictio. Previous studies of migration in the media have often focused on mapping migration discourses, following the agenda-setting theory, revealing salience and visibility of migration in general, or with a focus on specific aspects. This however only reveals the quantitative parameter of the text, while the quality of the discourse also remains an important variable (Heidenreich et al., 2020). Therefore, drawing inspiration on a study conducted by Tobias Heidenreich and colleagues from

2020, this research will also include a sentiment analysis to complement the rest of the findings uncovered in the first part of the text analysis. To measure this, a dictionary-based approach to quantify sentiment, based on counting keywords in each medium was conducted, using a single-language dictionary.

To calculate this, the study relied on a pre-validated and frequently used sentiment dictionary, called Lexicoder, that was developed by Young and Soroka in 2012 (Young & Soroka, 2012). The Lexicoder dictionary, is a bag-of-words dictionary, which was designed for the purpose of automated coding of sentiment in everything from news coverage to legislative speeches and is freely available for academic purposes. This English sentiment dictionary has been validated both internally and externally and was evaluated to outperform similar sentiment dictionaries when used in the field of political science, such as, for example, LWIC. Furthermore, Lexicoder has been identified as the most appropriate for political texts in a survey of analyses of sentiment in social media (Yue et al., 2019). The Lexicoder dictionary assigns sentiment scores to 4,567 positive and negative words, while measuring the general valence of language. If a word is not included in the Lexicoder dictionary, it will be assigned a neutral sentiment. Furthermore, the dictionary has been frequently used when measuring the sentiment in political texts, as well as in the analysis of migration-related texts in previous studies (Eberl et al. 2019: 30), fitting with the purpose of this analysis.

The texts for the sentiment analysis were pre-processed the same way as to prepare for the word frequency analysis, by removing stopwords and running a lemmatization, as these might interfere with this approach. The MAXDictio function of the dictionary-based content analysis was then used to analyze the sentiments appearing in the text corpus. The final score for a document (S_i) was calculated as the sum of the scores for all words bearing positive sentiment (P_i) minus the sum of all scores from negative words (N_i), divided by the number of words (W_i); this indicates whether the overall tone of a post is negative or positive (Heidenreich et al. 2020: 1268), as shown in the equation below.

$$S_i = \frac{\sum P_i - \sum N_i}{\sum W_i}$$

This equation calculates the percentage of the corpus that is either neutral, negative or positive according to the Lexicoder dictionary, which indicates the percentage of the articles/months that is allocated a negative or positive sum sentiment score, resulting in a global average score, presenting the general overall sentiment about migration. This approach was applied to all three variables, divided by month and year, and the findings of this analysis will be presented in chapter five.

5.4 Coding and Frames

The analysis will rely on frames to research how the media has been discussing migration between 2013 and 2017, with frames representing a scheme of interpretations that endorse a particular problem definition or causal interpretation of an issue (Entman, 1993). Previous similar studies have identified key frames that have been consistently used over time, and across different countries when dealing with migration coverage, which includes both generic frames, as well as more issue-specific frames. Some of the most used frames that are repeatedly highlighted is the "Economy Frame", the "Welfare Frame" and Security-related frames (Gabrielatos & Baker, 2008; Berry et al. 2016; McLaren et al., 2018; Heidenreich et al., 2019). Other frames that are often used when discussing migration, is the "Victimization Frame", which focus on the plight of refugees, portraying them as in need of help, because of circumstances that lie beyond their own control, calling attention to humanitarian stances on asylum policies, and the "Human-interest Frame", discussing legal and moral obligations (Greussing & Boomgaarden 2017: 1751). However, Greussing and Boomgaarden also found, that when discussing refugees and asylum seekers, the media draw on ambivalent frames and portrayals, ranging from innocent victims in the "Victimization Frame", to invaders that threaten the host countries both physically, economically, and culturally (Ibid.). Several previous studies have concluded that the "Threat Frame" is the most used frame when traditional media reports on issues relating to migration. This frame relies on language dominated by problem-orientation, associating migrants with illegality, terrorism, and crime, also using metaphors inter alia relating to elemental forces, such as flooding, when describing the arrival of migrants (Gabrielatos and Baker, 2008; Greussing and Boomgaarden, 2017). Using these frames and metaphors associate migrants with a sense of powerlessness in the host population, while also contributing to the possible dehumanization of refugees as a group, further leading to a polarization between "us" and "them". These findings

suggest that migrants are portrayed in a range of different ways, with the media drawing on diverse master frames in their reporting. This research will thus seek to broaden the understanding of this for the period between 2013 and 2017.

Framing theory will represent part of the background used in shaping and forming this research, and frames will be used based Entman's theories from 1993, where the media uses frames 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." (Entman 1993: 52).* Hanna Orsolya Vincze and colleagues also describe frames as essentially being themes that set up "cognitive windows" to a story, drawing on Goofman's idea that frames are "multiple and intersecting", which will repeatedly invoke *"the same objects and traits, using identical or synonymous words and symbols in a series of similar communications" (Vincze et al. 2021).* Therefore, the understanding of frames in this analysis is similar to the ones used in the previous body of literature on the media representations of migrants, which predominantly identify frames as recurrent, overarching themes (Ibid.).

However, since this research will take place in a period which has been described as a time of crisis, some important notes have to be made in relation to framing. For the traditional media, times of crisis are perceived as a series of disruptive events, which has the possibility of altering the usual routines of journalism, while being conflicted in nature (Figenschou & Beyer, 2014; Horsti, 2008). For literature relating to framing, it is often emphasized that during a crisis, a pattern of different frames will be experienced. Snow, Vliegenthart and Corrigall-Brown (2007) for example found that frame variations increased when a crisis was at its highest intensity. This variation will decrease when a crisis loses its novelty, and the media will reach a frame consonance, which can result in a possible frame crystallization. This idea relates frame variation to issue salience, as an increased media attention will allow for the use of more frames to describe the issue. However, this is a reciprocal relationship, as salience can be increased by the high media attention as well. Some scholars have further argued that, in times of crises, *"contextual factors such as time and issue salience substantially account for the reporting, which leads to rather similar framing practices across platforms and coverage" (Greussing &*

Boomgaarden, 2017). These ideas are also relevant when discussing Downs issue-attention cycle and his identification of the five cyclic stages of an issue. It is thus tentatively expected that this research will find diverse framing patters across the media landscape as the "crisis" unfolds, which will possibly lead to a frame crystallization at the end of the research period. To avoid skewed results, this study will thus also include the "pre"- and "post"-crisis period, employing a longitudinal study approach to capture the frames in a more dynamic manner, and not only under times of "crisis", where the journalistic routines are altered (Horsti, 2008).

The aim of this part of the analysis is thus to identify the issue-specific frames that are the most dominant within the coverage relating to migration from the data collection phase, which includes 9,759 articles, 800,589 tweets and 315 European Parliamentary debates. This equates to a total of 30,705,214 words prior to the pre-processing process. Following the pre-processing steps, 80,545 words were included for the first part of this exercise.

Previous research relating to the concept of media frames has been constructed in a number of different ways, either deductively based on extant literature, inductively based on a preliminary immersion in the sources, or a principal components analysis through preliminary manual coding (Vincze et al., 2021). These studies can often be distinguished between in their use of qualitative, manual-holistic, manual-clustering and computer-assisted approaches (Ibid.). This research however will differ from others, in the manner of which the sources are analyzed and coded, drawing on a combination of a range of different approaches. This part of the analysis will be conducted following an inductive logic, using a large number of sources, applying hierarchical cluster analysis for frame mapping, drawing on both quantitative computer-assisted approaches, and qualitative manual clustering.

Firstly, a word frequency analysis was applied on the entire corpus of the 80,545 pre-processed words, to determine the ones that were most frequently used. This step included a combination of inductive and deductive automated frame analysis, combining both computer-assisted text analysis provided by MAXDictio to reveal the most systematic patterns in the data set, which in its nature is not entirely context-dependent, which was then followed by a manual coding to ensure context specificity. Out of the relevantly coded words, the 500 most used keywords, with

the highest total code frequency, occurring in at least 3 months in a given year, were used to construct the frame coding, resulting in ten primary or master frames. These master frames were specified by combining the iterative findings from the word frequency analysis and informed by previous similar studies. These master frames are all defined through the use of a problem definition, giving an interpretation that a frame will be used to explain an issue, a target group involved or a strategy that can solve the issue (Dekker & Scholten, 2017). In the second round of coding, each defined frame was manually annotated to the most dominant and relevant master frame. The coding of the most retweeted tweets was manually performed using content analysis, whereafter these were also coded into the master frames. Out of the 500 coded keywords, the ones with more than 200 occurrences between 2013 and 2017 across the three databases were included in the final phase. The reliability of this step was safeguarded through intercoder reliability tests of a sample of media publications relating to each frame and outlet. In total, the subsample included 100 publications, 200 tweets and 20 debates, divided between a number of randomly selected keywords. At the end, 188 keywords were included in the final list of frames, formally added to the codebook, and coded under the master frames. The classification and typology of the final ten issue-specific master frames reveal similar patterns as established by previous studies (Yantseva, 2020; Berry et al., 2016; Heidenreich et al., 2019). These master frames will thus create the basis for the quantitative part of the research design, through the frame-specific dictionaries carefully developed, and shape the subsequent regression analysis.

It should be noted that some scholars have argued that "*using words as indicative features of frames may raise problems of construct validity, as not all words have equal significance*" (*Greusssing & Boomgaarden, 2017, inspired by (Carragee & Roefs 2004; Hertog & McLeod 2001).* Thus, this study has applied a number of pre-processing steps, to ensure that the data included in the final analysis, would only represent the corpus relating to the actual meaning of the text, and could thus discriminate between frames, as described by inter alia Burscher, Vliegenthart, and de Vreese in 2015. This includes the reduction of the complexity of the language applied (removal of stop-words and lemmatization as previously described), and the calculation of the tf-idf score. Furthermore, as previously mentioned, a number of randomly selected articles per topic, per outlet and per year were read for qualitative validation purposes, besides the use of the intercoder reliability tests.

5.4.1 Coding Scheme

Table 6 shows the ten master frames identified in this process, and their indicative terms.

Table 6: Frames (Own research)

Master Frame	Composition	Frames
1. European Crisis	17 frames 650,362 recurrences 33%	europe (210,779), crisis (193,067), asylum (124,930), government (25,012), operation (17,283), mediterranean (15,463), proposal (12,671), balkan (10,918), political (9,089), easo (8,726), schengen (7,245), frontex (4,225), populist (3,363), instrument (2,885), lampedusa (2,690), sovereignty (1,290), eurodac (726)
2. Securitization	24 frames 173,711 recurrences 9%	control (22,306), issue (19,236), problem (17,015), fail (16,135), illegal (13,225), concern (11,846), influx (11,671), challenge (10,585), surge (7,719), target (6,048), invasion (5,492), burden (4,946), deter (4,525), cope (4,517), flood (4,439), irregular (3,114), fortress (2,748), crackdown (2,195), violation (1,592), surveillance (1,040), panic (1,037), breach (827), intercept (825), xenophobic (628)
3. Migrating	14 frames 127,278 recurrences 6%	border (51,581), leave (16,770), route (12,675), run (9,297), sink (7,024), flee (6,809), drown (6,243), wall (4,980), root (3,202), desperate (2,589), exodus (2,322), escape (1,432), persecution (1,391), plight (963)
4. Reception/ Distribution	21 frames 150,892 recurrences 8%	deal (53,845), quota (17,483), share (10,363), host 7,706), pact (7,351), reform (7,298), relocation (6,848), integration (6,149), distribute (6,029), redistribute (5,178), detention (4,498), reception (3,667), dublin (3,267), transfer (2,868), hotspot (2,460), mandatory (1,887), negotiate (1,305), allocate (1,087), reunification (688), repatriation (556), isolation (359)

5. Conflict	13 frames 93,424 recurrences 5%	war (56,881), fight (9,357), nato (6,905), conflict (5,304), militia (4,928), battle (2,616), combat (2,325), torture (1,363), corruption (1,192), unrest (1,039), genocide (907), execution (310), chemical (297)
6. Human Impact	20 frames 157,925 recurrences 8%	aid (58,062), camp (41,443), rescue (15,080), hope (7,889), minor (5,120), victim (4,393), unaccompanied (4,022), assistance (3,426), suffer (3,318), shelter (2,720), humane (2,440), vulnerable (2,280), humanity (1,950), dream (1,906), survivor (1,247), dignity (1,112), sacrifice (599), innocent (495), sanctuary (423)
7. Social Problem	18 frames 132,125 recurrences 7%	work (52,922), job (14,030), labour (12,241), business (11,044), pay (10,509), care (7,909), employment (5,382), wage (3,569), sustain (3,367), welfare (3,080), unemployment (2,569), pension (1,938), healthcare (950), educate (858), expense (623), employee (623), beneficiary (262), allowance (240)
8. Economic	14 frames 58,989 recurrences 3%	Financial (9,423), budget (8,356), economy (8,123), money (7,682), cost (7,478), funds (5,353), finance (3,567), debt (2,482), income (1,734), austerity (1,407), fiscal (1,182), deficit (974), recession (649), wealthy (579)
9. Responsibility	20 frames 91,498 recurrences 5%	legal (24,405), law (22,081), protection (11,537), welcome (9,670), humanitarian (7,804), solidarity (6,841), obligation (2,340), moral (2,280), constitutional (746), non-refoulement (681), donation (501), honor (473), hospitality (404), conscience (315), kindness (263), ethical (258), tolerant (251), generosity (234), conscious (210), advocacy (204)
10. Threat	26 frames 334,541 recurrences 17%	isis (201,196), threat (18,190), attack (17,397), security (14,969), risk (11,638), fear (11,249), smuggle (9,144), rape (7,459), crime (6,089), terrorism (5,999), bomb (5,056), violence (4,752), murder (4,744), criminal (4,062), trafficker (3,466), jihadi (2,046), islamist (1,258), violent (1,238), extremist (1,080), jihadist

(1,004), kidnap (684), extremism (509), daesh (455), enemy (347), abusive (266), perpetrator (244)

Description of the master frames:

1. **European Crisis:** Frames relating to the so-called European refugee or migration "crisis".

2. **Securitization:** The process of shifting migration discourse towards an emphasis on security related issues, for example combining the discussion relating to border crossing, with stereotypical descriptions of refugees and migrants as *"an uncontrollable mass waiting to enter the EU" (Greussing & Boomgaarden, 2017).*

3. **Migrating:** Discussing the attributes of the act of migrating, and what refugees and migrants might face in their journey towards Europe.

4. **Reception/Distribution:** The internal European attempts to address the so-called "crisis", including the differing viewpoints and the tension and disagreement that exist, including inter alia the policy debates relating to reception, quotas and limits.

5. **Conflict**: References the conflict related reasons for refugees fleeing.

6. **Human impact:** The human side of migration focusing on the individual migrants.

7. **Social problem:** Issues that receiving countries might face when hosting migrants and refugees, for example the availability of resources, including physical, human and financial.

8. **Economic**: Financial consequences and implications at the personal, societal, national and international levels, *"framing refugees as economic burdens and a threat to the host country's economic prosperity" (Greussing & Boomgaarden, 2017).*

9. **Responsibility**: Highlights frames discussing helping migrants or calling for a more humane approach to the reception within the EU or referencing legal obligations to do so (Greussing & Boomgaarden, 2017).

10. **Threat**: Conveys migration as something harmful to society, which could contribute to create an atmosphere relying on prejudice and distrust.

To illustrate the media discourse of the individual frames, a series of randomly selected traditional media headlines from each news outlet, full tweets and MEP quotes belonging to each sub-theme can be found below:

Traditional Media

1. European Crisis

   a. "EU launches its plan to tackle the **Mediterranean** migrant **crisis**" (Euronews, May 2015)

   b. "Commission bares teeth over refugee **crisis**" (EurActiv, February 2017)

   c. "**EU** ministers eye temporary **Schengen** suspension" (Financial Times, December 2015)

   d. "**Lampedusa** deaths increase pressure for **EU** response" (The Economist, October 2013)

   e. "**Frontex** chief warns of difficult year ahead for **Mediterranean**" (Politico, February 2015)

2. Securitization

   a. "East-west tensions break out over call to **share** migrant **burden**" (Financial Times, September 2015)

   b. "Mass migration has become a major **political challenge** in **Europe**" (EurActiv, September 2017)

   c. "We cannot act alone against these flows of **irregular** migration" (Politico, August 2017)

   d. "No respite for **aid** workers as refugees continue to **flood** into **Europe**" (Euronews, December 2015)

   e. "Je suis Charlie was about free speech but now the **issue** is migrants" (The Economist, November 2015)

3. Migrating

   a. "5,000 Syria refugees **flee** every day" (Euronews, February 2013)

   b. "Migrants, Christianity and Europe: Diverse, **desperate** migrants have divided European Christians" (The Economist, September 2013)

c. "**Border** lawlessness fuels Turkey's calls for intervention in Syria" (Financial Times, September 2013)

d. "EU backs plan to shut Libya **route** to migrants" (Politico, February 2017)

e. "The EU must focus on the **root** causes of migration" (EurActiv, April 2015)

4. Reception/Distribution

a. "Germany pleads for **quotas** of refugees as thousands more arrive and weather chills" (Euronews, September 2015)

b. "EU migrant tensions rise as Sweden seeks to join **relocation** plan" (Financial Times, November 2015)

c. "Italy proposes Libya **pact** to curb illegal migration" (EurActiv, July 2017)

d. "Why the EU-Turkey **deal** is controversial" (The Economist, April 2016)

e. "Hungary approves **detention** 'transit zones' for asylum seekers" (Politico, March 2017)

5. Conflict

a. "Surrender or **Genocide** in Aleppo will fuel the ISIL Terror" (EurActiv, August 2016)

b. "The **battle** for Kobani rages on Syria's **border** with Turkey" (Euronews, October 2014)

c. "Afghans **flee** as **Nato** pullout nears" (Financial Times, January 2013)

d. "Syria's **war**; Could it go ethnic, too?" (The Economist, October 2013)

e. "The limbo of the Greek asylum process is little better than the **torture**, **war** and abuse refugees have fled." (Politico, December 2016)

6. Human Impact

a. "**Shelter** for gay refugees opens in Berlin" (Euronews, February 2016)

b. "Religious communities cover the **cost** of settlement for some of the most **vulnerable fleeing** Syria." (Politico, July 2017)

c. "Stylianides: We need strong bridges between humanitarian and development **aid**" (EurActiv, December 2014)

d. "**Rescue** diary; Five days on board a migrant **rescue** boat in the central **Mediterranean**" (The Economist, October 2016)

e. "Leaders pledge billions in **aid** to alleviate migration **crisis**; Donor conference" (Financial Times, February 2016)

7. Social Problem

   a. "Doctors warn of rising **xenophobia** in Europe's **healthcare** systems" (Euractiv, April 2013)

   b. "The sooner the refugees gain **employment**, the more they will help the public **finance**" (Financial Times, January 2016)

   c. "Greece wants to give asylum seekers the **right** to **work**" (Euronews, August 2016)

   d. "**Job** wanted; Refugees in Sweden are having a hard time finding **work**" (The Economist, November 2016)

   e. "The European Union needs a new **welfare** state model to **cope** with the **influx** of refugees" (Politico, September 2015)

8. Economic

   a. "How to tackle immigration without risking the **economy**" (Financial Times, November 2014)

   b. "Tough immigration rules threaten **economic** growth" (Politico, July 2014)

   c. "Monti group advisor: EU **money** could be better targeted at external **borders**" (EurActiv, January 2017)

   d. "Dealing with the refugee **crisis** could **cost** Germany 16 billion euros next year" (Euronews, October 2015)

   e. "Tripling of the **budget** of **Operations** Triton and Poseidon, naval **border-surveillance** programmes" (The Economist, April 2015)

9. Responsibility

   a. "UN: Syrian conflict is the worst **humanitarian crisis** in nearly 20 years" (Euronews, July 2013)

   b. "Turkey to boost **legal protection** for migrants, easing EU returns" (Financial Times, April 2016)

   c. "A **generous** immigration policy is the right thing to do, but does not end the conversation." (Politico, November 2015)

d. "A tragedy brings opportunities for **solidarity** between Muslims and non-Muslims" (The Economist, January 2015)

e. "Commission ready to boost cash support in **humanitarian aid**" (EurActiv, November 2017)

10. Threat

a. "Berlin **attack** suspect was arrested in Italy in 2011" (Euronews, December 2016)

b. "US, Russia and EU should work together to combat **ISIS**, says Juncker" (EurActiv, November 2015)

c. "What Israel can teach Germany about living with **terrorism**" (Financial Times, August 2016)

d. "EU and immigration ; **Fear** mongering" (The Economist, January 2013)

e. "EPP chief says **Europe** should be able to **fight traffickers** 'with a weapon in its hand if necessary'." (Politico, July 2017)

Twitter

1. European Crisis

a. "Hey world, the reason there's a refugee **crisis** in **Europe** is that there's a mega-tragedy going on in the Middle East" (Liz Sly, 30 August 2015)

2. Securitization

a. "Ex-Aussie PM Warns Europe: **ISIS Terrorists** Are Hiding in Syrian Migrant **Invasion**" (Breibart London, 14 November 2015)

3. Migrating

a. "2 Syrian families, 1 boat & a desperate desire to reach #**Europe** Surviving the Most Lethal **Route** in the World http://bit.ly/13CzWAq #Migrant (127, Pos. 2-5) Fatal **Exodus**: The Tragic Story of #African Migration To **Europe** http://t.co/JZvzQ6iZcR" (Nuala McGovern, 29 December 2014)

4. Reception/Distribution

a. "He'd have to be sent straight back to Turkey, according to the EU-Turkey migrant **deal** he signed *https://twitter.com/kylegriffin1/status/754064655270547456*" (Anne Hammerstad, 15 July 2016)

5. Conflict

   a. ""Just stop the **war** in Syria and we dont want to go to **Europe**".(words of a 13 y.o refugee boy)...No further comment." (P.A. Pourgourides, 04 September 2015)

6. Human Impact

   a. "Body of **innocent** syrian child refugee on turkey's beach...just breaks my heart!" (Dr Shahid Masood, 03 September 2015)

7. Social Problem

   a. "Institute of Directors says Home Office EU migration **plan** means even fewer nurses, teachers and **care workers**" (Alan Travis, 06 September 2017)

8. Economic

   a. "Putin on trade with EU: "Europe to wracked by cultural, ethnic, religious tensions...", mass migration detrimental to **economy**!" (beforeitsnews, 07 July 2014)

9. Responsibility

   a. "Children of **Europe's** refugee & migrant **crisis** need **protection**. They have a **right** to **protection**. #refugeecrisis" (UNICEF, 04 September 2015)

10. Threat

   a. "Children as young as 7 sexually abused in refugee camps. This is the real **rape** culture **Europe** is importing. *https://rt.com/news/355926-greece-children-refugees-sex-assault/*" (Paul Joseph Watson, 15 August 2016)

European Parliamentary debates

1. European Crisis

   a. "Mr President, with the Directive that we have approved on the **Dublin Regulation** we have consolidated an absolutely unfair situation, especially for bordering countries, such as Greece and Malta in particular." (Carmen Romero López (S&D), June 2013 (Originally in Spanish)) – Debate: 9.8. Application for international protection lodged in a Member State by a third-country national or a stateless person (recast version) (A7-0216/2013 - Cecilia Wikström) - Oral explanations of the vote

2. Securitization

a. "No one is under the illusion: we will defend the Bossi law to the death, because we consider it the last bulwark against the **invasion** of **illegal** immigrants in Italy and **Europe**." (Mario Borghezio (NI), in writing (originally in Italian)) – Debate: 18. European Border Surveillance System (EUROSUR) (debate) (COM(2011)0873 - C7-0506/2011 - 2011/0427(COD)) (A7-0232/2013).

3. Migrating

   a. "The European Parliament today expressed its deep concern about the current humanitarian crisis in Syria and the strong pressure being exerted on its neighboring countries, expressing its concern at the fact that the **exodus** of refugees continues to increase, with no end to the View." (Nuno Teixeira (PPE), in writing October 2013 (Originally in Portuguese)) – Debate: 18. European Border Surveillance System (EUROSUR) (debate) - (COM(2011)0873 - C7-0506/2011 - 2011/0427(COD)) (A7-0232/2013)

4. Reception/Distribution

   a. "My delegation is in favor of a compulsory distribution of asylum seekers, but under three strict conditions. And those conditions are equally important to all of us. Firstly, measures must be taken to better guard our external **borders**. I am thinking here of the establishment of **hotspots** and the associated effective **return** of **economic** migrants. Secondly, the European Commission must amend the Qualifications Directive so that EU Member States can pursue a strong activation policy." (Helga Stevens, on behalf of the ECR Group, September 2015 (Originally in Dutch)) – Debate: 21. Situation of fundamental rights in the EU (2013-2014) (debate) - (2014/2254(INI) – A8-0230/2015)

5. Conflict

   a. "And finally, let us not forget that the extradition of persons to a state at high risk of the death penalty or other inhuman punishment or **torture** is prohibited by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. " (Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE), October 2013 (originally in Romanian)) – Debate: 18. European Border Surveillance System (EUROSUR) (debate) - (COM(2011)0873 - C7-0506/2011 - 2011/0427(COD)) (A7-0232/2013)

6. Human Impact

a. "An **unaccompanied minor** is, first and foremost, a child potentially in danger. The **protection** of children, and not immigration policies, must be the most important principle of the Member States and the European Union in this matter, thus fulfilling the fundamental principle of the best interests of the child. In fact, the best interests of the child, as enshrined in the texts and jurisprudence, must prevail over any other consideration and in all acts adopted in relation to children, both by public authorities and by private institutions." (José Manuel Fernandes (PPE), in writing, September 2013 (originally in Portuguese)) – Debate: 9. Situation in Syria (debate) - [2019/2819(RSP)]

7. Social Problem

a. "**Jobs** and houses are in short supply, so they will be **employed** or housed at the expense of the home populations. Perhaps complicit MEPs should open their homes to these applicants and **fund** them from their salaries, rather than letting the poor and dispossessed bear the **burden**." (Andrew Henry William Brons (NI), June 2013 (originally in English)) – Debate: 16. Laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection (recast) - Application for international protection lodged in a Member State by a third-country national or a stateless person (recast version) - Establishment of 'Eurodac' for the comparison of fingerprints - Granting and withdrawing international protection (recast) (debate)

8. Economic

a. "Unfortunately, European immigration policy does not include a bona fide division of responsibilities between Member States. Suffice it to say the following: for the period 2007 to 2011, almost € 1 billion was allocated, in these six countries alone, to tackle migration flows. The **cost** for Greece amounts to more than 30 billion." (Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD), June 2013 (originally in Greek)) – Debate: 17. Evaluation mechanism to verify application of the Schengen acquis - Temporary reintroduction of border control at internal borders (debate) - (COM (2011) 0560 - C7-0248 / 2011 - 2011/0242 (COD))

9. Responsibility

a. "The EU's asylum law, and notably the Reception Directive, clearly also refers to territorial waters. The EU **law** and the European Convention and international refugee law all forbid returning people without checking, on a case-by-case basis, whether those people are in need of international protection. Likewise, 'hot returns' are in breach of the principle of **non-refoulement**, which is a key principle of international law as well as of European law, and the Spanish Government cannot simply ignore this." (Ska Keller (GREENS/EFA), November 2014) – Debate: 16. Summary expulsions and the proposed legalisation of 'hot returns' in Spain (debate) - (O-000085/2014 - 2014/2959(RSP)- B8-0043/2014)

10. Threat

a. "A project to rectify the budget which will therefore prove to be both costly and useless, only the restoration of national borders and the sovereignty of the Member States can allow an end to the migration crisis and an effective fight against **terrorism**." (Dominique Bilde (ENF), in writing April 2016 (originally in French)) - Debate: 6.9. The situation in the Mediterranean and the need for a holistic EU approach to migration (A8-0066/2016 - Roberta Metsola, Kashetu Kyenge) - Oral explanations of vote

As shown by the quotes cited above, an article, tweet or debate is not necessarily isolated to a single frame and can therefore include several frame codes.

5.5 Limitations

It is important in any study to recognize the limitations of the research, especially when working with large-scale secondary data sets, collected through computational and quantitative methods. Firstly, it should be mentioned that, as the data is collected retrospectively and not based on real-time information, some content may have been deleted or gone missing before it was included in the data set, which was collected in 2022. For example, in the case of Twitter, this could mean that controversial content might have been deleted after it was published, which may have had an impact on the results of inter alia the most used keywords. This means that although the data is comprehensive, it may not include all relevant articles and tweets read by the MEPs during the period of research.

Furthermore, as this analysis relies on automatically collected big data, it can also be presumed that there will be some noise present in the data set, although all precautions have been taken to avoid this issue. This includes the possibility of a number of off-topic articles and tweets that may not relate directly to the topic at hand, although they have fallen under the search criteria. This is a bi-product, when relying on unsupervised learning methods. All European Parliamentary debates have been manually checked, due to the limited search functions available on the Parliament website, so this issue is not relevant in this particular case. However, due to the large number of relevant articles and tweets for this period, it was not feasible to manually check all the collected data for these two categories. However, several steps have been taken in the data collection process to avoid or limit this, including the extraction of a number of random samples, which have been manually checked for validity. Furthermore, the search criteria included in the Boolean search string specified that the search terms should occur at least three times in each article, in combination with the specified locations relevant for this research.

The use of tweets also presents a number of challenges that need to be addressed. Twitter data is easily accessible through the Twitter API platform, however, there are several debates ongoing in relation to the ethics and risks when using this data. For example, there are a number of ethical considerations to be made, when drawing on tweets as a data source. The considerations relevant in this research project relate to the privacy concerns and informed consent, as well as the handling and archiving of data. Twitter users have not been approached directly to obtain consent for using their data in this analysis, as consent is assumed by the user accepting the Terms of Service presented by Twitter, since direct consent is simply not feasible due to the size of the data set (Bozdag & Smets, 2017). Furthermore, when using the Twitter API, the research has also been subjected to the academic product track, which means that Twitter has been informed of the intentions of this research, and approval had to be given before the data collection could commence.

Also, similar to other related studies, the results produced are contingent upon the country and media sample chosen. Although the sample used in this research is a comprehensive overview of EU and internationally based English-speaking sources, it still remains incomplete, as it does not include national newspapers, and lack diversity in relation to including both broadsheet and

tabloid newspapers. However, the sampling decisions were made, based on a number of considerations, including the relevance of news stories and focus included in the chosen newspapers, concerns relating to the performance of platforms such as Google Translate API, as well as extensive research on MEP news consumption and MEP answers to the questionnaire distributed in October 2021. So, although the sampling may lack some diversity, it does provide a unique insight into this particular setting, as the research focus is on EU rather than national developments and thus can provide meaningful conclusions. Similarly in relation to tweets, it was decided to include English language tweets only, both due to language restrictions, and to fit with the design of the rest of the analysis. However, this does open the door for the possibility of losing interesting tweets made in any of the other EU national languages, however, the lack of resources limits the ambition for the scope of this study in this regard. Tweets are difficult to introduce into automatic translation platforms, due to the language used when posting on Twitter, which may include slang, natural occurring languages and emotional complexities.

Another limitation that needs to be discussed relates to the dictionary-based sentiment analysis and coding of frames. For the sentiment analysis, there are limits to the quality that can be produced, as there are many subtleties, that may be lost when calculating sentiment through a dictionary based sentiment analysis approach, as it has insensitivities to emotional complexities, natural occurring languages such as sarcasm and its inability to handle negations (Yantseva, 2020), which could lead to either incomplete or an underestimation of the findings. Furthermore, dictionaries will only have a limited number of words included, and some popular words may be missing, which can compromise the results. However, despite its limitations, a lexicon-based sentiment analysis is a simple and fast researching tool for English texts, which can provide valuable information, despite insensitivities, which is a reasonable trade-off, especially when used for explorative purposes, and not for causality. Furthermore, this study seeks to offset these issues through triangulation and validation. Similar issues can be found when discussing the use of frames and coding. Utilizing methods such as the one described in this chapter thus has its limitations. It can be used to identify broad thematic relationships, but given its large-scale nature, it is too blunt a tool for an analysis to produce careful semantic distinctions. The important steps to be taken in this regard include the importance of manual coding, and a blind score of random sampling of all frames, to ensure their validity. Furthermore, combining several

steps, including sentiment, word frequency and collocation, producing similar and comparative findings, sentiment will provide a more general and comprehensive picture, while framing provides more specific information on the topic of migration (Eberl et al., 2019), which together can be used for further analysis.

As previously noted, the Parliamentary debates are multilingual, which means that all discussions are made and published in one of the 27 national languages. These have thus been translated for the analysis, which may add an additional layer of error margins in the data, as some languages are more suitable for computer-based translation than others. However, as this study relies on an analysis of lemmatized words, rather than a qualitative analysis of the speeches, this should allow to ensure a meaningful extraction of information regardless of the original language spoken.

6. CONSTRUCTING THE "CRISIS" – NUMBERS, NARRATIVES, THE MEDIA, AND POLITICAL DEBATES

6.1 Introduction

This chapter will begin the analysis, by answering the first sub-question "*How did the traditional- and social media, as well as Members of the European Parliament frame migration before, during and immediately after the so-called "refugee crisis"?"* In the previous chapters, the theoretical approach and position was defined, and the methodological framework developed to identify and gather the data that will help shape this research. Consonant with the defined methodology, the data collection and frame coding are applied to investigate the hypothesis to understand the media's role within the European migration policymaking process. This will be done by first quantitatively exploring the issue-attention and framing of the topic, which will build towards a qualitative analysis of the contingent effects of these on the policy agenda and deliveries at EU level, to be conducted in later chapters. This research will further be discussed drawing on the theories presented in chapter four.

To that end, this chapter will operationalize different approaches, to uncover the dynamics of the media coverage on migration during the period between 2013 and 2017, building on the data collection and coding scheme produced in the previous chapter. Firstly, the frequency of migration related articles, tweets and debates will be analyzed, which can help determine the level of attention given to the topic, and the change over time. These findings will be further elaborated on, through an analysis of the salience, to produce insights into the prominence of these articles in the broader media landscape, which can help reveal to which extent the migration coverage was prioritized, and how visible the respective articles were at the time of publication. These findings will feed into the discussion relating to the quantity of media coverage, and overall issue-attention, relying on a more traditional approach to agenda-setting studies. To complement this traditional approach, the analysis will also study the aspects of sentiment and framing, which will combine to ultimately answer the research question.

These are all steps in a holistic approach to the analysis of the media and political texts, which will help build towards the next steps of the analysis and to eventually answer the hypothesis.

Similar to Dekker and Scholten, it is believed that the media can impact several aspects of the policy developments at European Parliament level. It is hypothesized that the quantitative aspects of issue-attention have a greater impact on the political agenda than on actual policy change and delivery, whereas the more qualitative aspect of framing rather impacts a possible change in policy. In order to investigate this further, arguments will be developed throughout the four sections of this chapter, using quantitative methods to discuss and visualize findings, that will be presented to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the media environment during the period of research, and develop arguments to be used in the later chapters, feeding into the final analysis of the media's possible impact on policy deliveries at EU level, and to answer the first research question.

6.2 Trends in Migration Coverage in times of "Crisis"

The trends in migration coverage over the course of the period of research was analyzed using the entire data collection. These calculations thus include a total number of 9,759 articles, 800,589 tweets and 315 debates and are presented in Figure 6. Here, the data is organized as monthly frequency, to reveal possible trends and patterns. Although this method is simple, it does reveal interesting trends in the pattern of publications experienced in the researched period, for example significant periods of an increased frequency in migration related articles, when compared to preceding and succeeding months. To better understand these peeks, the graph was analyzed with the proxy of event-specific periods to more comprehensively argue for reasons impacting the frequency of articles. This is done using a list of key events that took place during the so-called "refugee crisis", specifically prepared for this comparison. The full list of events can be found in Appendix C, *Chronology of Key Events of the so-called Refugee Crisis in Europe*. In Figure 6, the x-axis indicates the months, while the left y-axis represents the number of articles and debates, and the right y-axis the number of tweets.

Figure 6: Monthly frequency of migration related articles (Own research)
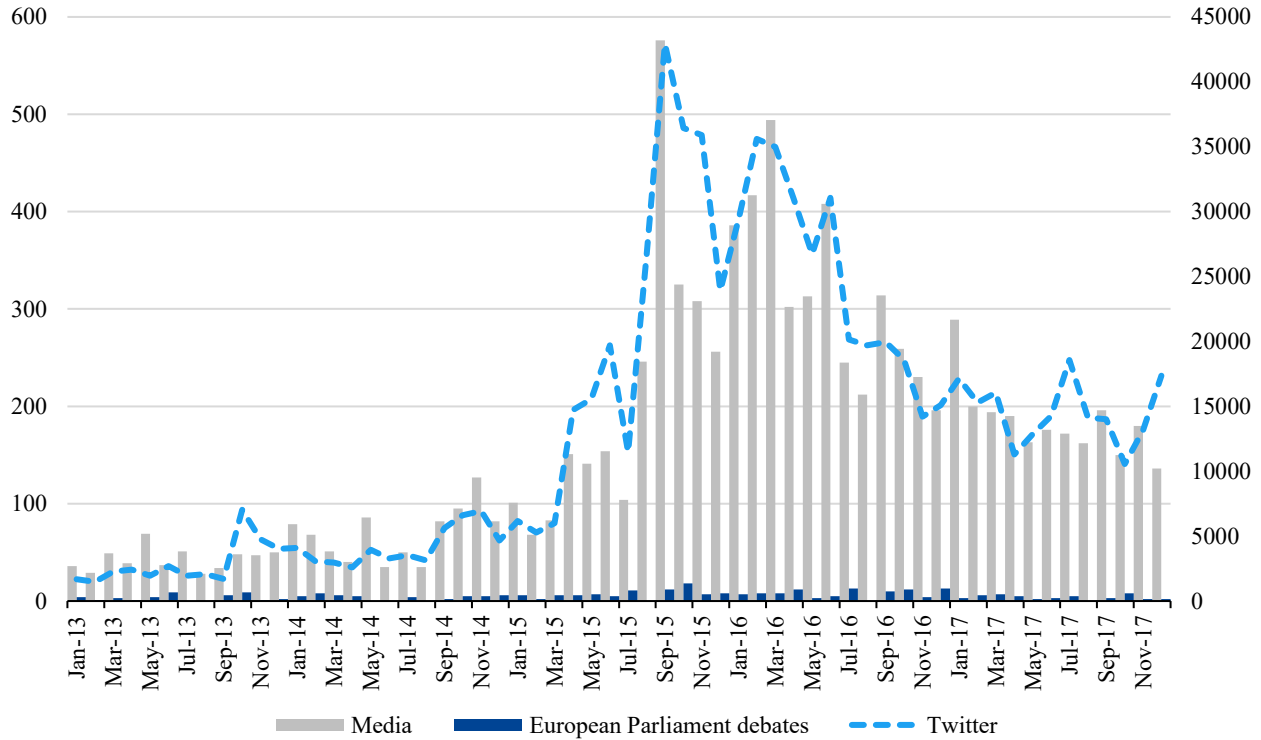
Prior to 2015, which is generally considered to be the beginning and peak of the "crisis", the migration related articles were low in frequency and only limited fluctuations was experienced in the number of articles published throughout 2013 and 2014, despite the fact that the number of migrants arriving to Europe had already started to increase during these years. The full number of arrivals can be found in Appendix D, *Number of arrivals to Europe, including refugees and asylum seekers from 2013 to 2017*. According to this data, which was subtracted from the official data published by Eurostat, the number of arrivals to Europe increased with more than 300,000 people between 2013 and 2014, reaching 3,778,597 detected border crossings into Europe in 2014. However, this increase was not reflected in the media coverage. On the graph, the first small increase that can be detected was on Twitter in October 2013, where tweets went from 1,700 to 7,000 in only one month. This is most likely related to the increase in shipwrecks that was experienced in the Mediterranean Sea at this time. Between 03 and 11 October 2013, it is believed that almost 400 people died in two separate shipwrecks close to Lampedusa. This was also reflected in the Parliamentary debates, which rose from 6 to 9 debates during these months, while the number of migration related traditional news articles remained relatively stable. These

shipwrecks also prompted the Italian government to launch "Operation Mare Nostrum" on 18 October 2013, attempting to prevent more tragedies in the Mediterranean Sea between Libya and Italy. Mare Nostrum was described as a military and humanitarian operation, aiming to save lives at sea, through its search and rescue component, and to combat human trafficking. Mare Nostrum was created and financed by the Italian government and received only limited financial support from the European External Borders Fund.

Throughout most of 2014, the coverage remained stable, until the last quarter of the year, where an increase in news articles relating to migration was experienced, beginning in September 2014. This small increase could again be explained by a new peak in shipwrecks in the Mediterranean Sea, beginning on the 11 September that year, where a boat carrying more than 500 people sank off the coast of Malta, with only nine survivors. Another boat sank near Libya, leaving more than 200 people dead in the same period. These tragic developments sparked a number of political debates, which resulted in the introduction of the Frontex mission Operation Triton, which was created to replace Operation Mare Nostrum on 01 November 2014. However, this operation had far fewer resources than Operation Mare Nostrum, and with far less search and rescue capabilities, rather focusing on border protection.

Compared to the previous years, 2015 was characterized by a steady increase in migration-related attention across the media platforms and within the Parliamentary debates, reaching its peak in September 2015. In the first half of the year, the increasing number of migrants arriving in Europe started impacting political discussions, which usually also receive attention in the press. The European Commission presented the European Agenda on Migration on the 13 May 2015, and although this was presented as shaping the EU response to the ongoing "crisis", its significance was not reflected in the number of articles published during this time. The Agenda was followed by several implementation packages supporting the initial proposals, as presented in chapter three. This included the implementation package proposing the relocation and resettlement quota, which was accepted on 20 July 2015 by the EU leaders. A second implementation package was presented on 09 September 2015, seeking to raise the number of relocations, which was passed by a majority vote by the EU interior ministers on the 22 September 2015, overruling the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia who all voted

against the package (Žagar et al. 2018: 13). Many of the major EU policies which were presented or adopted in this period followed larger shipwrecks in the Mediterranean Sea, including the introduction of the Agenda in May, which followed immediately after the worst border-crossing shipwreck on recorded, which took place on the 18 April 2015, where more than 800 people tragically died in the Mediterranean Sea. Besides the supranational proposals presented, many EU countries also attempted to address the migration situation unilaterally, by introducing temporary border controls, including inter alia Germany at its border with Austria, and Austria at its borders with Hungary (Žagar et al. 2018: 12). This increased attention, as well as the increasing number of people arriving at the EU borders, is also reflected in the number of political discussions taking place at the European Parliament at the time, which peaked with 12 and 18 debates in September and October 2015 respectively.

For traditional media and Twitter, the peak was experienced one month earlier than within the Parliament, namely in September 2015, where 576 articles and 42,926 tweets were published, reaching an unprecedented high. This can be explained by many factors, including the ones mentioned above, with the high number of arrivals into Europe, the many political responses adopted, as well as the many tragic events taking place in the seas surrounding Europe during this time. One event, which had significant effect on the coverage surrounding the "crisis" took place on 31 August 2015, when the German Chancellor Angela Merkel declared *"Wir schaffen das",* meaning, *"We can do this",* in relation to accommodating the high number of refugees that were arriving in Germany throughout the summer of 2015. Shortly after Chancellor Merkel made this statement, the slogan *"Refugees Welcome"* became a symbol for solidarity movements across Europe. Another event with significant impact, especially in the media, was the publication of the picture of three-year-old Alan Kurdi on 02 September 2015, drowned off the Turkish coast in the Aegean Sea, which shook Europe, and created a public sympathy for refugees, calling for more humanitarian approaches to the situation (Žagar et al. 2018: 9). The death of Alan Kurdi generated an emotional uproar in the public, and the picture quickly became the symbol of the tragic situation so many million people were facing at the European borders. Bozdag and Smets even called the circulation of these images *"One of the peak moments of the debate on the European refugee crisis" (Bozdag & Smets 2017).*

Following the peak of coverage in September and October of 2015, media attention slowly started to drop, although remaining at a constant high level, compared to the period preceding September 2015. A brief fluctuation was experienced again in November of that year, especially on Twitter, which could be explained by the horrific events taking place on 13 November 2015, where Islamic State militants carried out a series of terrorist attacks in Paris, killing 130 people. The perpetrators were later claimed to have entered Europe through the flows of migrants arriving through Turkey and Greece, thus creating a discourse linking migrants with a possible terrorist threat, creating a sense of fear (Žagar et al. 2018: 15).

After November 2015, there was a steady decrease in coverage until March 2016, where a sharp increase in the number of both articles and tweets was experienced again, which could be linked to two things. Firstly, the EU-Turkey Statement was agreed on the 18 March, coming into force already on 20 March. Another, possibly more significant event in relation to the sharp increase in migration related articles and tweets could be the Brussels terrorist attack, which took place on 22 March 2016, killing 32 people. Similarly to the attacks in Paris five months earlier, this terrorist attack was once again linked to the migration flows into Europe. This increase was also reflected in the European Parliamentary debates, which increased to 12 debates, the following month in April 2016. Once again, with a one-month lag as predicted, due to the way the debates are scheduled.

Another fluctuation, although smaller than the preceding peaks, was experienced around June 2016 in the traditional media and on Twitter, and one month later, in the European Parliament in July. This could be explained by the UK referendum on whether the country should leave the EU, which took place on 23 June 2016, resulting in Brexit, voted through by 51.9%. This is relevant in this regard, as much of the Brexit campaign had centered around the topic of migration, and the ongoing "refugee crisis" in Europe. Following this increase, a steady decline of migration related coverage can be observed, with only smaller outliers, which can be explained by a number of smaller developments, including that of campaigns against the quota system introduced by the EU, which took place in mid-September and early October in 2016. Other events of significance include riots and fires breaking out in the detention centers in Greece, as well as several larger shipwrecks in the Mediterranean.

When looking at the trends in migration coverage, it can be concluded that these are often event-specifically driven, and the general peaks in coverage can most often be traced to any of the following; political decisions, tragic shipwrecks, general peak in arrivals, or other significant and relevant events. However, it can also be concluded that it must be newsworthy. This is evident in this graph, as the number of articles and tweets steadily declined following the peak in September 2015, throughout 2016 and 2017, despite the fact that the amount of people detected crossing the EU borders, as well as the number of tragic shipwrecks resulting in a large number of people drowning in the Mediterranean remained high throughout 2016 and 2017. 1,000 more people lost their lives in the Mediterranean Sea in 2016, compared to 2015, and the number of detected arrivals remained higher than 4 million in both 2016 and 2017. These numbers were not reflected in the coverage, when compared to the peak in 2015 when the news value was higher. The period of research is thus generally characterized by a sudden and dramatic increase in coverage, which stabilizes, even though some of the outlying events continue to take place. How this coverage was framed, and how these frames developed during this time will be discussed later in this chapter.

6.2.1 Salience of Migration in the Media

When discussing the impact of migration in the media, one cannot avoid discussing salience. However, to analyze the salience, the frequency of migration related articles has to be compared to the total number of articles published during the five-year period from the five news outlets. To calculate this salience (S), the sum of all articles (A) published across the five outlets per month is thus divided by the sum of all migration-related articles (M) published per month and multiplied by 100.

$$S = \frac{\sum A}{\sum M} x100$$

This approach computes the relative percentage of salience for the migration related articles published, during the period of analysis, as a frequency-based indicator of monthly visibility (Damstra et al., 2021). However, it does not use indicators of the weight of articles based on article prominence, inter alia through the placement or the length of the articles. It is instead

based solely on the number of articles published in the given period. The use of this relative measurement is still imperative when discussing visibility, as explained by Damstra and colleagues *"since the relative presence of issues indicates to the audience how important these issues are vis-à-vis other topics" (Damstra et al., 2021).* Thus, following this calculation, the monthly salience of all five news outlets can be presented as follows:

Figure 7: Monthly salience of migration related articles (Own research)
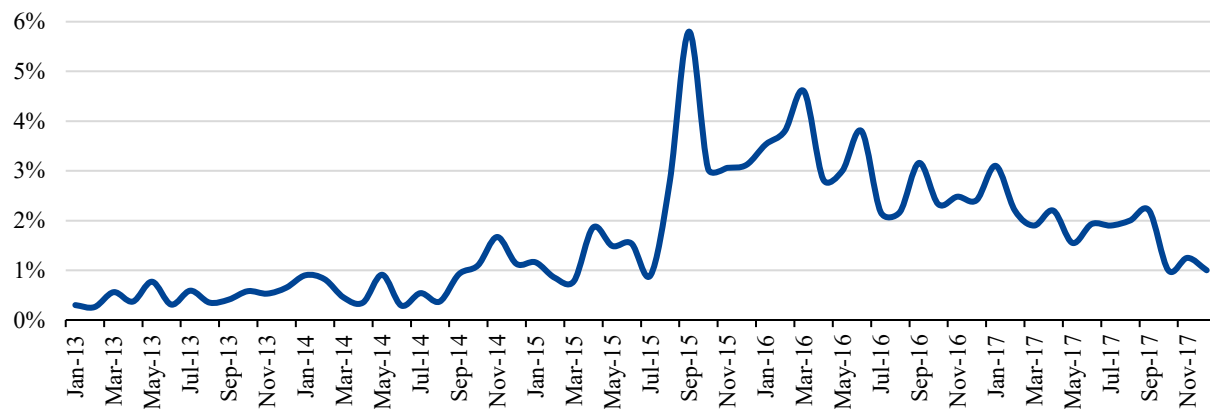
The monthly salience predictably follows a similar trend, as the one presented in Figure 6 relating to the monthly frequency of migration-related articles. The peak visibility occurred in September 2015, whereafter the coverage on migration experienced a large drop in visibility, following a similar curve as previously presented in Figure 6. When the salience of the migration related coverage was at its highest, at least 5.8% of all articles published across the five traditional media outlets related in part to the topic of migration. The lowest salience was measured in February 2013, when only 0.26% of all articles related to the topic. Generally, until October 2014, the percentage of articles relating to migration remained steadily below 1%. However, after the peak in September 2015, the migration related articles consistently remained between 2 and 4% of all articles throughout 2016, whereafter a decline in 2017 could be measured, although it never reached the low "pre-crisis" levels, by remaining above 1%. While the monthly division of salience follows a similar pattern as the frequency of migration articles described above, the division of salience across the five traditional media outlets provides new information.

Figure 8: Division of salience across the five traditional media outlets (Own research)
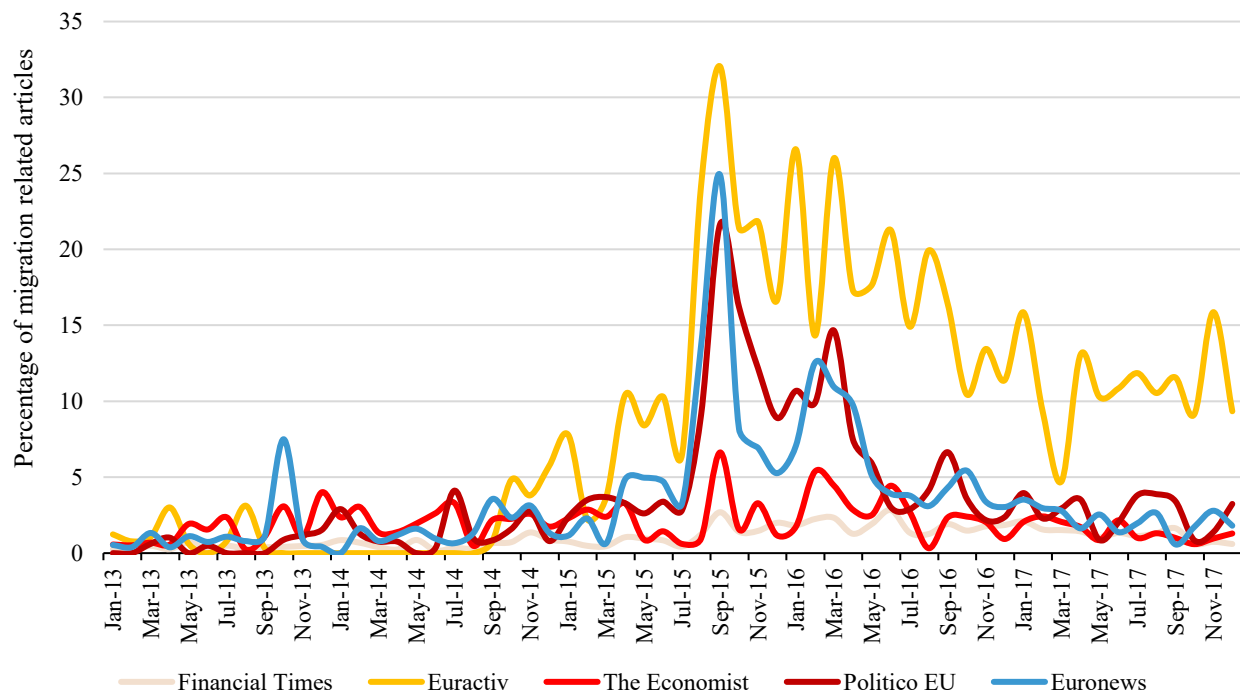
Presenting the salience across the five traditional media outlets provides for a more detailed overview of how different the prominence of migration coverage was in the different outlets during the period of research. Although the Financial Times has the highest number of total articles relating to migration published between 2013 and 2017, accounting for more than 50% of the total traditional media corpus with 4,979 articles, the overall visibility of these, compared to the other outlets, is far less. The topic of migration was far more present in the pan-European media outlets, Euractiv, Politico EU and Euronews, when compared to the two British based news outlets, the Financial Times and the Economist. At its peak, more than 30% of all news coverage published by Euractiv in September 2015 related to migration, conversely the Financial Times only reached 2.69% at its highest in the same month. Generally, the salience in the two British based outlets remain quite stable throughout the researched period, with only smaller outliers, compared to the salience experienced in the pan-European outlets. The Financial Times and the Economist are both geared towards publications relating to current affairs, economy, and international business, whereas the other three outlets are generally published with a more pronounced EU focus, specifically relating to EU and current affairs, primarily addressing an EU based audience. It is thus evident, when analyzing the salience, that the pan-European outlets

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generally follow more event-specific drivers in their media coverage, compared to the other two outlets. It should be noted here that both the Financial Times and the Economist are printed media, in broadsheet and magazine format respectively, although these articles are also published digitally. However, this will inevitably have an impact on the way they cover current events and affairs. In contrast, Euractiv, Politico EU and Euronews are mainly focused on their digital publications, geared towards a more event-driven, live coverage on their websites, which allows them to publish real-time news coverage, while the events take place.

6.3 The Contingent Effects on Migration "Issue-Attention"

A number of theories have been presented in relation to the way attention to an issue is measured in traditional media. Hilgartner and Bosk (1988) argued that media attention can be estimated by the number of articles published on the issue, while Erbring and colleagues (1980) argued that the level of attention to an issue is higher, depending on the placement of the article, inter alia whether it is front page news. Relying on the former, this study will approach the question of issue-attention, following the theory presented by Downs in 1972. To exemplify the level of media attention and discuss the issue-attention cycle and its applicability to the "refugee crisis", Figure 9 presents the number of articles and tweets published relating to migration between 2013 and 2017. The graph is presented with two horizontal reference lines that indicate the average monthly number of articles and tweets. These lines are centered on the outlets' respective average, thereby indicating the deviation of the coverage in a given month from the mean. The Figure is divided in two y-axes, indicating number of articles above or below the mean on the left y-axis, while the right y-axis indicates the number of tweets above or below the mean.

Figure 9: Number of migration related articles published above and below the mean (Own research)
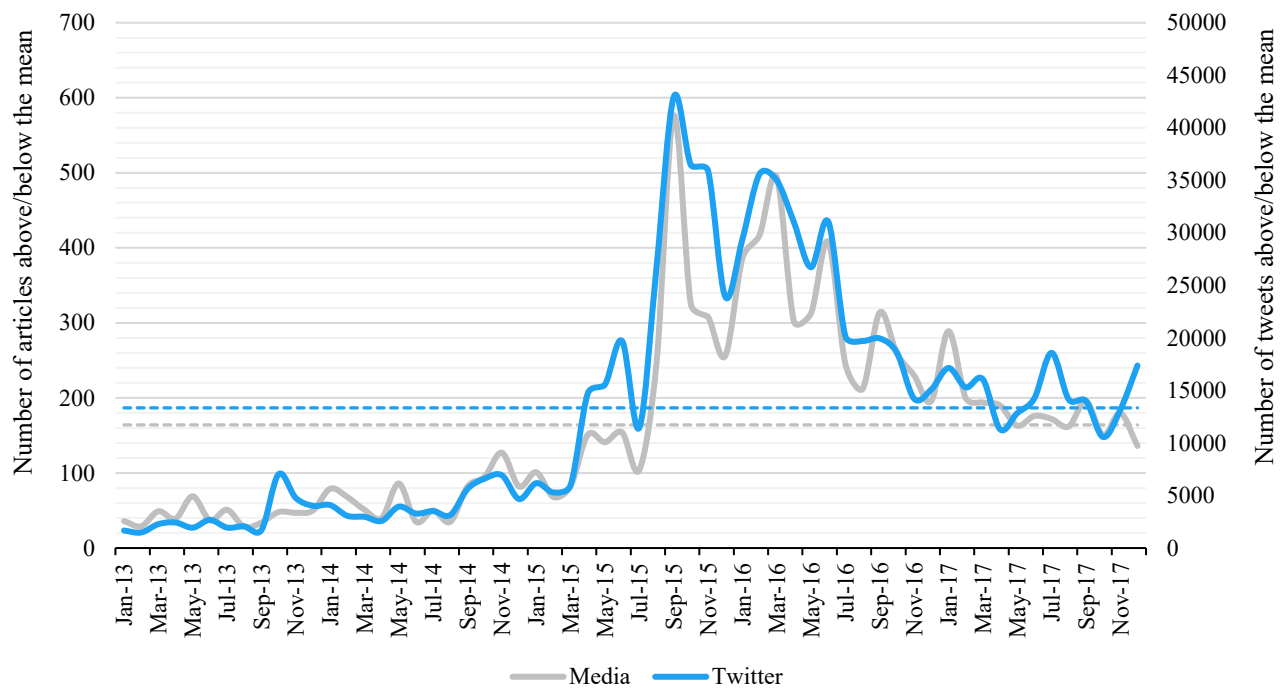
The dynamics of the issue-attention cycle was theorized by Downs, when he identified the five-stage cycle of attention that will emerge following particularly powerful events. The first stage of the cycle, the pre-problem stage, is the time when a social problem exists, although it has not caught the attention of the public yet. For this research, this stage takes place between 2013 and early 2015, where, as exemplified in Figure 9, only limited media attention relating to the issue of migration was published. During this time, the "crisis" mainly affected the neighboring countries, which were hosting a large number of people displaced in the aftermath of the Arab Spring and the intensifying Syrian Civil War. The Arab Spring was a wave of pro-democracy protests and uprisings taking place in the Middle East and North Africa in 2010 and 2011 in several countries, including Libya, Syria, Tunisia and Egypt. Especially the conflict in Syria escalated into the Civil War, that is still impacting the country to this day, also later becoming the source of most asylum applicants in the EU during the peak of the "crisis" in 2015. However, in 2013, the number of people arriving in Europe still remained largely stable. The number of arrivals in Europe, as well as asylum applications and tragic shipwrecks, began to steadily

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increase during 2014, while the level of media attention remained somewhat stable, indicating that this time was still within the first stage of the cycle with limited public attention.

By April 2015, the increasing number of migrants arriving in Europe had slowly build up political tension, which culminated following several unprecedented shipwrecks in the Mediterranean Sea that month. Following these tragic events, articles and tweets relating to migration steadily increased, marking the beginning of the second stage of the issue-attention cycle, when the alarmed discovery stage slowly began. This period is characterized by a striking change in the media attention, leading the public to suddenly become aware and alarmed about the issue. This alarmed discovery stage peaked around August and September of the same year, around the time when the photos of the three-year old Alan Kurdi, drowned off the coast of Turkey, were published. These photos marked the time of the highest intensity of media attention to the topic, but it also marked a switch in the attention, and the migration coverage slowly started to decline and began moving towards the third stage of the cycle, which Downs labeled the realization of the costs of significant progress. The third stage is when the public realizes the fundamental change that is required to make a significant change to the social problem, and the costs it will have on the majority of the population.

October 2015 marked the beginning of the third stage, where possible solutions to this issue, may have been perceived to threaten the privileged position of the EU population both economically, for example in relation to social benefits and in the competition for jobs, but also in relation to social identity and culture. Following this realization, a slow decline in media interest can be detected, and the fourth stage of the issue-attention cycle slowly begins, which is the gradual decline of intensity and interest in the issue. This decline can be caused by a number of things, including discouragement, threatened positions, or boredom. For the issue of migration, it could be a combination of all three things that caused the attention to shift away, as the number of migrants arriving in Europe continued to remain high.

The issue received renewed attention in the beginning of 2016, indicating that the post-problem stage was yet to be reached, but instead briefly restarted the alarmed discovery stage anew, caused by a few episodic events, which drew attention back to the issue, as also concluded by

Greussing and Boomgaarden in 2017. This is particularly noticeable in March 2016, which is also the time of the Brussels terrorist attacks. Where the first alarmed discovery stage was sparked by tragic events and horrific pictures, that called for a humanitarian approach towards migration, this new phase was sparked by security related events, such as the two terrorist attacks mentioned, which could have caused a paradigm shift. However, this renewed attention was short-lived, and the fourth stage continued in April 2016, through the gradual decline in media interest, which continued throughout the rest of 2016. The media coverage and attention found a relatively stable level around the mean in 2017, marking the beginning of the final and fifth stage, where the issue is believed to have reached the post-problem stage. The post-problem stage is described as when an issue enters a prolonged state of waiting, with only sporadic recurrences of interest. This stage differs from the pre-problem stage, as it will have a higher level of overall attention, especially political attention, as concluded by Downs "*after problems have gone through the cycle, they almost always receive a higher average level of attention, public effort and general concern" (Downs, 1972).* This stage can also experience smaller spikes in interest, corresponding to outlying relevant events, as seen in this case in July and December 2017. The identified stages of the issue-attention cycle are exemplified below in Figure 10.

Figure 10: The issue-attention cycle. Source: Figure created by author based on own research, inspired by Downs (1972)
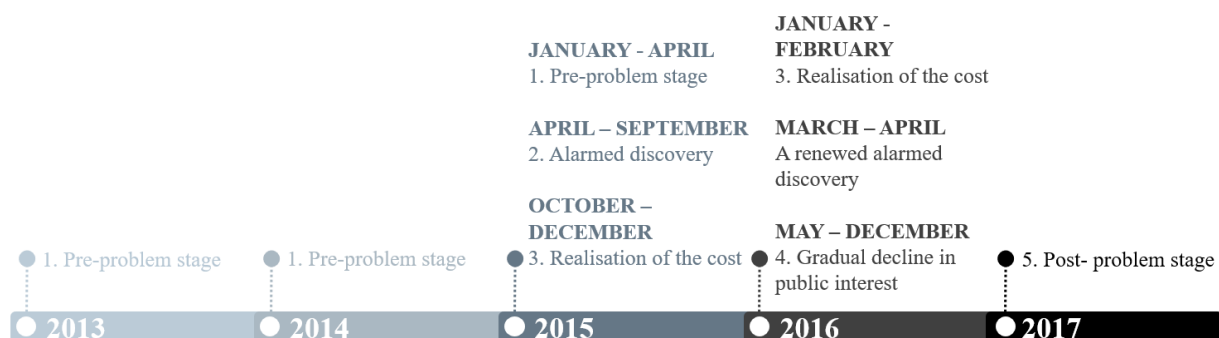
Despite the outlier experienced in March 2016, the "refugee crisis" appears to conform to the stages of the issue-attention cycle both theoretically, and empirically regarding the media coverage. According to Downs original theory, a social problem would be more likely to follow the issue-attention cycle, if the following three conditions are met; 1) that the majority of people

in a society is not suffering from the problem, but rather that a numerical minority is; 2) sufferings which is caused by the social problem is generated by social arrangements providing significant benefits to a majority of the population and; 3) that *"the problem has no intrinsically exciting qualities – or no longer has them" (Downs 1972: 41).* These conditions are met by the issue of migration at the time of study, considering that the majority of Europeans were not directly affected by the increased migratory movements, mainly affecting the migrants themselves, and to a lesser direct extent, the people living in the external border regions in Italy and Greece. Furthermore, the suffering caused by this so-called social problem, was in some degree generated due to the social arrangements provided to benefit the majority of the population, such as the contemporary migration policies. It can thus be argued that the conditions that Down's believed would allow for a social problem to conform to the issue-attention cycle is present in the case of migration to and within Europe during the time of research.

So, although the issue was far from resolved, it appears to have found a stable level of media attention around the mean by 2017. This is the case for both traditional and social media, which in general follows a similar pattern of attention throughout the researched period. However, although the level of media attention declined, the heightened media awareness has increased the overall political pressure for change. So, although the attention to the issue is more likely to be sporadic and rather inconsistent during this stage, as the population is no longer constantly reminded of it, the alertness to the issue has been heightened significantly, compared to the pre-problem stage.

6.3.1 "Issue-Attention" in the European Parliament

In contrast to the media, the pattern of the monthly European Parliamentary debates relating to migration reflect the fact that the MEPs play a different role in the issue-attention cycle. This can inter alia be seen, as the pattern of debates is far more scattered around the mean, which for the researched period is at 5.25 debates per month as exemplified in Figure 11, when compared the pattern of attention by the media, as exemplified in Figure 12, both presented below.

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Figure 11: Number of Parliamentary debates relating to migration above and below the mean[7] (Own research)
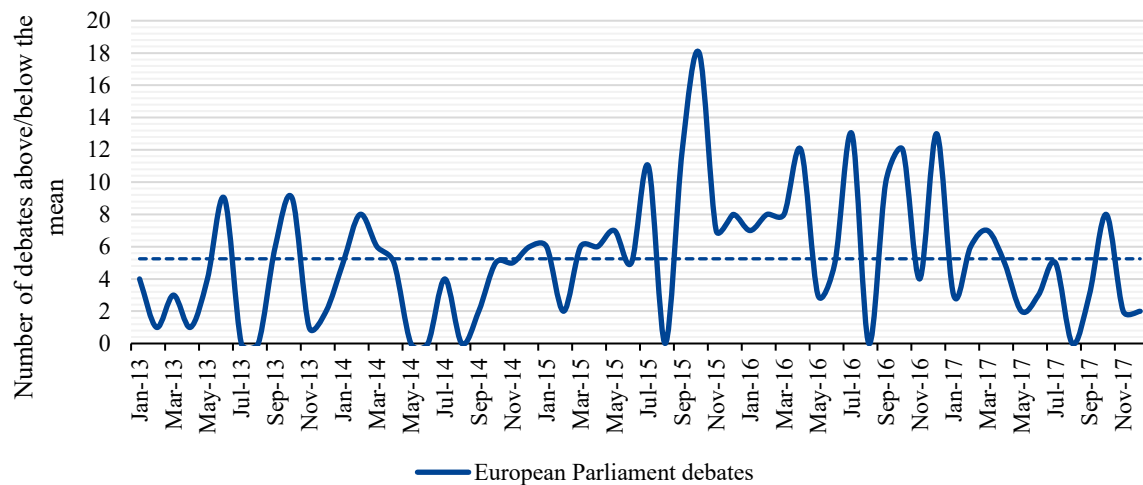
Figure 12: Comparison of issue-attention in the media and the Parliament (Own research)
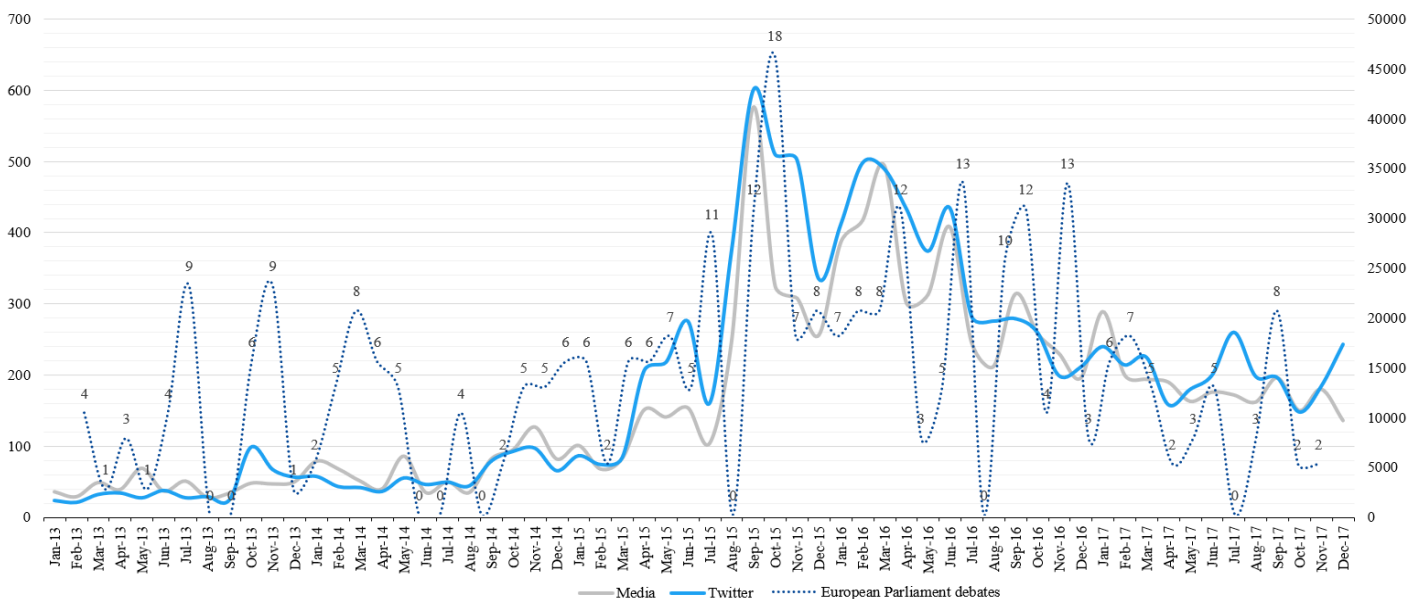
As with the media attention, the Parliamentary debates increased, as the "crisis" unfolded, although in a more scattered pattern. This is particularly evident in 2013, when a large number of debates relating to migration took place at the plenaries of the Parliament throughout the year,

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[7] The European Parliament is in recess in the summer period from the end of July to end of August each year, which means that no debates take place during this time, explaining the skewness experienced in the data each year during these months.

while the media was still well below the mean, in the pre-problem stage. During this time, the recast process for the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) was taking place, which demonstrates the different role politicians play in the issue-attention cycle. An issue may already be on the political radar and in the political debates, although it has yet to have reached the alarmed discovery stage for the media. Furthermore, MEPs are also more likely to keep updated on trends in relation to an increasing arrival of migrants, which means that they may discuss the issue earlier than the media, which are more likely to react, when a larger event calls attention to the issue publicly. This could for example explain why the Parliamentary debates were higher than the media coverage throughout most of 2014, where the media had yet to pick up interest in the increasing number of migrants arriving in Europe.

Although the trajectories of the three entities are rather different, it is possible to draw correlations for the period under analysis, which is for example evident when the alarmed discovery stage begins for the media in April 2015. At this time, the Parliamentary debates follow a similar trend, which continues throughout stage two and three of the media's issue-attention cycle, until the end of 2015. When the media experience a gradual decline of attention during stage four in 2016, the Parliamentary Debates remained significantly higher than the mean of 5.25 throughout that year. Thus, although the media has started to lose interest in migration the Parliament continues to debate the issue, without the increased pressure the added attention can place on the discussions. This was also a time when several recast procedures within the CEAS were debated at plenary. The number of Parliamentary debates reached stability around the mean in 2017, as also experienced in the media, when the post-problem stage began.

These patterns indicate that the Parliament plays a more significant role in both the pre- and post-problem stages of the issue-attention cycle, than the media does, and it will thus follow a rather different cycle, than that of the two media variables. Media attention seldom remains focused on an issue for longer periods of time, although for the case of migration, the issue-attention cycle can be argued to be of quite significant length, with its two years from the beginning of the alarmed discovery stage to the post-problem stage. The length of attention and pressure could have generated significant political pressure for an effective policy change. Policy outputs are also likely to go through phases, and according to Downs, public concern will diminish when

politicians address an issue through legislative action (Downs, 1972). It should be noted that Downs theory has received a number of criticisms, for example in relation to the fact that it ignores the possible impact of issue interlinkage on the increasing or decreasing attention levels, as well as for neglecting how attention can be sustained, when new institutional structures are introduced (Gupta & Jenkins-Smith, 2015).

Whether a heightened attention level from the media push or limit direct political action is still widely debated. When an issue is in the alarmed discovery stage, politicians may fear to take strong positions, as choosing a side may possibility alienate a large fraction of voters. So, although most politicians will acknowledge an issue, during a peak in attention, it is possible that they will not be willing to pay the political price they perceive necessary, in order to implement the drastic measures needed to comprehensively approach the issue. However, mediatization and agenda-setting theories agree that media attention can drive, if not policy change, at least the political agenda. Furthermore, media plays an essential role in fostering the issue-attention cycle, as it generates the moral panic surrounding the events, capturing the attention of the public, which will also command significant political interest, although political action may not be given.

6.4 Sentiment Analysis

Previous studies of the representation of migration in the media have often focused on quantitative aspects of visibility, or on specific aspects of attention, similarly to the previous two sections of this chapter. This approach however only reveals the quantitative parameter of the text, while the quality of the discourse also remains an important variable (Heidenreich et al., 2020), which is why this research relies on a mixed method approach. As described in the methodology chapter, to measure the sentiment of the migration-related texts, a dictionary-based approach to quantify sentiment, was calculated using the Lexicoder dictionary and the final score for a document (S_i) was calculated as the sum of the scores for all words bearing positive sentiment (P_i) minus the sum of all scores from negative words (N_i), divided by the number of words (W_i); indicating whether the overall tone of the text is negative or positive (Heidenreich et al. 2020: 1268).

Table 7: Mean sentiment analysis (Inspired by Heidenreich et al. 2020)

Mean sentiment analysis		
$$S_i = \frac{\sum P_i - \sum N_i}{\sum W_i}$$ $$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$		
Traditional media	Twitter	European Parliamentary debates
-0.00215186	-0.056361796	0.013853136

The calculation of S_i found that the mean of the analyzed variables between 2013 and 2017 was divided as presented in Table 7. At a first glance, these numbers show that the mean sentiment of the two media sources were negative, although the traditional media was only slightly negative at -.002, and Twitter was overwhelmingly negative at .-05. The MEPs however were calculated to be more positive in their discourse in the Parliamentary debates relating to migration, which is evident in the allocation of an overall positive sentiment score at .01, suggesting an overall positive global average. Generally, the variance of these appears to be small, given the range of the scale, thus to better understand how these sentiments changed over time, the findings have been exemplified monthly for all three variables in Figure 13 below.

Figure 13: The dynamics of the sentiment over time (Own research)
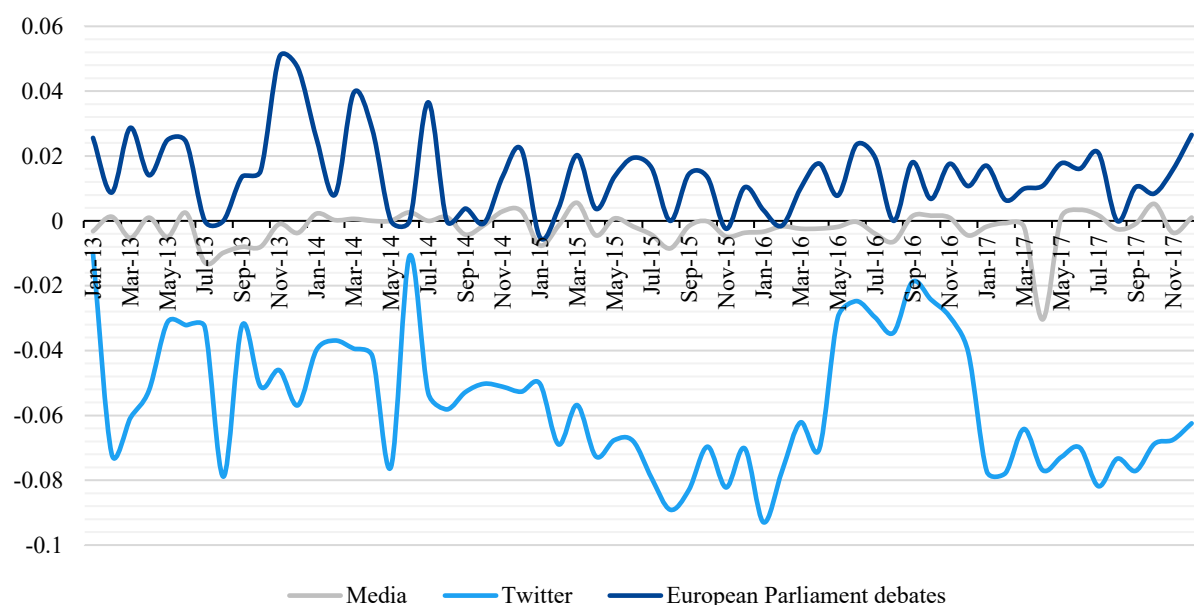
The results of the calculation of sentiment, as exemplified in Figure 13, generally confirm the mean calculation presented in Table 7, while identifying the changes in the sentiment component over time. This calculation presents the sentiment score monthly, calculated for each article, tweet and debate, and can be used to assess the general tone with which the migration-related topic is discussed during the period of research. Theoretically, each entity can range from -1, which means that all calculated words in a given entity has a negative sentiment, to +1, meaning that all calculated words have a positive sentiment, while 0 refers to either a balance between the sentiments, or that a given text only includes neutral words (Eberl et al. 2019: 30).

Figure 13 graphically confirms the mean sentiment calculation, that Twitter overwhelmingly remained negative throughout the researched period, never reaching a positive score in the global average, although experiencing occasional spikes in the positive sentiment. Three noticeable spikes in positivity took place in June 2014, June 2016 and September 2016. These findings, however, does not reveal whether it is a negative migration sentiment, or negative sentiment relating to the EU's way of approaching the so-called "crisis", it only reveals that the calculated sentiment score of the tweets was negative. For the traditional media, the sentiment remained the most stable throughout the five-year period, around 0, with a balanced or neutral overall score, with only smaller increases and decreases in both positive and negative sentiment. The traditional media only experienced shorter periods of greater negative sentiment scores, first between July and October 2014, and again in April 2017, where the largest decrease in the sentiment score was experienced. Thus, there was no noticeable overall difference in the share of positive, negative or neutral sentiments per month in the traditional media sources throughout the period of research.

As regards the sentiment used by the MEPs in their plenary debates, a more overall positive sentiment was detected, when compared to the traditional media and Twitter. Generally, the positive sentiment score was higher before the peak of the so-called "crisis" in September 2015, but it still remained overwhelmingly positive, in the post-"crisis" period, but never went as high in overall score, as in the pre-"crisis" period. When compared to the trends recorded for the two media variables, the Parliamentary debates seem rather unbalanced with no pattern in the

sentiment, with large fluctuations from month to month. Furthermore, as previously noted, the Parliament has a summer period recess between July and August each year, which can explain skewness in the data for these months for the debates. One noticeable outlier is the significant dip in overall sentiment in the debates that took place in January 2015, which could be explained by the fact that in this month, the plenaries discussed a common security and defense policy, as well as debated recent human smuggling incidents in the Mediterranean.

Contrary to the results in the previous chapters relating to trends, issue-attention and salience, each variable seems to follow their own independent pattern of sentiment scores, although following similar trajectories, while remaining in their respective personal patterns. However, there is a larger noticeable overlap between the sentiment in the traditional media and the Parliamentary debates, compared to the scores calculated for Twitter.

These results confirm similar findings from previous studies of both sentiment, but also discourse and framing, which have found that social media in general, and Twitter in particular, experience a more negative overall sentiment when migration is discussed (Yantseva 2020; Arlt & Wolling 2016; Strömbäck et al. 2021). However, as mentioned, this sentiment analysis cannot measure and confirm whether this negativity is directed towards the migrants or the handling of the migratory situations by the politicians, but only confirm that the overall tone of the tweets were negative. As previously mentioned, when discussing the contemporary media landscape, social media networks have allowed the public to participate in, and challenge traditional media and political frames, but it has also become a place for the spread of populism and far-right narratives, as the nature of social media platforms has allowed sympathizers to easily find each other, resulting in the share of more negative attitudes towards migration increasing (Arlt & Wolling 2016: 18). These findings also confirm the conclusions presented by Strömbäck and colleagues, who found that the social media platforms can foster anti-immigration discourses, which are potentially more negative than the one found in traditional media sources (Strömbäck et al. 2021: 14). These negative sentiments can produce a counter-discourse and potentially influence the more mainstream media outlets. However, the calculations of the sentiment in this data reveals that the traditional media outlets do not seem to mirror the sentiment presented on Twitter. This also confirms findings by Victoria Yantseva, from her study on the Migration

Discourse in Sweden, relating to frames and sentiments in mainstream and social media, published in 2020, where she concluded that *"the mainstream newspapers largely avoided using these migration-skeptic frames, possibly to distance themselves from right-wing narratives that were attributed to the "sphere of deviance" (Yantseva, 2020).* Furthermore, in this study, traditional media is represented by quality and broadsheet outlets, which have been found to foster a more overall positive sentiment score, when compared to tabloids, which are not represented in this particular analysis (Eberl et al. 2019: 9).

As for the overall findings, it should be noted that tweets are not governed by the same rules, as that of traditional media outlets, and the people publishing their thoughts on Twitter have more creative freedom to express radical or negative views than journalists. Furthermore, publications in the traditional media tend to be mainly event-driven, thus the articles will also be more descriptive in nature, than when compared to tweets. As regards the Parliamentary debates, parts of these debates are very standardized, which will thus rely on neutral language overall. These aspects could all have an impact on the overall sentiment calculations for the three variables. Also, while tweets were limited to only 140 characters, the articles and debates were far more exhaustive. This means that when people express themselves on Twitter, they will need to keep their message concise and to the point. This could thus lead to a false positive for the traditional media and the parliamentary debates, due to the sheer number of words that are included in the sentiment analysis, compared to the one of the tweets, where the overall message is included immediately, without extra words that can increase the count of the neutral or positive score.

As previously mentioned, when discussing methodological limitations, measuring sentiment is rather limited in several ways. Firstly, the calculation is based on a dictionary approach, which will limit the quality that can be produced, as dictionaries will automatically lose several subtleties, including emotional complexities and sarcasm, which could lead to an incomplete or underestimation of the findings. However, utilizing this method is a fast researching tool, which can provide valuable information, despite its insensitivities, to get an idea of the overall sentiment in the texts in question. In this particular analysis, the sentiment calculation is used solely with an explorative purpose, and not to claim causality in any manner, and the overall findings will be triangulated with other methodologies. This calculation can however provide an

idea of the general sentiment used in the three variables, when discussing migration. The findings have confirmed similar previous studies, finding that social media platforms tend to foster a largely negative sentiment in relation to migration or the handling of migratory situations, while both the traditional media and MEPs rely on a more neutral or positive sentiment overall. However, this does not capture whether the latter two rely on negative framing, but rather that the overall tone is either more neutral or positive. These could instead draw on more subtle negative approaches, which is not necessarily captured by the standardized calculations, which are possibly more obvious on Twitter. These variations will be discussed further in the following chapters relating to the use of frames.

6.5 Framing Migration

Thus far, the analysis has relied mainly on quantitative calculations of trends and salience, however, in order to elaborate further on how migration was discussed during the period of research, building on the explorative discussion on sentiment in the previous section, the next section will analyze the trends and changes in framing used to represent migration in the five-year period, in order to comprehensively answer the first research question. This will be done, by drawing on the 10 master frames that were identified in the methodology chapter, through the 188 coded keywords.

Figure 14: Share of frames (Own research)
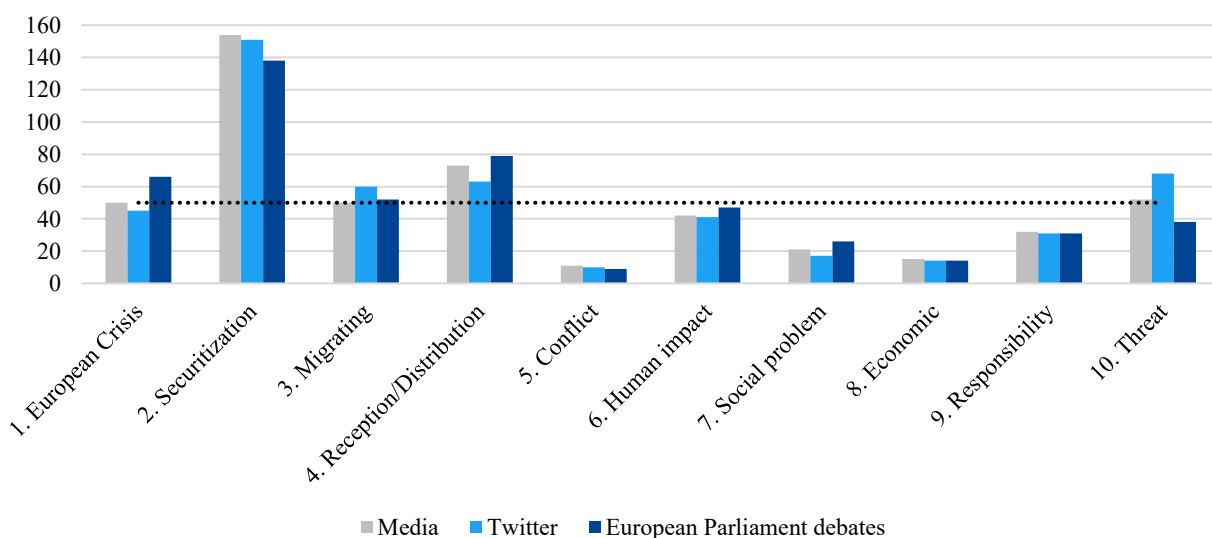
Figure 14 exemplifies the overall distribution of all ten master frames during the full period of research, divided by the share in the three different sources. At a first glance, it is evident that as a master frame, securitization is the most commonly used by all sources, although mainstream media and Twitter generally relied more on the Securitization and Threat frame, than the MEPs in the Parliament did when discussing migration. The MEPs, however, scored higher in relation to the use of the European Crisis and Reception/Distribution frames, when compared to both media sources. This indicates that the Parliament was slightly more concerned about the European aspects of the "crisis", as well as how it should be dealt with, while the media was more concerned about discussing migration using the Threat frame, which was especially evident on Twitter. This confirms the preliminary findings of the sentiment calculation, suggesting that Twitter was far more negative in their tone, when discussing the topic of migration, than the two other sources.

Generally, the distribution in the use of frames is mostly similar across the three data sources, with the Securitization frame being the most prominent of all ten frames when calculating for the full period of research. This confirms similar findings from previous studies, such as the one conducted by Greussing and Boomgaarden in 2017, in their automated frame analysis of the 2015 "refugee crisis". The second highest scoring master frame relates to addressing the reception and distribution, and how the EU were dealing with the "crisis", closely followed by the overall European Crisis frame and Threat frame, while the Conflict and Economic frame both scored significantly below the five-year mean. The overall distribution of the master frames across the three variables is also evident, when comparing them to the most frequently used key words. In the traditional media, border, issue and control were the coded keywords with the highest number of occurrences, while on Twitter the most frequently used words were crisis, deal and border. In the European Parliament, the most commonly used words in the debates were work, humanitarian and political.

However, these frames are all created as part of a process (Maneri, 2023) and must be understood and researched as such. The process means that the frames can change over time, and this must be investigated to fully unfold the use of framing between 2013 and 2017. This should

also be compared to outlying events, which could emerge and impact or transform the use and understanding of these frames.

6.5.1 Trends in Framing over time

To better understand the changes in the use of frames over the course of the "crisis", Table 8 presents the yearly percentage of the master frames, and Table 9 exemplifies these in yearly quarters, to more comprehensively investigate any possible changes in the use of frames across the three variables.

Table 8: Yearly percentage of master frames (Own research)

Description (N frames)	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
1. European Crisis (17)					
Media	14%	15%	12%	10%	11%
Twitter	15%	15%	13%	12%	13%
EP debates	17%	16%	14%	13%	13%
2. Securitization (24)					
Media	20%	24%	28%	30%	29%
Twitter	20%	20%	24%	26%	24%
EP debates	17%	19%	23%	25%	18%
3. Migrating (14)					
Media	7%	6%	9%	9%	9%
Twitter	8%	7%	9%	9%	10%
EP debates	5%	5%	7%	8%	9%
4. Reception/Distribution (21)					
Media	14%	15%	14%	15%	14%
Twitter	13%	15%	14%	15%	14%
EP debates	14%	15%	16%	16%	18%
5. Conflict (13)					
Media	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Twitter	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%
EP debates	4%	2%	2%	2%	3%
6. Human Impact (20)					
Media	8%	8%	9%	8%	8%

Twitter	12%	10%	9%	8%	8%
EP debates	10%	9%	8%	8%	10%
7. Social Problem (18)					
Media	10%	7%	5%	4%	5%
Twitter	8%	7%	5%	5%	6%
EP debates	7%	8%	5%	5%	6%
8. Economic (14)					
Media	6%	5%	4%	4%	4%
Twitter	4%	5%	4%	4%	4%
EP debates	5%	6%	5%	4%	4%
9. Responsibility (20)					
Media	8%	7%	7%	7%	7%
Twitter	8%	9%	7%	6%	7%
EP debates	11%	8%	9%	8%	9%
10. Threat (26)					
Media	10%	10%	11%	10%	11%
Twitter	10%	10%	13%	12%	13%
EP debates	10%	12%	11%	9%	10%

Table 9: The prominence of frames over time (% of use) (Own research)

	2013-Q1	2013-Q2	2013-Q3	2013-Q4	2014-Q1	2014-Q2	2014-Q3	2014-Q4	2015-Q1	2015-Q2	2015-Q3	2015-Q4	2016-Q1	2016-Q2	2016-Q3	2016-Q4	2017-Q1	2017-Q2	2017-Q3	2017-Q4
1. European Crisis																				
- *Media*	11.96	15.77	13.90	14.73	14.03	16.79	15.28	13.73	13.61	11.61	10.92	10.34	10.29	10.62	11.18	11.11	10.81	11.30	11.32	11.58
- *Twitter*	14.94	14.29	16.67	14.32	15.45	15.60	16.63	13.64	15.61	12.45	11.71	11.47	11.90	12.35	12.19	13.07	13.40	13.17	12.72	11.67
- *EP debates*	20.25	17.56	14.52	14.75	18.10	12.87	18.18	15.52	20.73	10.25	12.27	13.23	13.13	11.04	14.62	15.08	13.61	14.80	9.09	14.71
2. Securitization																				
- *Media*	18.60	20.77	20.98	20.33	25.68	21.17	22.63	27.97	24.44	26.83	28.35	30.70	31.71	30.58	29.88	29.42	29.67	27.53	28.92	29.16
- *Twitter*	19.82	19.50	18.95	20.54	22.77	17.97	20.67	19.76	18.69	24.08	25.73	26.90	26.97	24.69	24.87	26.01	24.13	23.25	24.05	22.83
- *EP debates*	13.29	21.76	14.52	17.62	19.68	20.79	15.91	18.68	14.02	21.93	28.18	26.09	25.25	24.84	24.10	25.99	23.33	18.42	11.19	19.89
Migrating																				
- *Media*	7.64	6.15	6.54	7.26	7.10	6.08	6.00	6.54	8.33	9.64	9.29	9.04	8.82	8.92	8.62	9.74	8.71	8.24	8.59	8.53
- *Twitter*	7.01	8.62	8.82	8.51	6.02	7.33	6.41	8.30	8.09	9.30	9.15	9.81	8.52	9.20	9.67	9.30	10.19	9.41	9.29	9.60
- *EP debates*	5.70	5.34	3.23	6.56	5.08	5.94	3.41	6.61	4.27	10.86	8.64	6.05	9.29	8.70	6.15	6.96	9.44	5.26	11.19	8.72
4. Reception/Distribution																				
- *Media*	15.28	13.46	12.26	14.94	14.03	15.82	15.28	15.03	13.33	14.24	15.13	15.15	15.08	14.84	14.39	14.48	14.07	14.36	14.86	14.32
- *Twitter*	13.11	11.79	14.05	13.69	13.61	17.02	12.35	15.81	12.52	14.36	14.15	14.00	14.85	15.04	14.45	14.20	13.54	13.71	14.12	14.14
- *EP debates*	7.59	16.79	12.90	18.03	15.87	13.86	13.64	17.53	15.85	13.93	15.91	17.39	16.36	16.14	17.69	14.62	14.44	17.76	20.98	18.26
5. Conflict																				
- *Media*	2.66	2.88	3.54	3.11	2.00	2.19	2.51	2.22	2.78	1.97	2.39	2.28	2.32	2.60	2.38	2.19	2.39	2.39	2.33	2.00
- *Twitter*	1.83	1.59	1.63	1.87	2.09	1.89	2.85	1.98	2.70	2.60	2.44	2.76	2.62	3.03	3.02	2.39	2.01	2.82	2.80	2.85
- *EP debates*	4.43	2.67	6.45	2.05	2.54	1.98	1.14	2.59	3.05	2.66	1.59	2.27	2.22	2.76	2.56	1.62	2.50	2.30	3.50	2.18
6. Human Impact																				
- *Media*	5.98	6.92	8.45	9.13	7.29	7.79	8.12	8.76	9.17	9.42	8.91	7.82	8.04	8.27	8.07	7.74	8.33	7.58	8.29	8.00
- *Twitter*	11.28	12.47	11.11	11.62	9.69	11.35	10.45	9.88	10.21	9.30	9.15	8.27	8.41	8.19	8.67	8.42	7.91	8.47	7.63	8.17
- *EP debates*	10.13	10.69	9.68	9.84	8.89	6.93	7.95	11.21	6.10	10.25	8.18	8.13	8.48	8.92	8.21	6.73	9.17	9.87	11.89	9.54
7. Social Problem																				
- *Media*	12.29	9.81	9.81	8.09	7.83	7.06	6.77	5.75	5.69	4.60	4.31	3.99	3.87	3.81	4.12	4.46	4.59	5.45	4.75	4.84
- *Twitter*	8.23	8.84	8.17	6.43	8.90	5.91	6.41	6.32	6.17	4.79	5.12	4.19	4.91	5.16	5.03	5.03	5.63	5.65	5.98	5.58
- *EP debates*	10.13	4.58	6.45	6.15	6.98	10.89	7.95	4.89	5.49	5.33	4.09	3.59	3.64	5.94	5.13	5.80	5.28	4.93	6.29	5.99
8. Economic																				
- *Media*	7.64	5.96	5.45	4.77	5.10	6.57	5.61	4.05	5.00	3.94	3.64	3.50	3.48	3.65	3.94	3.64	4.02	4.65	3.74	4.11
- *Twitter*	5.18	3.17	3.92	4.77	3.93	4.73	4.75	4.94	5.01	3.97	3.78	4.08	3.93	4.04	3.39	3.89	3.89	4.57	3.94	4.28
- *EP debates*	6.96	3.05	3.23	7.38	5.08	4.95	7.95	4.60	6.10	4.71	3.86	4.16	4.04	4.03	3.85	4.64	4.17	4.28	4.90	4.63
9. Responsibility																				
- *Media*	8.31	7.69	7.08	7.88	6.92	7.54	6.96	5.75	6.11	7.23	6.90	6.60	6.34	6.49	6.51	6.65	6.79	7.18	6.67	6.53
- *Twitter*	8.23	8.84	8.82	7.68	9.69	8.27	9.03	7.51	7.13	6.70	6.83	6.39	5.90	6.06	6.66	6.03	7.24	6.72	6.74	7.26
- *EP debates*	13.29	9.16	14.52	7.79	8.57	7.92	9.09	7.76	12.80	9.02	7.95	7.94	7.88	8.07	10.00	7.89	8.89	10.86	9.09	8.72
10. Threat																				
- *Media*	9.63	10.58	11.99	9.75	10.02	9.00	10.83	10.20	11.53	10.51	10.15	10.59	10.05	10.22	10.91	10.56	10.62	11.30	10.52	10.95
- *Twitter*	10.37	10.88	7.84	10.58	7.85	9.93	10.45	11.86	13.87	12.45	11.95	12.13	12.01	12.23	12.06	11.68	12.06	12.23	12.72	13.62
- *EP debates*	8.23	8.40	14.52	9.84	9.21	13.86	14.77	10.63	11.59	11.07	9.32	11.15	9.70	9.55	7.69	10.67	9.17	11.51	11.89	7.36

During the pre-problem stage of the "crisis" between 2013 and April 2015, the Responsibility frame and the Human Impact frame experienced their highest frequency across the three sources, with both frames decreasing significantly after the alarmed discovery stage began in April 2015. Generally, the Responsibility frame was more often used by the MEPs throughout the issue-attention cycle, than when compared to mainstream media and Twitter. This frame more specifically relates to the legal rights to protection, humanitarian approaches, legal obligations of countries, as well as kindness and hospitality. The following is an example of the use of the Responsibility frame, in a statement made by German MEP Ulrike Lunacek from the Greens/EFA in a debate discussing the mid-term review of the Stockholm Programme in April 2014:

> It has now been more than two years since the European Court of Human Rights made its landmark Hirsi judgment on 24 refugees and found that their rights had been violated, that they had been pushed back to Libya, where they could face further deportation to Somalia, Eritrea, where they would have expected torture and other human rights violations (Lunacek, April 2014).

In contrast to the Responsibility frame, the Human Impact frame was more frequently used within the media, and was often used when discussing, for example kindness towards the arriving migrants, such as, for example, in the Financial Times in September 2015, *"It is surely no coincidence that when private citizens show kindness to strangers, so does the government"*, or on Twitter, in October 2014, *"wonderful episode tonight on those seeking asylum in Italy and the utter kindness of Italian navy who rescue them"*.

Another aspect that should be noted from the pre-problem stage, is that the Economic and Social Problem frames were used in the discussion of migration far more often than after the alarmed discovery stage, which kicked in, in the second quarter of 2015. This frame was for example used in Politico, when discussing the costs of the Italian search and rescue operation Mare Nostrum, in April 2015, *"that was wrapped up last November after the Italians complained about bearing most of the burden. "Ninety percent of the cost of the patrol and sea-rescue operations are falling on our shoulders," said Paolo Gentiloni, Italy's foreign minister"*

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(Politico, 20 April 2015). Generally, these two frames were seldomly used when discussing migration from this time onwards. This could inter alia be due to the fact that, prior to the alarmed discovery stage of the so-called "refugee crisis", another crisis was dominating the discussions between the European countries, namely the economic crisis of 2008, and its aftermath. During this time, there were a lot of discussions relating to recessions, unemployment and benefits, and when migration was discussed, it was often done in relation to the expected costs of hosting migrants. Furthermore, since migration at this time was yet to be considered a crisis, the attention in the discussions was drawn towards aspects such as economies, rather than discussing threats and legal responsibilities, as would become more pertinent, during the alarmed discovery stage. An example of the Social Problem frame used in October 2013 on Twitter, shows both concerns about the high unemployment rate experienced following the economic crisis, but also the increasing number of migrants arriving in Europe, in the tweet *"At a time of record-high unemployment in Europe, 35,000 asylum seekers have arrived off the Italian coast"*. In an opinion piece in Euractiv in March 2013, German MEP, Franziska Brantner (Greens/EFA) makes use of the Economic frame, when discussing Greece as remaining at the forefront of the European economic crisis, discussing migrants as victims of poverty, by writing that *"Drastic budget cuts along with negligent management by Greek leaders themselves have pushed too many of the country's people, whether native born or migrant, into an abyss of poverty and hardship that will leave long-lasting scars."*

When the alarmed discovery stage began in April 2015, a change in the use of frames was experienced. The European Crisis frame greatly increased from mid-2014 until the beginning of the "crisis" in 2015 in the Parliamentary debates, while the two media sources remained stable. This frame was especially used, when discussing what Europe was experiencing as a "crisis", which was quickly an agreed frame between all three sources, when discussing the contemporary migratory movements. This could for example be seen in most of the media sources, such as Euronews in September 2015, when they wrote *"Croatia continues to struggle as Europe's refugee crisis deepens" (Euronews, 20 September 2015)*, while MEPs also continuously drew on this narrative, such as, for example, Bulgarian MEP Emil Radev from PPE, when he stated that *"it outlines the main policies of the European Union and the necessary steps that need to be taken as soon as possible in order to overcome the crisis with immigrants and refugees at*

European borders" (Radev, 15 April 2015). This statement was made in relation to the amendment of the MFF 2014-2020. The Parliament also experienced an increase in the use of the Migrating and Human Impact frame in the beginning of the alarmed discovery stage, which could have been sparked by several tragic events taking place during this time, including the biggest shipwreck on record in the Mediterranean Sea, that marked the beginning of the alarmed discovery stage in April 2015. This stage is argued to have ended by September 2015, after the publication of the tragic pictures of the three-year old Kurdish child, drowned off the coast of Turkey. These two are significant events in driving frame change, and during this time, many stories and pictures emerged relating to the suffering of migrants at the European borders, which greatly enhanced the use of master frames drawing on empathy.

The tragic drowning of Alan Kurdi was especially reflected in the media, where it was referenced and discussed excessively in both traditional and social media sources, such as in Euronews on 5 September 2015, in the article titled *"Refugee boy's drowning raises hopes for political solutions",* where the article inter alia states that *"we wait to see if the drowning of three-year-old Aylan Kurdi, now an icon for the refugee cause, will move the world enough" (Euronews, 5 September 2015),* or on Twitter *"Trump's immigration ban is appalling, though let's not forget the EU+UK shameful inaction on the refugee crisis. Alan Kurdi, age 3, anyone?" (Twitter, 1 January 2017).* This horrific event was less directly referenced during the Parliamentary debates, where only three mentions of Alan Kurdi were detected, compared to the extensive media coverage on the tragic drowning. One MEP who mentioned this, was French non-affiliated MEP Bruno Gollnisch, when he stated that *"Ms. Merkel's announcements – reception of 800,000 immigrants, suspension of Dublin procedures – are a formidable invitation to undertake the journey for all immigration candidates, of all nationalities and all motivations combined. How many more Aylan Kurdi will these ads kill?" (Gollnisch, 7 September 2015),* in a debate on the situation of fundamental rights in the EU on 7 September 2015.

However, the slight increase in the empathetic master frames such as the Human Impact and Responsibility frames experienced in the early stages of the alarmed discovery stage, were quickly replaced by frames drawing on fear and securitization. The Securitization frame began dominating in both the media coverage, as well as during the Parliamentary debates, beginning in

the last quarter of 2015, continuing all through 2016, as exemplified in Figure 15. In the Parliament, another frame also increased significantly during 2015, namely the Reception and Distribution frame, which increased by over 3% in total in just a few months. This could reflect the European Institutions attempting to comprehensively address the challenges faced by the Member States at the external borders of the EU, as well as finding solutions to the tragic incidents in the Mediterranean Sea. An example of the use of this frame within the Parliamentary debates, is Finnish MEP Paavo Väyrynen from ALDE, who stated that *"Asylum seekers are received within national refugee quotas. All member states must open the quota. Persons who have been granted asylum in one Member State should have the right to move from one Member State to another" (Väyrynen, 12 April 2016),* in a debate relating to counterterrorism following the recent terrorist attacks. However, no real political solutions were found at the time, and when the realization of the cost for comprehensively addressing the issue dawned, the issue slowly moved into the third stage of the issue-attention cycle.

Figure 15: Monthly data for the Securitization and Threat Frame (Own research)
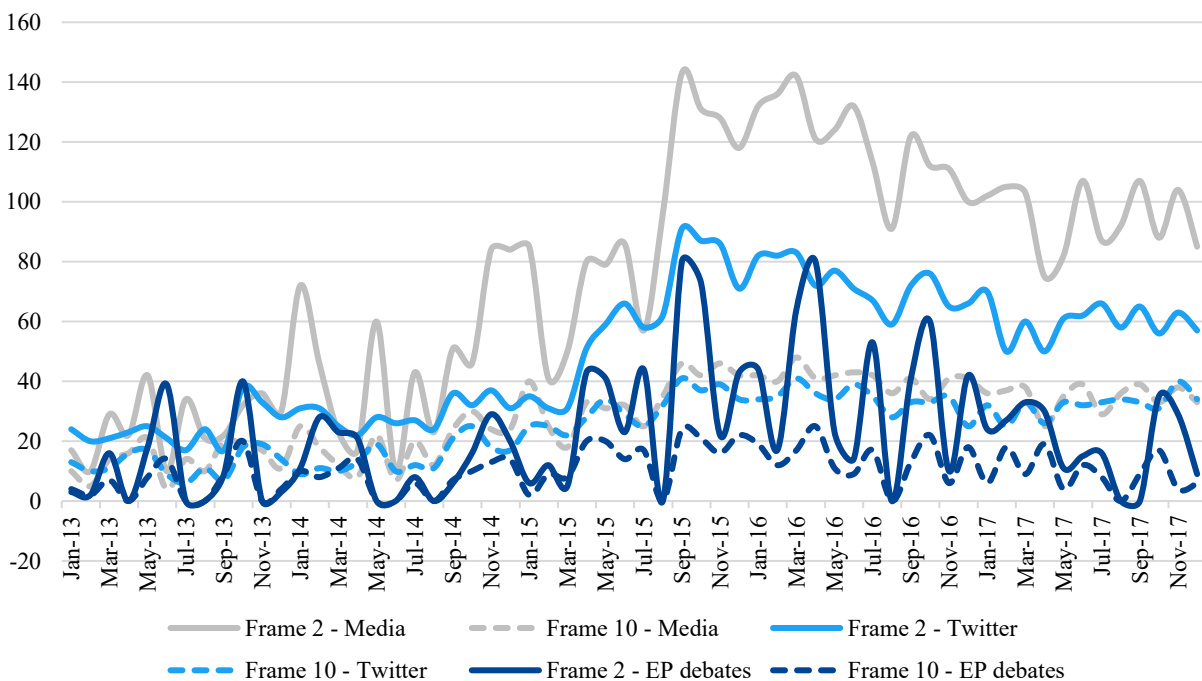
This time also marked the beginning of what could look like a new consensus amongst the media when discussing migration, with frames dominated by securitization and threat. This could

suggest a form of frame consonance, and in general a more hostile approach to the migrants arriving at the European borders. The Securitization frame was the most dominant throughout the researched period, but it saw a large increase in percentage when moving between the pre-problem stage in 2013 and 2014, into the alarmed discovery stage in the beginning of 2015. After this phase, the Securitization frame remained high, and it was included in 25% of the frames used in the Parliamentary debates, 27% on Twitter and 31% in the mainstream media. Moreover, on Twitter, the Threat frame also experienced a 3% increase during this time, which also continued throughout the rest of the issue-attention cycle. Several outside events could have been driving these increases and the ultimate frame consonance, including the two terrorist attacks, the introduction of border controls in a number of Member States, and Hungary building a fence at its borders with Serbia to stem the flow of migrants arriving through the Western Balkan Route, effectively closing it. The Threat frame was for example used by the Financial Times in June 2016, when discussing Brexit, in the quote *""People fought in the second world war for this country, to stop this invasion," says Roger Aldridge, a retired farm manager. "Now they're letting them all in." His wife Margaret says: "We have had enough of migration"" (Financial Times, 17 June 2016).* However, it was not only the media sources drawing on the Threat frame. It was also used on numerous occasions within the Parliamentary debates, such as in January 2016, when discussing the situation in Poland, when Italian MEP Mara Bizzotto from ENF stated that:

> (…) in 2015 one million migrants overwhelmed Europe and the invasion continues and will continue. Border states, such as Italy and Greece, have found themselves facing an unprecedented social emergency and our citizens have had to deal with the tragic social consequences of mass immigration, with the uncontrollable increase. violence, crime in our cities, with Islamic terrorist madness. The external borders of the Union are a sieve (Bizzotto, 19 January 2016).

Prior to the alarmed discovery stage, all three sources had relied on a more diverse representation of frames in their coverage, which at the beginning of 2016 seemed to have crystallized with the use of the Securitization frame. This frame was also often used in combination with other frames, but always keeping a security focus. In Politico in December 2015, the Securitization frame was

used by Donald Tusk, when he was serving as President for the European Council, when discussing a new proposal relating to fingerprinting migrants, he said *"Please don't downplay the role of security. If you want to screen migrants and refugees, you need more time than only one minute to fingerprint"*. Another example of the Securitization frame being used in combination with other frames, is from a Parliament debate, when Slovak MEP Anna Záborská from PPE draws on the Securitization frame in several aspects of her speech, which was made during a debate relating to sexual harassment and violence against women in public spaces:

> The Geneva Convention allows for the expulsion of a refugee if he or she endangers the security of the state or if he or she is legally convicted of a particularly serious crime. Personally, I believe that both violent and verbal attacks on women's dignity should be classified as serious, regardless of the origin and status of the perpetrator. However, in a situation where tensions in Europe are growing due to a large wave of migration, any such action by migrants must also be seen as a security threat (Záborská, 03 February 2016).

Here, MEP Záborská makes use of several frames including the Securitization and Threat frame, when discussing the security of women in public spaces. Even though these two quotes were differently framed, they both draw attention to migrants as threats to the security of Europe.

Although the Securitization frame may have crystallized at this point in 2016, frames can develop throughout the different stages of the "crisis", and variations of one master frame may be presented in different ways (Maneri, 2023). In the case of the Securitization frame, one of the variations used at this time was to describe migrants using metaphors relating to water and natural disasters, for example through the discussion of migration waves flooding Europe. This type of metaphor was in 2015 and 2016 presented in a number of ways, including the use of flooding, but also through similar words such as stream or tide (Pruitt, 2019). These frames are argued to belong under Securitization, given the way they portray a feeling of helplessness against the "natural disasters" flooding the European borders, causing a seemingly uncontrollable crisis, and feeding into the narrative of migrants as being a risk to European security. Relying on water-related imagery when discussing migration is not a new phenomenon and was for example

already used by Margaret Thatcher in 1978, when she called for tougher migration policies in the UK, stating that *"people are really rather afraid that this country might be rather swamped by people with a different culture" (Pruitt, 2019)*.

Drawing on this imagery became so ingrained in the way that we discuss migration during 2016, that it was used both negatively, but also in neutral language, when simply describing a situation or news story. Two examples of this were retrieved from the Twitter data collection corpora. The first tweet was published in December 2015, stating that *"Czech President: Refugee flood in Europe an 'organized invasion",* and the second tweet was published in January 2016, and stated that *"As refugee flood into Europe continues, UN and partners seek $550 million for 2016".* Although the latter tweet is rather neutral in its message, by drawing on the use of flood, it still activates the Securitization frame, building on insecurity, which could exacerbate feelings of fear, while also dehumanizing the people arriving in Europe and painting migration as an issue that has to be controlled, rather than people that has to be helped. This tweet is an example of how two frames can co-exist (Maneri, 2023), as it draws on the label "refugee", which is assumed to be a vulnerable group, falling under the protection as granted by the 1951 refugee convention, while describing a flood, painting this group, as an indirect security threat. Using the Securitization frame in this way, which is a more subtle reference of migration in relation to a perceived threat than the Threat frame, the media or MEPs can report on the issue, constructing a sense of danger, and, possibly presenting perceived necessities to address this possible threat, while neglecting to discuss the more complex issues at hand.

As argued by a number of previous studies (Boomgaarden & Vliegenthart, 2007; Strömbäck et al., 2021, Maneri, 2023), during a crisis, an increased number of frames will be used to describe the events, and these will settle through a frame crystallization, once the intensity of coverage and events decrease. This can also be concluded for this case, where considerable temporal and spatial variations in the use of the master frames were present during the pre-problem stage and the alarmed discovery stage, while the Securitization frame became dominant, at the end of the alarmed discovery stage, and throughout the remaining stages of the issue-attention cycle, when the coverage decreased. The variations and shifts in frames, could to a certain extend, be measured in accordance with triggering events, especially in the early stages of the "crisis",

when the frames were still being developed and discovered. This is especially the case for the media, which is largely event driven, and the language often shaped by either larger single events or smaller chain events. Such events can impact the possibility of a frame's success, and its chance of challenging an already existing and dominant frame, as the likelihood of success for a frame, also relies on the timing of introduction (Maneri 2023: 37).

When the attention began to decrease and stabilize, at the end of the issue-attention cycle, renewed interest in the European Crisis and Reception and Distribution frames was experienced in the European Parliament, while, contrary to what was expected when this analysis began, less attention was paid to these master frames in the two media. These two frames rely more on narratives on migration as a crisis, the controversy between the EU political parties, and the overall political and legal management and decisions. This frame was drawn upon by Portuguese MEP Ana Gomes from S&D multiple times, when referencing both the EU-Turkey agreement, returns, hotspots and the use of detention centers in her statement:

> Also contrary to the EU-Turkey agreement, centered on forced return, which puts the European Union in violation of international law and human rights, also by detaining thousands in hotspots, as I saw in Moria, Lesbos – in fact, a detention centre. It does not dissuade refugees from coming and gives more business to the drug mafias (Gomes, 12 April 2016).

Generally, this analysis confirms previous findings, that there seems to be a frame dissonance present in the pre-"crisis" and alarmed discovery stage, often coinciding with frame-building and episodic events, followed by a frame consonance, when the attention to the issue decrease and the frames are setting, and it is expected that these will have a larger and more long term impact (Dekker & Scholten, 2017). These findings also indicate that the media platforms do not solely follow the rhetoric used by the MEPs during the plenary debates, or vice versa. Each platform appears to rely on their own pattern when describing migration, to a certain extent. Furthermore, while the traditional media and the Parliamentary debates seem to rely on a more subtle language, Twitter users appear to both generally rely on a more negative sentiment, as well as harsher language when discussing migration, when compared to traditional media. However, it is

believed that the two media forms do tend to influence the publications on each platform, in a number of different ways, as mainstream articles are shared and commented on, on Twitter, while journalists directly source tweets, to be included in articles, for example when a politician posts on their Twitter account, which means that the two media also develop together.

6.6 A Refugee or Migrant Crisis? Why Labels Matter

Terminology is an important component of every framing effort, as it unavoidably will affect the emotional attachment a reader will contribute to a sentence. Therefore, when the media or politicians label migrants, it becomes influential in providing the reader with a quick categorization of an unknown population (Čepo et al. 2020: 473), and thus, discussing migrants as either irregular or illegal, may contribute to the securitization and politicization of the topic. Terminologies such as migrants, refugees and asylum seekers are often used interchangeably by media and in political debates, although these concepts are inherently different, and conflating these definitions may actually end up having profound effects on the rights and protection of the people in question. While an immigrant or migrant is a person who relocate from their country of origin to another country, a refugee is forced to flee, due to conflict or personal persecution. The status of refugee can be given based on an asylum claim made in a receiving country. Although the reasons for migration may overlap and the migration flows are often of a mixed nature, it is important that distinctions are made, due to the different rights and procedures involved.

Due to the heavy politicization, there is around migration, it is also important to understand how these labels are used by the media and politicians. Excessively drawing on one label can over-emphasize this group, which could make them more visible in the media, which according to Eberl and colleagues can increase an out-group hostility and create an anti-immigration attitude (Eberl et al. 2019: 8). One example of how labels can have an impact, was highlighted by Čepo et al. who found that when the term "refugee" is used, it is most often linked with positive descriptions, while the term "asylum seeker" more often is linked with negative descriptions, despite the interlinkage between the two (Čepo et al. 2020: 473). They further found that people are more positive towards accepting refugees, who are often portrayed as non-threatening victims in need of help and protection, than towards people migrating for economic reasons,

leading to the conclusion that *"the question of who counts as a deserving migrant and what the consequences of using specific definition matters" (Čepo et al. 2020: 473).*

Figure 16: The prevalence of labels in percentage of overall coverage (Own research)
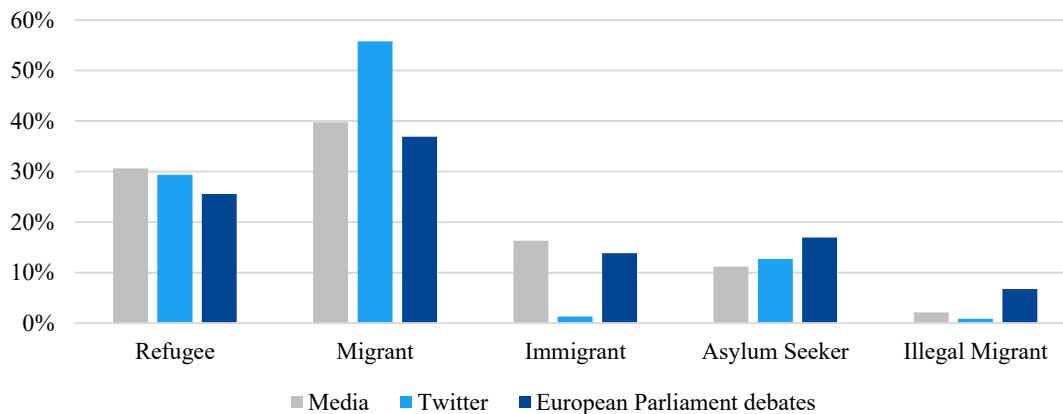
For this period of research, the terminology is divided as shown in Figure 16, exemplifying the five most frequently used labels and how the sum of these is divided between the three data sources. The most dominant label was that of migrant, followed by refugee, while immigrant and asylum seeker were far less frequently used. This is especially the case for the label immigrant on Twitter, which was used in less than 2% of the cases throughout the period of research. Generally, describing migrants as illegal migrants was the least used terminology overall, however, this label was more frequently used in the Parliamentary debates, than on the media platforms. Twitter users heavily relied on the migrant label, with over 55% of all the labels used. MEPs, however, used the label of asylum seeker slightly more than its media counterparts.

While Figure 16 exemplifies how many times the labels were used overall in the period of research, the next graphs will focus on the general trend of the labels, looking at the lifecycle of these. Figures 17, 18 and 19 demonstrate the significant changes experienced in the use of the different labels divided between the three variables over time. The data is presented in separate models for each variable, as to better compare the differences in frames and trends in labels over the years and is shown in overall percentage of each label per month.

Figure 17: Trend in the use of labels – Traditional media (Own research)

Legend: Immigrant | Migrant | Refugee | Asylum seeker | Illegal migrant
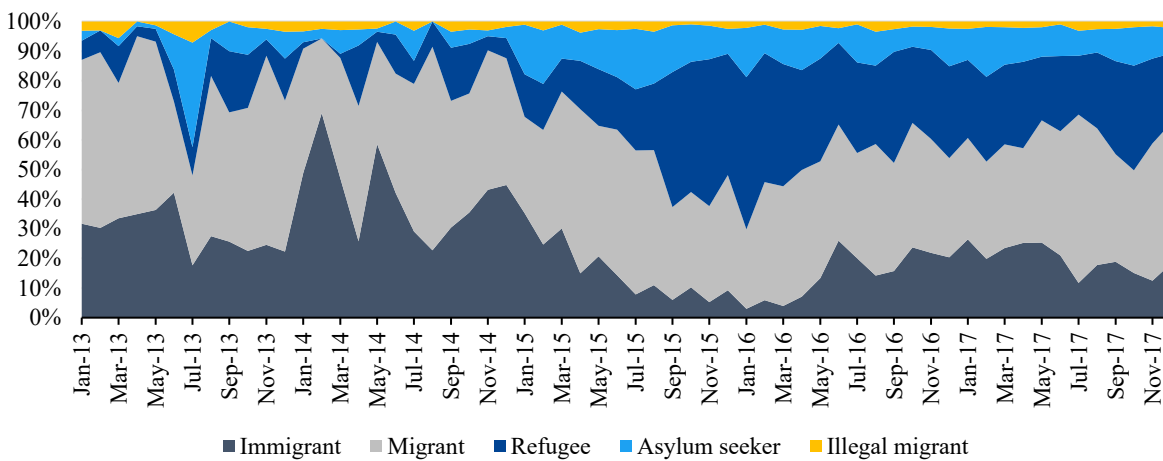
Figure 18: Trend in the use of labels – Twitter (Own research)

Legend: Immigrant | Migrant | Refugee | Asylum seeker | Illegal migrant
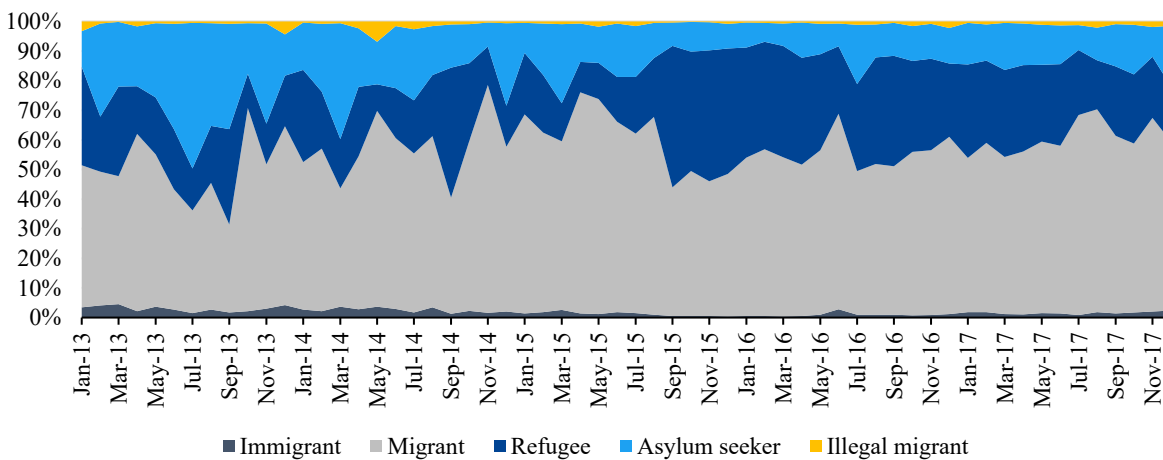
Figure 19: Trend in the use of labels – European Parliamentary debates (Own research)

Legend: Immigrant | Migrant | Refugee | Asylum seeker | Illegal migrant
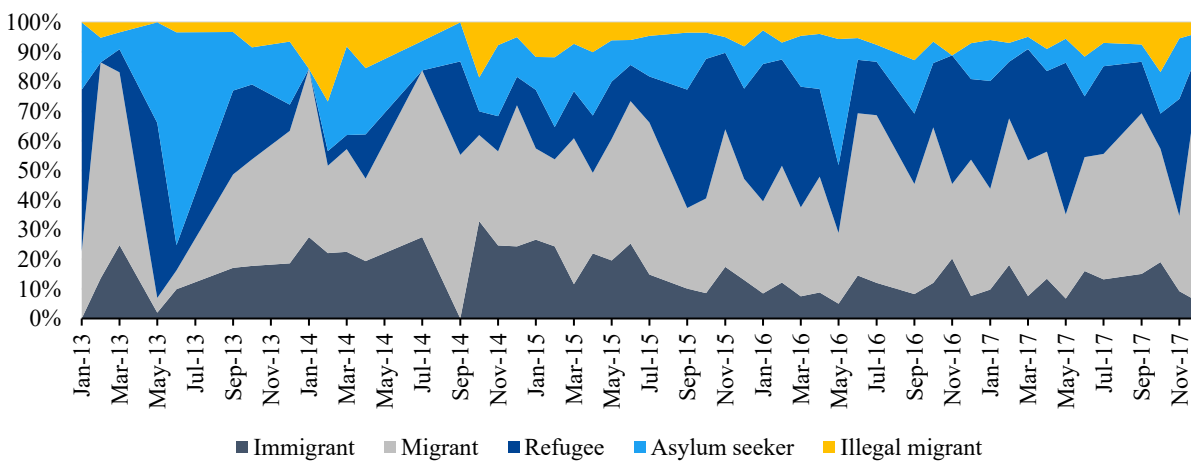
In general, the lifecycle of the five labels shows significant changes in pattern throughout the period of research, and although they do overlap occasionally, it appears that the three sources follow their own independent pattern, in regard to the use of labelling. When looking at the pre-problem stage, both the Parliament and the media experienced a noticeable spike in the use of the label "asylum seeker" in June 2013. During this period, the MEPs participated in three separate debates relating to the granting and withdrawing of international protection, as part of the recast process for the CEAS. This could explain this spike, given that the media could be reporting on these debates. The total number of asylum applications experienced between 2012 and 2013 increased with almost 100,000 asylum applications in one year, going from 335,285 in 2012, to 431,100 in 2013 (European Parliament, 2021). This could thus explain the overall increase in the interest in asylum seekers in the media over the course of 2013, however, it does not explain the sudden spike experienced in June, which subsequently subsided until the alarmed discovery stage in 2015, since the number of asylum applications launched in the preceding months did not significantly increase. The overall increase in asylum applications during 2013 could possibly be explained by the aftermaths of the Arab Spring.

When comparing the two most prominent labels, "refugee" and "migrant", the use of the label "migrant" generally dominated in all three sources throughout the period between 2013 and 2017. However, the use of the "refugee" label increased significantly half-way through the alarmed discovery stage in mid-2015 and remained more salient throughout the rest of the period of research, most noticeably in the mainstream media. The use of the "refugee" label culminated in September 2015, along with the "crisis" in general. One noticeable event during this time, as previously mentioned, was the circulation of the picture of Alan Kurdi on 02 September 2015, which briefly changed the way migration was discussed in Europe, as exemplified in the framing debate. This picture sparked renewed empathy with migrants, and similarly to the trends experienced in the framing dynamics, this period relied more heavily on the refugee terminology than in the pre-problem stage. This increase in the use of the "refugee" label in September 2015 was experienced in all three sources, and it remained more dominant for the rest of the researched period, when compared to before the circulation of the tragic photos in September.

It is interesting how fast the image of Alan Kurdi led to a change in terminology in all three of the sources, replacing the previously dominant "migrant" label, with that of the "refugee". This was experienced through a dramatic shift in terminology dominance following the publication of the image, which confirms the findings of similar previous studies, from inter alia Janina Klein and John Matthew Amis in 2021, who specifically researched the dynamics of framing in the aftermath of the publication of this image. This shift was also reflected in the public sphere of interest, as following the release of the image, Google searches for "refugee" significantly increased, compared to that of "migrant" in the same period (Vis & Goriunova, 2015). This shift in attention was also noticeable on social media, which is reflected on Twitter, where a marked shift in framing and the label use was experienced directly following the publication of the image in September 2015 and remained throughout the rest of the researched period.

Although dominance occasionally shifted and the share of percentage fluctuated, the "migrant" label remained the most salient when discussing the movement of people, throughout the period of research in all three data sources. This remained true throughout the so-called "crisis" during all the issue-attention cycle stages, regardless of the composition of the people arriving at the European borders. The fact that "migrant" remained the most prevalent and salient of all the terminology throughout the period is problematic, as it does not reflect the dynamics of the movements, and whether these were comprised mainly of refugees, or in fact by migrants.

During this time, words such as economic, irregular, and illegal were also used in connection with the word migrant, which creates a certain perception of the migrant concept in general. Drawing on words such as irregular and illegal highlights the issue of the legality and status of the migrants, describing them as criminals. These words used in connection to the terminology contributes to the developments of frames, which can have broader consequences for both public and political opinions, and it can create a dominant out-group. What is striking in the findings exemplified in the three graphs above, is how the use of the term illegal migrant almost exclusively was used by MEPs in official Parliamentary debates, rather than in the media, contrary to initial assumptions. One explanation could be that politicians will draw on such terminology when seeking to legitimize extraordinary policies, deploying aspects of securitization. By creating a dominant out-group, the politicians can contribute to removing the

individual's agency, which could be used in shifting the frame towards a Threat frame, to legitimize stricter policies when approaching an EU solution to the so-called "crisis".

Generally, the Parliament had the highest use of the "asylum seeker" label, which could, to a certain degree, be explained by the fact that they are the ones debating the legal aspects of the population movements, and which rights the people arriving are granted. Furthermore, the recast of the CEAS also took place during the period of research, which inevitably includes more references to asylum seekers, as their rights were being debated at the time in question. In contrast, the two media sources applied "refugee" in a markedly higher ratio than "migrant" or "immigrant", than when compared to the Parliamentary debates, however, in general, the terminology seems to have often been used as synonyms, or rather interchangeable, with little regard paid to the inherent differences.

6.7 Framing the so-called "Refugee Crisis"

This chapter has quantitatively explored the issue-attention and framing of the topic of migration in the traditional media, on Twitter and in the European Parliamentary debates, drawing on a number of different approaches to uncover the dynamics of the migration related articles, tweets and debates between 2013 and 2017, in order to answer the first research question *"How did the traditional- and social media, as well as Members of the European Parliament frame migration before, during and immediately after the so-called "refugee crisis"?"*

This analysis has confirmed the findings of previous similar studies, finding that although smaller short-term, event related frames are introduced, they need to resonate with the dominant frame in order to have a larger and more long-lasting impact (Garcés-Mascareñas & Pastore 2022: 18). In this case, frames such as Human Impact experienced brief, but significant spikes, following a number of tragic events, but the use of these frames were transitory, when compared to the Securitization frame, which remained high almost throughout the full period of research, culminating at the end of the alarmed discovery stage, when it reached frame consonance. Thus, although events such as the tragic fate and picture of Alan Kurdi can cause a brief paradigm shift, it will not last. This was described by Blanca Garcés-Mascareñas and Ferruccio Pastore in 2022, as *"it is very hard and seldom possible for a specific event-related migration narrative to*

achieve success if it is not converging and in syntony with a pre-existing hegemonic societal master narrative" (Garcés-Mascareñas & Pastore 2022: 18). Therefore, if the event-specific frames do not resonate with the hegemonic master frame of Securitization, it is unlikely to crystallize, and will often decrease again, when the interest in the event subsides. So, although this analysis did not provide evidence of larger changes in the hegemonic frames, there were temporal changes to be observed, for example in the pre- and post-problem stages, and at the height of the alarmed discovery stage. This confirms the findings of previous studies (Boomgaarden & Vliegenthart, 2007; Strömbäck et al., 2021, Maneri, 2023), that during a crisis, an increased number of frames is used to describe the unfolding events, and these will likely settle through frame crystallization, as the intensity of the coverage, and number of events decrease. These changes can to a certain extend be measured in accordance with triggering events, especially in the early stages of the "crisis" when the frames are still being developed. This is especially the case for the media sources, which are largely event driven, and the language is often shaped by either larger single events or a number of smaller chain events.

Another finding relates to the patterns in attention followed by the three variables. While the two media sources follow largely similar patterns, the Parliament appears to follow its own curve, which is often not explained through outside events, but instead based on the schedule of debates for the plenary sessions, for example as in the case of June 2013, when several CEAS recast proposals were being discussed. During this time, noticeable spikes in interest could be detected, although the media had little to no interest in the topic. However, the Parliament also became more interested in the topic of migration throughout the issue-attention cycle, and it did appear to a certain extent to follow the cue of the media, with the predicted one-month lag, to account for the scheduled plenaries. Generally, this part of the analysis demonstrates the different role that politicians play throughout the issue-attention cycle. While the issue may not be discussed in the media, it might already be on the political radar, before an external event will trigger the beginning of the alarmed discovery stage, which in this case can be traced back to the shipwreck in April 2015. Furthermore, the Parliament also seems to maintain interest in the topic, after the media has entered the post-problem stage, which raises the question whether policymaking may have better conditions, when migration is not front-page news.

While the Parliament follow a different pattern, the two media sources follow a similar attention trajectory and frame use throughout the period of research. However, as described, the tweets do seem to be slightly more negative in the way migration is described than the articles published in the traditional media. This could be explained by the fact that Twitter is governed by different rules, than mainstream media outlets are. People can publish their thoughts instantly through tweets, which allow for more freedom in expressing negative or radical views, than journalists writing articles for mainstream media, which relies more heavily on conveying interpretations of events, rather than reporting individual views. This confirms the findings of previous studies, that social media can become a place that foster negative attitudes towards migration (Arlt & Wolling, 2016; Strömbäck et al. 2021; Yansteva, 2020) and thus becomes more negative than traditional media sources. Whether that negativity is directed towards the migrants, or politicians however, cannot, as mentioned, be detected in a quantitative study such as this one.

Generally, September 2015 appears to be the turning point of the so-called "crisis", which came as a reaction to a number of events. This includes the publications of the pictures of Alan Kurdi, but also the introduction of the *"Refugees Welcome"* slogan, which became the symbol of solidarity movements across Europe. September also saw the presentation and implementation of several political measures, including the implementation packages for the relocation of 120,000 refugees within the EU, as well as a number of Member States introducing temporary border controls across the Union. This analysis concludes that especially the tragic picture of three-year-old Alan Kurdi became the culmination of a brewing "crisis", highlighting the shame of Europe, becoming an event that was strong enough to briefly challenge the hegemonic Securitization frame, leading pro-refugee movements across Europe to call for better and safer gateways to Europe. The picture sparked a renewed empathy for migrants, which was reflected in the framing dynamics at the time. However, shortly after, another important event took place, which matched the hegemonic Securitization frame better, and thus quickly shifted the framing dynamic back. The Paris terrorist attack in November 2015, was linked to the migration movements into Europe, and quickly removed the attention from the Human Impact frame, to the Threat frame, which was more in line with the already dominant Securitization frame. So, although the pictures of Alan Kurdi generated a sufficiently intense emotional impact, which changed the emphasis of the frames used in the media outlets, it did not shift these frames permanently, as it did not align

with the hegemonic frame, already established at the time of publication, and thus this event did not end up being transformative in nature (Maneri 2023: 41).

The way we talk about migration can have broader consequences for both the public and political opinion and describing migration through the use of securitizing language may portray a feeling of helplessness against this out-group, which can feed into the narrative of migrants as a risk to European security. This approach can cause more intense public attention as well as pressure to generate an effective policy change, in order to "protect" the European population against the "flooding" of migrants. However, whether this heightened attention level, combined with an overall negative portrayal can push or limit direct political action is still widely debated. When attention is at its highest, during the alarmed discovery stage, politicians may fear taking stronger positions, or choosing a side, which may risk alienating their voters. So, although politicians are forced to acknowledge the issues at this time, they may not be willing to implement drastic measures, in fear of paying a political price for a comprehensive approach. During this process, a dominant out-group has been created, which can contribute to removing the individual migrant's agency, which may be used by some politicians to legitimize stricter policies. Furthermore, the continuous introduction of the "crisis" narrative can reinforce the Securitization frame, and the feeling of the need to control migration, rather than saving migrants, as the frame consonance is used over a longer period of time, becoming more likely to influence policy decisions (Dekker & Scholten, 2017).

So, although preliminary findings indicate that the media platforms do not solely follow the rhetoric used by the MEPs during the plenary debates, or vice versa, it is worth investigating further. The next chapter will thus look at the question of who leads whom, in an effort to answer the second research question.

7. WHO LEADS WHOM? MEDIA ATTENTION AND THE RESPONSIVENESS OF THE MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

7.1 Introduction

Whether the framing and sentiment in the media has had an impact on the MEPs use of frames in the European Parliamentary debates, will be examined through a regression analysis, conducted using Stata as the statistical software. This statistical method will be used to reveal whether these variables interact with each other, and whether there is a measurable correlation between them, to answer the second research question *"Was the symbolic political agenda susceptible to the way migration was framed in the traditional and social media between 2013 and 2017?"*.

To predict this interaction, the analysis will consider two explanatory variables, and one outcome variable, applied to the traditional media, Twitter and the European Parliamentary debates, respectively. To conduct this statistical analysis and measure any possible correlation, each frame and sentiment defined in the methodological chapter, was assigned a value code. The sentiment was measured using three values, with zero (0) corresponding to a negative sentiment, one (1) corresponding to a positive sentiment and two (2) corresponding to a neutral sentiment, while the framing was divided between numerical codes corresponding to each frame and master frame. The data was measured on a monthly basis, and one article, tweet or debate can include and be tagged with more than one frame, but only one sentiment. These variables will be used, to test the null hypothesis (H_0) that there is no correlation between the traditional media and Twitters use of sentiment and frame, to the sentiment and frame used during the European Parliamentary debates, when discussing migration.

The regression analysis will be applied to two sets of data, to ensure that the analysis will be based on a solid foundation, and to avoid skewness in the results. Both these data sets include traditional media and Parliamentary debates, while one includes all tweets relating to migration in the period in question and the other includes the 1,000 most retweeted tweets in the same period.

The analysis involved a number of steps before the final regression model was chosen. Firstly, a number of suitable regression models were identified, fitting with the aim of the analysis. Then, the three most relevant ones were chosen for a test for goodness of fit with the data. These were:

- Multiple regression using panel data
- Ordinary least squared (OLS) regression with lag
- Linear ordinary least squared (OLS) with panel corrected standard errors

All three models were applied to the data, to conduct normality tests and to measure the goodness of fit, which included careful attention to issues relating to autocorrelation and heterogeneity especially. These steps were conducted to ensure that the findings were sound and verified, and that the model used would be best suited for this type of data, and for answering the H_0. These tests determined that the linear ordinary least squared (OLS) regression model with panel corrected standard errors (PCSE) was the best fit for the data, providing the most robust and reliable results to answer the second research question. A description of the alternative models, and the tests for goodness of fit and normality is presented at the beginning of this chapter, with explanations as to why these were not chosen. Following these presentations, the final regression analysis will be conducted, and the findings from this will be presented.

7.2 Multiple Regression using Panel Data

The first test relied on a multiple linear regression model using panel data, which tests the data for mutual dependency and allows to consider the effect of more than one explanatory variable on the outcome variable. The model is used as a prediction and is based on the assumption that there is a linear relationship between the variables, which are not too highly correlated, and it evaluates the relative effect of one explanatory variable on the outcome variable, while holding the other variables in the model constant. The formula for the multiple regression model is presented as follows:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_{1x1} + \beta_{2x2} + \beta_{3x3} + \beta_{4x4} + \in$$

The data set contains observations of different cross sections across time and is collected chronologically and at a regular frequency. Furthermore, the data contains more information, variability and efficiency than, for example cross-sectional data, and thus, to fit the data into the model, the *xtreg* command was used, to prepare a balanced panel data set, containing the same number of observations for each group. Using the panel data series model allows for heterogeneity across groups in the data set, whereas the homogeneous (or pooled) panel data models assume that the model parameters are common across individuals. In order to run this formula, the data had to be prepared for the model. Firstly, all string or alphanumeric variables were converted into numeric. Hereafter, the fixed-effects and random-effects models using the GLS estimator was fitted, producing a matrix weighted average of the between and within results. Furthermore, since the words are a statistical unit, they were cleaned to be the *id*, to convert it into a panel through *xtset*, and the number of observations were stored in the macro r ((N)=17,402)), whereafter the panel data was set using the *xtset* command.

After the data was cleaned and converted, it was tested for normality. This test was conducted to determine whether the residuals were identically and independently distributed from a normally distributed population of data. The residuals are predicted after running the regression analysis and plotted to check for normality through a residual analysis. Thus, the *command regress* was applied to all variables, and the residuals were predicted and generated through *predict resid*, residuals.

7.2.1 Testing for Normality
To test for normality, Stata offer several graphical and numerical methods. The former includes drawing a stem-and-leaf plot, scatterplot, box-plot, histogram, probability-probability (P-P) plot, and quantile-quantile (Q-Q) plot. The latter involve computing the Shapiro-Wilk, Shapiro-Francia, and Skewness/Kurtosis tests. The first step in the test for normality is a histogram for continuous and categorical variables, with the normal-density-plot and kernel density plot, which gives the following results, when applied to both sets of data.

Figure 20: Histogram for the 1,000 most retweeted tweets (right) and all tweets (left) – Multiple regression (Own research)
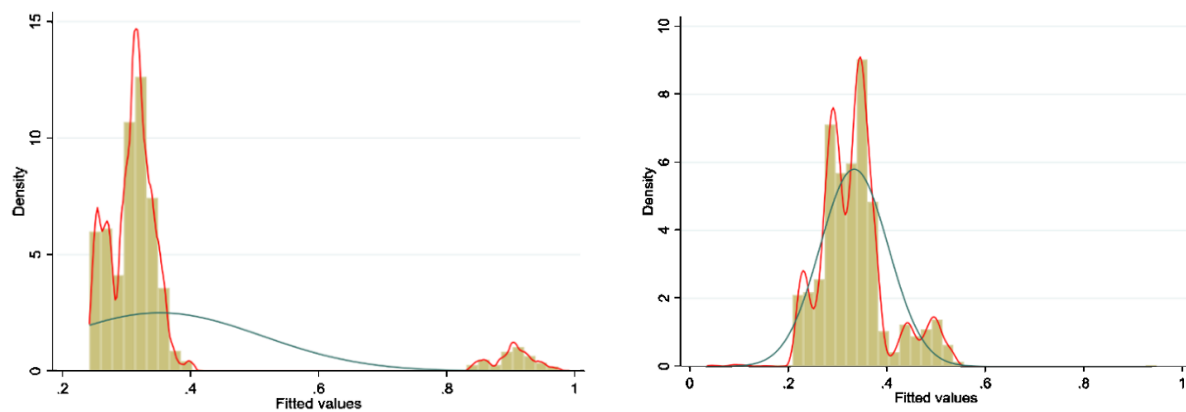
These histograms make it possible to infer that the kernel-density plot is more normally distributed for the data set that contains all tweets, whereas the data containing the 1,000 most retweeted tweets presents a significantly skewed normal-density plot. However, when working with panel data that contains large quantities of observations, significant variations from normality may be found, although the data might still be appropriate for an anova or other parametric test, as these are not very sensitive to deviations from normality.

The next step in the test for normality is testing the quantile-quantile (Q-Q) plot, to assess whether the set of data plausibly come from a normal theoretical distribution, and to identify any possible substantive departures from normality. Running a Q-Q plot test in Stata gives a graphical exemplification, with a 45-degree reference line, and if the data is normally distributed the points will lie on a straight diagonal line. As with the histogram, the test was applied to both sets of data, to confirm which one would be best suited for the regression analysis. This resulted in the following exemplification of the qnorm.

Figure 21: Quantile-Quantile plot for the 1,000 most retweeted tweets (right) and all tweets (left) – Multiple regression (Own research)
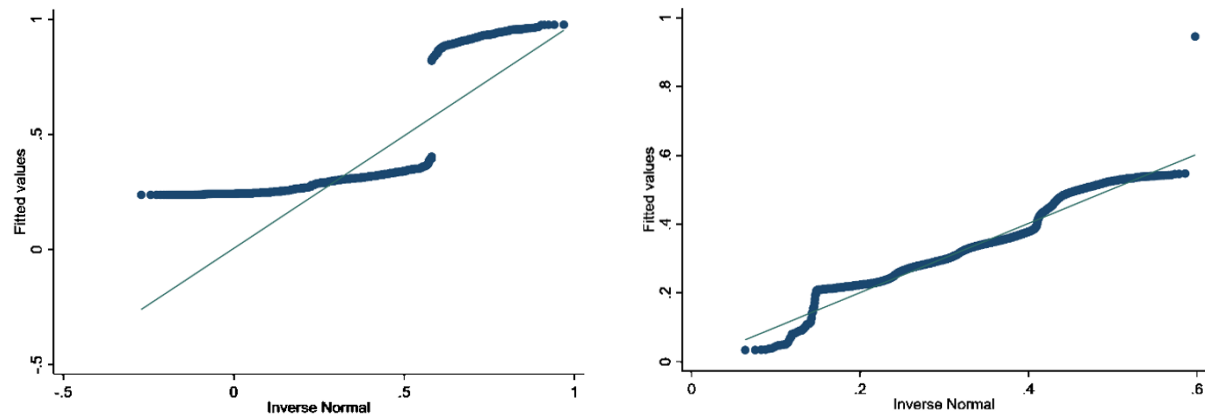
As with the histogram, the Q-Q plot illustrates that the full data set is more likely to be drawn from a normally distributed data population, when compared to the data set including the 1,000 most retweeted tweets. This is possible to infer, as the quantiles in the left graph roughly follow the same distribution, forming a line that is closely distributed along the normal distribution, whereas the distribution on the right graph is significantly skewed.

The last part of the test for normality for this data is a Skewness and Kurtosis test, which measures the asymmetry of the probability distribution of a random variable about its mean, which represents the amount and direction of the skewness, while kurtosis represents the height and sharpness of the central peak, relative to that of a standard bell curve. Checking the residuals in a Skewness and Kurtosis test, help to accept or reject the H_0, assessing whether the data is skewed, as presented in Table 10 and 11.

Table 10: Skewness and Kurtosis test for normality for the 1,000 most retweeted tweets – Multiple regression (Own research)

| Variable | Obs | Pr (skewness) | Pr (kurtosis) | Joint test | |
				Adj chi2 (2)	Pro>chi2
resid	17,389	0.0000	0.0000	.	.

Table 11: Skewness and Kurtosis test for normality for all tweets – Multiple regression (Own research)

Variable	Obs	Pr (skewness)	Pr (kurtosis)	Joint test	
				Adj chi2 (2)	Pro>chi2
resid	18,626	0.0000	0.0000	.	.

As both tables exemplify, the residuals should be normally distributed with a mean of 0 and variance σ, as values for asymmetry and kurtosis between -2 and +2 are considered acceptable to prove normal univariate distribution (George & Mallery, 2010). If the data has a skewness between -2 and +2 and kurtosis between -7 and +7, the data can be considered normal (Hair et al. 2010, Bryne, 2010). The number of observations in the two tests are respectively 17,389 and 18,626, both having a skewness at 0, which implies that the skewness is asymptotically normally distributed, and the data is therefore symmetrical. Furthermore, kurtosis is at 0, and a normal distribution can thus be assumed. The chi square test shows whether the expected values are equal to the observed ones. However, in both tests, these are left blank, which could be explained by the large sample size. Therefore, following the central limit theorem, which states that if the population has a mean μ and standard deviation σ, from a sufficiently large random sample from the population with replacement, the distribution of the sample means will be approximately normally distributed (Kwak & Kim, 2017). The central limit theorem thus allows for the conclusion that the Skewness and Kurtosis test shows the residuals are normally distributed. Moreover, since this data set is being analyzed as panel data, a test for normality may not be necessary, as a normal distribution is not a prerequisite when working with this type of data.

7.2.2 Goodness of Fit Test

Following the determination that the data is suited to be used in this model, a goodness of fit test was performed, and the multiple regression analysis was applied, using the cleaned panel data, through the command *reg ep nword sentiment frame media socialmedia month*, which provided the following results for the two data set, presented in Table 12 and 13 respectively.

Table 12: Multiple regression analysis with European Parliamentary debates as the dependent variable – 1,000 most retweeted tweets (Own research)

Independent variables	European Parliamentary debates (β)	
	Coefficient	P-value
Nword	.0000581	0.014
Sentiment	.0272746	0.000
Frame	.0055103	0.000
Media	-.5905387	0.000
Social media	.041845	0.007
Month	1.24e-08	0.899
Constant	.8088668	0.000

Notes: N=17,389, R^2=0.1119. All coefficients are standardized.

Table 13: Multiple regression analysis with European Parliamentary debates as the dependent variable – All tweets (Own research)

Independent variables	European Parliamentary debates (β)	
	Coefficient	P-value
Nword	.0000307	0.162
Sentiment	.0252606	0.000
Frame	.0045079	0.000
Media	-.1490783	0.000
Social media	.0650322	0.000
Month	1.79e-07	0.000
Constant	.1658945	0.001

Notes: N=18,626, R^2=0.0214. All coefficients are standardized.

7.2.2.1 R-squared (R^2)

The R-square provides the proportion of variation in the dependent variable, accounted for by the predictors of the independent variables in the model, calculated as a statistical metric, that measures how much of the variation in the outcome, that can be explained by the variation in the independent variables. According to Falk and Miller (1992), this must be equal to or greater than 0.10, for the variance to be deemed adequate. Where 0.1119 can be considered a moderate

association, used to measure the goodness-of-fit for the linear regression, indicating that the model explains some of the variation in the outcome variable for the data set containing the 1,000 most retweeted tweets, while the full data set has an R-square of 0.0214, which can be considered as a weak association.

The adjusted R-square value, which reflects the adjustment of the first R-square value, to the number of predictors and the sample size, to avoid overfitting the data, remain largely identical to the original R-square in both data sets.

7.2.2.2 F-test (significance test)

The F-test indicates whether the regression model provides a better fit for the data, than a model that contains no independent variables, testing the H_0, that the population R-squared is greater than 0. The P-value is rounded up at four decimal places, and there is no actual 0 P-value. The .0 presented in the two tables are rounded up, and it is therefore possible to infer that P is less than .001. Thus, as it is less than each value, the model is statistically significant, and the H_0 can be rejected with 99% confidence. Instead, it can be inferred that the model has some explanatory power, and that the observed differences are unlikely to be due to chance.

7.2.2.3 Regression Coefficient (ß)

The regression coefficient signifies the amount by which change in X must be multiplied to give the corresponding average change in Y, or the amount Y changes for a unit increase in X, thus representing the degree to which the line slopes, either upwards or downwards. The constant is the Y intercept and is the height of the regression line when it crosses the Y axis. Thus, this is the predicted value of science when all other variables are 0. Testing the regression coefficient for statistical significance, is done by forming a ratio of the regression coefficient to the associated standard error, which gives the T-value. This is done for each of the independent variables. The T-value measures the size of the difference relative to the variation in the data or the calculated difference represented in units of standard error. Therefore, the larger the T-value, the more likely it is that the independent variable has a statistically significant impact on the dependent variable, and that the H_0 can be rejected. For each test, the T-value is a way to quantify the difference between the population means, and the P-value is the probability of obtaining a T-value with an

absolute value at least as large as the one observed in the sample data, if the H_0 is true. This is also used for the two-tailed test to assess the non-directional hypothesis. If the sample falls into either of the critical areas, the alternative hypothesis is accepted instead of the H_0.

Thus, to test each of the explanatory variables for statistical significance, a ratio of the regression coefficient with the associated standard error is formed, giving the T-value, and the associated P-value for a two-tailed test. For this test, the alpha (α) for rejecting the H_0 is adopted at .05, to determine whether the regression coefficient observed in the sample data deviates far enough from the null, in either direction. Thus, if P is greater than .05, it is not statistically significant. Most of the independent variables show evidence of a significant population in the data. For the data containing the 1,000 most retweeted tweets, all P-values, for the explanatory variables, except for month and all except nword for the full data set, are less than the significance level, or α, which provides evidence of statistical significance with a 95% confidence interval. They are therefore low enough to reject the H_0, which suggests that there is an association between the explanatory variables and the outcome variable.

7.2.2.4 Standardized Regression Coefficients (Beta)

An unstandardized regression coefficient is scale dependent, thus making it difficult to determine which of the predictors are doing most of the work in the model. Calculating the Beta rank orders the predictors in terms of their relative contribution, as exemplified in Table 14.

Table 14: Standardized regression coefficient test (Beta) (Own research)

Independent variables	European Parliamentary debates (β)	
	Beta – 1,000 most retweeted tweets	Beta – All tweets
Nword	.0177081	.0102768
Sentiment	.0523937	.0491599
Frame	.034619	.0287684
Media	-.3246801	-.1082525
Social media	.0196075	.0654723
Month	.0009084	.0288166
Constant	.	.

7.2.3 The Issues Associated with a Fixed-Effects Time Model

Using a standard panel-data analysis imposes the restriction that all observations share the same slope co-efficient, and any unobserved heterogeneity across observations is attributed solely to the presence of individual-specific, time-invariant effects. This restriction can be difficult to justify, both theoretically and empirically (Burnside, 1996; Baltagi & Griffin, 1997; Pesaran et al., 1999). Furthermore, as this model relies on a fixed-effects time model, lag in responsiveness is not allowed. This creates a risk, that some of the explanatory power can be absorbed from slowly changing variables, which could explain why a variable such as the media might seem to have neither substantively nor statistically significant effects on the dependent variable (Beck & Katz, 2001). This would also explain why an instant media such as Twitter, has a higher positive coefficient.

The weaknesses in this design, do not allow the analysis to fully grasp the possible impact over time from all the explanatory variables, as is required for this study and to comprehensively answer the research question and hypothesis. These limitations may instead obscure any actual impact. Furthermore, when testing the robustness of the results, several additional analyses were conducted, using a changing dependent variable. However, the same issue with the fixed-effects time model was present in alternative modelling strategies. So, although it can be inferred from this model that there is a statistically significant mutual dependency between the explanatory variables and the outcome variable, the model does not allow to fully measure this impact and may negatively influence the reliability on the estimated effects for the respective explanatory variables. This leads to the conclusion that the multiple regression model using panel data is not the right fit for this analysis and data set, although it does allow for the conclusion, that there is a measurable mutual dependency between the traditional media, Twitter and the Parliamentary debates. How this mutual dependency is shaped will need to be analyzed using another regression model, to better fit the specificities and needs inherent in the design of this analysis, as well as data sets.

7.3 Ordinary Least Squared (OLS) Regression with Lag

The second model is an ordinary least squared regression analysis with lag, dividing the sentiment and frames individually, to reveal any possible patterns in the traditional media, on

Twitter or by the MEPs, and the correlation between the variables respectively. This model will also include an indicator or dummy variable, and will be applied on both data sets, as with the previous multiple regression model (Lee & Nerghes, 2018). More precisely, the formula for this model is exemplified as follows:

$$Y_{i\,t-1} = \beta_0 + \beta_{1x1} + \beta_{2x2} + \beta_{3x3} + \beta_{4x4} + \in$$

This model includes a lagged value of the dependent variable, seeking to offset the issues found in the previous model. This will control the variance accounted for by the same type of news in the previous months (autocorrelation) and include a time variable to assess any change over time. Generally, lagged dependent variables have been used in regression analysis to provide estimates of the effects of independent variables, although some research has argued that using lagged dependent variables in regression models may produce a negatively biased coefficient estimate, even if the lagged variable is part of the data-generating process, which need to be kept in mind when running the model (Wilkins, 2017).

To prepare the data for this type of regression, the "month" variable was converted in the standard format DMY, making it possible to be processed along with the other variables used in the analysis. Furthermore, to run *xtreg* or the regression command, all variables need to be numeric, and the word variable thus had to be encoded, and a unique ID or observation number was created for each word in the data set, and a new variable for the Parliamentary debates was created, to allow for the lagged variables. As a last step, the categorical variables, frame and sentiment, were turned binary, leaving out one reference group, frame_1 and sentiment_1.

7.3.1 Testing for Normality

As with the previous model, a test for normality was conducted before proceeding to apply and analyze the OLS regression model on the data set. The first step of the test for normality included a histogram.

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Figure 22: Histogram for the 1,000 most retweeted tweets (right) and all tweets (left) – OLS with lag (Own research)
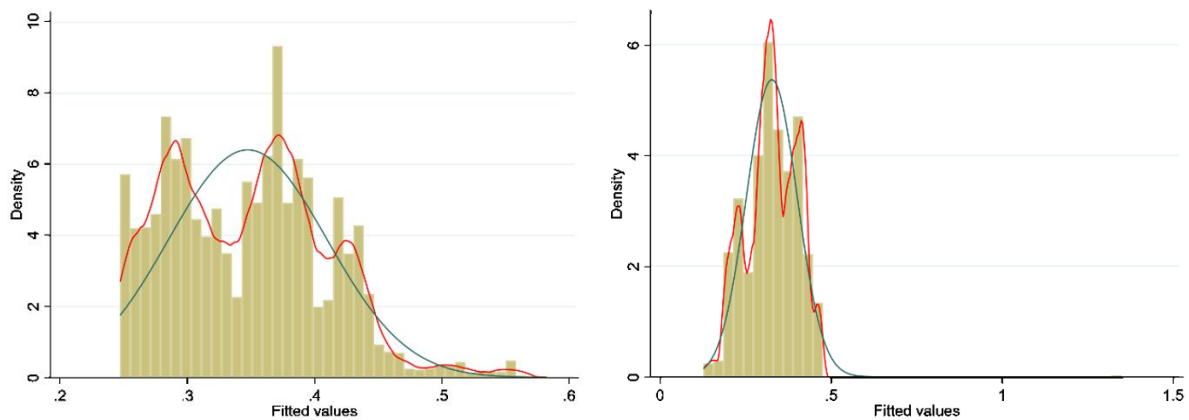
It can be inferred that the kernel-density plot is more normally distributed in the data set containing all tweets. The graph also exhibits a truncated left-hand pale, which could indicate the possibility of incomplete data, and the sample average could become inconsistent for the population mean. Both histograms show a right hand, or positive skew to the distribution, which could imply a lower boundary in the data set. The histogram could therefore suggest that the data is not appropriate for this model and should thus be further tested. For this purpose, a Q-Q plot can assist in assessing whether the data plausibly comes from a normal theoretical distribution and identify possible substantive departures from normality.

Figure 23: Quantile-Quantile plot for the 1,000 most retweeted tweets (right) and all tweets (left) – OLS with lag (Own research)
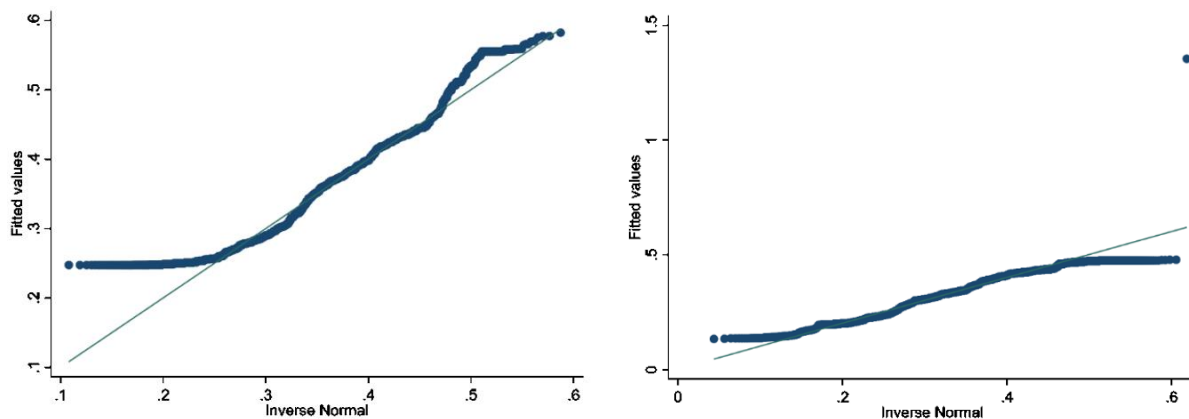
As with the histogram, the Q-Q scatter plot also shows that the data set containing the 1,000 most retweeted tweets is less likely to be drawn from a normally distributed population, compared to the data set containing the full tweets. This could be explained by the possibility of incomplete data, as also revealed in the histogram. The last test for normality to be conducted is the Skewness and Kurtosis test, which gave the following results:

Table 15: Skewness and Kurtosis test for normality for the 1,000 most retweeted tweets – OLS with lag (Own research)

Variable	Obs	Pr (skewness)	Pr (kurtosis)	Joint test	
				Adj chi2 (2)	Pro>chi2
resid	16,891	0.0000	0.0000	425.92	0.0000

Table 16: Skewness and Kurtosis test for normality for all tweets – OLS with lag (Own research)

Variable	Obs	Pr (skewness)	Pr (kurtosis)	Joint test	
				Adj chi2 (2)	Pro>chi2
resid	18,090	0.0004	0.0000	414.01	0.0000

Both tests reveal a skewness of 0, which implies that the skewness is asymptotically normally distributed, and the data is therefore symmetrical. Kurtosis is also at 0, and a normal distribution can therefore be inferred. The chi square test shows whether the expected values are equal to the observed ones, which in this case is confirmed, and the normality test can thus be concluded. This test could indicate that the data is not appropriate to be applied in this model, however, since this model also relies on panel data for the analysis, a test for normality may not be required, as a normal distribution is not necessarily a prerequisite when working with panel data. Thus, the goodness of fit tests will still be conducted, while keeping in mind the possible issues detected in the histogram and Q-Q plot tests, and caution must be paid as to the possibility of incomplete data and skewness.

7.3.2 Goodness of Fit Test

Following these tests, the analysis could proceed, and the goodness of fit test performed. The regression analysis was run using the cleaned panel data through the command *reg epnew frame_2-frame_10 sentiment_2 sentiment_3 nword media socialmedia*, and the results are presented in Table 17 and 18.

Table 17: OLS regression with European Parliamentary debates as the lagged dependent variable – 1,000 most retweeted tweets (Own research)

Independent variables	European Parliamentary debates T-1 (β)	
	Coefficient	P-value
Frame_2	-.1228352	0.000
Frame_3	-.1080864	0.000
Frame_4	-.0374751	0.009
Frame_5	-.0439128	0.101
Frame_6	-.0531141	0.001
Frame_7	-.0573967	0.003
Frame_8	-.0253468	0.222
Frame_9	.0209949	0.267
Frame_10	-.081278	0.000
Sentiment_2	.0260465	0.054
Sentiment_3	.0256843	0.003
Nword	.0000732	0.004
Media	-.0233225	0.097
Social media	.1134622	0.000
Constant	.3935106	0.000

Notes: N=16,891, R^2=0.0171. All coefficients are standardized.

Table 18: OLS regression with European Parliamentary debates as the lagged dependent variable – All tweets (Own research)

Independent variables	European Parliamentary debates T-1 (β)	
	Coefficient	P-value
Frame_2	-.0943207	0.000

Frame_3	-.0982222	0.000
Frame_4	-.0789108	0.164
Frame_5	-.0325698	0.201
Frame_6	-.0455684	0.004
Frame_7	-.0418789	0.024
Frame_8	-.0061449	0.760
Frame_9	.08072	0.115
Frame_10	-.0703553	0.000
Sentiment_2	.0367136	0.004
Sentiment_3	.0272763	0.001
Nword	.0000358	0.110
Media	.0606072	0.000
Social media	.1045836	0.000
Constant	.2281973	0.000

Notes: N=18,090, R^2=0.0249. All coefficients are standardized.

7.3.2.1 Weak Association for the R-squared (R^2)

The R-square indicates that only a weak association between the explanatory variables and the outcome variable can be measured for both data sets, respectively at 0.0171 and 0.0249. According to Falk and Miller (1992), the R-square should equal to or be greater than 0.10, for the variance to be deemed an adequate association, and it can therefore be inferred that there is no sufficient evidence for an association between the variables when applied to the OLS regression with lag model.

In an attempt to offset any nonlinearity or interaction between two or more of the independent variables, several additional tests were conducted. If an interaction term is created between nword and media/social media, the R-square will indeed increase. However, this will also result in a significant increase in the P-value in all independent variables, thus leading to an indication of non-statistical significance, if the alpha (α) for the H_0 is rejected at .05. This thus means that an association between the outcome variable and the explanatory variables can be rejected, leading to the conclusion that this model is not the right fit for the data in question, and that the skewness detected in the test for normality, may have an impact on the results delivered by this

model. It is therefore necessary to run further tests to determine what is causing this skewness, and how to best offset this with the regression models chosen, which leads to the final test, using the linear ordinary least squared (OLS) regression model with panel corrected standard errors (PCSE).

7.4 Linear Ordinary Least Squared (OLS) Regression Model with Panel Corrected Standard Errors (PCSE)

The last model to be presented, and ultimately the one which was concluded to be the best fit for this data, is the linear ordinary least squared (OLS) regression model with panel corrected standard errors (PCSE). The two previous models have experienced issues when applied to the data, which is believed to be connected to possible heteroscedasticity and autocorrelation. The data set for this analysis can be described as panel, or longitudinal data, as it is data that contains observations about different cross sections over time. Panel data, which is also known as cross-sectional time-series data (TSCS), is a relatively small number of panels (or repeated observations on the same fixed political units), observed over many periods, which is the case in this data set. Furthermore, panel data is characterized by time dependency for each panel unit, which can sometimes be described as autocorrelation. Autocorrelation can be present in a data set, due to inter alia spatial diffusion processes such as shocks, which for example can be seen in panel data gathered during the financial crisis, and in this case, the so-called "refugee crisis". If such cross-sectional dependencies are present in the data set, it could result in an inefficiency of the estimators and invalid inference when using standard estimation techniques, as with the case when the two previous models were applied. Panel data such as this will typically display both contemporaneous correlation across units and unit level heteroskedasticity, making inference from standard errors produced by ordinary least squares incorrect.

The main approach to dealing with such issues in a statistical model, is by adjusting standard errors to take into account the possible autocorrelation. This is done to avoid any substantial autocorrelation in the error terms, that could make even heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors inconsistent. Thus, using a model which includes panel-corrected standard errors can account for such deviations from spherical errors, and allow for better inference from linear models estimated from panel data (Beck 2001: 271). Beck and Katz proposed the linear ordinary least

squared (OLS) regression model with panel corrected standard errors (PCSE) to account for such issues. The PCSE method proposed by Beck and Katz requires that T be large enough over the T time periods, for each unit to make sense, thus requiring a reasonably large T to be useful (Ibid. 273).

Previously, when fitting linear models to panel data, a non-spherical error structure was commonly used, to improve inference and estimation efficiency, by a feasible generalized least squares estimator (FGLS), as suggested by Parks in 1967. However, Beck and Katz (1995) found that the Parks model had poor finite sample properties (Bailey & Katz 2011: 1), and in a simulation study from 1995, they showed that the estimated standard errors for this model generated confidence intervals that were significantly too small, often underestimating variability by 50% or more, and with only minimal gains in efficiency over a simple linear model, that ignored the non-spherical errors. Therefore, they instead suggested estimating linear models of panel data by ordinary least squares (OLS), and they proposed an estimator of the covariance matrix of the estimated parameters that they called panel-corrected standard errors (PCSE), which should be robust to the possibility of non-spherical errors (Ibid. 2). The critical assumption of Beck and Katz model is "pooling", which means that all units are characterized by the same regression equation at all points in time, with the generic model exemplified as follows:

$$Y_{i,t} = X_{i,t}\beta + \epsilon_{i,t}; \quad i = 1, \dots, N; \quad t = 1, \dots, T$$

In this equation $X_{i,t}$ is a vector of one or more (k)exogeneous variables and observations, indexed by both unit (i) and time (t). This usually includes an assumption that for any given unit, the error variance is constant, so that the only source of heteroskedasticity is differing error variances across units. The temporal dependence exhibited by the errors is also assumed to be time invariant and may also be invariant across units. This therefore must be controlled for by including the lagged dependent variable, $Y_{i,t-1}$, in the set of regressors (Bailey & Katz 2011: 2-3).

This model might thus be the most appropriate for the data set, to offset the issues encountered with the two models in the previous steps of the regression analysis. However, before proceeding

to applying the OLS regression model with PCSE to this data, it needs to first be tested for heteroscedasticity. Heteroskedasticity in regression analysis refers to the unequal scatter of residuals or error terms, which for example was detected when testing the data for normality. Specifically, heteroscedasticity refers to the case, where there is a systematic change in the spread of the residuals over the range of measured values and is a problem because OLS regression assumes that the residuals come from a population that has homoscedasticity, which means constant variance. When heteroscedasticity is present in a regression analysis, the results of the analysis become hard to trust, as exemplified with the previous models. However, heteroscedasticity is actually a fairly common problem when it comes to regression analysis, because so many data sets are inherently prone to non-constant variance, but the issue can often be eliminated by using weighted regression, if detected.

7.4.1 Measuring Heteroscedasticity

To test for heteroscedasticity, a Breusch-Pagan test was conducted in Stata, which produce a Chi-Square test statistic and a corresponding p-value, to check the H_0 against the alternative hypothesis. In this case, the H_0 is that the error variances are all equal (homoscedasticity), whereas the alternative hypothesis states that the error variances are a multiplicative function of one or more variables (heteroscedasticity), using the formula:

$$H_0: \sigma_1^2 = \sigma_2^2 = \cdots = \sigma^2,$$

$$H_A: \sigma_1^2 \neq \sigma_2^2 \neq \cdots \neq \sigma^2,$$

If the p-value is below the threshold of 0.05, then there is sufficient evidence to conclude that heteroscedasticity is present in the data. The Breusch-Pagan test is conducted on the data, after a command for a multiple linear regression is applied, as the test use the standard errors obtained from the regression results for the calculation of the H_0, using the Parliamentary debates as the response variable. Once the regression model is fitted, the *estat hettest* command can be applied using Stata to run the Breusch-Pagan/Cook-Weisberg test for heteroskedasticity, which gives the following results:

Assumption: Normal error terms

Variable: Fitted values of ep

H₀: Constant variance

$Chi^2(1) = 92.80$

$Prob > chi^2 = \textbf{0.000}$

As the p-value, corresponding to the Chi-square test statistic, is 0.000 the H_0 can be rejected, and it can be concluded that heteroscedasticity is present in the residuals. This means that the variance differs across the values of the explanatory variables, and thus violate the assumptions, making a simple OLS estimator unreliable due to bias, and it is therefore imperative to apply corrective measures, before running a regression model on this data.

To confirm the results of the Breusch-Pagan test, the White test for heteroscedasticity was also applied, using the *estat imtest, white* command. As with the results of the Breusch-Pagan test, the prob $> chi^2 = 0.000$. The H_0 of constant variance can thus be rejected at a 5% level of significance, confirming the findings from the Breusch-Pagan test.

Table 19: White's test for heteroskedasticity (Own research)

H_0: Homoskedasticity

H_1: Unrestricted heteroskedasticity

$Chi^2(70) = 1545.92$

$Prob > chi^2 = \textbf{0.000}$

Cameron & Trivedi's decomposition of IM-test

Source	Chi^2	df	p
Heteroskedasticity	1545.92	70	0.0000
Skewness	3631.62	14	0.0000
Kurtosis	3985.07	1	0.0000
Total	9162.61	85	0.0000

It is thus possible to assume that heteroscedasticity is present in the data set. The consequence of this heteroscedasticity is that the OLS estimations are no longer BLUE (Best Linear Unbiased Estimator), and the standard errors will be unreliable. This will further cause bias in any test results and confidence intervals, which could explain the issues encountered when applying the two previous models. It is therefore essential to correct the heteroscedasticity, which can be done with a robust command in the regression, such as the PCSE model by Beck and Katz. The OLS regression model with PCSE produces panel heteroscedasticity, where each variable will have its own error variance, and the data will thus take the form of time-series cross-sectional estimations, to offset the heteroscedasticity in the data. This could thus be the right model to comprehensively and reliably estimate the impact of the three variables in question. Each major issue forms a panel, and the resulting coefficients in the estimations provide an indication, for example of the average effect of media sentiment and frame on the Parliamentary debates (Walgrave et al. 2008: 12). The model would therefore more precisely look as follows:

$$EP_{it-1,4} = \beta_1 media_{it} + \beta_2 socialmedia_{it} + \beta_3 EP_{it} + \beta_4 frame_{it} + \beta_5 sentiment_{it} + \in_{1it}$$

$$Media_{it-1,4} = \beta_6 media_{it} + \beta_7 socialmedia_{it} + \beta_8 EP_{it} + \beta_9 frame_{it} + \beta_{10} sentiment_{it} + \in_{2it}$$

$$Socialmedia_{it-1,4}$$
$$= \beta_{11} media_{it} + \beta_{12} socialmedia_{it} + \beta_{13} EP_{it} + \beta_{14} frame_{it} + \beta_{15} sentiment_{it}$$
$$+ \in_{3it}$$

This means that, where the current values of any one agenda (at T for issue I) are a function of the past lags (t.1) of itself and the other agendas. This way of assessing causation was inspired by the approach applied by Walgrave and colleagues in a study from 2008, who analyzed a similar designed data set. This approach will allow for the estimation of whether:

a) The European Parliament leads the Media
b) The Media leads the European Parliament
c) Each leads the other
d) There is no connection

These estimations can be done, while still controlling for the effects of the other independent variables. To prepare the data for this type of regression, the "month" variable was converted in the standard format, to compute PCSEs, as Stata must be able to identify the panel to which each observation belongs and be able to match the periods across the panels. Stata is informed how to conduct this matching, by specifying the panel and time variables with *xtset,* and as the data is monthly, this is specified as well. Furthermore, to run *xtreg* or the regression command, all variables need to be numeric, and the word variable thus had to be encoded, and a unique ID or observation number created for each word in the data set. As a last step, the categorical variables inter alia, frame and sentiment were turned binary.

7.5 Applying the Ordinary Least Squared (OLS) regression model with Panel-Corrected Standard Errors (PCSE)

The *xtpcse* command is used to apply this model, which calculates the estimates for panel-corrected standard errors for linear cross-sectional timeseries models, with parameters estimated by either OLS or Prais-Winsten regressions. In this case, the model will rely on OLS. *Xtpcse* can also account for other disturbances to the covariance structures, however, PCSE refers specifically to models that are heteroscedastic and are contemporaneously correlated across the panels, as is the case for this data, with or without autocorrelation. The model was applied to the cleaned data through the command *xtpcse epnew sentiment frame media socialmedia nword, hetonly*, and adapted according to the dependent variable and lag, without any detected autocorrelation. This model produced the following results:

Table 20: OLS regression with PCSE (Own research)

Dependent variable	Independent Variable	No lag	One-month lag	Two-month lag	3-month lag	4-month lag
European Parliamentary debates	Media	.04***	.23**	-.54*	0 (omitted)	0 (omitted)
	Twitter	.08***	.14**	-.01	.04	-.05

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Media	Twitter	-.02***	-.03	-.07	.01	
	EP	.08***	.01	.00	.07	
Twitter	Media	-.04***	.45***	.09	0 (omitted)	0 (omitted)
	EP	.06***	.27***	.10	.36*	-.31

Notes: N=18,090

*p < .05. ** p <.01. ***p <.001

All coefficients are standardized

Heteroskedastic (unbalanced), no autocorrelation

Time variable: month

Table 20 presents the findings from the OLS regression with PCSE, measured using all three sources as the outcome variable. Furthermore, the model is explored on different time lags, to establish any change in dependency between the variables over time. However, the R-squared, which determine the proportion of variance in the outcome variable that can be explained by the explanatory variables, or the goodness of fit, decreases steadily with the number of lags applied, being at the highest for T_{-1}, which indicate a high to moderate influence, decreasing to a low to moderate influence by T_{-4}. This could infer that the interaction between the variables is highest either immediately, or at a one-month lag, whereas the association between the variables would decrease to a weak association between T_{-2}-T_{-4}. These findings will be discussed further in the next section. The model has also been applied to the ten master frames, to test for differences across the frames, in a separate calculation. This model still relies on the OLS regression with PCSE but estimates the effects of the variables on each master frame, by interacting each independent variable with a categorical variable. This estimation will thus calculate a coefficient for each of the frames, focusing on the reciprocal relationship between the three variables, applied to a T_{-1} lag, as it is the model which estimated the highest influence between the variables. The findings of these calculations are presented in tables 21, 22 and 23 below.

Table 21: OLS regression with PCSE divided by Master Frame with EP as the outcome variable (Own research)

Master Frame	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable: European Parliamentary Debates (Lag 1)	
		Media/Twitter leading Frame	Same Frame use
1. European Crisis	Media	.36***	.78***
	Twitter	.13*	0 (omitted)
2. Securitization	Media	.49***	.59***
	Twitter	.17	0 (omitted)
3. Migrating	Media	.38***	.16
	Twitter	.16**	0 (omitted)
4. Reception/Distribution	Media	.33***	.59**
	Twitter	.18**	0 (omitted)
5. Conflict	Media	.41***	.79**
	Twitter	.16**	0 (omitted)
6. Human Impact	Media	.35***	.80***
	Twitter	.18**	0 (omitted)
7. Social Problem	Media	.37***	.43
	Twitter	.18**	0 (omitted)
8. Economic	Media	.36***	1.1***
	Twitter	.16**	0 (omitted)
9. Responsibility	Media	.37***	1.1***
	Twitter	.15**	0 (omitted)
10. Threat	Media	.37***	1.2***
	Twitter	.15**	0 (omitted)

Notes: N=18,090

*p < .05. ** p <.01. ***p <.001

All coefficients are standardized

Heteroskedastic (unbalanced), no autocorrelation

Time variable: month

Table 22: OLS regression with PCSE divided by Master Frame with Traditional Media as the outcome variable (Own research)

Master Frame	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable: Media (Lag 1)	
		EP/Twitter leading Frame	Same Frame use
1. European Crisis	EP	.10**	.01
	Twitter	.04	0 (omitted)
2. Securitization	EP	-.11**	-.06
	Twitter	.03	0 (omitted)
3. Migrating	EP	-.08**	-.21
	Twitter	.03	0 (omitted)
4. Reception/Distribution	EP	.07**	-.48**
	Twitter	.02	0 (omitted)
5. Conflict	EP	-.08**	-.96***
	Twitter	.01	0 (omitted)
6. Human Impact	EP	-.09**	-.04
	Twitter	.03	0 (omitted)
7. Social Problem	EP	-.10**	.01
	Twitter	.03	0 (omitted)
8. Economic	EP	-.10**	.00
	Twitter	.02	0 (omitted)
9. Responsibility	EP	-.10**	.01
	Twitter	.02	0 (omitted)
10. Threat	EP	-.10**	.05
	Twitter	.03	0 (omitted)

Notes: N=18,090

$*p < .05.$ $**p < .01.$ $***p < .001$

All coefficients are standardized

Heteroskedastic (unbalanced), no autocorrelation

Time variable: month

Table 23: OLS regression with PCSE divided by Master Frame with Twitter as the outcome variable (Own research)

| | | Dependent Variable: Twitter (Lag 1) | |
Master Frame	Independent Variable	EP/Media leading Frame	Same Frame use
1. European Crisis	EP	.42	0 (omitted)
	Media	.20**	1**
2. Securitization	EP	.19**	0 (omitted)
	Media	.20	.59*
3. Migrating	EP	.20***	0 (omitted)
	Media	.64**	.52
4. Reception/Distribution	EP	.20***	0 (omitted)
	Media	.61**	1.13***
5. Conflict	EP	.24***	0 (omitted)
	Media	.31	-.19
6. Human Impact	EP	.22***	0 (omitted)
	Media	.44*	.99**
7. Social Problem	EP	.23***	0 (omitted)
	Media	.44*	.64*
8. Economic	EP	.23***	0 (omitted)
	Media	.45**	.83**
9. Responsibility	EP	.22***	0 (omitted)
	Media	.45*	.85**
10. Threat	EP	.23***	0 (omitted)
	Media	.45*	.91**

Notes: N=18,090

$*p < .05.$ $** p <.01.$ $***p <.001$

All coefficients are standardized

Heteroskedastic (unbalanced), no autocorrelation

Time variable: month

Some variables are omitted by Stata when the regression model is applied, due to dependency among the independent variables in the proposed model.

7.6 Who leads Whom?

The question remains, who leads whom, and whether responsiveness and alignments of framing can be observed between the media and the political debates, or more specifically answering the second research question, *"Was the symbolic political agenda susceptible to the way migration was framed in the traditional and social media between 2013 and 2017?"*. To answer this, the OLS regression model with PCSE was applied to measure whether the three variables, traditional media, Twitter and the Parliamentary debates interacted with each other, using the value codes assigned to the frames and sentiment. This model thus tested the H_0 that there is no correlation between the use of sentiment and frame in the traditional media and Twitter, and the sentiment and frame used in the European Parliamentary debates, when discussing migration. The findings produced by this model are presented in Table 20, which provides a broad picture of the measured correlations, showing the results from the model in which each of the three variables serves as the dependent variable, and independent variable, respectively. The table provides the summed coefficients of these estimates, applied with four different lags of the dependent variables, to account for any autocorrelation and to measure the possible deviations in coefficients over time. The standardized coefficients allow to directly compare the effects of each of the independent variables on the dependent variable, while controlling for the possibility of different variance in each model series. The standardized and unstandardized coefficients are largely similar since the unstandardized scores are already relative.

Firstly, it can be readily deducted that some form of correlation is present in the data. This can be inferred by looking at the Prob > chi_2, or more precisely the probability of obtaining the chi-square statistic, given that the H_0 is true. In other words, if there is in fact no effect of the independent variables measured together, on the dependent variable. In this case, the model is statistically significant, with a p-value of less than .000, thus rejecting the H_0 with a high confidence above 99.99%, inferring that the model does indeed measure some form of correlation between the variables in the data. Furthermore, alternative specifications have yielded similar results and conclusions, meaning that there is indeed a positive, measurable and

significant association between the media's framing of migration and the European Parliamentary debate framing when discussing issues relating to migration.

With statistical significance confirmed, the analysis will begin by examining the difference in lags. The findings, which are presented in Table 20, does indeed indicate significant effects in a number of directions, with measurable correlations. That is, the model indicates that there is evidence of reciprocal links between the variables, in a number of different ways, although the magnitude of these effects varies considerably. The P-value, meaning the probability of obtaining results that are at least equal to or more than the actual observations, thus indicating statistical significance and a rejection of the H_0, is highest when measuring the correlations with no lag or one-month lag, whereas when applied to the three and four-month lag, the P-value indicates that there is no statistical significance, and thus accepting the H_0. If more lag is applied, the results become less trustworthy, and less reliable interactions can be detected. It can thus be inferred that the impact should be measured and analyzed at no lag and with a one-month lag.

These first findings could be due to a number of factors. Both the media arena and the political debates are shaped by a continuous information stream, where especially the media landscape is formed by a breaking news culture, expected to follow a 24-hour News Cycle on their digital platforms. These platforms are therefore continuously updated with coverage to keep up with all unfolding events, resulting in a constant stream of information being published. The social media platforms have accelerated the spread of this news further, by enabling information to be shared faster and more widely than ever before. The European Parliament on the other hand operate within a more complex political environment, influenced by a variety of factors, which are not under the same fast-paced pressure the media is. However, the MEPs are still part of a public that live in an era of information overload, where rapid information dissemination is expected, and the attention span short. The MEPs thus operate within a certain time constraint to address issues in a timely manner, as well as constantly being exposed to the news themselves. So, although determining when the news has the greatest effect on policy debates can be complex and vary depending on the specific circumstances, it is possible to infer that, during the time of observation, the media had an almost immediate effect on the European Parliamentary debates relating to migration. One explanation to this fast impact could be, that this was measured during

a time of "crisis". Failing to react fast to external events during a crisis can be detrimental politically, and thus profoundly impact the communication choices of politicians, resulting in a more immediate effect, such as measured in this data. Reacting to news that were published three or four months ago, would be considered outdated, which could explain why no statistically significant correlation between the three variables could be measured when those lags were applied. During the alarmed discovery stage in mid-2015, over 500 articles relating to migration were published per month in the five news papers included in this analysis alone, thus constantly introducing and remaking the frames and narratives relating to migration. Considering this vast amount of information being published relating to migration within such a short timeframe, it is possible to assume that any media effect would be most pressing within the first weeks after publishing, rather than later, as confirmed by the initial findings of this model. This observation thus confirms the previous statement, that either politicians react to the media within the first month, or not at all, due to the risk of losing momentum (Walgrave et al., 2008; Vliegenthart et al., 2016).

As for the data measured at no lag, one-month lag as well as to a lesser extent with a two-month lag, the P-value is statistically significant. The model however does indicate that when measured with a two-month lag, statistical significance is only detected when applied on the European Parliamentary debates, while no statistical significance can be measured when applied to the variables of the traditional media and Twitter. The next part of the analysis will thus focus on the data measured with no lag and one-month lag respectively, due to the statistical significance, inferring that the traditional media will have the biggest effect either immediately or within the first month after being published.

Turning towards the findings of the model within these two lags, the coefficient sizes are measured on a standard scale ranging between -1.0 and +1.0, and as such, the correlation coefficient can be interpreted as representing an effect size, to measure the strength of the relationship between two variables. Firstly, when looking at the data measuring the immediate effect at no lag, only very small coefficients or strengths in relationship can be detected, across all three variables. However, the statistical significance is high, meaning that there is very little chance that these results are random. The traditional media and Twitter have a .04 and .08

coefficient respectively, on the Parliamentary debates, meaning that when a frame is used in the traditional media and on Twitter, the likelihood of this frame being adopted by MEPs in their debate increases with 4 and 8 percent. Although this significance is low, it does indicate that there is a small, but immediate effect from the traditional and social media in the framing used in the Parliamentary debates. These numbers also suggest that tweets have a larger impact on the Parliamentary framings, when measured immediately, than compared to traditional media, indicating the importance of Twitter as an instant media for MEPs to follow and use in their debates immediately. Furthermore, the relationship between Twitter and the MEPs appears to be reciprocal.

The measured coefficients with no lag appear to be highest when the European Parliamentary debates are used as the dependent variable, thus indicating that the media positively, albeit minimally, influence the framing used in the Parliamentary debates relating to migration, more so than when measured the other way around.

When measured with a lagged variable of one month, the results remain statistically significant, while the coefficients are significantly higher than when measured at no lag. Firstly, the relationship between the lagged variable of the Parliamentary debates were tested against the independent variables of traditional media and Twitter, revealing coefficients suggesting that the framing used in the debates follow the framing of both traditional media and Twitter, at varying degrees, both within the alpha. These calculations suggest that when a frame is used in the traditional media, there is a 23 percentage point likelihood that the same frame will be adopted by MEPs in the Parliamentary debates within one month, while the frames on Twitter have a 14 percentage point chance to influence these frames. When looking at the same effect on the traditional media, the impact of the other two variables appears to be rather minimal, while both the traditional media and the Parliamentary debates greatly impact the framing on Twitter with 45 and 27 percentage points respectively. The OLS regression model with PCSE thus confirm the existence of mutual dependencies, finding evidence of moderate media effects on the European Parliamentary debates, demonstrating that the media framing relating to migration, both on Twitter and in traditional media, can influence the way the issue is framed and discussed in the Parliamentary debates, within a four-week period. These findings are thus consistent with the

prediction that the media would have a stronger effect on the European Parliament than vice versa, thus answering the second research question.

These findings therefore make it possible to infer that the framing in the mass media leads the framing used by the MEPs in the Parliamentary debates when discussing migration, to some extent. If migration is discussed in the traditional media, using a certain frame at a one percent increase, it will result in a .23 percent increase in the use of the same frame within the debates during the following four weeks. This positive relationship between the traditional media and the Parliament appears to be stronger than that of Twitter. While the MEPs seem to be influenced by the framing on Twitter, they appear more susceptible to traditional media cues than that of tweets, with a 9 percent bigger likelihood of impacting the frames. This stands in contrast to the conclusion reached relating to the immediate effect, at no lag, where Twitter had a higher percentage point impact than traditional media, suggesting that Twitter has a more immediate role as an instant media.

For the purpose of this analysis, the most important finding remains that the issue framing within the two media seems to lead the issue framing used by the policymakers in their debates, more so than the other way around. That is, MEPs appear to be significantly affected by the framing in the media coverage of the issue, as this precedes the political framing tendencies much more than political framing precedes media framing, as exemplified in the presentation of the regression results in Table 20. However, this does not necessarily suggest that the media or direct media references will be used in the speeches of the MEPs at plenary. It rather suggests that the framing being used in the traditional media and on Twitter could be adopted by the MEPs in the way they discuss and frame migration during the plenaries, thus possibly slowly altering the way the MEPs discuss the topic of migration over time.

Furthermore, this analysis does not test who sets the agenda, but rather who leads the framing formation. As concluded in previous chapters, the framing used when discussing migration changed significantly throughout the "refugee crisis", and period of research, and where these frames originated from was thus tested using this regression model. The statements above do therefore not suggest that the media drive the political discussions, but rather influence the way

these discussions are conducted and framed. In today's mediatized world, it is arbitrary to completely separate the media and political agendas, as these two develop together. The findings do not reflect whether the media reports on the issues discussed at the Parliament, or who sets the agenda for the plenaries, but rather how these topics are discussed. The media can thus still report on the Parliamentary discussions, while shaping the way they frame and present these discussions independently from how it is framed by the MEPs in the debates. The Parliament will inevitably produce events with news value that can affect the daily lives of the European population, and the media will be expected to cover these activities. However, the media is not forced to adapt the same framing when presenting these activities, rather the findings suggests that the media will opt to use frames that fit within the media narrative and agenda. So, although the MEPs may have the power to set the media agenda, the way the issue of migration was discussed during this time, appears to be influenced more by the media than by the MEPs.

It is also important to note that the plenary discussions and their topics, as previously described, are scheduled in advance. The topics may therefore not always reflect what is being discussed in the traditional media on the day of the plenaries, which only takes place once a month. This thus limits the possibility for the MEPs to include immediate reactions to any news they have read on the day, and more immediate reactions should instead be sought on the MEPs social media pages, such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. The statements made in the plenaries must be relevant and timely for the discussion at hand, rather than shaped by what has been read on the day. This thus limits the traditional media's power in setting the agenda for the MEPs, and for possible immediate reactions to be measured in the data. However, it does not limit the possibility for the traditional media to shape how the issue of migration is framed over time in the debates, as suggested by the findings of the regression model. Furthermore, during the height of the issue-attention cycle, the number of debates, articles and tweets peaked around September of 2015, where migration was debated at each plenary. It could thus be possible to assume that during this time, the MEPs would be more affected by the large number of articles and tweets relating to migration published at a time where several crucial debates relating to migration also took place, compared to the pre- and post-problem stages, where less articles and tweets were published and written.

When the variables are reversed, a reverse impact can also be measured, albeit more limited, and with a lower P-value. This difference could be partly a function of the fact that the policy agenda deals with many issues during a plenary sitting, whereas the media agenda will tend to regularly focus on a select set of issues and largely ignore others, at any given time (Walgrave et al. 2008: 826). Therefore, during the height of the issue-attention cycle, the salience of the migration news was much higher in the media, than when compared to the Parliamentary debates. The framing used in the MEP debates appears to have only a modest effect, if any, on both media. However, since the debates are scheduled a month in advance, this could explain to some extent why the media does not pick up on the cues from the Parliamentary discussions, as much as the other way around, given the search for News Value and timeliness. Generally, it appears that Twitter and the Parliamentary debates as the independent variables affect the traditional media in a rather balanced way, with standardized coefficients within a similar magnitude, suggesting that they lead and follow each other to approximately the same extent.

Lastly, when Twitter was included as the dependent variable in the model, it revealed that traditional media has a significant effect on how migration is framed on the social media platform. This finding suggests that Twitter is more reactive to the news being published on traditional media sites, rather than vice versa. As previously mentioned, social media and traditional media are part of a symbiotic relationship, where they share and reference each other. Users on Twitter will often opt to share articles that have been published on traditional media sites, to either share their content, or choose to comment on it, adding their own opinions. However, although it is an established fact that these two variables are in a reciprocal relationship, it appears that the traditional media has a stronger effect on Twitter, than the other way around. This could be due to several factors. Firstly, the role of social media has significantly changed during the past decade, where today, a tweet may be shared within an article, which was not necessarily the case during the time of research. Secondly, there is a distinct difference in the way reporting or commenting is done on the two media. Twitter users have significant freedom to express their opinions in whichever way they prefer, thus for example adopting the frames used in the traditional media, in a combination with other frames when sharing the articles or quotes directly from the traditional online media platforms on their private social media pages. However, in traditional media, journalists are far more restricted in

their language use and will thus likely alter the language used if referencing or discussing a tweet, especially as the language on Twitter is far more informal, and in some cases, more negative than what is usually published in traditional media. This was also confirmed by the calculations of sentiment presented in chapter five, inferring that the narrative on Twitter relied on a significantly more negative sentiment, than when compared to articles published by more traditional media sources, where neutral language was calculated as the mean. Another possible explanation could be rooted in the fact that traditional media will influence the framing used on Twitter, due to it having a stronger cognitive effect. Traditional media sources report, while Twitter users will comment on the reporting, thus adopting the frames used in the initial reporting produced by the traditional media sources.

In sum, the framing used in the media has an effect on the framing used in the European Parliamentary debates when discussing migration, especially by articles and tweets published within the month leading up to the plenaries, confirming the mutual dependencies between the variables. This also confirms the initial expectation, that the more symbolic parliamentary debates are indeed susceptible to media cues. Whether the more substantive policy decisions are susceptible as well, has yet to be established. The findings, although relevant and interesting, do not reveal whether this impact has an influence on the policymaking, and more investigations will need to be conducted in order to divide politics, policymaking and debates. However, this analysis did infer that the media can change the way the issue of migration is framed, providing an example of the subtle effect the media can have on politicians.

What can be concluded from these results is thus that there is a relationship between the framing used in the traditional media, on Twitter and in the Parliamentary debates. However, the model presented in Table 20 does not reveal whether a variation in these relationships can be measured across the different master frames, as coded in the methodology chapter, and whether the trends detected in the first model will also be present when looking at cross-issue trends. These differences are therefore tested in a separate estimation, to allow the effects across the master frames to be investigated. For the sake of clarity, this analysis will only focus on the reciprocal relationship between the three variables and the master frames applied with a one-month lag,

given the fact that this yielded the most reliable and statistically significant results. These estimations are presented in Tables 21, 22 and 23.

These calculations confirm the findings from the previous model, which is that the media most often leads the frames, also when measured separately. It can be inferred from the findings, that the interaction terms in the regression model reveal a reciprocal relationship for each frame. However, in general, the traditional media has a higher impact on setting all ten frames, compared to the Parliament and Twitter, which were more scattered in their impact across the frames. This is evident, given the significant difference in the coefficients for each variable. This generally confirms findings from previous similar studies, such as the one conducted by Walgrave and colleagues from 2008, that concluded that issues tend to appear in print before they appear in the Parliament.

However, it is interesting to note that the framing power of the traditional media, appears to systematically differ across the master frames, and that the media especially lead when using frames relating to securitization and conflict. This confirms the findings presented in chapter five, when discussing the trends in the framing over time. Here, it was concluded that the Securitization frame was especially high in the media, and it appears that the regression model can confirm this, finding that the media in a larger degree increase the interaction of the coefficients with articles drawing on the Securitization frames. Measuring the interaction terms between the variables in relation to the Securitization frame is especially interesting, given that it was previously concluded that this is the frame which was used most often by all the sources. The frames originate from somewhere, and they are created as part of a process, meaning that they can change over time, and it seems that the media generally has the biggest impact in setting and altering these frames, for the period in question. Whereas, for the Parliament on the other hand, the highest coefficient for leading a frame was measured for the European Crisis frame, especially when measured with Twitter as the dependent variable. This was also the case for the Reception and Distribution frame, where the impact of the traditional media is smaller than for the other frames, which also confirms previous findings from chapter five, when discussing the trends in framing, which concluded that this frame was mostly used by the Parliament.

As previously discovered, the Securitization frame dominated the coverage throughout the "crisis" across the three variables, especially following the alarmed discovery stage in mid-2015, when a frame consonance could be detected, settling with the Securitization frame right before reaching the realization of costs stage. While all three variables relied on this frame, it appears that more often than not, it would originate from the traditional media. This is an important finding, as discourse drawing on securitization may shape the further discussions of migration, and how these discussions evolve (Heidenreich et al. 2022: 16). An increase in the Securitization frame risks impacting anti-immigration sentiments, both politically and for the public through the traditional media and social media, during a time of extraordinary increases in movements to and within Europe. A negative framing may impact both the discourse on social media and for politicians, who are democratically elected, and will seek to please constituents and possibly adopt similar negative attitudes towards migration if needed.

So, have these models answered the question of whether the media determine or codetermine the framing used in the political debates relating to migration, and thus the symbolic political agenda between 2013 and 2017? The answer appears to be yes. The media coverage does affect the way the topic of migration receive attention from the MEPs during the Parliamentary debates. Naturally, the media is not all determining, but their lead on the frame use is both measurable and significant. Although far from agreeing on the significance and size of this impact, other studies have come to similar conclusions prior to this one (Eilders, 2000; Walgrave and Van Aelst, 2006; Walgrave et al., 2008; Dekker and Scholten, 2017). In sum, this part of the analysis has demonstrated the importance of mass media in shaping and affecting the framing chosen when discussing migration in the European Parliament, although this importance is not equal in size across all master frames. Nevertheless, the effect is evident across most issues and is not negligible. However, the media effects on policy discussions are not a linear process but instead entail a complex causal interaction with feedback effects and multiple contingencies, and there is a need to go beyond the linear notion of causality when discussing this impact.

The findings of these regression models further confirm the thesis from the mediatization and agenda-setting theories, which both agree that the media attention can drive, if not policy change, then policy discussions. The media plays an essential role within the issue-attention cycle,

generating the narrative surrounding events, capturing the attention of the public, which will command significant political interest, as also demonstrated by these calculations. However, this does not mean that political actions are given. Whether the tone of the discussions, or a general heightened attention level will push or limit direct political action, remains to be answered. As previously mentioned, Dekker and Scholten expected that policy change is more likely to be associated with media coverage that is characterized by frame consonance, as detected at the end of 2015. When a variety of media outlets report on the same issue drawing on a singular frame over a relatively long period, such as the Securitization frame in this analysis, then media coverage is more likely to influence policy decisions (Eilders, 2000; Walgrave and Van Aelst, 2006; Dekker and Scholten, 2017).

This chapter has quantitatively explored the driving of the issue-attention and framing of the topic of migration amongst the three variables, traditional media, Twitter and the European Parliament. These calculations have confirmed the initial expectation that the media, to a larger extent, drive the framing in the Parliament, more so than the other way around. This conclusion thus suggests that the traditional media is most likely to introduce the more dominant frames, which are then picked up and used on Twitter and within the Parliament. So, while the previous chapter found evidence that the media platforms do not solely follow the rhetoric used by the MEPs or vice versa, this chapter has proven, through statistical probability measurements, that they do have a mutual and reciprocal relationship. As for the question about who leads whom, it very much depends on the topic discussed, but it appears that the traditional media has larger and more statistically significant overall coefficients, when compared to Twitter and the Parliament.

This relationship was especially dominant when measured on the hegemonic master frame of securitization, also confirming the findings from the framing analysis in the previous chapter, that this frame has had the largest and most long-lasting impact on the way the migration topic was framed and debated between 2013 and 2017. Less media impact was detected for the frames which experienced brief, but significant spikes throughout the "crisis", inter alia, following sudden and tragic events, for example the drowning of Alan Kurdi. Furthermore, although the Parliament appears to follow its own curve when the pattern of attention was measured, which was more loosely based on the schedule of the debates for plenary and not directly driven by

outside events such as the media attention, the MEPs will still pick up on the media cues on how the issue is discussed and introduce these frames within the debates. So, although the MEPs do have a different role to play throughout the issue-attention cycle, they do get affected by the way the media discuss the issue of migration, which confirms the previous statement, that the way we talk about migration can have broader consequences for both the public and political opinion formation. Describing migration through the use of securitizing language may portray a feeling of helplessness, which can feed the narrative of migrants as a risk to European security. Doing so, the media may impact the way it is described within the Parliament. This could cause more intense public attention to the issue, and generate pressure for an effective policy change, to protect the European population against the perceived flooding of migrants.

The heightened attention level detected in the previous chapter can therefore be concluded to have a noticeable impact on the discussion at Parliamentary level, with this model inferring a causality between the three variables. However, will this impact push or limit direct political action? This will be discussed in the last chapter of the analysis, which will seek to answer the final research question, and ultimately the hypothesis, investigating what this causality has meant for the policy deliveries, and whether it can be traced within.

7.7 Limitations

Given the design of this analysis, it is important to note the key limitations in the empirical approach of the above findings. As noted by Walgrave and colleagues when using a similar model in 2008, it is important to acknowledge that, although a strong suggestion of causation can be made, this approach does not strictly speaking prove it. Whenever applying and analyzing findings from a regression model, or other analysis that tries to explain the impact of one factor on another, this point has to be kept in mind. It is easy to state that there is a correlation between two variables, and a regression model can indeed confirm such a correlation, but it is entirely different to infer that one variable causes the other, as a direct cause and effect can be very difficult to confirm. However, what can be proven by an analysis such as this one, is the evidence of temporal precedence, which in this case will be regarded as an indication of causation, as has been done in previous cases (Walgrave et al. 2008: 12). Thus, when referring to the effects of the

media, it is a reference to the preceding rise or decline in the framing used when discussing migration across the three variables.

To ensure that the results are robust, several robustness checks and various analysis probing the empirical results were conducted, and all analyses were repeated for the same periods for all variables, to ensure that the results were unaffected. The replication of all the models shows that the results are largely similar to the ones conducted on the full data set. In many instances, the effect sizes are small, however the results remain robust to the changes and different types of interactions, or when the model specifications were altered or different variables included. Furthermore, results remained robust to several sensitivity tests, that take into consideration additional control variables as well.

It should also be noted that this model does not allow for concurrent effects, that is, the dependent variable at T can be caused by independent variables at T_{-1} to T_{-4}, but not at T. This has its limitations, as it cannot be expected that there wont be some form of concurrent, or next-day relationships between the media content and political agendas, as although the MEPs debates are scheduled in advance, they can still draw on the framing they read in the media the day before, although it might not relate to the same event, or discussion, but solely relate to the issue of migration. To the extent that such a concurrent relationship is missed, then, the tests are biased against finding significant effects, however assessing the direction of such a concurrent link can be difficult. Furthermore, methodologically speaking, allowing only for the lagged effects improves to some extent the ability to talk about causation, especially in the case of European Parliamentary debates. This is the case, as it avoids another methodological difficulty in regards to concurrent effects, as the Parliamentary debates takes place only once a month during the plenary sessions in Strasbourg, lasting four days (Monday to Thursday), whereas the media data is captured daily. The concurrent effects in either direction would thus lead to a complicated situation, where a meeting taking place on Thursday would determine the media four days earlier. This situation is thus avoided by using only the lagged values of the independent variable (Walgrave et al. 2008: 21).

8. FRAMING A "CRISIS" AND ITS POLITICAL IMPACT – THE MEDIA'S IMPACT ON EU MIGRATION POLICY MAKING

8.1 Introduction

While the previous chapters inferred that the symbolic political agendas were susceptible to the framing of migration in the media between 2013 and 2017, they did not answer whether the substantive political agenda was susceptible as well. Seeking to answer this, the third and last research question was developed, asking *"Did the framing of migration impact the substantive political agendas of the European Parliament during the period of research?"*. This question will be tested on a data set of legislative speeches and outcomes from the 7th and 8th European Parliament (2009-2014 and 2014-2019 respectively). This qualitative part of the analysis will investigate whether the consonance and hegemonic role of the Securitization frame, which was detected in the media, impacted the substantive political agenda of the European Parliament during the so-called "refugee crisis", using a qualitative comparative analysis inspired methodology.

The focus of this part of the analysis will be placed on the Dublin Regulation, namely the Dublin III Regulation, adopted in 2013, and the recast proposal for the Dublin IV Regulation, which was presented by the Commission in 2016, as the legislative processes for these took place during the period of research. The Dublin Convention, going back to 1990, will contribute greatly to this debate, due to it being one of the most important European migration policies since its introduction. It is often described as the cornerstone of the CEAS, due to its role in setting the criteria and procedures for determining the Member State responsible for examining an asylum application within the European Union. The Dublin Regulation was also chosen, due to its central role during the debates surrounding the so-called "refugee crisis", where it was argued to be inefficient, failing to respond to the exponential increase of migration towards the EU. Some have even argued that it was one of the causes of the structural limitations experienced by the CEAS at the time (Cafiero 2019: 3). Although the Dublin IV Regulation was never adopted, and ultimately abandoned, after the Ursula Von Der Leyen Commission presented the new Migration Pact in September 2020, the Dublin IV proposal, and its subsequent discussions, opinions and

reports produced by the different Committees in the Parliament, remain interesting and a valuable contribution.

The final part of the analysis will thus comparatively analyze the Parliamentary discussions and outputs taking place between 2013 and 2017, through a qualitative and manual content analysis of all debates and documents relating to the Dublin Regulation and its recast procedure. The analysis will rely on all legislative speeches given during the researched period mentioning the Dublin Regulation, to ensure that the data is not issue-specific. Furthermore, the speeches, while informative, can only be used to assert a rise in level of interest, choice of framing, and effort of the EU to address said issue, but not represent the actual substantive Parliamentary political agenda. It is thus crucial to also include the Parliament readings, opinions, votes, resolutions, reports and proposals within the Ordinary Legislative Procedure (COD). Qualitatively analyzing these documents will allow for a deeper analysis of the framing, and the actual outputs, compared to the quantitative analysis conducted in the two previous chapters.

The analysis will seek to understand how the frames defined in the previous chapters are transposed into different spheres, from the media to the political debates, and ultimately measured in the policymaking process. This approach will thus explore the different framing nuances in the debates, alongside the actual outputs of the different Committees, which will be serving as the tangible outcomes, to determine whether these outputs have been influenced by similar framing as detected in the media. By comparing the Dublin III Regulation and the Dublin IV proposal, it will be possible to assess whether the recast procedure shifted the focus towards a more restrictive and security driven approach when compared to its predecessor. This process can shed light on the possible influence the media environment has had on the policy processes, through the identification of patterns and correlations, and whether these are similar to the Securitization frame consonance detected in previous chapters. This analysis will also include a discussion of the political dynamics of the Parliament, the role and influence of political groups, and the different party stances relating to migration, and how these have been susceptible to the media framing cues.

As the issue-attention cycle of the media is assumed to be shorter than the workings of the bureaucratic system of the European Union, the legislations are not expected to respond directly to any focusing events subject to media coverage, as concluded by Dekker and Scholten in 2017 (Dekker & Scholten, 2017). The effect of the framing is instead expected to stretch further, and this analysis is thus carried out as part of a longitudinal study, to consider later changes and effects, due to lag in time. According to previous research, a minimum of six months to maximum one-year lag in time is sufficient to follow these changes in issue framing (Nowak, 2013; Dekker & Scholten, 2017). In doing so, this analysis will thus set out to complement previous research seeking to understand the media framing, and its impact on policies relating to migration. Applying a comparative approach enables this research to compare the previous findings of the analysis, relating to the framing variations, as well as its impact on the Parliament's framing determined by the regression analysis, with the impact this framing may have had on the actual policy deliveries and outcomes.

While these steps may indeed provide valuable insights into the role of media coverage in shaping the policy process, it is important to acknowledge that isolating direct causality is inherently difficult, due to the multitude of factors that can influence decision-making in complex political systems such as the EU. This exercise is thus conducted with caution, recognizing the limitations in this methodology, and the need to account for other contextual factors that may also influence the policy outcomes.

8.2 The Evolution of the Dublin Regulation

Before proceeding with the comparative analysis, the evolution of the Dublin system will briefly be introduced, to situate the debates taking place in 2013 and 2016, within the historical developments of creating the Dublin system, thus making it possible to determine significant political shifts between the different Regulations since its inception. The Dublin system was first signed in June 1990, by eleven of the twelve European Community Member States (West Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxemburg, Ireland, the United Kingdom, Greece, Spain and Portugal), while the twelfth Member State, Denmark, signed one year later (Lott 2023: 459). However, the Dublin Convention did not come into force until September 1997. Since then, the Dublin system has applied to all EU Member States, and any States that

have later joined. Today, it governs the responsibility allocation amongst 32 States, including all EU Member States, and the four EFTA States, Iceland, Switzerland, Liechtenstein and Norway. The geographical scope of the Convention has thus changed significantly since its inception, but the foundation remains largely the same (Maiani 2016: 11).

With the introduction of the Dublin Convention, the first framework for determining the Member State responsible for examining an asylum application lodged within EU borders was established. This has often been described as a need created due to a functional spillover following the introduction of the Schengen Agreement, which was signed in 1985. The foundation for the Dublin system was thus first introduced within the Schengen Implementing Convention, to allow for the free movement of goods and EU citizens between its Member States. The intended purpose of the Dublin system is therefore to provide clear methods for determining the Member State responsible for examining an asylum application, while also preventing "asylum shopping", multiple applications and secondary movements, as well as avoiding "refugees in orbit" where no Member State will accept responsibility (Armstrong 2019: 353).

Although the Dublin system was the first time in European history, where the rules and principles relating to allocation and cooperation were clearly defined, the concept of interstate cooperation and responsibility-sharing within the area of asylum and protection is not new. These concepts are actually inherent features in both modern international and soft law (Armstrong 2019: 341), and can be traced back to the aftermath of World War II, when the 1951 Refugee Convention was introduced, which established the essential components of today's international refugee protection regime. The Convention also established the importance of responsibility-sharing amongst its participating States, within its preambulatory. However, although the Convention highlighted the importance of responsibility-sharing, it did not set out an official mechanism, defining how such international responsibility-sharing should be accomplished. The concept of responsibility-sharing has also been highlighted in several EU Treaties, such as the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU) Article 80, which explicitly calls for a fair sharing of responsibilities between Member States, when providing international protection, thus creating a binding legal norm. However, as argued by Ashley Armstrong in 2019, this binding

norm appears to be at odds with the creation of the Dublin system, which is a system of responsibility determination, rather than a system for equitable sharing.

The first Dublin Convention, as agreed in 1990, remained in place until 2003, when the Dublin II Regulation was adopted and came into effect. With the Dublin II Regulation, the EURODAC system was introduced to facilitate information sharing between the Member States and determine responsibility for the asylum application. This system requires Member States to fingerprint asylum seekers, as they enter Europe. A decade later, the Dublin III Regulation was introduced and adopted in 2013, coming into force in January 2014. This recast procedure aimed to address shortcomings and to improve the efficiency of the current Dublin II Regulation, including by inter alia enhancing the protection and procedural safeguards for the individual asylum seeker, including guaranteeing the rights to a personal interview and safeguarding minors, while also aiming to improve the overall efficiency of the system. Furthermore, the Dublin III Regulation also introduced mechanisms for early warning and crisis management within the system for the first time.

The discussions relating to the Dublin III Regulation took place in early 2013, prior to its adoption in June 2013. During the final debate of the Dublin recast procedure in plenary on 11 June 2013, a number of MEPs voiced their concern relating to the applicability of the Dublin system. While some parties highlighted the inherent issues, in implementing the system, others worried for the new solidarity mechanisms that was proposed, such as Cornelis de Jong, a Dutch MEP from GUE/NGL, who stated that:

> (…) the real work has yet to begin, because the Dublin system is cracking at the seams (…) There is therefore an important flaw in that system. It is assumed that if you properly guard your external borders, you will have few asylum applications to process. But that's not right. (…) I call on the Commission to start a discussion as soon as possible on how to set up a new system. This could be a system with European asylum centers, often near the external borders. Then asylum will also become more of a shared responsibility and we can all ensure that asylum applications are handled properly (de Jong, 11 June 2013).

This sentiment was echoed by, inter alia, German MEP Nadja Hirsch from ALDE, who said that:

> When we talk about asylum, we must always be aware that we are talking about people. (…) The Dublin system for example. By now we are all more or less in agreement that it is currently not working as it should. Families are torn apart and live in different countries. They cannot be brought together because this first state principle applies. This is incompatible with human rights. We as the FDP reject the Dublin system in general and want a distribution system (Hirsch, 11 June 2013).

However, while many MEPs argued that the Dublin system was in need of components relating to responsibility-sharing and a working distribution system, other MEPs continued to argue in favor of the current system but demanding stricter rules for implementation. British MEP Timothy Kirkhope, speaking on behalf of the ECR Group, argued that:

> Of course this package does deliver improvements in addressing these issues, and I particularly highlight Eurodac and the Dublin system in this respect. (red…) These are measures which attempt to protect the rights of asylum seekers but also protect against abuses of the system. The real proof will be in the system's implementation. We must be careful not to create a system which buckles under the weight of its own prescription. Overprescription, detailed administrative rules, quotas and compulsory solidarity are not going to fix the problems. (Kirkhope, 11 June 2013).

Austrian MEP, Andreas Mölzer, who was a non-attached member (NI), also referenced issues with implementation, when he wrote:

> The EU's external border is still as full of holes as Swiss cheese and is being undermined from within. Common EU asylum rules only make sense if they effectively stop the mass immigration of economic refugees and if agreements like Dublin are actually adhered to (Mölzer, 11 June 2013).

Generally, in this debate, the humanitarian logic was greatly emphasized by most MEPs, although they remained divided as to whether the Dublin III proposal was sufficient in securing the rights of the applicants, as evident in the following two argumentations, from plenary in June 2013. Firstly, Lorenzo Fontana, an Italian MEP from EFD, voted against the proposal, and argued in writing that *"We also want to strengthen the right to family reunification and establish the right to appeal against a transfer decision. No one can be detained for seeking international protection. Given the proposal as a whole, I vote against."*. In contrast, Philippe Boulland, a French MEP from PPE, voted for, stating that *"The reform aims to guarantee that an asylum seeker can no longer be transferred to one of the EU countries where there is a risk of inhuman or degrading treatment."*.

These diverging views between the MEPs when discussing the Dublin system only became more pronounced, as the migratory pressure increased during the following year, particularly from the ongoing civil war in Syria. Thus, within its first year after coming into force, concerns were raised relating to the adequacy of the Dublin III Regulation. In October 2014, during a plenary discussion relating to the joint police operation Mos Maiorum, the Dublin III Regulation was referenced on multiple occasions, always with the same conclusion, that even after the recast procedure, the Dublin system was not working. The German MEP Birgit Sippel stated, on behalf of the S&D Group, that *"if we now conclude that Dublin III is overtaxing the countries at the external borders, then we must also come to the realization that Dublin is not an appropriate response to the challenges"*. Emil Radev, Bulgarian MEP from PPE echoed this sentiment in November of that year, during a discussion relating to the situation in the Mediterranean and the need for a holistic EU approach to migration, in his written statement:

> the European Union has been facing unprecedented migratory pressures caused by protracted conflicts and the unstable situation in neighboring countries. (…) As a result, crises are emerging within the European Union - crises in refugee camps, crises at the external borders, crises at the internal borders, such as in Calais, crises in public opinion and, accordingly, a crisis of tolerance. The only possible answer is more solidarity between Member States. I am not just talking about financial solidarity, although it is also needed. I am talking about specific measures to be taken by other EU members regarding

the relocation and reception of refugees. The current situation proves that even the renewed Dublin Regulation is not enough to effectively manage refugee flows in Europe (Radev, 25 November 2014).

Contrary to the previous two statements, Finish MEP Jussi Halla-aho, from ECR argued that:

Sweden received twice as many asylum applications as Italy. Germany received five times as many. This kind of asylum shopping is against the principles of the Dublin mechanism and it undermines the acceptability of the Schengen area. We need a responsible, long-term strategy. Opening new legal routes to Europe is not a solution, because European societies cannot indefinitely afford this kind of immigration, be it legal or illegal (Halla-aho, 25 November 2014).

So, although the argumentation and reasoning behind these conclusions differ, by the end of 2014, the majority of the MEPs across the parties agreed that the Dublin system, in its current form, was inadequate and did not work. These argumentations were made, either due to concerns relating to the rights of the asylum applicants, the unequal migratory pressure placed on the EU Member States at the external borders, or due to concerns relating to the implementation of the system.

The Dublin III Regulation, which is also the Dublin system in place to this day, is in fact structured in complete continuity with its predecessor, despite its argued shortcomings. Thus, the Dublin III Regulation follows the same rules, determining state responsibility through a hierarchy of criteria, relating to family considerations, recent possessions of visa or residence permits, and whether the applicant entered the EU irregularly or regularly. If none of these criteria are applicable, the state responsible will be the Member State where the applicant first arrived, or the so-called "first country of entry principle", as described in the Regulation Article 13(1), stating that "*the Member State thus entered shall be responsible for examining the application for international protection.*" *(Regulation N604/2013).* As argued by Camilla Cafiero, the fact that the mechanism for allocating jurisdiction continued to be anchored in this principle, is "*at the basis of the structural failings of the division of powers system*" *(Cafiero*

2019: 8), ultimately concentrating the applications for protection in a certain number of Member States, specifically the Member States located at the southern borders.

The main differences that can be detected between the Dublin II and Dublin III Regulation is the enhanced protection for the applicants. The recast Regulation introduced more robust and defined protection criteria for the individual asylum applicant, including explicit guarantees for the right to information, personal interviews and legal assistance, with a special consideration awarded to vulnerable groups, such as unaccompanied minors. A principle was also created, to ensure the respect for family unity, in accordance with the ECHR and the Charter. Furthermore, the Dublin III Regulation also provided clearer rules in terms of deadlines, to make the process more efficient. Outside of the more explicit rights of the individual, the Regulation also established a mechanism for Early Warning, Preparedness and Crisis Management, to help address situations where asylum systems are under pressure, seeking to develop a more equitable distribution of responsibilities between the Member States (Regulation 604/2013). Thus, it can be concluded that while the Dublin II Regulation placed a pronounced focus on establishing the responsibility criteria, without placing much emphasis on the rights and protection of the individual, the Dublin III Regulation, although following a similar structure as its predecessor, also included stronger safeguards of the rights of the applicants.

The strengthening of the protection of fundamental rights of the applicants in Regulation 604/2013, showed how the EU institutions attempted to respond to some of the criticisms that had been made regarding the Dublin system. The Regulation no longer presupposed that a common protection and homogeneity in rights was offered throughout the EU but instead emphasized the need to provide concrete assessments in individual situations. This was provided by the sovereignty clause, as laid out in Article 17(1) in the recast Regulation, which allowed a Member State to examine an application for asylum, regardless of whether that application falls under their responsibility, if said State has reasons to believe that an applicant could suffer inhumane and degrading treatment, due to systemic deficiencies in another Member States asylum or reception system (Cafiero 2019: 9). This was codified for the first time in the Dublin III Regulation, in response to important rulings by the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) and the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU), where the courts held that a

Member State's ability to transfer an applicant under the Dublin system is not absolute, in so far as a transfer could violate a State's non-refoulement obligation (Armstrong 2019: 354). This was inter alia in response to the landmark ruling of M.S.S. v. Belgium and Greece (Application no. 30696/09) from 2011. However, leaving the assessment of this clause to the competent authorities of the Member States could provide varying and biased outcomes, depending on the Member State in question.

While the Dublin III Regulation provided stronger procedural guarantees for the applicants, it also sought to strengthen the rules of enforcement and compliance, inter alia to avoid secondary movements (Regulation 604/2013). This was evident, in the more rigorous application of the first country of entry rule, and stricter enforcement of responsibilities, with more stringent consequences for the Member States, if they failed to meet their obligations under the system, including penalties for delays or non-compliance, and strengthening the mandatory use of the EURODAC system (Ibid).

The increasing migratory pressure experienced in 2014 raised questions regarding the fairness and solidarity in the allocation of this responsibility, which was especially evident in Member States facing the external borders of the EU, despite the fact that the principle of responsibility-sharing and solidarity, in theory should be the basis of the Union's asylum system as set out in the TFEU Article 80. Furthermore, the Parliament remained divided in their respective opinions relating to the Dublin system, where some parties called for more solidarity and responsibility sharing, others called for a more consistent application of the system. However, regardless of the different party stances, it became evident, that the pressure placed on the system, trapped a large number of migrants arriving in the EU, in just a small number of Member States, which left a system that largely failed to achieve two of its primary goals, being the establishment of an objective and fair criteria for allocating responsibility, and the provision of swift access to international protection for the asylum applicants.

If the Dublin system had been applied consistently throughout the so-called "crisis", Greece and Italy would have been responsible for processing almost all asylum claims made in the EU during that period. The aforementioned Member States sought to remedy this by, amongst other

things, avoiding fingerprinting the individuals, to avoid responsibility claims (Armstrong 2019: 360). This ultimately moved the responsibility to other Member States such as Hungary, who, in 2015 received over 400,000 arrivals, traveling through the Balkan Route, although initially having entered through Greece (Ibid.). This resulted in a number of Member States erecting borders, and the core of Schengen effectively failed. This ultimately showed how a fortress mentality will not lead to a dissuasion of migration, but rather a diversification of the migratory routes, which could effectively lead migrants to seek more dangerous options to enter the EU, and create incentives to seek the use of smugglers, risking more drownings and shipwrecks.

The aforementioned issues, coupled with the continuous increase in migrant arrivals, placed a pressure on the EU institution to provide a fundamental overhaul of the Dublin system. Since its inception, the EU and its Member States have worked to get the Dublin system to function, however, most scholars agree that the system does not work as expected and never has (Maiani 2016: 12). As concluded by Francesco Maiani, in a study done for the LIBE Committee on the reform of the Dublin Regulation in 2016, *"it achieves very little at very high costs both for protection seekers and for the functioning of the Common European Asylum System" (Ibid.).* These weaknesses were made more evident during the 2015 "crisis", prompting an increasing number of calls for reforms of the overall system, including from the Parliament. Multiple debates and resolutions from the Parliament during 2015 emphasized the need for solidarity and fair burden-sharing amongst the Member States, while criticizing the Dublin III Regulation's inability to adequately cope with the "crisis". In the Parliament, MEPs across the spectrum agreed on the need for a reform, as evident in the argument presented by the Greek MEP Notis Marias from ECR, during a debate relating to the way forward for Frontex and the European Asylum Support Office in February 2015, *"Dublin needs to be changed immediately, so that Greece stops becoming a storehouse of souls. To formulate a solidarity clause for the distribution of migratory flows and refugees in all Member States of the European Union".* In another debate in April 2015, relating to the latest tragedies in the Mediterranean and EU migration and asylum policies, MEPs from many different parties echoed the sentiment that the Dublin system was in dire need of a reform. These sentiments were especially presented by MEPs from the Member States located at the EU external borders. Firstly, the Maltese MEP Alfred Sant from the S&D Group stated:

Mr President, we all know what needs to be done. The extraordinary European Council took hesitant steps in this direction: a search and rescue operation that is properly funded and widespread, to cover the North African coast; amendments to the Dublin II Treaty that respect the interests of all European states, big and small; action against people-traffickers; a policy for regular migration to Europe covering asylum seekers and economic migrants; a comprehensive development aid programme for sub-Saharan Africa. However, humanitarian action, vital though it is, can no longer be enough (Sant, 23 April 2015).

Matteo Salvini, a non-attached Italian MEP argued for a similar process, although based on different argumentation, in his statement:

I'm embarrassed by the level of this debate trying to find political culprits when the political culprits are in here. Because now you realize that the Dublin Treaty must be changed. You confirmed this two years ago. The League voted against and those who now wake up two years ago voted for the same crap. I hope I don't have to wait another 700 deaths before I hear as much leftist racist rhetoric (Salvini, 23 April 2015).

These calls were answered by the Commission, who in 2016 proposed the Dublin IV Regulation, as part of a broader reform package of the CEAS. This proposal was presented in April 2016, aiming to overhaul the Dublin system, with inter alia an Automatic Allocation Mechanism and stricter controls on secondary movements. The formal proposal was presented in May 2016, triggering immediate extensive discussions and debates within the Parliament.

Despite its many reform processes since its inception in 1990, the primary goal of the Dublin system has remained the same, determining responsibility for asylum applications within the EU, in a fair and efficient manner. However, the EU has yet to define a system that has not faced significant challenges, particularly during periods of high migratory pressure. This has led to continuous debates and proposals for improvements, while these proposals often continue to be based on the same underlying principles as the predecessors, providing little to no innovation. Prior to the alarmed discovery stage in April 2015, the discussions in the Parliament relating to

the Dublin Regulation focused more on burden-sharing and improving the overall efficiency and fairness of the system. However, after the peak of the "crisis", within the alarmed discovery stage after September 2015, discussions became more heated, focusing in larger degree on security concerns, border controls and the inadequacy of the Dublin system to handle times of "crisis". The debates relating to the Dublin IV proposal took place in the fourth and fifth stage of the issue-attention cycle, namely the gradual decline of interest and the post-problem stage. This was reflected in the outcome of both the initial proposal and the Parliamentary debates relating to the proposal, which will be exemplified in this chapter.

8.2.1 The Process of Recasting Dublin – The proposal for a Dublin IV Regulation

The Dublin IV proposal was presented in May 2016 in the first package of the reform of the CEAS, as foreseen in the European Agenda on Migration presented the year before, in May 2015, which included the Dublin IV proposal, a proposal to develop EASO into a full-fledged European Agency (the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA)), and a recast proposal for the EURODAC Regulation. A second package was introduced two months later, in July 2016, which included a proposal for a new Regulation to replace the Asylum Procedures Directive; a proposal for a new Regulation to replace the Qualification Directive and proposed modifications to the Reception Conditions Directive.

The Dublin IV proposal was debated in plenary by the MEPs on multiple occasions throughout 2016 and 2017. Firstly, the proposal was examined by the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) in June 2016, which included multiple hearings and expert testimonies. The proposal underwent its first reading in the Parliament in October of that year, with debates focusing extensively on the balance between security, solidarity and the rights of the asylum applicants. A draft report was published by the LIBE Committee in February 2017, following the first hearing, which presented amendments to the proposal that would address concerns relating to the mandatory quotas and the treatment of the applicants. Another plenary debate took place in April 2017, which revealed significant divisions amongst the MEPs, reflecting the broader disagreements simultaneously experienced in the Council amongst the Member States. Greek MEP Neoklis Silikiotis from GUE/NGL voiced his concerns, in his statement that *"the unacceptable refugee exchange agreement with Turkey should be repealed or*

immediately lifted, humanitarian aid should be strengthened, Dublin should be abolished, safe and legal routes should be created and a refugee redistribution and resettlement network should exist.". Other MEPs disagreed with such concerns, for example Nicolas Bay, a French MEP from ENF, who stated that:

> With this report, the regulation would turn into an automatic mechanism for distributing illegal immigrants. This "Dublin IV" would thus provide that a candidate for the right of asylum is offered four countries in which he could settle while waiting for the processing of his application. The mere fact that asylum seekers can choose the State in which their claim will be processed is, strictly speaking, grotesque. Are they really fleeing the war in a transitory way as it is claimed or do they simply want to choose the most advantageous social system? (Bay, 25 October 2017).

The report and decision of the Committee was tabled for plenary in October and November 2017, and a Committee decision to enter the interinstitutional negotiations was announced, which was confirmed by a vote. At this time, the LIBE Committee also adopted a position with amendments to the Dublin IV proposal that sought to balance the concerns of the different parties and Member States, and the need for a more effective and humane asylum system. The trilogue negotiations between the Parliament, Council and Commission immediately faced significant challenges, due to the deep division experienced between the Member States. However, the Parliament was committed to the reform process, and in December 2017, they adopted a resolution urging the Council to reach an agreement. This was also evident in a number of debates, for example when discussing the conclusions of the European Council Meeting of 19 and 20 October taking place in plenary on the 24 October 2017, where a number of MEPs called upon the Member States to finally break their stalemate and provide a solution. Italian MEP Nicola Caputo from S&D wrote that the *"Parliament is speeding up on changing the Dublin regulation. There is not the same commitment on the part of the Member States.".* This sentiment was echoed by Cecilia Wikström, a Swedish MEP from ALDE and rapporteur for the reform, who, in the same debate, in regards to the reform of the Dublin Regulation, stated that:

I have managed to gather behind me and to unite this House in a very bold proposal, creating a truly European Asylum System, and we have managed to do so through long negotiations and by listening to each other. Now I think it is high time that you, in Council, do exactly the same: listen to each other and start paying respect to each other, leaving national egoism behind. This belongs to history and not to the current situation in Europe (Wikström, 24 October 2017).

The mixed reactions and significant opposition from various Member States lead to protracted negotiations and debates, and ultimately a definite stalemate was reached in the Council in 2018. Some Member States argued that the proposal did not comply with the principle of subsidiarity (Matera 2020: 217), while still calling for faster and more efficient ways to determine the Member State responsible for examining asylum claims and preventing secondary movements. Since commencing the discussions relating to the proposal, some Member States have blocked the unanimity required to give a Presidency the mandate to enter interinstitutional negotiations with the Parliament (Matera 2020: 217). The main challenge experienced in the Council relates to the fact that all Member States interests must be reflected in the proposal, but these are so divergent, that reaching a compromise is difficult.

Despite these difficulties, the proposal was discussed on numerous occasions within the Council in 2018, inter alia in June, October and December. However, the EU leaders were still unable to achieve a final decision on several different aspects of the proposal, and whereas the Parliament reached their conclusion in late 2017, the Council remained divided, reaching an impasse, meaning that the reform process had to be handed over to a newly elected Parliament in 2019, further complicating the process. Frontline Member States, such as Italy and Greece continued to push for a proposal that would ensure solidarity and responsibility sharing, while the Visegrád Group, Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic and Slovakia, strongly opposed any proposal that included mandatory relocation quotas (Van Wolleghem, 2018). Thus, the proposal's compulsory relocation and financial penalties was a contentious topic, with Member States arguing that these measures could infringe on their sovereignty. Despite the fact that successive Council presidencies throughout 2018 and 2019 attempted to broker compromises within the negotiations, they continuously failed to achieve a consensus. Ultimately, the Dublin IV proposal

was never adopted, due largely to the divergent interests of the Member States, and their lack of consensus. Although the Council confirmed their commitment to continue working on the proposal, no deadline was agreed (Matera 2020: 219). This stalemate affected, not only the Regulation, but the full reform process of the CEAS, given the important role of the Dublin Regulation in the functioning of the other Regulations and Directives. To approach this impasse, and to answer the request for a more comprehensive approach, the European Commission introduced the New Pact on Migration and Asylum in September 2020, which ultimately led to the withdrawal of the Dublin IV proposal by the Commission in April 2021.

As previously mentioned, the so-called "crisis" revealed the Dublin system to be inadequate at dealing with disproportionate migrant arrivals to the EU. However, the proposed recast was still based on the same main principle as its predecessors, namely the concept of first country of arrival. Despite the foundation of the proposal being the same as the previous Regulations, a number of changes were included in the original proposal presented by the Commission in May 2016. Compared to the Dublin III Regulation, more explicit descriptions of the individual applicants' rights were elaborated, for example in relation to the rights to information and an improvement in the right to a judicial appeal, which was made more effective by the new proposal (Cafiero 2019: 14).

The greatest innovation in the Dublin IV proposal was the Corrective Allocation Mechanism, which was created to ensure fairer allocation of responsibility, building on the relocation scheme presented in the 2015 Agenda on Migration, despite its limited success and resistance from a number of Member States. This mechanism would include an automatic trigger, which would be based on an automated system for registration and monitoring, as set out in Article 44 of the proposal (Proposal for Regulation 2016/0133). This system would assign unique numbers to each asylum applicant lodged within an EU Member State, thus indicating in real time, the total number of asylum applications lodged within the EU, the number of third country nationals that have been resettled by each Member State and the number of applications examined. The EUAA would then create a reference key, which would be based on the size of the population and the GDP for each of the Member States (Cafiero 2019: 14). When the automated system would indicate that the number of asylum applicants in one Member States, plus the number of people

effectively resettled exceeded 150% of the reference key, the Corrective Allocation Mechanism would be triggered, according to Article 34 of the Dublin IV proposal. If the 150% was exceeded, the automated system would then allocate the respective asylum applicant to another Member State. If a Member State would wish to not participate in this proposed system, they could instead provide a solidarity contribution of €250,000 per applicant, pursuant of Article 37 (3) of the original Commission proposal.

However, prior to a possible transfer, the sending Member State would still have to fulfil significant procedural steps, despite the fact that the Member State benefitting from this mechanism would officially be considered under extraordinary migratory pressure, including significant security verifications and to confirm whether the applicant would fall under any of the exceptions from the Corrective Allocation Mechanism, which are:

1. If the asylum application is inadmissible under the safe third country and first country of asylum provisions of Article 33 (2)(b) and (c) of the Asylum Procedures Directive;
2. If the person may be considered as a danger to national security or public order;
3. In cases of family members or dependent persons; and
4. If the allocation of family members to different states may be the result of the automated allocation (Hruschka 2016: 532).

Including a Corrective Allocation Mechanism in the proposal is in theory an initiative that could move the Dublin Regulation towards a principle of solidarity, in pursuant of TFEU Article 80, by establishing a sharing of responsibilities between Member States. However, the extensive checks and necessary pre-procedure screenings which should be carried out prior to the transfer, could suggest that this Corrective Allocation Mechanism would ultimately prove to be inefficient, and risk not working in practice, due to the number of complicated steps to be conducted prior to any transfers. Furthermore, the lacking solidarity in the Corrective Allocation Mechanism, could actually risk pitting national interests against each other, resulting in a zero-sum game, which could encourage defensive behavior and exacerbate the situation further (Maiani 2016: 57).

In general, a greater emphasis on security checks was included in the proposal by the Commission. This was reflected, inter alia, in the explicit mentioning of systematic fingerprinting and registration of biometric data, to ensure accurate tracking of asylum applicants. This would include an expanded use of the EURODAC database system, including more comprehensive data collection, also allowing law enforcement access for security purposes. Furthermore, despite the proposal reinforcing greater standards for reception conditions, to ensure humane treatment of all applicants, it also emphasizes the increasing need for security and control. In pursuant of security, the proposal also expanded the conditions describing when an asylum applicant can be detained, especially when attempting to prevent absconding and ensure compliance with any transfer procedures. Whereas the Dublin III Regulation has limited measures included to prevent secondary movements, the Dublin IV proposal introduced stricter controls and penalties to prevent these movements.

It could thus also be argued that the Dublin IV proposal would leave the applicants facing stricter rules when compared to its predecessor, including inter alia the sanctions to avoid secondary movements. The Commission proposal is overly focused on points relating to non-complying applicants, with Article 4 foreseeing a number of obligations for the potential asylum seeker. Article 4(1) obliges the individual to lodge the asylum application in the first country of entry, abandoning the general international principle, that there is no obligation to lodge an asylum application as soon as possible upon arrival (Hruschka 2016: 428). Article 4 continues with paragraph two and three containing extensive obligations for the applicant, and if any would fail to comply with these obligations, they could face sanctions, in pursuant to Article 5 of the Dublin IV proposal, including leaving the asylum application to be conducted in an accelerated procedure. Furthermore, if an applicant has been found to irregularly leave a Member State, they will not be entitled to the reception conditions as set out in the 2013 Reception Conditions Directive. These sanctions are both meant to reduce secondary movements and increase coercion. The Dublin IV proposal would still leave the third country national with little to no choice as to where they want to reside, which does not allow the asylum applicant ownership over their own fate. But, for a system as Dublin to be viable in the long term, it would need to give serious considerations to the best interest of the individual seeking protection, as consequently ignoring the preferences of the people in question is bound to create a system that

will fail. Furthermore, consistently labelling secondary movements as an abuse to the system or asylum shopping may miss the fact that the motivation for moving could be legitimate, and instead actually reflect failures within the current CEAS system, rather than an abusive behavior.

While some argued that the proposal presented new and innovative solutions, such as the Corrective Allocation Mechanism, it still generally remained insufficient, by reinforcing many of the premises that have previously been deemed faulty within the Dublin system. If the Dublin IV proposal was adopted, the disparity between the Member States would continue to remain a key factor in the EU system of responsibility distribution.

The researched period saw extensive debates relating to the Dublin system in the Parliament, which has highlighted significant divisions amongst the parties, Member States and within the Parliament itself, reflecting the contrasting views relating to solidarity, security, and the rights of the individual asylum seekers. As the so-called "crisis" developed, an increasing focus on security concerns, border controls and the inadequacy of the current system became pronounced within the plenary debates. This focus on security remained throughout 2016 and 2017, when the reform of the Dublin Regulation was discussed, which focused mainly on the internal security aspects relating to irregular migration and protecting the EU external borders. The shift experienced in the debates between 2013 and 2017 mirrors both the broader European political climate at the time, where migration increasingly intersected with security concerns, and the media framing, as analyzed in the previous chapters. The solidarity that could be achieved with a proposal such as the Dublin IV, should be labeled a defensive solidarity, as suggested by Cafiero in 2019, as it is characterized by a securitizing rhetoric, placing the humanitarian aspects secondary to issues relating to security and controlling the borders (Cafiero 2019: 19).

In general, the proposal fails to address several of the main causes of delays and complexities inherent in the system's structure, for example by relying on intergovernmental procedures, administrative complexities, and involuntary transfers, which confirms that the Dublin IV proposal fails to identify and address three of the main structural factors that has impeded the success of its predecessors, as defined by Francesco Maiani as the:

- Neglect for protection seekers' motives and agency
- Conflicting national interests
- And heavily bureaucratic approach to responsibility allocation (Maiani 2016: 20).

Maiani, in his report to the LIBE Committee actually concludes that, whereas the Dublin III Regulation sought to improve both efficiency and the protection of applicants, the recast proposal appears to pursue efficiency through sanctions, and a general reduction of rights (Ibid. 39), which could instead aggravate some of the inherent issues already present in the system. Hruschka (2016) concludes that the proposal does not offer a viable solution, it lacks innovation and keeps a structure of national asylum systems intact, without offering common standards. Progin-Theuerkauf (2017) even goes so far as to argue that there is no real added value of the Dublin IV proposal.

What can be concluded from the Parliamentary debates relating to the Dublin system between 2013 and 2017 is that the MEPs became more focused on security related topics when discussing migration, with a significant increase in securitizing language detected after reaching stage three of Down's issue-attention cycle in October 2015. These developments are similar as the ones detected in the media at this time, during the framing analysis. However, whether the substantive political agenda of the Parliament also became more securitized, and as a result restrictive, will be analyzed in the following chapters.

8.3 The Wikström Report

Shortly before the Commission presented its Dublin IV proposal, the Parliament continuously debated the functioning of the current Dublin III system. Although the majority of MEPs agreed that the system did not work, there was a stark disagreement on which elements of the system that was the cause. For the Latvian MEP, Robert Zille from ECR, the basic principles of the Dublin Regulation, for example the first country of entry principle, would need to remain, for the system to properly function, as he in April 2016 argued that:

> The basic principle of the Dublin Regulation must remain in force. It must also be
> ensured that any migrant who pays the smugglers is returned; and only those who are

genuinely fleeing the threat of war would obtain their refugee status in third-country camps, where they would apply to a particular Member State to have their status reviewed (Zile, 12 April 2016).

This sentiment was echoed by MEP Helga Stevens from the Netherlands, who, in the same debate, on behalf of the ECR Group stated that *"We have to work in different areas at the same time. So, on the one hand, to ensure that our borders are properly guarded and that every Member State applies the Dublin rules" (Stevens, 12 April 2016).* These MEPs are linking a notion of internal Union security with the control of migration and guarding of the external borders. In contrast to this, Italian MEP Salvatore Domenico Pogliese from PPE underlined the importance of solidarity, but similar to his colleagues from ECR, he also drew connotations between the notion of security and that of migration, when he stated that:

> This is why we must face and definitively resolve the issue of the modification of the Dublin 3 regulation, which represents the real anomaly of the European reception system. Only in this way can the right balance be found between the needs of solidarity, those of concrete solidarity, but also of security, which is a priority for Europe (Pogliese, 12 April 2016).

The official Dublin IV proposal was presented by the Commission on the 4 May 2016, for which the Swedish MEP, Cecilia Wikström from ALDE was appointed rapporteur for the LIBE Committee, which was the Committee assigned with the proposal. In her first speech regarding the proposal, she highlighted the importance of once and for all getting the Dublin negotiations right, and for the proposal to become as comprehensive as the CEAS would truly need, while promising a continued commitment from the Parliament, in reaching a good and fair deal, in her opening statement:

> I can assure the Commission, Member States and this entire House that I, together with my negotiating team, will work in an effective, determined way to conclude in a good agreement. The Dublin Regulation is the cornerstone of the European asylum system and this is not the time for watered—down deals. This is the time to – once and for all – get it

right. (…) The Commission proposal is a good point of departure, but I am convinced that we are going to substantially strengthen the proposal in this House (Wikström, 11 May 2016).

However, despite the stated commitment from MEP Wikström on behalf of the Parliament, the MEPs remained divided in their priorities, when it came to a new and improved Dublin system, which was already evident in the initial debate on 11 May 2016. During this debate, Slovenian MEP Tanja Fajon from S&D drew attention to the lack of functionality of the current Dublin system, and argued that the proposed measures for solidarity in the Dublin IV proposal was far from enough, to ensure a proper functioning system, when she argued that:

> The European asylum policy does not work. It doesn't work for member states, it doesn't work for asylum seekers. The proposed package of measures and proposals for changes to the Dublin system is a step in the right direction, but it is not ambitious enough. It's like we want to heal superficial wounds, treat the symptoms, while forgetting about the original disease. I am afraid that the proposed reform will not prevent the emergence of similar situations as we are witnessing in Greece today. We need a truly common European asylum system based on justice and solidarity. The burden cannot and should not be borne solely by countries with an external border. Mechanisms to take action against non-cooperating countries are urgently needed (Fajon, 11 May 2016).

However, despite MEP Fajon generally relying on arguments of solidarity and a human impact frame, she concludes her statement, by drawing connotations between migration, and security and borders, when she stated that *"If we want a functioning and secure situation at our borders and in our countries, if we want to protect everyone's fundamental rights, we need better and more comprehensive reform"* (Ibid.).

In contrast to MEP Fajon, British MEP Timothy Kirkhope from ECR welcomed the Commission proposal, as it maintained the basic principles of the current Dublin system, but he denounced the solidarity mechanism, arguing that it would have limited success, due to it forcing the Member

States into compliance, instead of promoting the need for upholding the Dublin rules, when he, in the same debate, argued:

> I welcome (…) the Commission proposal to maintain the basic principles of Dublin. This is essential if we are going to combat irregular economic migration, sending a strong signal to human traffickers and allowing us to grant asylum to the most vulnerable. As you are aware, my political group has always had serious reservations about a compulsory relocation scheme. It has had little success. Rarely does forcing someone to do something result in improved relations between the parties and the payment system suggestion of a fine of EUR 250 000 per individual who is not being relocated seems like a punishment for Member States, rather than a credible alternative. I welcome the strengthening of important instruments such EASO and Eurodac. I believe that looking at how we can enhance what we already have, rather than reinventing the wheel, will always be the most effective way forward (Kirkhope, 11 May 2016).

Despite the many differing perspectives on how the Dublin system would best function and the different ideological backgrounds of the MEPs, a common denominator in the early discussions on the Dublin IV proposal was the connection made between migration and internal security. At this time, it appears that the securitization of migration had become enshrined in the way the MEPs would frame the migration debate, despite whether they argued for enhanced solidarity or more border controls. However, one thing most MEPs across the political spectrum could agree upon was that the proposal presented by the Commission was far from adequate and would fail to provide any real change. During the initial debate in May 2016, MEPs from different groups all argued for the inadequacy of the proposal, although relying on different argumentations behind their position. Spanish MEP Juan Fernando López Aguilar from the S&D Group argued:

> Mr President, Commissioner, we Socialists have said many times in this European Parliament that the Dublin Regulation is obsolete and blatantly unfulfilled and, therefore, we have demanded its overcoming and its replacement by a true European mechanism, a European system that deserves that name, a European system that lives up to the Lisbon Treaty's commitment to a Common European Asylum System. And, for exactly the same

reason, we are now critical and deeply disappointed with the rickety inadequacy of the Commission's proposal, which offers little more than a creative makeover of the current Dublin Regulation instead of establishing a truly binding mechanism governed by the principle solidarity, reception and registration of asylum seekers on European soil (Aguilar, 11 May 2016).

German MEP Cornelia Ernst made a similar statement on behalf of the GUE/NGL group:

To be honest, I would really like to meet the people who came up with this Commission proposal on Dublin. Because it's actually cocky to declare a dead rabbit alive and kicking! Because the Dublin system is dead and now it is to be revived. The so-called correction or fairness mechanism in the event of exceptional migratory pressure in the member states does not change this. It is naïve at best (Ernst, 11 May 2016).

On the other side of the political spectrum, Italian MEP Laura Ferrara from the EFDD Group also doubted the suitability of the proposed Automated Allocation Mechanism, in her statement on behalf of her group:

Why wait for a country to collapse, for it to be in extreme difficulty, and then trigger the automatic relocation mechanism? Provided that this mechanism then works, because a Member State can decide to wash its hands of it, pay the fine of 250,000 euros and therefore not accept any asylum seekers. We have long been aware of the failure of this Dublin system. The 5 Star Movement has clamored for its modification, but it meant a strong, effective, true modification. A change that unfortunately did not arrive. Indeed, the Commission has limited itself to proposing an implementation of the old Dublin system, maintaining the status quo (Ferrara, 11 May 2016).

Although these three statements are presented from different ideological stances and beliefs, they are rooted in the same argumentation, which is, that the current system does not work, and by continuing to build the new proposals and recast procedures on the same foundation as its predecessors, it will not be able to succeed in providing the necessary changes. Furthermore, all

three parties are of the belief that the proposed solidarity mechanism would be far from enough in a pursuit to ensure a fair and equitable system. However, not all of the Parliament parties shared these concerns. The biggest group of all the Parliamentary parties, PPE expressed their gratitude and welcomed the proposed changes, such as Slovenian MEP Milan Zver, who stated that:

> I welcome the Commission's proposal establishing a collective security mechanism. It is a realistic set of measures that should be taken already upon the dissolution of the Dublin Asylum Regulation. Allow me to make a few more comments. First: the fact is that reforming the asylum system alone will not solve the migrant crisis. The new asylum system is only one of the key parts of an integrated approach to solving the crisis, the main pillars of which are the protection of external borders and the efficient and rapid return of migrants to their countries of origin. If these principles had been followed last year, only a third of the newcomers who are here now would have entered Europe (Zver, 11 May 2016).

In contrast to their colleagues, MEPs from the groups ENF and ECR raised concerns about the lack of enforcement mechanisms included in the Dublin rules and pointed to this, as the main failure of the functioning of the system, while also strongly opposing the proposed Corrective Allocation Mechanism. German MEP Marcus Pretzell argued, on behalf of the ENF Group:

> The Dublin rules, which have now ended up on the dustbin of history because nobody within the European Union is observing them anymore, just like not only the Dublin rules, but also the Schengen agreement and all sorts of other European agreements in recent years have been broken at the discretion of national governments. It is said that simple rules are what they want to sell us here. So why hasn't the Commissioner managed to explain to us in two or three sentences in a way that we can understand exactly what these rules are supposed to look like? You can buy your way out of this European solidarity system! On the other hand, the Commission deserves my special thanks. We now know the price of a migrant in the European Union: a quarter of a million euros (Pretzell, 11 May 2016).

These divergent views were also mirrored in the Council discussions by the Member States, as previously exemplified. However, despite the issues the proposal was facing in the early negotiation process within the Council, the Parliament proceeded with their internal procedure. While the LIBE Committee was assigned the responsibility of the proposal, the Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET) and on Budgets (BUDG) both adopted their respective opinions in May 2017. These opinions were incorporated in the final report, which was presented by the LIBE Committee on the 19 October 2017, hereon after called the Wikström Report. This report was eventually adopted in the Parliament, confirming their mandate to begin the interinstitutional negotiations with the Council. During the debate on the Report, the MEPs began voicing their concerns relating to the Council priorities, and their delays in reaching internal decisions on the proposal. One MEP voicing his concern was Belgian MEP Philippe Lamberts when he, on behalf of the Greens/EFA, stated:

> Parliament improved the initial text so that the Member States henceforth assume in a united manner the response to the challenge of migration and the reception of asylum seekers 'asylum. (…) Dear Mr Tusk, I was in the Council press room last week and went to listen to you at the press conference. I must admit that I was flabbergasted to see you benignly assert that the Council would take up the problem in December, with the idea of perhaps reaching a conclusion at the end of the first half of 2018, that is to say two years after the proposal made by the Commission and eight months after the agreement reached here in the European Parliament (Lamberts, 24 October 2017).

The Wikström Report presented the Parliament amendments to the original Dublin IV proposal by the Commission. Some of the main changes proposed by the Parliament related to the responsibility sharing mechanism, family reunification, protection of vulnerable groups, detention and compliance. This inter alia included a permanent and Automatic Relocation Mechanism without a threshold, and new provisions to ensure compliance of both asylum applicants and Member States. This report will henceforth serve as the policy outcome for the qualitative comparative analysis, including the roll call voting process. Although the recast procedure was never concluded through an agreement between the Parliament and the Council,

this report was debated, concluded, and approved in a roll call vote, and can thus be used as a representation of the Parliament's political position towards the Dublin system, and as a result the EU migration policies at the time of analysis, and thus serve as the concrete policy outcome. The Wikström Report will thus be the base for which the possible media effect will be measured.

8.3.1 The Parliamentary Amendments

Even though the Parliamentary debates at the time of the amendments reflected a measurable increase in the use of the Securitization and Threat frames when discussing migration, the Wikström Report appear to have presented amendments of a more liberal approach than the initial proposal presented by the Commission, which was far more conservative, focusing on maintaining stricter controls over the asylum process. When comparing the proposed amendments to the outcome of the Dublin III negotiation process, they continue a trend of generally advocating for a more equitable, humanitarian and solidarity-based asylum system.

In their amendments following the first reading, the Parliament attempted to eliminate or improve a number of the more controversial points of the initial proposal. However, although the Parliament sought a more liberal approach, inter alia by providing concrete and explicit procedural safeguards for the individual asylum seeker, it also remained focused on adopting a regulation, which would reflect a stronger position on internal security. Several MEPs continuously argued for the inclusion of more stringent security checks and measures that would ensure that migrants would be properly identified and registered upon entry. Thus, throughout the process, the MEPs remained committed to finding a balance between humanitarian and security concerns. In this regard, especially the notion of secondary movements received extensive attention, and was explicitly mentioned as a priority in the final report, as evident in the following written statement that the proposal would:

> (…) ensure that applicants remain in the member state that is responsible for assessing their application for international protection. In order to reach this goal, the loopholes that have until now allowed for a shift of responsibility between member states have been removed (…) The only path to international protection within Europe for them will be to remain in the responsible member state (European Parliament 2017d, LIBE Report).

The Wikström Report thus included several amendments produced to discourage these secondary movements, including inter alia through far-reaching sanctions placed upon the asylum applicants. However, a notable difference between the original Commission proposal and the Parliament amendments in this regard, is that the Commission proposal included reactive penalizing rules, while the Parliamentary amendments were produced to be more proactive, with a stated aim to dissuade the asylum applicants from moving to other Member States, rather than penalizing the applicant after the fact (Abrisketa 2019: 269). The Commission also linked this punitive approach to the recast procedure of the Reception Conditions Directive, by including an exclusion from the general material reception conditions, if an applicant would be caught in a secondary movement. However, the Parliament requested the deletion of this provision in the proposal, in pursuant of Article 31 of the 1951 Refugee Convention, which provides protection for refugees against any imposition of criminal penalty.

One of the main reasons for these secondary movements, and for the difficulty of conducting transfers of asylum applicants between Member States under the Dublin system, has often been argued to be rooted in the issue of the first country principle and the disregard of the asylum applicants' personal preferences. Although in the original proposal, the Commission continued to argue that asylum seekers should not have the right to choose which Member State to apply for asylum in, the Parliament attempted to offset this, in their amendments, by proposing to introduce additional criteria to enhance the link between the competent Member State and any would be asylum applicant. This included extensive proposed changes to the hierarchy of the responsibility criteria, which establish the responsible Member State. The Parliament thus proposed to change the hierarchy as:

1. Introducing academic and professional qualifications as relevant criteria;
2. Deleting irregular entry visa waived entry and applications at airports and transit zones; and;
3. Introducing an allocation mechanism between Member States as the fall-back criterion in the Regulation (Aida, 2017).

MEP Jean Lambert explained the need for this expansion, in her statement on behalf of the Greens/EFA, arguing that:

> Dublin is only going to have a chance of working if we also take into account asylum seekers themselves, because if you are looking at secondary movement, you need to think why do people move? Dublin fixes you; it gives you one chance (Lambert, 11 May 2016).

However, although the changes proposed by the Parliament did expand the agency of the applicant to a certain degree, this amendment is far from revolutionary, and the asylum applicants would still be left with little to no choice in where their asylum application should be examined.

To ensure that the Dublin rules would be adequately transposed, the amendments from the Parliament also included strong incentives for both the Member State and the asylum applicant to register immediately upon arrival in the EU, including mandatory security controls of all applicants, with checks against relevant national and European databases. These rules implicitly ensure that the external border countries would continue to carry out the work as gatekeepers. These amendments included several steps:

- Expanding on the pre-procedure principle from the original proposal, whereby the first country of application would be in charge of screening and taking responsibility of applicants that raise security concerns, or are manifestly unlikely to qualify for protection;
- Several incurred costs of which are currently borne by the Member State, inter alia the cost of reception and transfers under the Dublin system, would instead be placed on the EU budget;
- Member States who are found to fail in registering the incoming arrivals, are to be excluded from the allocation mechanism.

Enshrined in the proposed pre-processing amendment is the principle, that an applicant considered to have very low chances of receiving asylum should not be considered for relocation, but would instead be processed in the State of entry in an expedited procedure. The Parliament labeled this process *"a filter for applicants with very small chances of receiving protection" (European Parliament 2017d, LIBE Report)*. This principle is included with the stated aim to separate what the report calls "economic migrants" from the "real" applicants for international protection, in a carefully calibrated filter. These applications would thus be treated in the Member State of first entry, as explained in the report, to ensure *"the right to a fair asylum procedure for the applicant as well as the interests of having an effective asylum system, without creating undue burdens on frontline member states or unnecessary relocations" (European Parliament 2017d, LIBE Report)*. However, this proposed amendment would effectively leave the processing of a large number of all applicants with the external Member States, and thus not provide a tangible change to the current system. Acknowledging this, the report also includes a provision, that those Member States would receive EU funding to offset these processing costs.

In relation to a possible accelerated procedure, the Wikström Report amends Article 3 of the original proposal, by restricting this procedure to only apply under two circumstances:

1. If an applicant is considered a danger to national security or public order
2. If an applicant has previously been expelled under national law, from any Member State for serious reasons of public security

To ensure the cooperation needed, the Wikström Report introduced disincentives inter alia through sanctions if non-compliance was detected. These sanctions include excluding any Member State of first entry from participating in the relocation process, as well as restricted access to and use of EU funds. Furthermore, Member States who refuse to accept relocations of asylum applicants to their country, would also face limited access to EU funding. According to the report, these provisions should ensure the full participation of all Member States. However, should these disincentives prove to be inadequate, the system risks to quickly revert to the default approach of placing pressure on the external border Member States, which could choose to defect by waving migrants through without registration, and the overall system would once

again fail. For these provisions to work, it would require the Member States, especially the Member States placed at the external borders, to trust in the proposed Allocation Mechanism, as fast allocation and registration would be the only insurance against being overburdened as a first country of arrival.

The most divisive change of the proposal related to the Automated Corrective Allocation Mechanism. Firstly, the Parliament proposed to make the mechanism a permanent feature of the European asylum system, rather than a crisis mechanism as foreseen in the Commission proposal. Furthermore, in the original proposal, the Commission conditioned this mechanism to be activated at a fixed 150% exceed of the quota of migrants considered sustainable for a Member State. This condition was removed by the Parliament proposal, who instead proposed to trigger the corrective redistribution immediately, once the reception capacity of any Member State would be exceeded, to ensure that the system would *be triggered before the benefiting Member State is overwhelmed by the inflow of asylum seekers*" *(European Parliament 2017d, LIBE Report: 67),* thus lowering the threshold from 150% to 100% of the reference key. As highlighted in the report prepared by the BUDG Committee, 150% would leave Member States to bear the responsibility of over half as many applicants, as their capacity would allow. However, the BUDG report also added a contingency upon this clause, in their statement that:

> (…) potentially lax border policies be prevented by adding a mutual solidarity clause under which the corrective mechanism can be suspended when the Member State fails to properly fulfil its obligations in terms of managing its external borders in accordance with the Regulation on the European Border and Coast Guard." (European Parliament 2017b).

This contingency would ultimately make solidarity conditional on the notion of security and the protection of the Union's external borders, rather than ensuring the appropriate protection of would-be applicants, and the adequate functioning of any Member States' reception capacities. Despite the fact that the proposed changes to the Automated Corrective Allocation Mechanism was divisive in the plenary, one point that all Parliamentary groups could agree upon, was the fact that no Member State should be able to buy their way out of a solidarity system, thus

eliminating the possibility of paying a lump sum instead of accepting an asylum applicant for transfer (Cafiero 2019: 17). However, as exemplified previously, the reasoning as to why the different MEPs argued against such a provision differed greatly. While Rapporteur Wikström stressed that it would be unacceptable to assign a price to human beings, other MEPs believed that the principle of compulsory division of asylum applicants or fines would impinge on the Member States sovereignty.

Besides these proposals, the Parliament added a number of other changes in relation to the relocation of the asylum seekers, and the determination of the Member State responsible for examining the application. Firstly, and most importantly, as mentioned, the Parliament deleted the default criterion of irregular entry in the hierarchy of Member State determination. Under the proposed mechanism, a Member State would first and foremost be determined through previous connections between the applicant and the State. If an asylum applicant has no connection to any Member State, they would be allowed to choose from the four countries, with the lowest quota fulfilment at the time of application. Thus, in an attempt to break incentives of secondary movements to preferred destinations and to promote a fairer responsibility sharing between the Member States, the Wikström Report sought to amend a number of issues previously determined in the functioning of the Dublin system, including by prioritizing the links of any applicant with a Member State, and in seeking to allow the asylum applicant a choice in the process. However, most of these proposals are described to apply "to the extent possible", which could backfire in times of high migratory pressure, and by constricting the choice to only four Member States, the reform could be deprived of its intended effects. Limiting the transfer choices to the four least-burdened states, rather than all Member States considered to be below their quota, will still risk secondary movements. Furthermore, this choice is also contingent on the applicant registering in the Member State of first entry, thus, as a form of punishment, the choice would be denied to any applicant who enter the EU irregularly, without applying for asylum in the first State of entry. The logic by the Parliament in introducing such amendments was explicitly to encourage applicants to apply for asylum in the first Member State of entry, by removing the prospects of "getting stuck", and instead enhance the prospects of getting transferred to a more desirable destination.

The Member State of first entry would be expected to perform a light procedure, based on the prima facie application to facilitate the allocation according to the reformed criteria. However, this would still require a financial burden on the State of entry, as well as the need for ensuring a reception capacity that can uphold the proper reception standards to protect the applicants' rights. Furthermore, it would be far from certain whether this system, which is built on incentives and disincentives designed to secure the cooperation of the Member States, would actually be effective. Some Member States would still have several obvious incentives not to cooperate, and it is doubtful, as previously mentioned, that the threat to reduce access to EU funding would be sufficient to counterbalance these incentives.

Also, this proposed Automated Corrective Allocation Mechanism risks creating a transfer heavy system, which could prove unsustainable. Under the current Dublin system, where transfers are infrequent, Member States have been consistently unable to implement a large proportion of the agreed transfers, just as the EU were unable to successfully implement the emergency relocation scheme in 2015. Under the proposal from the Wikström Report, the number of transfers would be far greater than under the current system. However, the Report does not provide a credible answer as to how this large increase of transfers should be carried out, thus risking an increasing number of asylum applicants in limbo situations.

When comparing the rights of the applicants in the two proposals, the Parliament added a number of provisions designed to strengthen the rules of safeguarding the rights of the applicants, especially safeguarding the best interest of the child. This was for example evident in the inclusion of guaranteeing the appointment of a legal guardian, in case of an unaccompanied minor, and that no forced transfers can be conducted. The Parliament further sought to strengthen the interest assessment rules and explicitly requiring that, if a transfer is to be carried out, a prior best-interest assessment would be required by a multidisciplinary team, and the receiving Member State would need to appoint a guardian prior to the conduction of any transfer. Furthermore, the Parliament amendments also expanded the criteria for family reunification, and provided stronger safeguards for vulnerable groups, emphasizing humanitarian concerns.

In general, the Wikström Report does propose a new structure for the Dublin system, which would significantly change the current system, by inter alia allowing the applicant an element of choice, and by better accounting for genuine links between an asylum applicant and a possible transfer State, while also attempting to offset the unbalanced distribution from the default Member States. However, the Report does not go far enough in the effort to include the applicant in the process, and it still leaves the Member States of first arrival with significant costs and reception responsibilities. Furthermore, the proposed structure risks to create an unfeasible number of transfers, which are to be conducted in an unspecified manner.

In previous research, the Parliament has often been described as the most liberal of the three European institutions, especially when compared to the Council and its Interior Ministers (Krotký & Kaniok 2021: 178). However, recent research has also suggested that the Parliament has undergone a significant policy shift, in particular in the area of migration policies. Jan Krotký and Petr Kaniok (2021) suggested that this shift began after the Parliament achieved its co-decision authority in this policy area, where a measurable change in position was experienced towards more restrictive and security related policies, in contrast to their previous position as a champion of human rights. The Parliament was pushed to move away from its ideal position, to instead compromise in its negotiations with the Council, which has been evident in both the plenary debates, and the legislative outputs.

However, the overall shift in framing when discussing migration within the plenary debates also reflects several other contextual factors, such as the increase in migrant arrivals in 2015, media and the rise of populist and right-wing parties in the 2014 European elections. The change in party structure during this time allowed the right-wing parties to gain a growing influence within the Parliament as well as across the Member States at the time of research, which has undoubtedly contributed to the rise in the securitization framing and the possible shift in policy direction. But no matter the cause, between 2016 and 2017, the Securitization frame had reached a frame consonance both within the media, but also in the plenary debates and the MEPs argumentation structure. While this shift towards more security-oriented framing within the plenary debates could be seen as a response to all of these contextual factors, the Parliamentary legislative output, or more specifically the Wikström Report, reflected a broader and more

balanced approach than what the debates suggested. However, the amendments did prioritize security and border controls, but also included provisions that were developed to uphold humanitarian principles and protect the rights of the asylum applicants, although these were often based on a condition of compliance with the proposed system. The outcome thus reflected the Parliament's diverse composition, its institutional role, the influence of the civil society, and the commitment of the MEPs to attempt to uphold the European values and human rights, while keeping the area of migration within the realm of internal security. However, while the plenary debates placed an explicit emphasis on security and controls, the proposed changes reflected a more nuanced approach, aiming to incentivize the applicants to remain within the official system, while ensuring participation of all Member States, securing the borders, but also explicitly safeguarding the rights of the applicants, within some conditions.

These compromises are in part due to partisan division and attitudes towards European integration from the MEPs, which are both essential elements in the structural determination of any shift in policy preferences. Other factors include the distinction between old and new Member States, as well as the geographical position of the Member State in question. As concluded by earlier research, MEPs from Central and Eastern Europe tend to rely more on Securitization frames than MEPs from other EU countries (Krotký & Kaniok 2021: 181-182), often providing arguments to keep policies relating to migration as part of the core state power. Thus, the Parliament's composition and ideological balance matter in the policymaking process, as it is composed of MEPs from a wide range of political groups, representing different ideologies and national interests. While some groups consistently pushed for more restrictive measures, due to security concerns and pressure from their Member State, others, particularly those from more liberal and progressive parties, tended to emphasize humanitarian principles and solidarity.

This policymaking process involves negotiations and compromises between these parties, and the final amendments often reflect a balance between the different political views, which often lead to outputs that reflect elements from both sides of the debate, which is why, the following section will provide a discussion relating to the different Parliamentary parties at the time of

research, and their ideological stances during the debates and negotiations in question, and whether any measurable changes are present, during the period of research.

8.4 Party Divisions and Ideologies within the European Parliament

It is inevitable to discuss the party ideologies and divisions within the European Parliament, when researching the decision-making process. As this analysis is conducted between 2013 and 2017, two Parliament Constitutive sessions are included, the seventh Parliamentary term from 2009 to 2014 and the eighth Parliamentary term from 2014 to 2019. In these sessions the seats were divided between seven and eight political groups respectively, for which the share of seats are presented in Figure 24 and 25 below.

Figure 24: Seventh European Parliament Constitutive Session 2009-2014 (European Parliament, 2024b)
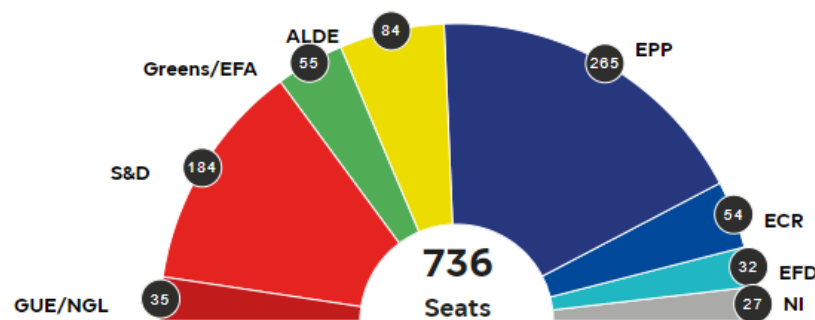
Figure 25: Eighth European Parliament Constitutive Session 2014-2019 (European Parliament, 2024c)
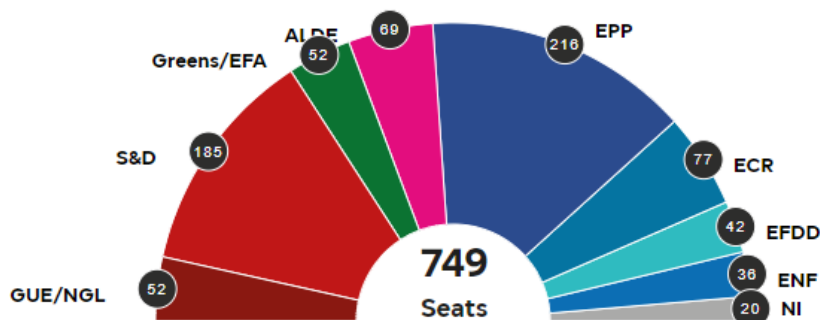
Following the European elections in 2014, an unprecedented number of Eurosceptic MEPs were elected, which resulted in an exponential growth of Eurosceptic parties in the eight Parliamentary term, compared to the outgoing Parliament composition. Some has explained this growth as a reflection of the growing politicization of European integration at the time, *"in which conflicts between those opposing the process and those favouring it became more pronounced" (Hix et al. 2024).* This trend continued into the 2019 European elections, and in just 10 years, the number of Eurosceptic MEPs had increased with almost 10%, when compared to the elections of 2009 (Hix et al. 2024). This shift in beliefs and ideologies is important to note, as it has the potential to be a structural determinant in the Parliaments decision-making process relating to migration. Previous studies have even concluded that the left-right ideological division is a significant determinant for the MEPs positioning on this topic (Proksch & Slapin, 2010; Krotký & Kaniok, 2021). Right-wing positioned MEPs generally tend to support a more restrictive approach to migration, in contrast to left-wing and centrist MEPs, who are more likely to support liberal approaches. These ideological preferences and the determinants of national origin has been concluded to play a significant role in the plenary speeches, when in relation to migration and asylum, as concluded by Snorre Frid-Nielsen in 2018, *"MEPs from CEE nations tend to propose a security-oriented approach to asylum policy more than MEPs from Western countries (Frid-Nielsen 2018).* Frid-Nielsen goes further, to argue that the Eastern enlargement, which took place in 2004, created a new political cleavage within the Parliament, specifically when it comes to the topic of migration and asylum (Ibid.).

However, the positioning of the MEPs within a bureaucratic system such as the European Parliament cannot solely be understood from their speeches at the plenary debates. Although these can serve as a strong tool to capture the audience, draw on speech acts and position themselves, it does not necessarily reflect the final roll call voting behavior of the individual MEP. As previously discussed, MEPs are agents of two principals, representing their national parties and their European political group, in a house that represents 27 different nationalities, and over 170 diverse national parties, thus making it necessary to also distinguish between rhetoric and voting behavior. Slapin and Proksch (2010) describe the plenary debates as a communication tool between the MEPs, their political groups and national parties. The national parties remain important in the European context, as these parties determine which candidate will

be able to run for re-election and will thus continue to have an influence on the positioning of individual MEPs throughout their mandate. Thus, the voting behavior and therefore the policymaking process is a result of the interaction between the MEP and external actors, including their national party and the public. Understanding the European party politics is therefore a crucial component, when researching the dynamics of European policymaking and the media.

8.4.1 The Political Groups and their Priorities in the Area of Migration

Each European political group has its own ideology and individual approach to the topic of migration, which has shaped the debates and the outcomes significantly. A topic such as migration is very divisive for the ideological stances represented at the Parliament, which reflects a broad spectrum of different political ideologies as well as national interests. Outside the official political groups are also a number of non-attached MEPs (or non-inscrits/NI), which in the seventh and eight Parliamentary term represent 27 and 20 MEPs respectively. The non-attached members are often MEPs who are members of a national party, which do not have enough members sharing sufficient ideological similarities to form a group. For a political group to form, a minimum of 23 MEPs from at least seven different Member States need to agree upon forming a new group. Thus, the non-attached MEPs have no tie to each other, other than their mutual lack of a European political grouping.

The different ideological standpoints and the positionings towards migration, for each of the political groups that were active during the time of research, will briefly be presented and discussed below, including whether they experienced any measurable shifts in their approach towards migration and asylum in this period.

8.4.1.1 The European People's Party (EPP)

The European People's Party (EPP), is considered to be a center-right political group, and in the two Parliamentary terms between 2013 and 2017, the EPP held a centrist, pro-European stance, which explicitly focused on pragmatic solutions to migration. They were also the largest European political group in both terms. In general, the EPP supported controlled and managed migration, while advocating for strong external border controls and enhanced responsibilities for

Frontex. Furthermore, the EPP emphasized the need to combat irregular migration, and improve cooperation with the countries of origin and transit. During the time of research, MEPs from the EPP was thus often likely to support measures that aimed at ensuring security and controlled migration, while emphasizing the need for a balanced approach to this control, which should be combined with humanitarian aid and effective border controls, and a compliance mechanism, such as the one proposed with the Dublin IV proposal.

Throughout the researched period, the EPP manifestos maintained a pro-European and centrist position, supporting deeper European integration and cooperation and a common asylum system, which they believed should be fair and efficient, and ensure fast processing of all asylum applications, while also distributing the asylum seekers between the Member States. Furthermore, they continuously called for stronger EU capabilities within security and defense, including counter-terrorism efforts and the protection of the EU external borders. The MEPs from EPP thus continuously focused their argumentation on the idea of controlled and managed migration, to ensure predictable processes, while also drawing connotations between the idea of internal security and migration.

In 2015 and 2016, in the wake of the so-called "refugee crisis", the EPP supported emergency measures, while also calling for more long-term European solutions, such as a permanent relocation mechanism (EPP, 2016). This was also reflected in the stance of the EPP MEPs during the Dublin recast procedure, where they generally argued in favor for the overhaul, believing that the current system was unfair and outdated. This is evident, inter alia in a statement made by Spanish MEP Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra, in September 2015, during the alarmed discovery stage:

> Going to the bottom of the matter, I want to make a personal statement that has to do with the statement of my political group. We are in favor of the obligatory and the permanent. We are in favor of prioritizing vulnerable people, especially children. We are in favor of revising Dublin as soon as possible: Dublin is unfair and outdated, and is not facing a crisis of this proportion and magnitude (Díaz de Mera García Consuegra, 8 September 2015).

However, despite MEP Díaz de Mera García Consuegra's statement, most of the political argumentation and resolutions adopted by the EPP relating to migration, relied heavily on Securitization framing, referencing control and illegal migration. Although the political outputs and voting behavior of the EPP MEPs often represented a balance between control and humanitarianism, their use of framing in the plenary debates often favored frames relating to control and security. This is inter alia evident, in a statement by David McAllister, a German MEP, who argued that:

> Let's be honest: the Dublin rules in their previous form were and are no longer up-to-date, they overwhelm a few member states and ultimately encourage irregular migration. In my view, for a humane and effective European asylum policy and for better controlled immigration (McAllister, 11 May 2016).

This statement, despite calling for solidarity and unity, relied on securitizing language and frames, discussing controlled migration and burdens. This general approach was often conducive for the EPP MEPs argumentation in plenary, when discussing migration and the Dublin system. Thus, despite these MEPs often seeking a balanced approach, their framing frequently relied on securitizing frames. This was also evident, in a statement by MEP Salvator Domenico Pogliese, where he presents the topic using the Securitization frame, describing migration as a problem:

> Only in this way can the right balance be found between the needs of solidarity, those of concrete solidarity, but also of security, which is a priority for Europe. Commissioner - and I am starting to conclude - the solution to the immigration problem cannot be represented only by the agreement with Turkey, which cost six billion euros, which in fact is blocking the flow of migrants from the Balkan trade to transfer it. in the Mediterranean section (Pogliese, 12 April 2016).

Throughout the researched period, the EPP's stance on migration evolved in response to the changing political and social landscape in Europe, from emphasizing legal pathways, to focusing increasingly on security concerns. Initially, the EPP focused on creating legal pathways for

migration and supporting asylum seekers. However, as the "crisis" intensified and security concerns grew, the group placed increasing emphasis on controlling borders and ensuring the security of EU citizens, following the framing curve of the media, and the frame crystallization experienced around the end of the alarmed discovery stage. Furthermore, the EPP always supported cooperation with third countries, but the alarmed discovery stage prompted a greater focus on this externalization of migration controls for the EPP members. The group became more vocal in advocating for deals with non-EU countries to manage migration flows and enhance returns. Throughout the period, the EPP struggled to find a balance between these security concerns and the humanitarian responsibilities. This balancing act led to nuanced positions, where the group supported refugee protection and integration but also called for stricter controls and more robust border management.

8.4.1.2 The Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D)

The second largest political group of the two consecutive terms in question was the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D), which are considered center-left. Comparing S&D with their EPP colleagues in the period of research, they were more likely to advocate for a humanitarian and rights-based approach to migration, which is also reflected in their positioning throughout the researched period. This is reflected in a humanitarian approach, focusing on fair distribution based on solidarity, and opposing policies that they perceive as restrictive and discriminatory. The MEPs from this group, were often found advocating for a compassionate and humanitarian response to migration, emphasizing the need to protect the rights of the individual, while supporting an effective distribution system based on solidarity. However, despite their left-leaning ideology, S&D also emphasized the need for effective security measures and supported policies designed to improve border security and combat trafficking (S&D, 2016). During the height of the alarmed discovery stage, the S&D group remained very vocal in their calls for a coordinated and compassionate response, which they believed should rely on emergency relief, humanitarian aid and relocation. This approach was also evident in their argumentations during the debates relating to the Dublin system in 2016. When the Commission presented their proposal for the Dublin IV, Dutch MEP Kati Piri, stated:

It is disappointing to see that there is insufficient support and political courage among our governments in Europe to thoroughly revise the Dublin agreements and therefore there is no willingness to work on a genuine common European asylum policy based on solidarity and shared responsibility. That is why we have to make do with this proposal from the European Commission. Not a huge leap forward, just a small step in the right direction. For example, the proposed distribution key prevents member states from having to sit down and squabble over which country should take over how many people if another member state is temporarily unable to cope with the influx. The proposed fines for countries that refuse to comply with earlier agreements do not deserve the beauty prize. It is actually too bizarre for words that we have to enforce solidarity within the EU, but unfortunately the current situation, where a number of countries refuse to take in refugees at all, leaves the Commission no other choice (Piri, 11 May 2016).

Here, Piri follows the ideological line of her group, when calling for a system, which should be based on solidarity and shared responsibility, arguing that the Commission proposal did not go far enough. This view was echoed by colleague MEP Inés Ayala Sender from Spain, who also argued for a complete review of the Regulation, with a mandatory system based on solidarity, which represents the political stance of her group at the time (S&D, 2016):

We socialists have long been denouncing the ineffectiveness of the current Dublin system and emphasizing the need to undertake an in-depth reform of it that will give rise to a true European Asylum System worthy of the name. A system based on solidarity between the Member States when facing the challenges posed by the current dynamics of asylum and refuge. A system that includes a mandatory distribution key, with corrective mechanisms that take into account the particularities of each State in terms of size, GDP and absorption capacity. (Ayala Sender, 11 May 2016)

Throughout the researched period, S&D's approach to migration remained fundamentally consistent with a commitment to a right based approach, solidarity and social justice. However, certain aspects of their approach evolved in response to the changing context. As the "crisis" unfolded, the group intensified its call for solidarity amongst the EU Member States, strongly

pushing for mandatory refugee relocation schemes, and criticizing the lack of cooperation from some countries, thus increasing the emphasis on solidarity mechanisms. Furthermore, the group developed greater attention to the external dimension. While always advocating for addressing root causes, the S&D group placed increasing emphasis on the external dimensions of migration, including cooperation with third countries and development aid as a means to manage migration flows sustainably. Although S&D's primary focus remained on human rights and humanitarianism, the group acknowledged the need for effective security measures. They sought to find a balance between protecting Europe's borders and upholding the rights of the migrants throughout the period of research. Although this Group appears to have been less affected by the overall frame crystallization in the media, the use of securitization frames became more common as the period of research progressed. For example, as evident in a quote by Italian MEP Caterina Chinnici from 2017, although arguing for a humane and solidarity-based approach, she continuously relies on a narrative of "crisis" in her argumentation, thus exemplifying the hegemony of the securitization frame and process experienced at the time:

> (…) the migration crisis, which by its size has turned out to be a real humanitarian crisis, has registered, as we know, a deficit of solidarity and a failure to share the principle of responsibility, which not only puts The political stability of the Union is at risk, but which, unfortunately, is the main cause of the failure of the relocation program. (…) However, a European response needs to be given to the migration crisis (Chinnici, 16 May 2017).

8.4.1.3 The Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE)

The Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) existed from 2004 to 2019, until it was renamed Renew Europe (RE) by ALDE President Guy Verhofstadt, following the European elections for the ninth Parliamentary term in 2019. ALDE is a centrist/liberal European political group, which supports a balanced approach to migration, emphasizing both control and humanitarian aspects, calling for a comprehensive European migration policy, which should be based on solidarity. Throughout the researched period, their stance on migration evolved greatly, moving through the different stages of the issue-attention cycle. During the first stage, or the pre-problem stage, ALDE remained relatively liberal in their approach to migration, advocating for

policies that focused on humanitarian aid and human rights, and the importance of a coordinated EU response to migration (ALDE, 2014). This approach was inter alia evident in German MEP Nadja Hirsch statement from 2013:

> The Dublin system for example. By now we are all more or less in agreement that it is currently not working as it should. Families are torn apart and live in different countries. They cannot be brought together because this first state principle applies. This is incompatible with human rights. We as the FDP reject the Dublin system in general and want a distribution system. Eurodac: Here, too, we put people under general suspicion that they are generally criminals (Hirsch, 11 June 2013).

Here, MEP Hirsch relies on the Human Interest framing, denouncing the general suspicion of migrants. However, when the issue-attention cycle reached its peak of the alarmed discovery stage, and the third stage of realizing the costs between 2015 and 2016 began, the ALDE MEPs, while continuing to emphasize the need for a coordinated European response, also began recognizing the challenges that might be imposed by the large amount of arrivals, starting to also advocate for stricter border controls and increased security measures to manage the flows of migration (ALDE, 2015). The ALDE political group thus followed similar securitization frames, as the ones described for the media. An example of this, is Belgian MEP Guy Verhofstadt, in a statement where he argues for more European solidarity, while also relying on a crisis narrative, which he has previously strongly denounced, in his statement: "*it not a crisis of Europe. It is in fact a crisis of a lack of Europe! Let us tell the truth to the people" (Verhofstadt, 9 September 2015),* thus in contrast to his previous statements, beginning to call attention to a crisis narrative to describe the 2015 migratory movements.

Throughout the post-problem stage, the ALDE position on migration continued to evolve, and became more nuanced than compared to the beginning of the researched period. While ALDE MEPs continued to emphasize the need for upholding human rights, a greater emphasis was also placed on border controls and measures addressing security concerns. Thus, the ALDE stance on migration evolved greatly, moving from a primarily humanitarian focus to a more balanced

approach, that takes into account both humanitarian concerns, but also security considerations, in response to the escalating issue-attention cycle, and the possible effect of media framing.

8.4.1.4 The Greens/European Free Alliance (Greens/EFA)

The Greens/European Free Alliance (Greens/EFA) party, is a left-wing to center-left political group, who strongly supports a humanitarian approach to migration, advocating for both open and legal pathways for migrants, while opposing restrictive policies and further border controls. The group maintained a consistent position towards migration throughout the researched period, while adapting to changing political dynamics. Between 2013 and 2014, the Greens/EFA strongly advocated for a compassionate and inclusive approach to migration, arguing for a more comprehensive and humane response. This approach continued throughout the issue-attention cycle, and as this intensified by mid-2015, the Greens/EFA continued their advocacy for a strong humanitarian approach, calling for increased EU support to the Member States at the external borders. This remained evident in the groups position to the overall Dublin system, calling for more solidarity, as inter alia in German MEP Rebecca Harms statement on behalf of the Greens/EFA:

> For too long, the European Union had settled into the Dublin Regulation, which was designed to isolate and limit the problem to border countries. When we weren't shaken up by ships that sank in the Mediterranean, we actually settled into indifference to the problems, especially in the south of the Mediterranean. Getting out of such a mode of disconnection and indifference is not easy now. But I believe that the European Union is strong enough to do this if we stop talking the European Union to pieces in this challenge (Harms, 27 October 2015).

This position was maintained by the political group for the rest of the researched period, remaining steadfast in their commitment, continuing to push for a reform of the EU asylum system, wanting to ensure a fair and efficient procedure, while also advocating for a compassionate and rights-based approach to addressing the so-called "refugee crisis".

In February 2016, the Greens/EFA published *"The Green Alternative to the Dublin System"*, which called for a fair allocation of asylum seekers across the Member States, based on objective criteria, mutual recognition of asylum decisions, and a system that would build on the preferences of the asylum applicants (Keller et al., 2016). This publication also warned that a proposal that would continue building on the core failures of the current system would never be able to succeed. The group maintained this position on the Dublin system, throughout the negotiations of the Parliament amendments to the proposal, as evident in the statement made by Jean Lambert on behalf of the Greens/EFA in 2016:

> Dublin is only going to have a chance of working if we also take into account asylum seekers themselves, because if you are looking at secondary movement, you need to think why do people move? Dublin fixes you; it gives you one chance. If that is going to be in a country where you think your claim will not be properly examined, where you will not be able to make the contacts with your community, use the language that you have to integrate as we want you to, would you not move? It is your one chance to actually develop your life in any sort of way (Lambert, 11 May 2016).

However, despite the group maintaining the same position on the Dublin system, and the need for solidarity throughout the period of research, a securitized language became more pronounced as the years progressed also within the Greens/EFA. An example of such securitized language is presented in a quote by Croatian MEP Davor Škrlec, who in writing argued for aid to be given to France and the UK, in handling the situation in Calais. However, while arguing for this, he continuously drew on securitized framing, describing the current situation as the European migrant crisis, and as a problem that needed to be fixed, thus exemplifying how even the argumentations of MEPs from left-wing parties were influenced by the growing securitization of migration taking place at the time.

> Calais is one of the focal points of the European migrant crisis, which for years has been a gathering place for those refugees and migrants trying to cross the English Channel and enter the United Kingdom. The site is at the center of political debate in both France and the UK, and is a symbol of the poor conditions in which thousands of people live (…) I

am concerned about the current situation and I call for a quick solution to this problem in order to enable a normal life for all parties: unhindered traffic for passengers, and assistance in all necessary forms for migrants (Škrlec, 4 October 2016).

8.4.1.5 European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR)

The European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR), is a right-wing and Eurosceptic political group, which advocate for the need of strict border controls, and the reduction of what they call illegal migration, pushing for stricter measures to prevent irregular migration and secondary movements, as set forth in their Group Priorities. They strongly believe in national sovereignty within the area of migration policies and generally oppose mandatory quotas for redistribution of asylum applicants between the Member States (Steven, 2020).

Following the 2014 European elections the ECR saw a large increase in their seats, going from 54 to 77 MEPs, which was a 43% increase in just five years. The ECR is a political group that represents a broad ideological spectrum, which was also evident in the diverse range of attitudes towards migration from their MEPs in the plenary debates. However, some common themes and trends were noticeable throughout the researched period. In the pre-problem stage during 2013 and 2014, the ECR maintained a cautious approach to migration, with some members supporting stricter border controls, and others emphasizing the importance of addressing the root causes of migration, such as poverty and conflict. But there was a broad tendency for the MEPs to prioritize national sovereignty and control over migration policies. This ideological divide was evident in several of the statements made by ECR MEPs, for example, in 2013 when British MEP Timothy Kirkhope stated that:

> I do not support this common asylum system, not because I do not believe in European cooperation or because I do not think immigration can indeed have positive effects on society, but because, by pursuing this, we are not getting to the root of the problem (Kirkhope, 11 June 2013).

While his Greek colleague, MEP Notis Marias in 2014 argued:

But the issue of thousands of illegal immigrants and refugees cannot be tackled with a Mos Maiorum-type vacuum cleaner operation, without control, without transparency, without guarantees for the protection of human rights. It can be tackled by abolishing Dublin II and introducing a key to distributing illegal immigration flows to all EU countries based on their economic strength, size and population. Because Greece, Italy and the other countries of southern Europe can not stand other refugees and illegal immigrants. The countries of Europe's hard core must therefore also assume their responsibilities on the basis of Community solidarity (Marias, 22 October 2014).

However, although these MEPs are arguing for different solutions, they both draw on highly securitized language, despite their ultimate arguments. Here, MEP Marias also provides an example of how MEPs can go against the group priorities in their plenary statements.

In 2015 and 2016, during the alarmed discovery stage, the ECR group's attitude towards migration became even more varied, where some members adopted a more restrictive stance, calling for tougher border controls and measures to limit immigration, particularly from Muslim-majority countries. Other members expressed concerns about the humanitarian impact of the "crisis" and advocated for efforts to address the underlying causes of displacement. However, the overall line remained the same, opposing any compulsory or voluntary quota, as evident in Latvian MEP Robert Zile's statement from 2016:

It must be understood that the compulsory voluntary quotas, this time dressed in a shell of solidarity, do not work (…) it does not solve the issue of restricting secondary movements, but on the contrary, if a large majority of migrants and asylum seekers are forcibly located in countries where they would rather not enter, it poses serious risks to the existence of the Schengen area. The basic principle of the Dublin Regulation must remain in force. It must also be ensured that any migrant who pays the smugglers is returned; and only those who are genuinely fleeing the threat of war would obtain their refugee status in third-country camps, where they would apply to a particular Member State to have their status reviewed (Zile, 12 April 2016).

So, the ECR political group remained divided in their approach to migration throughout the researched period, with some MEPs supporting greater solidarity and burden-sharing, especially evident with MEPs from external Member States such as Greece and Italy, while other MEPs prioritized national sovereignty and strongly opposed mandatory quotas, especially MEPs from Central and Northern Member States. While the ECR's approach to migration reflected the diversity of views within the group, one thing remained consistent between 2013 and 2017, which was the strong reliance on securitizing language by all group MEPs when discussing migration.

8.4.1.6 The Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy (EFDD)

The Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy (EFDD), formerly known as the Europe of Freedom and Democracy (EFD), was a political group in the European Parliament that existed from 2009 until 2019. The group was generally Eurosceptic and had a right-wing populist orientation. Primary parties included the UK Independent Party (UKIP) and Italy's Five Star Movement. While the group was still called EFD from 2013 to 2014, its stance on migration was characterized by a strong opposition against the EU's approach to migration and asylum policies, including the Schengen Agreement, which they believed undermined national sovereignty and security. They also advocated for stricter migration controls, in particular in relation to non-EU migrants. This was for example evident, in the statement of Greek MEP, Nikolaoes Salvrakos in 2013:

> The Dublin Regulation makes Greece a country forced to deal alone with a huge wave of illegal immigration, without any mechanisms of genuine European Community solidarity. The implementation of the "Treaty of Dublin II" of the EU, provides for the return of illegal immigrants to their country of entry, which unfortunately, in an overwhelming percentage, is Greece. I therefore voted against Mrs Wilstrom's report, with which I disagree on the substance of the above reasons. (Salvrakos, 12 June 2013)

This statement emphasizes the political groups focus on national issues. So, although MEP Salvrakos argue for solidarity, he also relies heavily on securitizing frames, such as discussing the return of "illegal immigrants". This approach is evident in most EFDD statements. The MEPs

stance and advocacy were highly shaped by the country of origin, more so than when compared to statements from other political groups, where the party position was more evident. Although all EFDD MEPs rely on Securitization and Threat frames when discussing migration, they argue for different measures and approaches, with MEPs from the external border countries continuously referencing the need for solidarity. However, it is quite evident that this solidarity is invoked due to national interests, rather than for the advancement of the EU migration system.

Following the European Elections in 2014, the EFD was rebranded as the EFDD, while the core national parties remained the same. They continued to oppose EU migration policies, arguing that they failed to adequately protect member states" borders and sovereignty. Furthermore, the EFDD continued to emphasize the right of individual countries to control their own borders, strongly resisting and criticizing any EU-wide quotas, or participation in any programs.

In the researched period, the migration stance of the political group became more pronounced and urgent, due to the escalating migration "crisis". The tone and intensity of the rhetoric increased, reflecting the growing public concern and political salience of the migration issues. Some of these key shifts included an increased focus on security concerns. This shift also included a greater emphasis on national solutions and a heightened opposition to EU policies, framing these as ineffective and damaging to Member States' interests. Although the EFDD stance remained consistent throughout the researched period, the rhetoric intensified, in response to the evolving political and social context (Heinen & Kreutzmann, 2015), which for example was evident in a statement made by Lithuanian MEP, Rolandas Paksas:

> First of all, let's honestly answer ourselves, do we seek to solve the problems posed by migration to Europe, or do we want to solve the problems of migrants flooding Europe at the expense of the population of all the countries of the European Union. And if we choose the first answer option, then neither the revision of the Dublin Treaty, nor the newly established European Union Asylum Agency, nor the computerized resettlement mechanism fundamentally solves it. The Dublin Treaty has enough leverage to properly regulate migration flows in Europe. But for this there is one essential and enforceable

condition. It is a strict and professional control of the external borders of the European Union. (Paksas, 11 May 2016)

This statement was made, in relation to the presentation of the Dublin IV recast proposal, relying heavily on Securitizing and Threat framing. This continued throughout the rest of the researched period, as evident in the statement by British MEP Patrick O'Flynn in 2017:

> irregular or illegal immigration is a political disaster. It undermines the positive case for controlled immigration, it is corrosive of public trust and it rewards law-breakers, as opposed to honest applicants who have stuck to the rules (…) The answer to the Mediterranean migration crisis is not to force other EU countries to take in those being sheltered by Italy or Greece. That will merely add to the pull factors which already lure so many young men from Africa and the Middle East to Europe. No, the solution is to intercept the boats coming from Libya and elsewhere, and to escort them back to their points of embarkation. Irregular migrants need to be seen to be losers (O'Flynn, 25 October 2017).

This quote strongly exposes the divide between the Member States experienced within the political group itself, with MEP O'Flynn labelling it a Mediterranean crisis, rather than a European crisis, thus distancing his Member State, and others, that are not placed at the external borders of the EU. However, one thing that all EFDD MEPs had in common, from the beginning of the researched period and throughout, was the continuous reliance on securitizing and threat frames, which only intensified, as the topic became more salient in the media, and a hegemonic frame was reached in late 2015.

8.4.1.7 Europe of Nations and Freedom (ENF)

The Europe of Nations and Freedom (ENF) is a political group, established in 2015 by national parties such as the National Front from France, Lega Nord from Italy and the Freedom Party from Austria. The formation of the ENF group signified a more coordinated response by nationalist and right-wing parties across Europe, attempting to amplify their anti-immigration sentiments on a broader scale. The ENF was dismantled in 2019, where the majority of the

parties joined the new Identity and Democracy (ID) political group, which emerged after the 2019 European elections. Since their formation, the group has consistently advocated for stronger national controls over borders and migration policies, rejecting any EU level mandate on these. They have strongly criticized the EU's handling of migration in general, including the Schengen Agreement and the CEAS, arguing that these policies have led to both uncontrolled migration and security risks.

Shortly after the party was formed, the ENF took up an opposition against EU-imposed refugee quotas, arguing that such measures would undermine national sovereignty. During 2015, the ENF consistently linked migration to security issues, particularly in the context of concerns over terrorism. The group argued that the influx of migrants, particularly from predominantly Muslim countries, could lead to security threats and social instability.

The group continuously relied on framing rooted in security and threat concerns, such as in a statement made during the alarmed discovery stage in September 2015, by Austrian MEP Georg Mayer, when he said:

> The current situation regarding mass migration to the EU presents the member countries with a fait accompli that the EU has lost control of the situation and some member countries, including my country's government, are not complying with the rules and laws prescribed by the EU keep. Instead of reintroducing border controls, respecting the Dublin regulations, protecting the external borders and getting to the root of the problem, open borders and exception regulations only stimulate the problem further and do not lead to a final solution. In addition, there is no clear differentiation between clear economic migration and real refugees. (Mayer, 8 September 2015)

This particular rhetoric only intensified over the researched period, with MEPs such as British Janice Atkinson arguing for arresting, detaining and deporting migrants, under the Dublin Agreement:

Why are the Calais authorities and the French Government failing to stop this? They can do so under the Dublin Agreement by arresting, detaining and deporting. Hungary's Viktor Orbán shows leadership by taking the appropriate measures. He is being a good European, entering into the solidarity that is so often spoken about in this Parliament (Atkinson, 6 October 2015).

The ENF continuously advocated for strengthening the EU's external border controls and implementing measures to repatriate migrants. The group also supported policies that aimed at helping migrants in their regions of origin, though opposing any proposals relating to resettlement and relocation. By 2017, the ENF followed a rhetoric that emphasized the need to protect European cultural identity and traditional values against the threats posed by multiculturalism and migration. The group drew attention to their points, by using populist rhetoric to mobilize public opinion, often framing the debate as a struggle between the ordinary citizens and the elite in Brussels (Heinisch, 2016). In the two years the ENF was active during the researched period, their stance on migration remained consistent, while their framing intensified, increasingly highlighting security risks and cultural concerns. This was inter alia evident, in a statement made during the debate relating to the presentation of the Dublin IV Proposal in May 2016, when German MEP Marcus Pretzell stated, on behalf of the ENF Group:

Mrs Merkel's breach of Schengen and Dublin led to the attempted redistribution of 160,000 migrants in the European Union last autumn. So far, less than 1% has been implemented. We have seen the negotiations with Turkey fail. We have seen how the European Union allowed itself to be blackmailed, exposed and humiliated. And we're not even talking about the problem of family reunification, which will multiply the mess that has been made in the past. (Pretzell, 11 May 2016)

MEP Pretzell is problematizing proposals, such as family reunification, describing allowing families to be reunified as a mess, while also describing Europe as being humiliated. The group also took a strong stance against the Wikström Report in 2017, as exemplified in the strongly securitized statement made by French MEP Nicolas Bay on behalf of the group:

last Thursday the LIBE Committee adopted a dangerous report by Mrs Wikström, which will soon be debated in plenary (…) Thus, today, if an illegal immigrant arrives, for example, in Italy, it is Italy that processes his request. If the same illegal immigrant then arrives in France, the latter has the right to request his expulsion to Italy. With this report, the regulation would turn into an automatic mechanism for distributing illegal immigrants. This "Dublin IV" would thus provide that a candidate for the right of asylum is offered four countries in which he could settle while waiting for the processing of his application. The mere fact that asylum seekers can choose the State in which their claim will be processed is, strictly speaking, grotesque. Are they really fleeing the war in a transitory way as it is claimed or do they simply want to choose the most advantageous social system? (Bay, 25 October 2017)

Due to the group being formed only in 2015, it is not possible to measure whether there have been any significant shifts in the groups approach to migration prior to the alarmed discovery stage. However, their stance on migration remained the same through the last three stages of the issue-attention cycle.

8.4.1.8 European United Left–Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL)

The European United Left-Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL) is considered to be a left to far-left-wing political group, and is consisting of left-wing, socialist, communist and green national parties. Their stance on migration from 2013 to 2017 was generally characterized by a progressive, humanitarian approach, emphasizing human rights, social justice, and solidarity. The GUE/NGL consistently advocated for a humanitarian response to migration, emphasizing the importance of protecting human rights, ensuring safe and legal pathways and providing asylum to those fleeing conflict or persecution. Furthermore, the group supported the idea of solidarity amongst the EU Member States and highly criticized any Member State refusing to participate in the relocation scheme. The group also criticized Frontex and opposed the securitization of EU borders in general (GUE/NGL, 2014). This view was exemplified by Dutch MEP Cornelis de Jong in 2013:

It is therefore no wonder that the asylum procedure is not in order in countries with long external borders. Asylum seekers are the victims in the first instance. They cannot even submit an asylum application and the reception conditions are degrading (…) Then asylum will also become more of a shared responsibility and we can all ensure that asylum applications are handled properly. Finally, a word about EURODAC. Taking and storing the fingerprints of asylum seekers was necessary for Dublin to function. However, it was never the intention to give the police and the judiciary access to this database. That has a criminalizing, stigmatizing and, I say here loud and clear, submitting an asylum application is not a crime (de Jong, 11 June 2013).

During 2015 and 2016, GUE/NGL criticized the European response as being inadequate and inhumane. They strongly condemned the EU-Turkey Statement and other agreements aimed at externalization, arguing that these measures violated international human rights law. The group increasingly emphasized the need for safe and legal routes for migrants to enter Europe, advocating for humanitarian visas, and criticized the dangerous journey that most migrants were forced to undertake, due to the lack of legal options (GUE/NGL, 2016).

While the GUE/NGL's fundamental principles regarding migration remained consistent throughout the researched period with an explicit emphasis on human rights and solidarity, there were some shifts in the attention of the group, including an increased criticism of EU policies as the so-called "refugee crisis" unfolded. The group's criticism of the EU and its policies became more vocal and urgent throughout 2016, particularly in regard to the handling of asylum claims and cooperation with non-EU countries to restrict migration. This approach was also evident, in the debate of the Dublin IV proposal in May 2016, when the Swedish MEP Malin Björk expressed her concern:

The EU is on its way into a dead end, where we are negotiating away international asylum law and closing the door to people on the run. It's deadly, and dangerous. But it also does something to us who are within the EU's borders. We shrink, our compassion is peeled off, we become crueler and crueler. It is enough to listen to what the policies of the far right sound like. There must be an end to adapting to the policies of the far right. You

in the Commission do what they want at EU level instead of nationally. The new Dublin proposals do not change that. On the contrary, I fear that they will strengthen Fortress Europe, and perhaps the worst is the proposed rule that wants to force member states to deport refugees directly to countries in the EU's immediate area. A kind of extension of the shameful agreement with Turkey (Björk ,11 May 2016).

The MEPs from GUE/NGL also appear to be the political group, which was least affected by the overall change in migration framing experienced between 2015 and 2016, as they largely refrained from adopting a securitized tone within their argumentations throughout the period of research.

8.4.2 A Compromise of Politics in Times of "Crisis"

The Parliaments amendments to the Dublin IV proposal, as presented in the Wikström Report, reflected a range of political perspectives and priorities. The amendments were presented and adopted in November 2017, representing a compromise between the political groups, seeking a balance between security concerns and humanitarian principles, although the different perspectives on the proposal varied significantly amongst the different groups. In general, the EPP and ECR were often found advocating and supporting restrictive measures, including stricter controls on secondary movements and enhanced security checks, while ENF and EFDD pushed for far more restrictive measures, focusing on national sovereignty and stringent border controls. S&D and the Greens/EFA advocated for stronger humanitarian safeguards, while opposing overly restrictive measures, while ALDE took a balanced approach, supporting some restrictive measures, but also advocating for a fair treatment and procedural guarantees. The final report thus reflected these diverse positions, for example by including amendments relating to security-oriented measures as proposed by EPP and ECR, and by more explicitly defining the procedural safeguards for the asylum applicants, as advocated by S&D, Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL. The final outcome was therefore a compromise that incorporated elements from various perspectives, between restrictive and protective approaches.

The voting process on the Wikström Report and the proposed Parliamentary amendments revealed a divided stance amongst the different political groups and a clear division between the

political ideologies, characterized by significant support from the centrist and left-leaning groups, while right-leaning and national parties largely opposed the final result. Other factors which may have impacted the voting behavior includes the MEPs attitude towards European integration, which could also be important in explaining roll call outcomes, as explained by Hix et al. as *"crisis-related votes in the post-crisis period divided MEPs more along an EU integration dimension than on a left-right dimension compared with the period before the Eurozone crisis" (Hix et al. 2023).* Thus, the left-right division and attitude towards European integration is essential as a structural determinant for the voting behavior, as well as the placement of the Member State, and whether the Member State is old or new.

In the end, the report was passed with support from S&D, the Greens/EFA and ALDE, who generally voted in favor of the amendments, while the more conservative and right-leaning groups, such as the ECR, EFDD and ENF predominantly opposed the proposal. MEPs from the EPP mostly voted in favor of the report. Furthermore, as previously exemplified, within the debates, the national differences amongst the MEPs were measurable, which have revealed a divide between the external border countries and the more central and northern Member States. However, this divide in the MEPs speeches is not necessarily present in the roll call voting behavior, where MEPs were more likely to take a group stance. The final vote breakdown ended as follows:

- Votes in favor: 390
- Votes against: 175
- Abstentions: 44

These divisions reflect the broader ideological divide within the Parliament relating to EU migration policies, however, the debates and voting patterns indicate a shift in more security-oriented positioning amongst the political groups, when compared to earlier discussions relating to the Dublin system. Even before the presentation of the Wikström Report, MEPs from inter alia EFDD was thoroughly against the proposal, as exemplified in the statement by Lithuanian MEP Rolandas Paksas from the EFDD:

First of all, let's honestly answer ourselves, do we seek to solve the problems posed by migration to Europe, or do we want to solve the problems of migrants flooding Europe at the expense of the population of all the countries of the European Union. And if we choose the first answer option, then neither the revision of the Dublin Treaty, nor the newly established European Union Asylum Agency, nor the computerized resettlement mechanism fundamentally solves it. The Dublin Treaty has enough leverage to properly regulate migration flows in Europe. But for this there is one essential and enforceable condition. It is a strict and professional control of the external borders of the European Union. (Paksas, 11 May 2016)

However, despite the group differences, the Parliament voted in favor of the report, which differ in many ways from most of the political group's initial stances on both the Dublin system, and towards migration in general. These compromises could stem from a pragmatic approach, with many MEPs explicitly recognizing that the proposal was far from perfect but seemed to agree that it was better to have a compromised proposal, and commence the interinstitutional negotiations, rather than also reaching a stalemate in the readings in the Parliament. Some MEPs that chose to vote in favor of the report vocalized that this was considered no more than a modest first step. One example of such an approach was Italian MEP from S&D Cécile Kashetu Kyenge, when she argued that the MEPs did not want to hide behind their political differences, but instead work seriously towards a response, when she stated that *"we move forward because we believe in a solid reform of the system (Kyenge, 4 October 2017).* This sentiment of compromise was also echoed by Maltese MEP Therese Comodini Cachia from the PPE, in her statement:

Malta has consistently maintained that Dublin rules place an unfair burden on frontier countries and called for amendments to achieve a fairer distribution of asylum seekers across the EU. Reform must not be seen in isolation but would have to be part of a holistic package, including fostering relations with third countries and addressing the root causes of migration (Cachia, 12 April 2016).

Clear examples of the different political groups' positions implemented in the final report, presented as amendments to the Dublin IV proposal, can be summarized as follows:

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- **EPP**: Supported stricter rules on secondary movements to ensure asylum seekers stay in the Member State responsible for their application, through for example a compliance mechanism to ensure that Member States adhered to their responsibilities.

- **S&D**: Pushed for an expanded family reunification criteria and emphasized the need for humane reception conditions.

- **ALDE**: Supported the introduction of a permanent relocation mechanism to ensure fair distribution of asylum applicants but also advocated for compliance measures to ensure effective management of asylum flows.

- **Greens/EFA**: Strongly advocated for humane reception conditions and the protection of family unity.

- **ECR**: Proposed amendments for stricter penalties for non-compliance by asylum seekers and Member States.

- **EFDD and ENF**: Supported stringent measures to prevent secondary movements and irregular migration and opposed amendments to reduce the responsibilities of Member States accepting asylum seekers.

- **GUE/NGL**: Opposed restrictive measures and penalties for asylum seekers and emphasized the need for strong safeguards and protections for vulnerable groups. While explicit safeguards was included in the proposal, the penalties for the asylum seekers were still included.

The influence of the different political groups is thus evident in the final Wikström Report, and can be traced within the legislative text, where the final proposal aimed to balance both security and humanitarian concerns, in an attempt to include priorities from each of the political groups, in a broader compromise.

In general, within the debates, there was a measurable increase in the use of the Securitization frame over time, which was more pronounced amongst a number of specific political groups, particularly those on the right and far-right of the political spectrum, including the EPP, the ECR, the EFDD and ENF, which could also be considered the issue owners, with some maintaining the use of the securitization frames throughout the period of research. Whereas, in contrast left-wing

and progressive groups such as S&D, GUE/NGL and Greens/EFA prioritized the Human Impact frame. However, these groups had a noticeable and detectable shift in framing when describing migration as a crisis, problem or the like, which became more pronounced in the debates as the period of research progressed, and the alarmed discovery stage ended. Centrist groups like ALDE found a balanced approach between the two spectrums, however MEPs from ALDE had the most noticeable shift in framing preferences, for which the analysis confirmed a more pronounced use of Securitization framing towards the end of the researched period. The overall framing within the Parliament had a noticeable shift following the end of the alarmed discovery stage and the consonance of the Securitization frame in the media, where the debates and speeches became more securitized, whether this was intentional or not. This was inter alia evident in a statement made by Italian MEP Caterina Chinnici from S&D in January 2017:

> Among these, the pressure of migratory flows remains one of the most sensitive problems especially for the countries of Southern Europe, such as mine, Italy, Greece or your own country (…) The Union therefore needs to assume responsibility for migration and truly useful and functional legislative instruments are needed for an effective solution to the migration crisis. I am referring in particular to the modification of the Dublin system. The current proposal, even if it contains some positive elements, does not seem suitable for providing adequate support to countries of first landing (Chinnici, 18 January 2017)

Although she generally sought to advocate for more humanitarian practices, the normalization of the securitizing language is evident in her statement, when referencing migrants as problems and discussing the situation as a crisis, demonstrating a shift towards a more general common argumentative framing process within the Parliament when discussing migration.

Throughout the five-year period, there was a very vocal minority within the Parliament, which relied heavily on the use of Securitization and Threat frames when debating migration. This is one of the reasons why the use of the term illegal migrant was much more evident in the Parliamentary debates, than in the other data sources, as MEPs from particularly EFDD and ENF drew on these frames. This is apparent, for example in British MEP Patrick O'Flynn's statement: *"Irregular or illegal immigration is a political disaster. It undermines the positive case for*

controlled immigration, it is corrosive of public trust and it rewards law-breakers, as opposed to honest applicants who have stuck to the rules" (O'Flynn, 25 October 2017). Statements such as this, calls into question the intentions of the asylum seekers that choose not to apply for asylum in the first Member State of entry, while relying on a strong securitizing language, such as labelling migrants as illegal, and discussing control and rules. This particularly vocal minority relied on the Securitization frame prior to the frame consonance in the media, and this practice was only strengthened as the period of research progressed. The early use of such frames, is evident in inter alia a statement by Austrian MEP Andreas Mölzer, who in 2013 was a non-attached MEP:

> If, for example, Italy gets rid of its annoying asylum seekers, which it can no longer control in view of the flood of migrants, by irregularly issuing tourist visas and financing onward travel to other EU countries, this clearly shows the limits of the agreement. In many cases, the return to the country of the initial application does not work either. The Dublin regulation turns out to be more and more just a sedative for the common local people. More and more attempts are also being made via EU detours to open the EU's doors even further for mass immigration, to torpedo all of the already sparse return options and to snatch even more powers from the nation states. In this sense, the present proposal once again contradicts the interests of the autochthonous population, which is why it, like similar proposals, must be rigorously rejected (Mölzer, 12 June 2013).

A key concept for this vocal minority, as previously discussed, is issue ownership, referring to the association between the political party and a political issue, in the minds of the voters (Damstra et al. 2021: 98). For example, anti-immigrant parties such as the EFDD and ENF can quickly become very prominent and vocal, when becoming identifiable as the owner of the issue of immigration.

In general, it appears that center and right-wing parties were more likely to have been affected by the growing Securitization framing in both their narratives and political positioning, whereas the left-leaning parties continued to champion the more humanitarian approach, although their framing appears to have been slightly impacted by the changing frames. Thus, despite their

ideological differences, it appears that the media framing indeed has impacted the different political groups, whether very explicit or subtle. This is measurable in the way migration is described, for example by normalizing the use of Securitizing frames such as crisis and describing migrants as problems. However, it appears to be less likely to impact the way the parties are voting, and the overall goal of their argumentation. While right-wing parties are more likely to have sought more securitized measures, even prior to the frame consonance, the center to center-right parties such as the EPP and ALDE are the two parties, which appear to have been most affected by the shift in media narrative, not only in their framing use, but also in their argumentation and voting behavior. As these two parties have a central approach, they are more likely to follow the flow of public opinion, media narratives and political changes, during a period as the one under research, where populism and right-wing politics were increasing in popularity. The MEPs from these parties were thus most likely to have been influenced by a number of venues at the same time, including the changing political landscape, the increasing migratory movement, and the securitization and salience of migration in the media.

Furthermore, the political space within the Parliament has changed significantly throughout the research period, beginning with the 2014 Parliamentary elections, and the high number of Eurosceptic MEPs joining the eighth Parliamentary term. The Parliament's position thus evolved in parallel with changes in national level-politics and public opinion. This change could for example be measured in the election manifesto of the EPP in the two European elections between 2014 and 2019. In 2014, the EPP called for *"controlling immigration into Europe to ensure internal security" (EPP, 2014),* which was a position that was greatly securitized in its 2019 manifesto, when the EPP placed a strong emphasis on "illegal immigration" and "radical Islamism" as fundamental threats to Europe, which was greatly influenced by the populist radical right agenda (EPP, 2019).

Although some parties in general sought a more negative and securitized framing when discussing migration throughout the researched period, it can be concluded that most MEPs at the end of the issue-attention cycle, following the frame consonance in the media, despite different ideologies, began drawing on similar frames. In 2017, the flood narrative, irregularity, problems and crisis had become normalized terms when discussing migration in the plenary

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debates, and these framing choices were used by MEPs from across the political spectrum, irrespective of the Member State of origin.

8.5 Numbers, Narratives or Both? The Political Impact of "Crisis" Framing

The intensification of the media's use of the Securitization frame, coupled with the high media salience, reaching up to 30% of all news stories during the peak of the alarmed discovery stage, would arguably have made it difficult for MEPs to completely disregard the news stories published in relation to migration at the time. The traditional media outlets and social media platforms have thus provided frames used in the discussions surrounding the so-called "refugee crisis", which could have shaped both public perception and informed the environment of the policymakers. However, politics and policymaking are two separate spheres. While politics are presented in the plenary discussions and in the media arena, the policy developments are the outputs that are produced and agreed upon by the politicians. Therefore, while the previous chapters have examined the relationship between the media attention and framing and the sphere of politics, this chapter has applied the findings from these, in the sphere of policy developments, through the premise that the level of media attention and framing relating to migration, is reflected in the outcome of the related policy developments, in seeking to answer the third and last research question, *"Did the framing of migration impact the substantive political agendas of the European Parliament during the period of research?"*.

During the pre-problem stage, the recast process of the Dublin III Regulation was debated. At this time, MEPs appear to have sought to improve the Dublin system, mainly focusing their attention on solidarity and burden-sharing during the plenary debates, rather than focusing on security related issues. These debates also took place, during a time of low public and media scrutiny, meaning that the MEPs were not constantly introduced to new migration narratives, with a low media salience. These debates resulted in a number of amendments to the Dublin II Regulation, including stronger safeguards for the individual asylum applicant and their procedural rights. This approach appears to mirror the sentiment in the media to some degree, as the media at this time relied on a diversification of frames, including the Human Impact frame. When the alarmed discovery stage was at its peak in September and October 2015, the media reached a frame consonance, relying most heavily on the Securitization frame when discussing

and describing migration, in up to 30% of all migration related coverage. This approach was also mirrored in the debates, which started to shift their focus towards enhanced border controls, while some MEPs even started drawing lineaments between migration, terrorism and internal security. This focus only intensified following the two terrorist attacks in Europe, in Paris in November 2015 and in Brussels in March 2016, which were quickly linked to the increasing migratory movements to and within Europe, both in the media and in the political sphere.

When the realization of cost stage began in 2016, the Securitization frame only became more prominent in the Parliaments work and debates, which inter alia was evident in a LIBE Committee Report published on the reform of the Dublin system in 2016, where the Committee began emphasizing security concerns more explicitly. This included calling for stricter controls and better management of external borders, which were recurring themes throughout the report. As with the media, albeit with a few months lag, it seems that the Securitization frame crystallized within the Parliamentary debates at this time, continuing throughout the post-problem stage. The Dublin debates were often characterized by statements relying on security and threat frames, including control and enforcement, emphasizing the need to control migratory flows, prevent irregular, or even illegal migration and enforce border security, while continuously relying on framing migration as a crisis or emergency. This reflects a broader trend of securitizing migration issues during the debates. Some MEPs may rely on such language, as a securitizing actor seeking to use speech acts to convince an audience to seek particular or immediate policies, to alleviate an imagined "problem" (Balzacq, 2005), thus using such framing to legitimize the use of security policies.

However, while such speech acts may be informative during the plenary debates, they are often not used to persuade opponents within the Parliament, since much of the legislative work of the European Parliament takes place within the Committees, rather than within the plenary debates. In these Committees, most of the work is conducted by the rapporteurs, shadow rapporteurs and the coordinators for each political group (Krotký 2023: 875). So, while the debates are a good indication of how framing has changed, and possible shifts in positions, the real outputs are presented in the reports from the Committees and roll call votes, which in this case is represented mainly by the Wikström Report.

It can thus be concluded that the debates within the Parliament relating to the Dublin system between 2013 and 2017 became more securitized. While aspects relating to security and control were part of the earlier debates as well, they were not the dominant frame, prior to the alarmed discovery stage in 2015. In 2013 and 2014, it was rather a small, but vocal, minority of issue owners from right-winged parties raising concerns relating to security, relying on the Securitization and Threat frames. MEPs from other parties generally emphasized the need to ensure fair treatment of all applicants and enhancing procedural guarantees, relying on either a neutral or human impact frame in the discussions for the Dublin III Regulation. However, the unprecedented migratory pressure placed especially on the external Member States, such as Greece and Italy in 2015, slowly shifted the focus away from such aspects. During the alarmed discovery stage and until September 2015, the emphasis was in large degree placed on a Human Impact frame relating to saving migrants from the dangers of crossing the Mediterranean Sea, as well as providing humane reception conditions. These discussions also focused on solidarity and sharing of responsibilities. However, as the issue-attention cycle progressed, so did the debates, and as 2016 began, a shift was experienced, which mirrored the shift measured in the media prior, with the Securitization frame reaching a frame consonance. Security and control became a major concern for most MEPs, regardless of ideology, and heightened debates relating to securing external borders, preventing secondary movements and ensuring compliance with EU rules became most prominent. Furthermore, Securitization frames also began emerging within non-security related debates and drawn upon in most debates relating to migration regardless of the debate topic, which cemented the discovery of the frame consonance. This shift was also influenced by the rising populist and anti-immigrant sentiment spreading across Europe at the time.

The shift in framing was measurable across the political spectrum, with all parties in some degree adopting a Securitized framing when discussing migration, whether consciously or subconsciously. Where right-wing MEPs in general sought a Securitized frame throughout the researched period, the center-wing MEPs had a noticeable shift in their framing practices, and also party position, as the research period progressed. As for the left-wing MEPs, although their voting behavior and argumentation remained liberal, some MEPs started adopting a language,

incorporating a Securitization frame, that was slowly being normalized, such as describing migration as a crisis, problem or in relation to irregularity.

MEPs continuously called for a reform or overhaul of the current Dublin system between 2014 and 2015, and a fundamental reform of the system was placed on the European agenda as a matter of urgency, after the Dublin III Regulation appear to have failed in 2015. However, the proposal for a Dublin IV Regulation presented by the Commission in May 2016 did not provide the needed reform, and on the contrary, retained the fundamental structural elements of the supposedly failed system. The proposal still relied on an approach that would disregard the opinion of the asylum applicants, while also continuing to place an unfair burden on the external Member States, as the first countries of entry, while relying on an almost naïve trust in the willingness of the Member States to cooperate in sharing responsibility, in a heavily bureaucratic and almost unworkable approach to responsibility allocation.

The Wikström Report attempted to offset some of the above-mentioned shortcomings in the original Commission proposal, however, where the Dublin III Regulation placed a strong focus on procedural guarantees, without significant penalties for non-compliance, the Dublin IV proposal and amendments significantly changed this, retaining a heightened focus on security measures, such as the control of secondary movements and compliance, in contrast to its predecessor. Although the Parliament sought to change the original focus from reactive penalization to proactive incentives, the amendments did reflect a more control-oriented approach towards the general Dublin system. This more broadly reflected a shift, which has been previously measured in both the media and the plenary debates, towards the securitized idea that migration and asylum should be controlled. The Wikström Report sought to regain such control, by providing incentives and penalties for both the asylum applicants, which could face reduced reception conditions and limited access to relocation, and the Member States, through financial penalties, should they fail to comply with their responsibilities under the new proposal. Furthermore, while the Parliament did advocate for increased humane reception conditions and alternatives to detention, it also included an explicit recognition of detention as a tool for managing asylum seekers, under certain conditions, in contrast to the Dublin III Regulation, which did not prioritize detention as a control mechanism. Solidarity was also made contingent

on adequate compliance for both the Member States and the asylum applicants, who would not be allowed to participate in the Automatic Relocation Mechanism, if non-compliance was discovered.

Thus, while the overall legislative output from the Parliament appears to have retained a focus on the humanitarian aspects of the proposal, a detectable increase in emphasis and explicit mentioning's of security and control measures was also reflected in several aspects of the Dublin IV amendments. These added elements reflected the shift, which was also experienced in the debates, relating to the increase in the use of the Securitization frame. This shift could thus also be measured within the legislative proposal presented by the Parliament, albeit not as prominent as in the debates themselves. However, the presence of these more restrictive and control-oriented amendments does indicate that the shift experienced in the debates, can to some degree be measured within the output itself.

It must be noted that these reflections remain nuanced. While the overall approach of the Parliament maintains a strong humanitarian focus, and in general a more liberal approach, than when compared to the initial Commission proposal, some specific changes in the Wikström report does indicate that an increased emphasis was placed on security and control measures, when compared to the Dublin III Regulation. So, although the Parliamentary debates saw a marked increase in the use of the Securitization frame, this shift was not as prominent in the legislative output, generally maintaining the often expected liberal approach of the Parliament. However, there was a number of measurable indicators of a shift towards more restrictive and security-oriented preferences, indicating that some elements of the restrictive debates were incorporated in the proposed amendments, albeit in a more balanced manner than explicitly called for in plenary, reflecting the compromises expected by the Parliament, due to their group composition. Thus, while the humanitarian amendments remain, the increased presence of security and compliance mechanisms within the amendments reflect the growing influence of the restrictive debates.

Therefore, in seeking to answer research question three, it is possible to confirm that the framing changes determined in the media, were mirrored within the plenary debates, but not fully within

the legislative outputs. The Wikström Report retained the Parliaments previous positions, seeking solidarity and to provide safeguards for the individual applicants, indicating an attempt from the Parliament in presenting a nuanced approach, which would seek to address not only the immediate security concerns, but also safeguarding the Unions long-standing commitment to human rights. So, although the analysis did not confirm that the restrictive or securitized approach prevailed over the liberal approach, some measurable increase in the focus on control and security was found within the proposal. An area where the framing of migration seems to explicitly have impacted the substantive political agenda, is within the aspects relating to the macro-level application of the Dublin system. It would appear that the MEPs sought a more restrictive and security-oriented approach, when focusing on the overall migration management, with internal security notions becoming more inherent, when compared to its predecessor. This could for example be detected in the focus placed on strengthening border controls, enhancing security measures, screenings and preventing irregular movements, which were all central in the new framework. These amendments followed a rationale of maintaining order and control over the procedure, while preventing potential security threats in partaking in possible uncontrolled movements throughout the Union, rather containing them in the first country of entry. However, the micro-level application of the proposal reflected a more liberal approach, continuing the shift in focus from the Dublin III Regulation, on safeguarding the individual's rights and procedural guarantees, constructed to explicitly protect the rights of the individual, especially vulnerable groups such as unaccompanied minors. The changes in frame were thus less measurable within the substantive political agenda focusing on the micro-level application of the Regulation, and the rights and protection granted to the individual. This overall approach, could thus be labeled a defensive solidarity approach, as suggested by Cafiero (2019), as it was characterized by a securitizing rhetoric, that generally places the humanitarian aspects secondary to the issues relating to security and control, as evident in the outcomes of the Parliamentary debates, and ultimately the Wikström Report.

This could therefore suggest that the framing would have the biggest impact on the macro-level application, which more explicitly reflects the framing shifts experienced during the researched period. These amendments emphasize that the overall phenomenon of migration can become an illegal act, with migrants becoming a nature of crisis, with causal effects for the safety of the

Union. This could ultimately be an accepted amendment, through the act of using securitized framing, that could have shifted the logic towards risks and security concerns, which would open the debates and the ultimate policy response to a more security-oriented interpretation, driven by exceptionality (Stępka 2022: 106). The increase in the Securitization frame could thus have produced a moment of exception, discursively creating a picture of a normalized governance, where migrants' deservingness can be contingent upon the idea of compliance to a legal system. This presented a larger shift towards a shrinking space for asylum, where both the Commission, and subsequently the Parliament, sought to develop various practices to control the movement of the applicants through a number of institutionalized deterrence procedures, while still seeking to protect the individual's general rights.

The final amendments presented in the Wikström Report reflected a conflicted environment, in a time without a political consensus, shaped by very vocal political divides. Thus, the final report represented a large number of compromises, reached between the majority of the parties. It is therefore clear in the final product that this report was a compromise between eight very different political groups. However, what remains evident is that the security logic became more significant in the Dublin IV amendments, and although correlation should not be confused with causation, it is within the realm of possibility that the media framing relating to migration, which has been inferred to have impacted the way the MEPs frame migration, has influenced what the individual MEP would be prepared to accept in the Dublin proposal, after two years of being exposed to an ever increasing Securitization frame, both within the media, and subsequently within the plenary debates. This increase has normalized the idea of migration as a crisis or security issue, which could have made MEPs, especially MEPs from center-wing political groups, open to accept more control-oriented measures. The center-wing MEPs were found to be more susceptible to change their political position relating to migration throughout the researched period, thus appearing to be more susceptible in general to the media framing of migration, and thus their impact on the substantive political agenda.

The findings also infer, similar to Picard's previous conclusions, that media pressure cannot simply produce or impact policies, and cannot be a robust explanation of the policy dynamics. Multiple factors must be included to thoroughly conclude what impacts policymakers. However,

no one can contest that the media is highly influential with an inevitable impact, especially during uncertain times of crisis, with high issue salience, such as present during the alarmed discovery phase. Nevertheless, deeper and more complex dynamics, which are likely to interact with the media effects, must be involved when asserting a certain cause-and-effect relationship between the media and policy developments. Besides the quantity and quality of the media attention, it is difficult to separate this effect from outside factors such as changes in the political landscape, changes in the seat distribution within the Parliament as experienced in 2014, external events, migration trends and legal pressure. These are all variables which in different ways will impact the process of policy change, and the conclusion thus goes beyond a linear notion of causality. Therefore, based on the mapping exercise, although no assertive claim can be made, a pattern of influence across the different spheres can be inferred, thus answering the three research questions. Although the qualitative analysis did not confirm that a restrictive approach prevailed over a liberal approach in the Wikström Report, the overall shift in frame was measurable also in the policy developments, mainly within the macro-level amendments, contributing to a shrinking space for asylum.

8.6 Limitations

While this analysis may provide valuable insights into the role of media framing in shaping the migration policy process, it is important to acknowledge that isolating direct causality is inherently difficult, due to the multitude of factors that can influence decision-making, especially in a complex political system such as the European Union. This exercise has thus been conducted with caution, recognizing the limitations in this methodology, and the need to account for other contextual factors that may also influence the policy outcomes. While the findings are interesting, they are based on assumptions about the way the MEPs rationalize derived from the outputs produced, and from a limited amount of information from the environment in which they operate, thus relying on macro properties to specify any links. While this approach does provide interesting information, it also raises challenges for the content analysis, and thus correlation should not be confused with causation.

In general, this analysis assumes that the MEPs are rational actors that make decisions based on the information collected from their environment. However, MEPs are not mere passive

recipients of information (Pettrachin 2023: 364), but rather subjective and active interpreters, taking part in the framing process, by assessing the frames presented in the media, and their own understanding of these, and as a result of this cognitive process, they will choose which aspects of the framing to highlight and which to discard. Thus, providing more robust explanations about the links between the actual policy outcomes and the context in which they are produced, require a move beyond this approach, more qualitatively looking at the MEPs actions and cognitive frames, which would need to adopt an actor centered approach, going beyond the scope of this analysis. Policymakers and their understanding can be influenced by the very outputs that they contribute to produce. Thus, media cannot be the only variable when determining causality and further qualitative work would therefore be needed to firmly confirm causality.

Furthermore, the analysis is conducted, being aware of the important information that may be lost, both due to intercoder bias and the subjective opinion of the researcher, as well as words that may have been confused during the translation process. However, as previously mentioned the quality of automatic translation is increasing, with researchers such as De Vries, Schoonvelde and Schumacher (2018) finding that the quality of human and machine translation has begun overlapping, claiming that Google translate is a valid tool for comparative research.

9. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

9.1 Introduction

This thesis began with a quote from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) from 2011, in which they describe migration and the issues surrounding migration as defining features of the 21st century (IOM, 2011 in Esses et al. 2013: 519). This quote was chosen as the opening, due to the important role it places on migration, both in the past, present and the future to come. Migration has the potential to shape our world, and how it is handled politically and on the ground reveals who we, as a global community, wish to be – and over a decade later, this IOM quote remains as relevant, as it was when it was presented in 2011. Since then, we have experienced an exponential increase in international migrants and forcibly displaced people world-wide, and a continuous academic interest remains crucial to approach this diverse topic and understand the different aspects of migration and what shapes the political debates surrounding it.

Therefore, analyzing the media's framing of migration, and its effect during the highly politicized context of the so-called "refugee crisis", can offer important insights into the political consequences of the media's use of frames in times of perceived crisis, and whether such frames could have implications on the subsequent policymaking within the field of migration and asylum governance in the EU. This study thus aimed to unravel aspects of how migration was discussed, and with what political impact, to approach a number of unanswered questions within academia, especially given the importance of understanding the inter-connections influencing the ability of the political leaders to promote a safe and coherent migration strategy within the EU, and to broaden the knowledge within this field.

Studying the representation of a public policy issue is nowhere more interesting than in the case of the framing of migration and migrants. This terminology is used to represent a group of people, who are made up of countless different facets, for example when approaching the individuals in relation to the reasons that they seek to migrate or the legal instruments surrounding each migrant individually, despite the fact that this group is often discussed in a singular manner. This complexity makes the case of migration particularly interesting to research

in relation to framing and its political impact. It also magnifies the uncertainty in the area where policymakers operate to regulate migration and asylum, especially within a multi-level environment such as the EU, governed by a number of demographically diverse Member States. All these points make for an important and highly interesting avenue of research and highlight the significance of understanding the actual impact of this framing.

Furthermore, the complex structure of the European policymaking sphere becomes inherently apparent, when discussing the area of migration and asylum policymaking. Since the EU experienced a deepening of the integration project, creating an interconnected structure between its Member States, a unified approach to migration has become a necessity. However, it still remains a policy area which is largely considered a competence of the Member State rather than the EU, due to it being perceived as impinging on sovereignty. This has often led to compromises within the area of migration and asylum governance, thus leaving the Union with a migration system, that is not prepared for outliers or challenges. The durability of the CEAS has therefore been tested on several occasions, and the "refugee crisis" in particular tested the character of the Member States, while highlighting systemic deficiencies within the current system. Understanding how these policies are shaped, and which variables that have an impact within this multilayered decision-making process is crucial. This is especially interesting in relation to the media, given the high media salience of migration at the time, and the permanent epistemic instability in the framing of migration (De Genova 2017: 9).

In other words, this thesis focused on the link between the media framing and the way migration was discussed, and its possible influence on the European migration governance processes, outputs and outcomes through a mixed-methods research design. This concluding chapter will thus discuss the findings and conclude the research, relating them to the main overarching hypothesis, answering the three research questions and summarizing the key findings in relation to such. The findings for each question will be synthesized and connected to the ongoing debate. Subsequently, the final reflections on the implications will be discussed, as well as the value and contribution thereof. Furthermore, this chapter will also review the limitations of the overall study and develop final reflections and implications of the findings, proposing opportunities for future research.

9.2 Discussion of the Research Findings

This research has aimed to identify what impact the media's framing of migration has had on the European migration policymaking process in perceived times of crisis. This was sought, through testing the hypothesis that *"The media's framing of migration has impacted the reform process of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), leading to policy outcomes that did not promote a coherent long-term migration strategy within the European Union during the so-called 'refugee crisis'."* To effectively test this, three sub-questions were developed, to guide the analysis and ultimately answer the hypothesis. The research methodology included a mixed methods research design, by quantitatively seeking to answer the first two research questions and qualitatively addressing the third research question. This three-part analysis has made it possible to conclude that the media do in fact impact the way migration is discussed within the plenary sessions in the European Parliament, and that this impact is partially measurable in the substantive political agendas, or more specifically in this case, the recast processes of the Dublin Regulation between 2013 and 2017. The research thus postulates that the media discourse has the potential to both directly and indirectly shape the political decision-making processes in relation to migration governance within the EU. How this conclusion has been reached will be approached below, through a discussion of the findings from each research question.

Q1: How did the traditional- and social media, as well as Members of the European Parliament frame migration before, during and immediately after the so-called "refugee crisis"?

To uncover the dynamics of the migration framing and address the first research question, a range of different quantitative approaches were operationalized in chapter five. This analysis included approaches relating to frequency, salience, issue-attention, sentiment, and subsequently framing, applied in a holistic approach to analyze both the media coverage and political debates, in a quantitative exploration of the topic between 2013 and 2017. This thesis thus relates and contributes to an ongoing debate within migration and communication scholarship, concerning the framing of migration in the media, with conclusions that reaffirm a number of previous studies and their findings. As previously presented, distinguished researchers and scholars has engaged in the debate of identifying how the framing of migration has changed over time, and especially how it changed during the "refugee crisis" between 2015 and 2016 (Berry et. al. 2016;

Georgiou & Zaborowski, 2017; Schweitzer et al. 2018). The first research question has confirmed these, by concluding that the framing of migration has become increasingly negative over the researched period, and that a frame crystallization appears to have taken place in late 2015, normalizing the Threat and Securitization frames. This analysis has added to the previous scholarship on the topic, by expanding the period of research to also include the post-crisis stage, which confirmed that the media further consolidated and maintained the migrants within a framing of possible threats to security, and securitization frames in general, throughout 2016 and 2017 as well.

Early in the researched period during the pre-problem stage, between 2013 and 2014, when migration had yet to reach the political or public radar, a low media salience was experienced and migration was presented using a multitude of frames, without a clear hegemonic frame. However, during the alarmed discovery stage, following several tragic events in relation to the plight of migrants attempting to reach the European borders, the media environment experienced an increase in the salience of migration within the coverage, both in the articles published in traditional media, and the tweets on Twitter. During this period, the media continued to rely on a number of frames, although the Human Impact frame experienced a brief spike in popularity, especially right before and around September 2015, when the tragic pictures of the drowned three-year old Alan Kurdi were published, which caused a brief paradigm shift. This shift was also measured within the Parliamentary debates, although they did not explicitly appear to draw on the specific event of the drowning, in contrast to the media. However, this paradigm shift was short lived, confirming findings from previous studies, that it is difficult for a frame to become permanent, if it is related to specific events, and not in syntony with the more hegemonic societal master frames (Garcés-Mascareñas & Pastore, 2022)

This analysis thus found that there were temporal measurable changes within the first part of the period of research or what was labeled the pre-problem and alarmed discovery stages, although there were no larger changes in the hegemonic frames for longer periods of time. This finding confirms previous similar findings (Boomgaarden & Vliegenthart, 2007; Strömbäck et al., 2021; Maneri, 2023), that during a crisis, an increased number of frames will be used to describe the events as they unfold, and that those are likely to settle through a frame crystallization, as the

intensity of the coverage and the number of significant events decrease. This also confirmed that frame changes could often be measured in accordance with triggering events, especially in the early stages of the "crisis", when the frames were still being developed, and the media experienced a larger frame diversification. During this time, the framing was thus characterized by a frame dissonance, shaped by frame-building often following episodic events.

This part of the analysis also established the different roles the media and political sphere play within the issue-attention cycle, as the MEPs continued discussing the topic in times of low saliency, such as prior to the alarmed discovery stage, whereas the media remained largely below the median, until this stage commenced in April 2015. However, as migration proceeded to become a more salient topic, and the number of migrants arriving to the EU increased, so did the saliency in the media, which was also measurable within the Parliamentary debates. This confirms that the MEPs do follow the cue of the media, when the salience is high, with approximately one month lag in intensity, accounting for the scheduled plenaries. During the final two stages of the issue-attention cycle, the media moved away from an intense coverage of the issue, settling around the mean, whereas the analysis determined that the Parliament maintained a similar level of interest in the topic, even during the beginning of the post-problem stage, which was measurable within the attention trajectory throughout 2016 and to some extend in 2017. This confirmed that the media attention during the so-called "refugee crisis" conform to the traditional idea of the issue-attention cycle as proposed by Down's in 1972, whereas the Parliament will be discussing the topic episodically, and not only driven by media saliency. This reflects the different role the MEPs play within the issue-attention cycle, with the debates being far more scattered around the mean, continuing into the post-problem stage. This is a confirmation of the thesis presented by the issue-attention cycle, that an issue will fade from the media attention, before a solution has been reached, while still remaining on the political radar.

However, a peak in MEP attention was measured during the height of the so-called "crisis" around September of 2015, which was also the time where the highest media salience was measured. This was especially the case within pan-European media outlets, where migration accounted for approximately 30% of all news coverage published in Euractiv in September 2015, conversely the Financial Times only reached 2.69% at its highest the same month. When looking

at the trends in frequency and salience, it can be concluded that these are often event-specifically driven, and the general peaks in coverage can be traced to any of the following: political decisions, tragic shipwrecks, peaks in arrivals; or other significant and relevant events.

Generally, September 2015 was revealed as a turning point for a number of variables, and the brewing culmination of the "crisis" appears to have been reached in November 2015, following the Paris terrorist attacks. This marked the time, when the Securitization frame determinately became the hegemonic frame. The end of 2015 thus marked the beginning of what appears to have been a consensus amongst the different variables in their use of framing when discussing migration, leading to the conclusion that a frame consonance had been reached. Although the Securitization frame was the most dominant throughout the researched period, it saw a large increase in percentage when moving between the pre-problem stages in 2013 and 2014, into the alarmed discovery stage during 2015. After this stage, the Securitization frame was used in 25% of all Parliamentary debates, 27% of all tweets and 31% of all mainstream media, ultimately becoming the hegemonic frame. One Securitization frame which was significantly prominent after the frame consonance, was the use of metaphors when describing migrants, often relating to waters and natural disasters. All three sources extensively described migration as inter alia waves or flooding, which portrayed a feeling of helplessness against the "natural disasters" flooding the European borders. This caused a seemingly uncontrollable crisis, which fed the narrative of migrants as being a risk to European security. Drawing on this imagery became so ingrained in the way migration was discussed in 2016, that it was used both negatively, but also in neutral language, when simply describing a situation or news story.

This part of the analysis has discussed and established the way migration was talked about, during the period of research. How migration is discussed is hypothesized to potentially have broader consequences for political opinion formation, thus describing migration using securitizing language and portraying a feeling of helplessness against a perceived out-group, can feed a narrative of migration being a risk to overall European security. The general hypothesis shaping this research, believes that this can cause more intense public attention, as well as pressure to generate an effective policy change to "protect" the European population against the perceived idea of the "flooding" of migrants crossing the borders. Whether this heightened

attention level, combined with an overall negative portrayal can push or limit direct political action is still widely debated. However, the continuous introduction of the "crisis" narrative will only reinforce a securitized view of migrants and the general feeling of the need for control. It is thus worth investigating further, where this framing originates from, by asking the question, who leads whom in the framing formation process during the "refugee crisis"?

Q2: Was the symbolic political agenda susceptible to the way migration was framed in the traditional and social media between 2013 and 2017?

The second research question has guided the thesis towards investigating, not only how migration was framed, but also with what potential impact, by measuring the use of frames through a statistical analysis, using the Linear Ordinary Least Squared (OLS) Regression model with Panel Corrected Standard Errors (PCSE). This has provided insights into an ongoing debate within both political science and media studies, relating to the influence between the media and political debates. While more traditional agenda-setting studies have explored this in considerable detail, much less has been written about the impact of the media frames when discussing the issue of migration, on the approaches and frames adopted within the political sphere. The studies available on this topic have presented a variegated reality, often leading to the conclusion that the influence of the media does not exist as a linear relationship, but rather a feedback cycle, where the media agenda is informed by the public and policy priorities, and these are then in turn informed by the media agenda (Hilgartner & Bosk, 1980). Others have even argued that the capacity of the mass media to influence the political agenda, is conditioned upon the interests of the political parties (Green-Pedersen & Stubager 2010). However, most of this literature has focused on explaining variations of the changes and impact on the political agendas, at the expense of the subtitles inherent in the framing variations, especially when discussing an issue as sensitive as migration.

This research question was thus shaped to take this analysis a step further, to understand whether the frames developed and deployed within the media were used by the MEPs during the Parliamentary debates, or more specifically, establish who leads the framing formation, if any. To research this, the variables of framing and sentiment uncovered in chapters four and five were

introduced within a regression analysis, to understand whether media framing actually had an impact on the symbolic political agendas, or more specifically, answer the question of who leads whom, and whether responsiveness and alignments of framing could be observed between the three variables, traditional media, Twitter and within the political debates.

This analysis quickly revealed that a correlation was present within the data, although this statistical significance was not detectable in all models of application, depending on the lag applied. This means that statistical significance was only measurable, when applied to the data with no lag or up to one-month lag. This is argued, to be due to a number of factors, including that the media and political sphere is shaped within a digitalized and mediatized breaking news culture, which has only become more apparent after the introduction of social media and other digital news platforms. These are continuously updated, resulting in a constant stream of information being published at all times, and social media platforms have only accelerated the spread of news faster and more widely than ever before. Although the MEPs operate within a more complex political environment influenced by a variety of factors, and not under the same fast paced pressure as the media, they are still part of the larger public, where rapid information dissemination is expected, which means that politicians in general are expected to address issues discussed within the media in a timely manner.

The findings of this regression analysis have thus made it possible to infer that the issue framing within both traditional media and on Twitter lead the issue framing by the MEPs within the debates more so than the other way around. The MEPs are 23 percentage point more likely to be using a frame within the debates the following month, if this frame was used within traditional media the preceding month, meaning that the MEPs appear to be affected by the framing in the pan-European media coverage relating to migration, much more than the MEPs framing inform the media framing. This is also the case for Twitter, although 9 percentage point less likely than if presented by traditional media. Twitter on the other hand, is more impactful immediately, when calculated with no lag at 8 percentage point, compared to traditional media at 4 percentage point, solidifying the role of social media as an instant medium. These results do not necessarily suggest, that the media or direct media references will be used within the speeches of the MEPs in plenary, but rather that the framing of migration in traditional media and on Twitter is likely to

be adopted by the MEPs in the way they discuss and frame migration, having the possibility of slowly affecting the way MEPs discuss the topic. This does not determine who sets the agenda and will thus not feed into previous agenda-setting studies, but rather who leads the framing formation when discussing migration.

These findings thus imply that traditional and social media has the possibility to shape how the issue of migration is framed and discussed within the Parliamentary debates, confirming that the media is a key player within the framing formation process. This solidifies the connection between the media and the securitizing process, in their construction and contribution to the framing within the political sphere, proving that in today's mediatized world, it is arbitrary to completely separate the media and political sphere, as these develop together.

Applying the variables to measure the master frames separately, further confirms that the media most often leads the framing formation for the individual frames as well. However, an interesting finding within these calculations is that the framing power of the traditional media, appears to systematically differ across the master frames, with the media most often leading the framing formation process when relating to the Securitization and Threat frames. This corresponds to the findings from the framing analysis in chapter five, suggesting that the media in a larger degree increase the interaction of the coefficients with articles drawing on the Securitization frames. This measurement is particularly interesting, given the importance of the Securitization frame throughout the period of research in all three variables. It thus appears that the media generally has the biggest impact in setting and altering these frames. This is an important finding, as the discourse drawing on securitization may shape the further discussions of migration, and how these discussions evolve over time, especially given its hegemonic role. The increase in the use of the Securitization frame risks boosting an anti-immigration sentiment, both politically and within the public, during a time when Europe experienced an extraordinary increase in the movement of people both to and within its borders.

So, has this model answered the question of whether the media determine or codetermine the framing used in the political debates relating to migration, and thus the symbolic political agenda of the European Parliament between 2013 and 2017? The answer is yes. This analysis has

established a mutual dependency between the variables, and confirmed the initial expectation, that the symbolic Parliamentary debates are indeed susceptible to media cues. The media coverage, both traditional and social, does affect the way the topic of migration is discussed by the MEPs at varying degrees. Naturally, the media is not all determining, but their lead on the framing formation is both measurable and significant. Other studies have come to similar conclusions (Eilders, 2000; Walgrave and Van Aelst, 2006; Walgrave et al., 2008; Dekker and Scholten, 2017), although far from agreeing on the significance and size of this impact. In sum, this part of the analysis has demonstrated the importance of mass media in shaping and affecting the framing chosen when discussing migration in the Parliament, although this importance is not equal in size across all master frames. Nevertheless, the effect is evident across most issues and is not negligible, further confirming the thesis from the mediatization and agenda-setting theories, which both agree that the media attention can drive, if not policy change, then policy discussions and agendas. Thus, for the question of who leads whom, it appears to depend on the topic discussed, but that traditional media has a larger and more statistically significant coefficient, than social media and the Parliament, making it possible to infer causality.

This analysis has thus confirmed that the way migration is discussed in the media has broader consequences for the political framing – but will this impact push or limit direct political action?

Q3: Did the framing of migration impact the substantive political agendas of the European Parliament during the period of research?

In previous scholarly work, MEPs and their political behavior has often been studied, in relation to their voting patterns, while less consideration has been placed on the speeches delivered during the plenary sessions. This research thus combined both elements, to comprehensively address the legislative outcomes and to provide deeper insights into how the framing changed within the Parliament over the five-year research period. This was conducted, in a search to reveal how the frames and their transposition from the media into the political sphere, as determined by the two previous research questions, has impacted the actual outputs from the LIBE Committee during the negotiations and ultimate presentation and voting on the Dublin IV proposal in 2017, as part of the COD process. This thus represents the tangible outcome, or

substantial political agenda, within the EU migration governance process for this analysis. The years between 2013 and 2017 were crucial for the Dublin Regulation, experiencing two recast processes, making it possible to access whether the Dublin III Regulation (2013), and the Dublin IV Proposal (2016), experienced a measurable shift in the approach, and whether such shifts were in line with the framing shifts previously detected. This process was applied to shed light on the possible influence the media environment has had on the policy processes, through the identification of patterns and correlations, specifically in relation to the securitization process.

During the initial stage of this analysis, the main differences between the Dublin II and Dublin III Regulations were uncovered. The Dublin III Regulation was agreed within the Parliament in 2013, during the pre-problem stage, where it appears that the recast Regulation introduced more robust and defined protection criteria for the individual applicants, than when compared to its predecessor. This for example included the introduction of more explicit guarantees for the rights to information, legal assistance, and special considerations awarded to vulnerable groups, such as unaccompanied minors. The more clearly defined safeguards for the individuals were a display of how the EU institutions attempted to respond to some of the criticisms that had grown louder relating to the overall Dublin system. However, while the Dublin III Regulation did provide stronger procedural guarantees for the individual applicants, it also strengthened the rules of enforcement and compliance, inter alia to avoid secondary movements within the EU. This was for example evident in the rigorous application of the first country of entry rule, and stricter enforcements of responsibilities on the Member States.

Although smaller improvements were measurable within the recast Regulation, the foundation of the Dublin system remained the same, and was thus quickly facing questions relating to the system's fairness and solidarity inherent in the allocation of the responsibility, as the number of migrants began to increase throughout 2014 and more exponentially in 2015, leading up to the alarmed discovery stage. During this time, the Dublin system was routinely discussed during the plenary debates, and a pronounced divide between the parties was measurable and evident, with some parties strongly urging for a more solidarity-based system, which should include responsibility sharing mechanisms, while others increased their urges for a consistent application of the current system. So, as the migratory pressure increased, so did the criticism of the system,

or the application of the Regulation, depending on the political leaning of the critic. As it became apparent, during the height of the alarmed discovery stage, that the system was inadequate to respond to the current migratory situation, a new recast proposal was presented in 2016. The discussions for the new amendments took place between 2016 and 2017, during the last two stages of the issue-attention cycle, namely the gradual decline in public interest and post-problem stages. During this time, when comparing the plenary discussions to the discussions taking place during earlier stages of the issue-attention cycle, there was a measurable increase in the use of the Securitization and Threat frames from the MEPs, reflecting the same frame consonance as measured in the media at this time.

This increase became more pronounced amongst the different political groups between the two recast procedures and as the issue-attention cycle progressed. Whereas the right-leaning MEPs drew on this frame significantly throughout the period of research, there was a noticeable and detectable shift in framing when discussing migration from other parties within the Parliament as the last two stages of the issue-attention cycle were reached. This was especially evident for parties with political ideologies located close to the center, such as ALDE and EPP, who began shifting towards a more pronounced use of Securitization frames towards the end of the researched period. A qualitatively measurable frame consonance appears to have taken place within the Parliament in early 2016, a few months later than within the media. Whether this securitized shift was intentional or not, the more centrist MEPs began drawing significantly on a rhetoric relating to crisis, problems or flooding.

This could support the claim, that the media continuing to rely on a crisis or securitization frame consolidates and maintains migrants within a framing of possible threats to European security, creating an image of a problem that needs to be addressed through the adoption of exceptional measures, ultimately impacting the MEPs frame use and argumentation.

However, these findings also partially disprove previous statements such as from Green-Pedersen and Stubager who, in 2010, concluded that the capacity of the mass media to influence the political agenda, is conditioned upon the interests of the political parties. The analysis did confirm that the center parties were more easily influenced by the securitizing frames, however,

other parties appear to also have been influenced by this media framing, by slowly adopting it. The shift in framing was measurable across the political spectrum, with representatives from most of the parties appearing to adopt securitized framing, to some degree, whether consciously or subconsciously. Although the voting behavior of the left-wing MEPs remained liberal, some MEPs began adopting a language, which incorporated Securitized framing, that appears to normalize the description of migration inter alia as crisis, waves or problems. Security and control thus became a concern for most MEPs regardless of ideology, as the debates intensified during 2016, and heightened debates relating to securing external borders, preventing secondary movements and ensuring compliance with EU rules, became the most prominent topics when discussing migration. However, the frame consonance didn't become abundantly clear, before the Securitization frames began appearing in debates relating to non-security related issues as well.

Despite a significant and measurable impact of the media framing in the way migration was discussed during plenary, it appears that this had less impact on the way the parties and individual MEPs voted. While the right-wing parties were more likely to seek securitized measures, even prior to the frame consonance, the center to center-right parties such as the EPP and ALDE are the two parties, which appear to have been most affected by the shift in media narrative, not only in their framing use, but also in their argumentation and voting behavior. This could inter alia be due to the fact that both of these parties are placed at the center of the political spectrum, and they are thus more likely to follow the flow of public opinion, media narratives and political changes, for example during a period, such as the one researched, where populism and right-wing political parties were increasing in popularity.

The diverse ideological preferences within the Parliament were reflected within the debates, as well as in the Dublin IV recast procedure. It was clear in the final Wikström Report, that it represented a number of compromises between the different political groups, attempting to find a balance between the ideological concerns. The final report was thus a compromise, that incorporated elements from various perspectives, ranging from restrictive to protective approaches. However, the final voting process still revealed a divided stance amongst the different political groups, and a clear division between the political ideologies, characterized by significant support from the centrist and left-leaning groups, while right-leaning and national

parties largely opposed the results of the negotiations. However, the report was ultimately passed, with a majority support. These compromises could stem from a pragmatic approach from the MEPs, explicitly recognizing that the proposal was far from complete, but seemingly agreeing that it was better to have a compromised proposal, than a stalemate.

Thus, while there was a measurable shift in security related framing within the Parliamentary debates, the legislative outputs, or more specifically the Wikström Report, reflected a broader and more balanced approach, than what the debates suggested. These amendments were found to prioritize, not only security and border controls, but also provisions that were specifically designed to ensure that the humanitarian principles would be upheld, protecting the rights of the individual asylum applicant. The report also included suggestions to ensure solidarity, however, it was still far from a workable solidarity mechanism, as first envisioned when the proposal was debated. This outcome thus reflected the Parliament's diverse composition, its institutional role, the influence of the civil society, and the commitment of the MEPs to attempt to uphold the European values and human rights.

However, although this proposal did provide a more nuanced approach than what would be expected from the debates surrounding these amendments, it still reflects a securitized shift. When comparatively analyzing the Dublin IV Parliamentary proposal and the Dublin III Regulation, a heightened focus on security measures, such as the control of secondary movements and compliance was measured. Although the Parliament did seek to change the original focus proposed by the Commission from a reactive penalization to proactive incentives, the focus remained the same, to avoid secondary movements, reflecting the securitized idea that migration should be controlled. Within the Wikström Report, such control was sought to be regained through the use of incentives and penalties, both for the applicants, who faced reduced reception conditions and limited access to relocation, and the participating Member States, through financial penalties, should they fail to comply with their responsibilities. The Parliament proposal did advocate for an increase in the reception conditions and alternatives to detention, however it also included explicit recognition of detention as a tool for managing asylum seekers. It thus made the humanitarian and solidarity aspects contingent upon compliance of both the Member States and the applicants.

Thus, while on the surface the legislative output from the Parliament retained its expected focus on the protection of the individuals' rights, a detectable increase in the emphasis and explicit mentioning's of security and control measures was also reflected within the amendments. These elements mirrored the shift, which was experienced within the debates, albeit less explicit, towards a securitized approach to migration overall, making it possible to argue that this shift to some extent was also measurable within the final report, which was presented and agreed on in the post-problem stage.

Although some shifts in approach and framing are measurable, as exemplified above, the reflections on this remain nuanced. The overall approach of the Parliament maintained a far stronger humanitarian and liberal focus, than the original proposal, although some changes within the Wikström Report does indicate a stronger emphasis on security and control, when compared to its predecessor. However, these changes do not reflect the extent of the marked increase in the use of the Securitization frame within plenary. Thus, when seeking to answer the last research question, the qualitative comparative analysis confirmed that the changes in framing experienced in the media, was to some extent mirrored within the Parliamentary debates, but not fully within the legislative outputs. The Wikström Report did retain some of the Parliaments previous positions, seeking solidarity and to provide safeguards for the individual applicants, demonstrating an attempt from the Parliament to break a stalemate in negotiations, by presenting a nuanced approach, which would seek to address not only the immediate security concerns, but also safeguarding the Unions long-standing commitment to human rights. However, where possible these amendments did reflect a more securitized approach than its predecessor, with measurable increases in the focus on control and security, which was especially evident within the macro-level application of the proposal. This could for example be detected in the focus placed on strengthening border controls, enhancing security measures and screenings and preventing irregular movements, which were all central in the new framework. These proposed amendments followed a rationale of maintaining order and control over the procedure, while preventing potential security threats in partaking in possible uncontrolled movements throughout the Union, by containing them in the first country of entry, ultimately maintaining status quo.

Restrictive and security-oriented approaches were less measurable within the substantive political agenda focusing on the micro-level application of the Regulation, and the rights and protection granted to the individual. However, these points did experience a shift in approach, with the Parliament making rights and safeguards contingent upon compliance to a system, rather than a general right. This overall proposal could thus be labeled to have adopted a defensive solidarity approach, since it was generally characterized by a securitizing rhetoric, that placed the humanitarian aspects secondary to the issues relating to security and control, and contingent upon compliance.

As the Wikström Report was produced in a conflicted environment, at a time without a clear political consensus, shaped by very vocal political divides, it is difficult to fully prove which variables that has most significantly shaped the proposal. However, what can be argued is that the media has shaped the way migration is discussed within the plenary to a certain degree. Whether this has an impact on the voting behavior and conviction of the individual MEP, is difficult to comprehensively address, without further analysis. It does however, remain evident that the security logic became more significant in the Dublin IV amendments, and although correlation should not be confused with causation, it is within the realm of possibility to argue that the media framing relating to migration, which has been inferred to impact the way the MEPs discuss migration, has influenced what the individual MEP would be prepared to accept from the Dublin proposal, after two years of being exposed to an ever-increasing Securitization frame. This marked increase in the use of the Securitization frame has normalized the idea of migration as a crisis or security issue, which could have made the MEPs, and especially MEPs from center-wing political groups, more open to accept stronger control-oriented measures. These final findings can thus be used to infer that the framing had the strongest impact on the macro-level application of the Regulation and the position of the center-wing MEPs.

The amendments presented in the Wikström Report reflect the idea that the overall phenomenon of migration can become an illegal act, and migrants a crisis, with causal effects for the safety of the Union. The MEPs would have been more open to accept such amendments, when continuously faced by securitized framing, which shifts the logic of migration towards the idea of security concerns, opening the debates and policy responses to a more security-oriented

interpretation, which is driven by exceptionality in the face of crisis, rather than accepting and approaching migration as a part of human history. The increase in the Securitization frame and ultimate frame consonance, could thus have produced a moment of exception, discursively creating a picture of a normalized governance, where migrants' deservingness can be contingent upon the idea of compliance to a legal system. This proposal actually presented a larger shift towards a shrinking space for asylum, where both the Commission, and subsequently the Parliament, sought to develop various practices to control the movement of the applicants through institutionalized deterrence procedures, while still seeking to protect the individual's general rights, to uphold the appearance of a liberal and welcoming system within the larger soft law practices.

In sum, the final findings infer that the media pressure cannot simply produce or impact policies, as they are part of a larger policy dynamic, with multiple factors that must be included to thoroughly conclude what variables impact policymaking, and to what extent. However, on the basis of these findings, no one can contest that the media is highly influential, with an inevitable impact, especially during uncertain times, such as during a perceived crisis, with high issue salience, although deeper and more complex dynamics, which are likely to interact with the media effects, must be involved when asserting a certain cause-and-effect relationship. Besides the quantity and quality of the media attention, it is difficult to separate this effect from outside factors such as changes in the political landscape, changes in the seat distribution within the Parliament, external events, migration trends and legal pressure. These are all variables which in different ways will impact the process of policy change, taking the conclusion beyond a linear notion of causality. So, although no assertive claim can be made, a pattern of influence across the different spheres can be inferred, and despite the fact that the qualitative analysis did not directly confirm that a restrictive approach prevailed over a liberal, it did prove that an overall shift in frame was measurable within this policy development.

9.3 Framing Migration as Crisis and its Impact

This research has strived to challenge conventional ideas relating to the relationship between policy developments and the media, by investigating the impact of the media on EU policymaking processes, or more specifically the Dublin Regulation recast. In doing so, this

thesis has proposed new ways in which we should understand the media's role within the political sphere, especially in times of perceived crisis, which has been theorized by uncovering the inherent connections between the media framing and the framing used by the MEPs in the Parliamentary debates. These connections have been illustrated within the analysis and discussion chapters, guided by three research questions, designed to test the hypothesis that *"The media's framing of migration has impacted the reform process of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), leading to policy outcomes that did not promote a coherent long-term migration strategy within the European Union during the so-called 'refugee crisis'."*

Between 2013 and 2017, the media followed a framing curve, that was characterized by temporal frame variations, that moved from a frame diversification in the early stages of the issue-attention cycle, where humanitarian and empathetic frames had a significant presence, while no substantial hegemonic frame was measured. The frames at this stage were found to often be event driven, either by single or chain events. As the issue-attention cycle progressed, and the alarmed discovery phase reached its peak in September of 2015, a more hostile and suspicious frame became dominant. These shifts were markedly influenced by single events, such as the drowning of Alan Kurdi in September 2015, and the terrorist attacks in Paris in November 2015. This also marked the time, where a frame consonance was reached, and the Securitization frame became the hegemonic frame both within traditional media, social media and eventually in the Parliamentary debates. Although this part of the analysis proved that no larger changes in the overall hegemonic frame took place throughout the period of research, temporal measurable changes were present. These findings allowed this research to conclude that September 2015 marked a turning point in the so-called "refugee crisis", changing how migration was discussed. At this time, a normalization of the Threat and Securitization frames took place, especially within the media, which steered the overall debate away from the normative core of the asylum and refugee concepts, towards the idea that Europe had to be protected against the "floods" of migrants arriving at its borders, creating an apparent crisis that needed to be dealt with politically.

Through statistical measurements, this media framing was demonstrated to have impacted the framing and sentiment used by the MEPs within the plenary debates. This confirmed that a frame

was 23 percentage points more likely to be adopted by an MEP, if it had been presented within the traditional media in the preceding month. This was also the case for tweets, although at 14 percentage point likelihood. This led to the conclusion that the MEPs were significantly affected by the framing they encountered, when they consumed news coverage relating to migration between 2013 and 2017. The media thus have the possibility of slowly altering the way migration is discussed, and not only within the media itself, but also within the political sphere. These findings confirm that the media is a key player in setting the way migration is discussed, while also solidifying the connection between the media and the politicians.

These findings do not prove nor disprove the agenda-setting theory, they do however make it possible to conclude that the media has a statistically significant role within the frame making process, confirming that the symbolic political agenda, in the form of the Parliamentary debates at plenary, are susceptible to the media cues. Naturally, the role of the media is not concluded to be all determining, but they do lead the framing formation process, in both a measurable and significant way. This thus demonstrates the importance of the mass media within a mediatized society, in affecting and shaping the way an issue is discussed. Although this impact is not equal in size across all master frames, the traditional media does have a stronger frame making effect than the other variables, and most significantly within the hegemonic frame of securitization.

When testing whether this framing effect also impacted the substantive political agenda, it quickly became apparent that the effects on the policy deliveries were not a linear process, but rather a complex causal interaction, with multiple contingencies, and that a linear notion of causality would not suffice in answering this complex hypothesis. Demonstrating a causal link between the media attention and policy developments required a multifaceted research approach, with a combination of strategies, to build a strong evidence-based case. This firstly included the conduction of a quantitative content analysis of all articles, tweets and debates published during the period of research, as presented in the first part of the analysis, tracking the changes in the media tone, intensity and framing. This allowed the analysis to track the frame changes and consonance within the media, comparing these to corresponding key moments in the policy debates, and the draft proposals. This process compared the language within the policy documents, to assess how this changed over time, while also drawing on the findings from the

framing and statistical regression analysis. This was ultimately applied to assess the relationship between the media and policy sentiments, more specifically in relation to the Dublin IV recast process, and its changes from the Dublin III Regulation. Thus, while it is challenging to isolate direct media influence from other factors such as political, social or economic, a combination of these research methods has contributed to building a robust methodology for investigating how the media has influenced this procedure. Although the evidence is correlational in nature, multiple strands of evidence suggest and strengthen the argument that the media framing played a role in shaping the proposal's more control and security-oriented features.

The Securitization frame consonance, which was determined to have begun within the media around November 2015, subsequently occurred within the MEPs argumentation structure in early 2016. One measurable tendency within the debates was the shift towards the general normalization of the use of securitizing language, at the end of the issue-attention cycle. This demonstrated a shift towards a more general common argumentative framing process rooted in securitized language, moving the use of such framing from being the preferred framing by a vocal minority, to become a normalized practice across the political spectrum. This was especially apparent for the center and right-wing MEPs, who appears to have been most affected by the growing Securitization framing. However, although the left-leaning MEPs continued to champion a more humanitarian approach, their choice of framing was impacted, albeit more subtlety. This was measurable in the way migration was described, with the normalization of especially the crisis, flooding or problem frames, although the adaptation of such language did not appear to have impacted the way the parties voted. Thus, as the intensification of the Securitization frame could be measured both quantitatively and qualitatively within the debates, it is possible to conclude that the Dublin Regulation debates between 2013 and 2017 became securitized.

This normalization meant that the Securitization frames were used, irrespective of what was being debated, or with what purpose, whether these frames were adopted consciously or subconsciously. MEPs arguing for more protection of migrants were found to also discuss migration as problems or a crisis, which suggested that a full frame consonance was reached within the debates. This meant that, when the debates reached their final stages in late 2017, the

Dublin discussions heavily relied on framing relating to security concerns, border controls, and viewing the act of migrating as crisis or crime.

This trend was also reflected within the Regulations, and the Dublin III Regulation could be seen as part of a broader trend of securitizing migration in the EU, while simultaneously attempting to address some of the humanitarian critiques of its predecessor. The Dublin IV proposal, or more specifically the Wikström Report continued this trend of following a more securitized approach, by introducing stricter measures than its predecessor, while attempting to carve a balance of accountability, by introducing new safeguards and protection measures for the rights of the individual as well. The approach of the agreed Dublin IV proposal, as presented by the Wikström Report, reflected a more control-oriented approach, driven by political motives, with tighter measures for verifying claims and preventing abuse. This analysis thus concludes that the Report placed a stronger focus on control of the perceived "crisis" rather than proposing long-term solutions, which in this authors opinion should favor solidarity and protection over security.

Through the compromises reached within the Parliament, the Dublin IV proposal attempted to navigate the intricacies of EU law, by focusing on migration control and border security, while still striving to safeguard the rights of the individual asylum seeker, thus highlighting a tension between the two approaches at macro and micro level. The Dublin IV proposal was found to prioritize control over humanitarian aspects, in an attempt to streamline a migration system, and ensure orderly border management, despite criticism for potentially compromising protection rights, appearing to shift the balance of the EU asylum system towards greater control and security. Furthermore, although it was presented as a proposal with seemingly larger changes to the structure, in reality it was designed to keep the system close to its original design. Therefore, the overall shift of the proposal, and more explicitly the accompanying political rhetoric indicate that it became more securitized than its predecessor. The emphasis on stricter criteria, enhanced biometric and data-sharing measures, and a focus on preventing system abuse all contributed to a perception and a reality that the recast proposal was primarily structured to safeguard Member States' interests and manage migration flows, sometimes at the expense of a balanced approach to protection.

Although the media is just one piece of a multi-faceted decision-making puzzle, the qualitative comparative analysis suggests that the securitized media coverage preceded the normalization of a securitized discourse within the Parliamentary debates, to some extend suggesting that, amongst other factors, it helped shape a more control and security-oriented approach to the Dublin IV Proposal. With the heightened media focus, media salience, and increasingly negative narrative, the media has inevitably impacted the notion of crisis, and solidified the concept of migration as crisis, creating an idea that migration required immediate actions, through robust control measures. This environment would inevitably have created an impetus for policy proposals that would prioritize control and deterrence, rather than a balanced humanitarian approach, with longer-term goals, relating to solidarity and responsibility sharing. These are points that appear to have been downplayed within the final proposal, due to the MEPs being unable to agree upon such measures, thus instead agreeing on a compromise, closely resembling the idea of the lowest common denominator.

While the securitized media coverage did contribute to a change in MEP framing, it is expected to be one of several factors. One other factor, which is suspected to have had a large impact is the political landscape at the time of research, as it saw a drastic turn towards a populist and far-right approach, which inevitably impacted the political shift in several ways. This research took place in a time, where EU policymaking witnessed significant changes, at the back of a string of crisis, which increased both the politicization of the EU as a whole, which resulted in a rising Euroscepticism, but also an increase in populist nationalist parities and xenophobic tendencies within the Member States. This politicization process put the EU actors under considerable pressure, inter alia due to the increased public scrutiny, which could also be measured in the increase of populist MEPs joining the Parliament in the 8th session following the European Parliament elections in 2014.

Although it is clear, that the media influence is part of a broader and more complex set of drivers, including migration movements and political pressures from Member States, that collectively contributed to the proposal's orientation, the securitized media attention does appear to have impacted, firstly the framing of migration, and subsequently the political acceptability of the changes presented in the Dublin IV recast proposal. By amplifying security concerns and

fueling public and political demand for tighter controls, the media environment has helped shape an approach that moved towards more control and deterrence, rather than a balanced framework. The Wikström Report sought to regain the perceived loss of control, which was brought on by the onset of the so-called "refugee crisis". However, what it failed to do was to re-work the cornerstone of the CEAS and move away from the main issues this system was facing, by still relying on some of its inherent difficulties. Rather than providing a proposal for a Dublin system, which had longer-term goals of a more integrated approach to the European migration system, it responded to the perceived immediate challenges of securing the borders, gaining control of secondary movements and compliance. Although the Parliamentary proposal did reflect a smaller shift in approach, when compared to the original proposal presented by the Commission, it still maintained a shift towards control-oriented amendments which continuously emphasized the feeling of a need to regain control, while the liberal amendments were made contingent on adequate compliance from both the Member States and the asylum applicants.

This three-part analysis has thus made it possible to conclude that the media impacts the way migration is discussed in the political sphere and that this impact is partially measurable within the substantive political agendas, or more specifically in this case, the recast processes of the Dublin Regulation between 2013 and 2017. It thus concludes that the media discourse has the potential to both directly and indirectly shape the political decision-making processes in relation to migration governance within the EU. Although correlation should not be confused with causation, one should not negate the role of the media. The way an issue is discussed, especially over a long period of time, will inevitably shape what the public and the politicians are prepared to accept as means to solve an apparent crisis. Thus, by influencing the way migration was discussed by the MEPs over time, the media has to some extent impacted the political outputs. It has normalized the idea of migration as crisis, and migrants themselves as security issues, which has made, especially MEPs from the center-wing political groups, more open to accept control-oriented measures. Without this shift, right-wing parties would not have had the numbers to have pushed for significant change, despite their increase after the 2014 elections.

The findings of this thesis thus conclude that although media pressure cannot simply produce or impact policies and can thus not be a robust explanation of the policy dynamics alone, the

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findings prove that the media is highly influential, with an inevitable impact, especially during uncertain times of perceived crisis. The Wikström Report opened new venues for securitization, continuously connecting the movement of people with security issues, creating policies and practices that were legitimized through framing. The proposed changes would have been made more acceptable through the continuous use of securitized framing over a longer period of time, which shifted the logic of the humanitarian act of seeking protection towards a logic of risk, uncertainty and security concerns. This so-called "crisis" thus created a moment of exception, discursively painting a picture of a normalized governance, where migrants' deservingness was made contingent upon the idea of compliance to a legal system. This also presented a larger shift towards a shrinking space for asylum, where the MEPs sought to develop practices to control the movements of applicants, through a number of institutionalized deterrence procedures, while still seeking to protect the individual's general rights, prescribed by the 1951 Convention, and International Human Rights law, for which all European Member States are signatories.

This author is of the belief, that one of the main challenges the EU migration regime faces, is the general discourse surrounding migration, which has long been contentious, both politically and in the media, presenting competing descriptions of a realist frame relating to the internal security of the Union, competing with a liberal frame of humanitarianism, as described by Lavenex, already in 2001. The normalization of the use of the crisis concept, which is highly ideological, has only reinforced the securitized view of migration, and this has been created in an interaction between the media, the public and the politicians, by collectively acknowledging and accepting these movements as a crisis. This frame has thus developed in parallel between the objectivist approach of measurable exceptional migratory movements, outside the realm of normal developments, and the constructivist approach of framing the movements as a threat to the political and societal structures (Lindley, 2014). The idea of migrants as a security issue, thus quickly evolved to become a threat to European cohecency, and as a tool for the European political sphere in an attempt to recapture perceived control, drawing on securitizing language to justify extraordinary measures, which has become deeply embedded in the EU approach to migration. This approach presented a dual nature to this "crisis", embedded in the idea of protecting and governing the European sovereign borders, and protecting the people on the move, which has challenged the political strategies introduced during the period of research. This

thesis has thus exemplified that it is possible that this normalization of the state of exception has facilitated passive strategies, maintaining the status quo, while the EU policies remain caught in a continuous crisis production.

Furthermore, as our society becomes more digitalized, the mediated reality becomes as important as the actual reality, and the impact of the media will only increase in the future, be it through traditional or social media. This study thus emphasizes the power of the media, and how it plays a crucial role in shaping the knowledge of migration, how migrants are discussed and perceived. It has further demonstrated the complexity of migration framing, with migration often being discussed and framed using binary terms, i.e. crisis vs. humanitarian responsibility, with the media contributing or shaping this polarized debate, which could have fueled xenophobia and populism. This study further argues that such framing impacts policy debates, and to some degree the policy responses. The media is thus not simply a passive reflection of reality, but rather an active force in shaping political framing. This study thus calls attention to the need for responsible media practices, which should go beyond the idea of sensationalism, advocating for a more nuanced approach to the discussion of migration. It also raises concerns relating to the disconnect between actual migration structures and the realities of EU policymaking. An understanding of these dynamics would lead to a more informed and realistic policy process for migration. By contributing to a better understanding of how the media has framed migration, and ultimately how these frames have impacted the policymaking process, this study aspires to contribute, not only to academic literature, but also to policy discussions and awareness. Migration debates should always be grounded in facts and solidarity, instead of control and security, calling for a more informed and inclusive approach to migration management, which should reflect the inherent complexities of migration, both within the EU and beyond.

9.3.1 An EU "Refugee Crisis" or a "Crisis of Will" – a Brief Discussion on Contemporary Developments

Contrary to the statement made in the introductory chapter, relating to the current EU asylum system not being prepared for similar challenges in the future, the EU and its Member States showcased notable differences in terms of policies, media and public sentiment, as well as logistical arrangements, when approaching the arrival of Ukrainian refugees in 2022. These

differences warrant a discussion. Where the 2015 "refugee crisis" primarily involved refugees from the Middle East and Africa, fleeing war, persecution and poverty, the Ukraine "refugee crisis", which began in 2022, and is still ongoing to this day, stems from the Russian invasion of Ukraine, resulting in a large exodus of refugees, far exceeding the number of arrivals experienced in 2015. These two refugee "crises" were handled significantly different in many aspects, including through legal and policy frameworks. This was for example evident, in the many legal reforms taking place between 2015 and 2017, where implementations most often focused on curbing irregular migration. In contrast, the Ukraine "refugee crisis" was quickly approached by activating the Temporary Protection Directive, for the first time in EU history since its introduction in 2001, which has granted Ukrainian refugees' immediate access to residence permits, work, education and healthcare across the EU, without lengthy asylum procedures. During this time, Member States demonstrated an unprecedented level of cooperation and solidarity in accommodating Ukrainian refugees, in a process that was supported by EU wide coordination.

In general, the two "crises" saw significantly different public and political responses. In 2015, the public opinion was deeply divided, as also exemplified in the findings of the frame dissonance in the beginning of the researched period within the media, which included significant empathy, but also a rise in xenophobia and far-right populist movements opposing migration, where countries such as, for example, Hungary and Poland adopted hardline anti-migrant policies, through, inter alia, the building of fences and by refusing to accept any mandatory quotas. However, during 2022, these countries adopted a completely different approach, and the political opposition to hosting refugees was minimal. At this time, a widespread public sympathy also became the hegemonic frame, discussing Ukrainian refugees as neighbors and victims of aggression, often linking this to the shared European cultural and historical ties.

How differently these two similar "crises" were handled, has thus highlighted discrepancies in the treatment of refugees, appearing to be based on country of origin, ethnicity or even religion, which could spark criticism of double standards. The EU's response to the Ukrainian "crisis" was far more cohesive and rapid, when compared to the fragmented approach in 2015, which exposed

deep divisions. It showcased, how the EU Member States can handle a "refugee crisis" with greater solidarity, which raised ethical questions about the EU's approach to refugees previously, underscoring the importance of political will and the media and public sentiment in shaping migration responses and policies. The overall perception of the cause of migration matters greatly, which is nowhere more evident than when comparing these two cases. The Ukrainian refugees were fleeing a clear and identifiable threat, which was Russia's unprovoked military attacks, and the war was quickly and widely recognized as an existential struggle for democracy, and an attack on European values. This narrative, aligned with the contemporary political stances within the Union, thus making it easier for Member States to rally support and justify their responses. The causes for the 2015 "crisis" however, were more complex, which involved both wars, instability and economic hardship across multiple regions. These complex causes made it more difficult to align a narrative, and many in Europe began questioning whether these movements were legitimate, which was only amplified when key actors such as the media and political figures began painting these migratory movements as potential threats to European security and in general as a crisis. Media coverage relating to the Ukrainian refugees largely emphasized their victimhood and resilience, as innocent victims escaping an unjust war, and the portrayal of the Ukrainians as the EU's neighbors only solidified this approach, making their plight relatable to the larger public, whereas the 2015 "refugee crisis" was often portrayed using frames of crisis, discussing the migrants as threats or using language of invasion, as exemplified by this research. This made the influx of refugees a polarizing political issue, exploited by the far-right populist parties, to stoke fears about migration in general.

Thus, in contrast to the initial statement, the EU actually appears to have been better prepared for similar challenges in the future, and it would appear that lessons learned from 2015 have impacted the way the EU dealt with similar refugee movements. However, although this may have been the case in 2022, it is not this authors belief, that a similar "refugee crisis" as the one experienced in 2015, would receive the same response as the arrival of the Ukrainian refugees in 2022. What this response instead highlighted is the implicit biases and double standards in the EU's treatment of refugees, based on inter alia countries of origin and reasons for fleeing. These disparities have been criticized, as reflecting systemic racism and a failure to uphold the universal principles of human rights, made contingent upon a number of external factors. The

contrasting responses to the two crises reveal how cultural proximity, political contexts, media framing, and institutional readiness can shape migration policies. While the EU's approach to the Ukrainian "crisis" demonstrated greater solidarity and coordination, the differences also underscore the need for more consistent and equitable treatment of all refugees, regardless of their countries of origin. It would thus be extremely interesting to further research, and compare, how the two "crises" were discussed in the media, with what impact, and comparing the political outputs.

Another area, which is experiencing similar shifts as in 2015, is the political climate, in which we are currently experiencing another shift towards right-wing and populist policy preferences, such as the one experienced in 2014. When studying the topic of migration, it is crucial to understand that it moves quickly, through constant developments, both in response to current migratory movements, and the political approaches to migration, depending on the political climate. Especially countries in Europe and North America in general have experienced a rise in right-wing or nationalist populist parties over the past decade, which often emphasize stricter migration controls, focus on national identities and skepticism about globalization. This has for example become evident in European integration, where certain EU countries have experienced political developments that have increased support for parties that are critical towards the European project, and multicultural policies. These political leanings are often cyclical, and events such as economic recessions, pandemics or security threats can lead to temporary shifts in political attitudes, that may favor more conservative or nationalist policies, with the public seeking stability. Geopolitical instability, migration and the media are all deeply interconnected, with each influencing the others in complex ways.

Within this climate, migration can be one of several factors influencing these political shifts, with rapid or large-scale migration sometimes leading to debates relating to national identity, culture and social cohesion, which are concerns that right-wing parties often use to mobilize support, as issue owners. This often includes arguments for stricter migration controls, as ways to preserve cultural traditions, while ensuring social stability. Other areas where these parties tend to connect issues with migration are inter alia through economic anxieties, for example the use of fears over job security and pressure on public services. Specific events, such as the so-called

"refugee crisis" in 2015, have been associated with a surge in support for parties that campaign for restrictive migration policies. Events such as this often serve as a catalyst for broader debates about national security and identity, thus making both migration and the media an increasingly important area of study today, for a variety of interconnected reasons, most importantly, to inform a nuanced and balanced policy development process.

9.4 Contributions to the Field

This research has addressed the impact of framing on EU migration governance processes during times of high media salience and perceived crisis, which are areas that to some extend has eluded previous research, especially in relation to the impact on the substantial political agendas. The conclusions drawn from this study can contribute to the overall understanding of the media's impact within the political sphere, while both proving and challenging previous findings in the area, inter alia in relation to the media's impact on the individual politician, and by revealing that the media, in a larger degree than previously expected, leads the framing formation process when discussing migration.

This innovative approach to the role of the media within migration governance has produced new insights into the media's direct influence on the policy debates, whereas the existing literature on the topic, has often limited the focus to how the media has framed migration during the so-called "refugee crisis", with less attention paid to the direct influence on the policy outcomes during this period. Thus, by approaching this topic, the research has contributed novel insights into the direct and indirect power of the media in shaping EU migration policies, through an original interdisciplinary perspective, proving how the media framing does not only reflect or impact public opinion, but rather has an active political role, both in shaping the political debates, but also within the final decision-making process, leading to new understandings of the interconnections between the media narratives and the political processes within the EU.

Furthermore, by including both traditional and social media, this study has offered insights into how these platforms diverge and converge in their portrayal of migration, and with what impact. This comparative analysis has thus helped to clarify the evolving role of digital platforms, within political discourse, for example by introducing original findings that traditional media, more so

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than the other way around, set the framing relating to migration, thus proving that social media does not act independently in shaping the discourse, or influencing the political discussions. This discussion was further elevated through a comparative analysis that included cross-national narratives, by exploring pan European and international newspapers, which allowed this study to uncover the differences in migration framing across national boundaries, making this analysis more issue specific to the hypothesis at hand, than when compared to previous similar studies. This comparative approach thus provides new knowledge on the dynamics of migration reporting.

This research has thus contributed to the reconceptualization of the media's power in shaping EU migration governance and provided a new understanding of the social media's role within this process. Although previous research has often proclaimed that traditional and social media platforms have the power to shape political discourse, their precise impact on formal political debates, like those taking place within the European Parliament, are under-researched. By focusing on the two media sources during a highly charged period of European migration politics, this study has contributed with findings of how these variables have influenced the political discussions, and to the overall political process surrounding the Dublin Regulations recast procedures. This has highlighted new, non-institutional pathways of political influence, which has contributed to shaping EU policies in ways that have previously been overlooked within political science literature. Through reconceptualizing the media's power in shaping EU migration governance, this study has brought the discussion beyond framing, to reveal the media as a political actor. The findings can thus challenge a more traditional view of the media as a passive conduit, by revealing how the media, particularly through their frame making process, actively shape the debates within the Parliament. This confirms the media as more than just a tool for conveying information, but as an actor with direct influence within the EU political agenda, policy formulation and political discourse. This more nuanced understanding of the media's power within political processes, could enrich not only media studies but also political science, offering a new framework for analyzing the EU governance processes within a media-saturated environment, as the one we are living in today.

This research has also contributed to new dimensions within debates relating to the Dublin system, where existing studies on the Dublin Regulation has often focused on the legal and institutional dimensions, this study has offered a contribution showing how the media framing have reframed or redefined the way the Dublin Regulation was discussed within the Parliament, and how the shifts in media framing, could have contributed to the more securitized shift in discussions relating to the Dublin system. Secondly, this research has complemented the existing migration literature focusing on the Dublin system, by placing its focus on the early stages of the policymaking process, rather than the implementation, by exploring how migration policies concretely unfold, and how the actions between the venues at multiple levels have influenced this process. Furthermore, in contrast to previous studies, this research has focused specifically on the context decisions and immediate outputs, rather than the outcomes of the political process, from an analytical and methodological point of view, opening a "black box" within migration governance processes, revealing the variables influencing these.

This study has thus offered a new lens for understanding the power dynamics between the media and political institutions, which has brought forth new approaches that has helped provide a more thorough understanding of the impact the media can have, when framing a sensitive topic such as migration, especially during times of perceived crisis. This has offered a more nuanced, sociopolitical contribution to understanding how migration policies are shaped, with a critical perspective on how media framing can influence these structures. By integrating both media studies, political science and migration governance, this research offers new insights into the direct links between media framing and policy debates and outcomes, the evolving role of social media in political mobilization and a comparative analysis of media influences across different contexts. It has also deepened the already existing understanding of how media framing can help or hinder the shaping of EU policies, and how it can redefine migration as a crisis or political issue, proving the importance of a media narrative. This should encourage actors to provide an informed and pragmatic portrayal of migration, to foster a more productive discourse around the topic in the future.

This process has established that the media, be it traditional or social, has a strategic and independent role, and should be factored into any analysis accordingly, as an active participant in

the construction of migrants as possible security threats, or migration as crisis. Lessons learned, following the research, confirm that the media should employ caution when developing the framing relating to migration, by demonstrating the possible impact this framing can have on the larger political landscape. It thus remains vital that the media fosters a balanced framing approach, providing informed coverage, due to the rhetorical mechanisms that could have broader implications. We live in an era of proliferating "fake news" and the use of information warfare, especially on social media, and policymakers should pay attention to and cultivate a strategy to avoid letting framing tactics be effectively weaponized. This thesis thus reinforces conclusions from extant framing scholarship, that the quantity and quality of coverage of a particular frame, can have significant impacts on attitudes towards migration, with the securitizing rhetoric having at least short-term effects, supporting an idea, of viewing the media as the fourth branch of government within the EU, and possibly beyond.

9.5 Limitations

In conducting this study, several limitations should be acknowledged to provide a nuanced and critical understanding of the findings. These limitations reflect inter alia the challenges inherent within a media analysis, the specific political context and methodological considerations. As previously mentioned, it is instrumental in any study to recognize the limitations of the research design, and like other studies, this thesis has a number of limitations, which have been highlighted throughout the respective chapters, where relevant for the methodology. This discussion of the limitations will thus not go into the specific details of the limitations presented in each relevant chapter but rather discuss the overarching limitation within the research design.

This analysis has provided valuable insights into the role of media framing in shaping the EU migration policy process, however, it is crucial to also acknowledge that isolating direct causality within this particular approach, is inherently difficult, due to a multitude of factors, which can influence decision-making, especially within a complex political system such as the European Union. The hypothesis has thus been tested with caution, while recognizing the limitations within this methodology, and the need to account for other contextual factors, that may also influence the policy outcomes. It is inherently difficult to separate causality and correlation, when discussing media influence. Measuring impact and quantifying influence is a challenge,

which is further complicated by the qualitative nature of both media narratives and policymaking processes. Numerous factors, such as political pressure, lobbying, economic conditions and international events will all be part of the larger process of changing European migration policies, and without including all possible variables, it will be impossible to provide a strong causality. Policies may evolve over time in response to a mix of immediate and delayed influences, and determining the precise timing and lag between media coverage and policy shifts is complicated, while also the qualitative analysis is shaped by subjective interpretations, including the choice of media sources and time periods, which are all factors that will introduce a bias, which could potentially affect the study's outcome. This is especially the case when studying the European Parliament, which is a dual political environment where MEPs are exposed to both Eurocentric news, as well as national.

Furthermore, demonstrating what would have occurred, in the absence of certain media frames is impossible, which makes it hard to assess the unique contribution of media framing to policy outcomes. However, what this study has accomplished is to demonstrate correlations and propose theoretical linkages, through the methodological expansion, of a mix of quantitative and qualitative approaches, which has allowed for a more robust examination of the relationship between media framing and policy outcomes. This mixed-methods approach strengthens the theoretical linkages by showing that patterns observed in the data are supported by in-depth narrative evidence. Thus, although direct causality remains difficult to prove, due to the complexity of the policymaking processes, and the presence of confounding variables, these methods still enable this research to demonstrate robust correlations, while building a well-supported theoretical argumentation, linking the media framing to the changes within the EU migration policymaking process, or more specifically the Dublin Regulation recast process, although further qualitative work would be needed to definitively confirm causality.

This analysis has also been conducted, being aware of the important information that may be lost, due to both intercoder bias and the subjective opinion of the researcher. The analysis process was first and foremost shaped by the framing analysis, which provided the basis for the rest of the methodology. However, the process of identifying and analyzing these frames involves a degree of subjectivity, where different researchers may interpret media content in varied ways.

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While this study has used a systematic and transparent coding framework, which has been explicitly presented in the methodology chapter, it is impossible to fully eliminate researcher bias, or misinterpretation of content, especially in the context of the highly polarized issue of migration. The framing process has inevitably been shaped by the subjective positionality of the researcher, which has been shaped through experiences gathered from studies and professional experiences directly relating to migration, over the past decade.

Furthermore, this analysis has included a limited time frame, which would thus automatically limit the political context. This study has focused on the period between 2013 and 2017, which covered the peak of the so-called "refugee crisis" and the subsequent debates relating to the Dublin Regulation. This was undoubtedly a critical period for the framing of migration, and the landscape for migration management in general, especially in Europe. However, since this covers only a five-year period, it may miss important framing shifts that could have occurred before or after this time frame, especially in relation to long-term policy change, or evolving political discourse on migration. In subsequent years, migration and migration framing more specifically has experienced a number of critical shifts, for example in relation to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on migration narratives, which are not accounted for in this analysis. Furthermore, several other critical shifts have been or are currently occurring, including the large number of Ukrainian refugees arriving in Europe after the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022. These critical shifts could have resulted in different conclusions and thus represent the importance of the timeframe chosen when conducting such research. Significant shifts in government and public opinion, including the rise of populist parties and changing leaderships in key Member States are all variables, which inevitably will impact the actual policy outcome, and will greatly differ, depending on when the analysis is conducted. These critical shifts would have influenced both the media framing, as well as the Parliamentary debates, and are avenues which could be interesting for subsequent research.

9.5.1 Recommendations for Future Research

This research has demonstrated framing as an important tool, to understand the dynamics within EU migration governance and policymaking. The findings could have significant and multifaceted impacts on several areas, including within academic scholarship, but also as

recommendations for media practice and policy process awareness. Through its illumination of how the media's framing can influence active policy debates, this research has the potential to inform policy developments, especially in regards to how migration is discussed, both within the media and in the political sphere. As the media effect and its role in shaping political framing has been established, the research has highlighted the possible consequences of the media narrative within the debating and drafting of significant migration laws. These findings could hopefully lead to a debate on a balanced and informed migration policy, that can account for the complexity of migration, encouraging the policymakers and civil society groups to engage within media framing strategies, to ensure a nuanced and informed migration debate. Understanding the role of the media could promote more informed policy reforms that are not swayed by sensationalist or polarized media coverage. This is especially the case in times of perceived crisis, where the media has the possibility of either helping or hindering effective solutions. It is thus this authors hope that insights from this study could inform future responses within similar "crises", ensuring that political decisions are made, based upon facts, rather than fear-based media narratives.

This research has also cemented the implications of media practices, reinforcing the importance of journalistic responsibility, thus highlighting the ethical obligation of journalists within the process of framing migration, hopefully spurring media outlets to adopt responsible journalistic practices, that will prioritize an accurate, nuanced and empathetic frame, over sensationalism and unwarranted negativity, through securitizing frames, thus recommending a balanced reporting, which could lead to a more informed opinion making process. Through its findings, this research has contributed to a greater awareness of the power of the media in shaping the perception of migration, and how we speak about migrants. This awareness could hopefully lead to a more critical consumption of the media, and a deeper understanding of how migration policies are developed, which should promote a deeper reflection on the approach to migration management. However, to better understand the implications of these results, future studies could address some of the limitations inherent in the methodology of this analysis, including approaching a broader set of contextual factors, that may also influence the policy outcomes. Further research is needed in determining the cause-and-effect relationship between the multitude of factors that could influence decision-making processes beyond that of the media. This would include going beyond

the macro properties, to specify further links across the numerous variables, within the environment in which the MEPs operate.

The contributions of this research, notwithstanding its limitations, could further guide and be addressed within future research. Firstly, a key limitation relates to the assumption of causality, for which further qualitative work would be needed, in which the media cannot be the only variable, to firmly confirm any causality, rather than correlation. Future research could thus explore the ways in which this model can be applied, to further understand political behavior. This could inter alia include an estimation through a vector autoregressive model, that would link current and lagged measures of political framing to news content and public opinion, to determine whether there are any statistically significant directions of influence, which should include more variables than this research. Within the current methodology, this approach was not possible, due to the choice of excluding public opinion data when building the time-series data set, but future research may consider other proxy data in a similar approach, which could produce valuable insights into the distribution of impact across the different spheres.

Furthermore, future research should delve further into the qualitative aspects of the research, observing the MEPs, going beyond the notion of mere passive recipients of information, approaching them instead as subjective and active interpreters, taking part in the framing, through cognitive processes, in order to provide more robust explanations about the links between policy outcomes, and the context in which they are produced. This would require a move beyond this specific thesis design, qualitatively investigating the MEPs actions and cognitive frames, adopting an actor-centered approach, which has gone beyond the scope of this methodology. This could considerably advance the knowledge within political and media studies, and the context in which policies are produced. This would require employing a more comprehensive qualitative methodology, which should include the consideration of the broader macro prosperities of the policy environment, as well as direct interviews with the policymakers. This could also include changing the geographical focus of the media outlets, instead asking *"How does media framing of migration in the home countries of the European Parliamentarians influence their positions on EU-wide migration policies?"* or *"What role does media framing of*

migration play in influencing European Parliamentarians' responses to political pressure from domestic media or public opinion on migration-related legislation?".

Another avenue which could yield interesting results would be to shift the focus to the increasing significance of social media platforms. Future research could specifically focus on the role of social media influencers, activists and movements within the framing process of the migration debates. One such question could be *"What role do influencers and online activists play in framing migration on social media platforms and how does this impact political mobilization and policy change?"*. This could provide a deeper and more contemporary exploration of social media's role within shaping the migration discourse, which has only continued to increase, since the beginning of this research in 2020. Another avenue, in which this approach could be applied, would be the investigation of the differences between the role of national and pan European media. This could inter alia include a comparative study of national media framing in key EU Member States, and how national and EU level decision-making was affected. This research could for example focus on countries with diverging stances on migration and explore how national media narratives could either reinforce or challenge the EU migration governance proposals, such as, for example, the Dublin Regulation. This could deepen the understanding of how media framing feeds into the different political movements, potentially leading to shifts in policies, both nationally and Union wide. This author would suggest approaching this within a case study methodology and could investigate the following research question *"How does the portrayal of a migration 'crisis' in Country A and Country B affect their governments' stance on EU-wide migration quotas or burden-sharing mechanisms?"*.

One contemporary area, in which the findings and conclusions of this research are particularly interesting, and where future research and discussions are warranted, is in relation to the differences between the 2015 "refugee crisis" and the arrival of Ukrainian refugees in 2022. The EU and its Member States showcased notable differences in terms of policies, media and public sentiment and logistical arrangements, despite the fact that the number of Ukrainian refugees significantly surpassed the number of asylum applications lodged within the 2015 "crisis". It would thus be extremely interesting to further research, and compare, how the two "crises" were discussed in the media, with what impact, and comparing the political outputs. This research

could focus both on the policy developments and practical responses on the ground, such as inter alia by asking *"How did the European Union's institutional responses to the 2015 'refugee crisis' differ from its response to the Ukrainian refugee crisis, and what do these differences reveal about EU migration and asylum policies?"*, or continue within the framework of this research by asking the question *"How did the media framing of the 2015 'refugee crisis' differ from that of the Ukrainian 'crisis' in the EU, and what impact did these differences have on political support for migration policies?"*, either choosing case studies of individual EU Member States, or continue within the Eurocentric focus. These questions could also seek to center more on how the geopolitical context of the two "crises" compared, and with what impact, or their effect on the political cohesion within the EU in general.

Rather than concluding this research with policy recommendations, this author believes that a discussion about the implications would be most useful. This analysis has exemplified that the conditions of uncertainty within a crisis can influence how we discuss an issue such as migration. The evidence produced by this research has been an excellent tool to exemplify how migration was discussed during times of perceived crisis, how these frames developed and the causes and effects. This research was built on a body of well-established literature and has led to the conclusion that the policymakers are influenced by the media's framing, despite the complexity of migration. This has thus shed light on the broader dynamics within the interaction between the media and policymakers, which has exemplified the importance of understanding the context in which policies are developed, as policy framing to some degree is a product of the media framing.

Insights from migration studies are critical for crafting policies that balance both security concerns but more importantly, humanitarian obligations, as effective policies can help support migration flows and improve overall outcomes. Migration is and will always be a global phenomenon, that will often require cooperation across borders. Research within this field can thus support the efforts to create a fair and humane system, as migration is not just about the movement of people, but rather an intersect between economic developments, social change, political dynamics, human rights and environmental challenges, which must all be reflected both in the portrayal of migrants, but also within the political developments. By encouraging further

studies on migration, researchers, policymakers and communities can better understand these complex processes and design effective interventions and a more resilient system, for an inclusive and dynamic society. It is thus crucial that the academic world maintains their focus on the topic, to hopefully help shape future policies and understandings of the migration phenomenon, in a world where it is needed more than ever.

In the end, we are all migrants – all with different paths, lengths and reasons for migrating, some far more tragic than others, but these policies shape the lives of all individuals seeking to migrate, irrespective of the reason for doing so, including this author, who for the past decade has been an economic migrant, and has always felt welcome in the receiving countries, and wish for everyone to have the same experience.

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APPENDIX A: FINDINGS FROM QUESTIONNAIRE (2021) FOR MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT – ONLINE MEDIA USE AND PREFERENCES

Q1. When reading online news, which of the following do you frequent most regularly? (Own research)

News sources	Number of answers	Percentage
International sources	29	39.73%
EU news sources	51	69.86%
National news sources	55	75.34%
Regional news sources	18	24.66%
Answered	73	
Skipped	0	
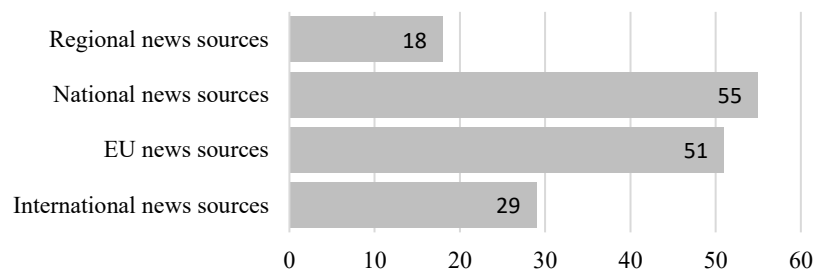
Q2. Which online news outlet do you read most regularly? (Own research)

News sources	Country of news outlet	Number of answers*
Politico INT/EU	EU	30
Financial Times	INT	18
Euractiv	EU	14
EU Observer	EU	7
The Guardian	UK	7
Sueddeutsche Zeitung	DE	6
Le Monde	FR	6
New York Times	US	6

The Economist	INT	5
Der Spiegel	DE	5
Der Tagesspiegel	DE	4
Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung	DE	4
Die Tageszeitung	DE	4
Público	PT	4
Expresso	PT	4
Euronews	EU	3
Le Soir	BE	3
Handelsblatt	DE	3
Politiken	DK	3
Berlingske	DK	3
DR	DK	3
Altinget	DK	3
Le Figaro	FR	3
Libération	FR	3
BBC	UK	3
De Tijd	BE	2
De Standaard	BE	2
Die Zeit	DE	2
Die Welt	DE	2
Deutsche Presse-Agentur (DPA)	DE	2
TV2	DK	2
BT	DK	2
Ekstra Bladet	DK	2
Jyllands Posten	DK	2
La Repubblica	IT	2
ANSA	IT	2
Wall Street Journal	US	2
Infomedia	N/A	2
Social media links	N/A	2
Reuters	INT	1
Washington Post	INT	1
Google News	INT	1

Jacobin	INT	1
MMC	INT	1
Bloomberg	INT	1
Reuters	INT	1
Brussels Times	EU	1
Brussels Morning	EU	1
ORF.at	AT	1
Le Libre	BE	1
L'Echo	BE	1
VRT	BE	1
De Morgen	BE	1
De Gentenaar	BE	1
Het Belang van Limburg	BE	1
Seznam Zpravy	CZ	1
ARD	DE	1
Tagesschau	DE	1
Der Norddeutsche Rundfunk (NDR)	DE	1
Westdeutscher Rundfunk (WDR)	DE	1
Deutschlandfunk	DE	1
Redaktions Netzwerk Deutschland (RND)	DE	1
SN.dk	DK	1
Jyskfynske medier	DK	1
Ritzau	DK	1
Information	DK	1
Policywatch	DK	1
El País	ES	1
Helsingin Sanomat	FI	1
YLE	FI	1
La Tribune	FR	1
France 24	FR	1
Contexte	FR	1
Ouest France	FR	1
Les Echos	FR	1
Irish Times	IR	1

Corriere della Sera	IT	1
AdnKronos	IT	1
Il Giornale	IT	1
Il Foglio	IT	1
Libero	IT	1
Delfi	LT	1
LRT	LT	1
Times of Malta	MT	1
NRC	NL	1
Volkskrant	NL	1
De Telegraaf	NL	1
Follow the Money	NL	1
Gazeta Wyborcza	PL	1
Diário de Notícias	PT	1
Spotmedia	RO	1
STA	SI	1
Dnevnik	SI	1
Večer	SI	1
Answered	48	
Skipped	25	

*Listed by number of answers, followed by countries in alphabetical order

Q3. How often do you read these news outlets? (Own research)

	Number of answers	**Percentage**
Daily	61	87.14%
A few times a week	9	12.86%
Once a week	0	0%
A few times a month	0	0%
Once a month	0	0%
Less than once a month	0	0%
Answered	70	
Skipped	3	

Q4. Which of these social media websites do you frequent most regularly? (Own research)

Social media channel	Number of answers	Percentage
Facebook	46	64.79%
Twitter	54	76.06%
Instagram	28	39.44%
Other (Please specify)*	8	11.27%
Answered	71	
Skipped	2	

*LinkedIn, Telegram and "Do not use social media for news"
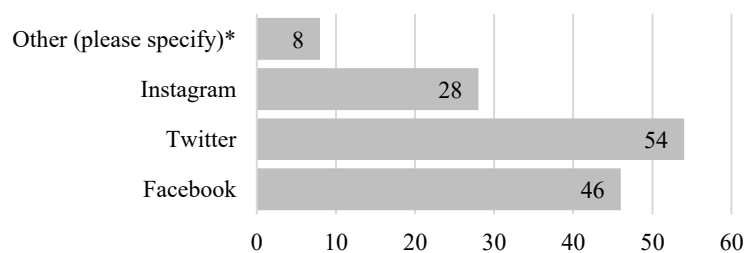
Q5. In your professional role, which is the most influential media source for EU news? (Own research)

News sources	Country of news outlet	Number of answers*
Politico	EU	24
Social Media (Twitter, Facebook)	N/A	9
Financial Times	INT	5
Cannot single out one specific sources	N/A	5
Euractiv	EU	3
EU Observer	EU	3
News agencies	N/A	3
The Economist	INT	2
Le Monde	FR	2

TV	N/A	1
Euronews	EU	1
EU focused news outlets	EU	1
Agence Europe	EU	1
Google News	INT	1
Reuters	INT	1
Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung	DE	1
Handelsblatt	DE	1
Major German publications	DE	1
Arte	FR	1
The Guardian	UK	1
Answered	47	
Skipped	26	

*Listed by number of answers, followed by countries in alphabetical order

APPENDIX B: THE NATURAL LANGUAGE TOOLKIT LIST OF STOP-WORDS

- a
- about
- above
- after
- again
- against
- ago
- ah
- all
- alongside
- also
- although
- am
- an
- and
- any
- anybody
- anyhow
- anymore
- anyone
- anyway
- anyways
- anywhere
- are
- as
- at
- be
- because
- been
- before
- beforehand
- being
- below
- between
- both
- but
- by
- can
- co
- co.
- com
- date
- de
- did
- do
- do
- does
- doing
- down
- during
- each
- ed
- etc
- example
- few
- for
- from
- further
- had
- has
- have
- having
- he
- her
- here
- here's
- hereafter
- hereby
- herein
- hereupon
- hers
- herself
- him
- himself
- his
- hither
- how
- however
- i
- if
- in
- into
- is
- it

- it'll
- it's
- its
- itself
- just
- let
- let's
- lets
- me
- meantime
- meanwhile
- might
- moreover
- most
- my
- myself
- notwithstanding
- now
- of
- off
- ok
- okay
- on
- once
- only
- or
- other
- otherwise
- our
- ours
- ourselves
- out
- over
- own
- same
- she
- should
- so
- some
- somebody
- someday
- somehow
- someone
- something
- sometime
- sometimes
- somewhat
- somewhere
- such
- than
- that
- the
- their
- theirs
- them
- themselves
- then
- there
- thereafter
- thereby
- therefore
- therein
- thereof
- thereto
- thereupon
- these
- they
- they're
- they've
- this
- those
- through
- thru
- thus
- to
- too
- under
- until
- up
- upon
- very
- was
- we
- we're
- we've
- were
- what
- what'll
- whatever
- when

- where
- whereafter
- whereas
- whereas
- whereby
- wherein
- whereupon
- wherever
- which
- whichever
- while
- whilst
- whither
- who
- whoever
- whom
- whomever
- whose
- why
- will
- with
- within
- you
- your
- yours
- yourself
- yourselves

APPENDIX C: CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS OF THE SO-CALLED "REFUGEE CRISIS" IN EUROPE (OWN RESEARCH)

Date	Event
03 July 2013	Mohamed Morsi is deposed as President of Egypt in a coup d'état by the military
21 August 2013	Ghouta chemical attacks in Syria leaves between 280 to 1,729 fatalities
03 October 2013	Over 360 people die in a shipwreck close to Lampedusa, Italian Coast Guard rescue 155 survivors
11 October 2013	At least 34 people drown following a second shipwreck 120 km from Lampedusa
18 October 2013	The Italian government launches "Operation Mare Nostrum" in an attempt to prevent more tragedies in the waters between Libya and Italy, described as a military and humanitarian operation aiming to "safeguard life at sea and combat human trafficking"
16 December 2013	The EU Commissioner for Home Affairs Cecilia Malmström signs a readmission agreement with Turkey
30 December 2013	The Iraqi Civil War officially begins
January 2014	A conflict between the Syrian opposition and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant begins
11 September 2014	A boat carrying more than 500 people sink off the coast of Malta, with only nine survivors rescued
14 September 2014	A boat with up to 250 people sinks near the coast of Libya, leaving more than 200 people dead
01 November 2014	EU mission Operation Triton replaces Operation Mare Nostrum, with far fewer resources
11 September 2014	A boat carrying more than 500 people sink off the coast of Malta, with only nine survivors rescued
14 September 2014	A boat with up to 250 people sinks near the coast of Libya, leaving more than 200 people dead
01 November 2014	EU mission Operation Triton replaces Operation Mare Nostrum, with far fewer resources
07 January 2015	Terrorist attack in Paris at Charlie Hebdo
09 February 2015	At least 300 migrants believed to have died after four inflatable boats sink close to Libya

12 April 2015	An estimated 400 people dies when a boat capsizes when crossing the Mediterranean from Libya to Italy
18 April 2015	Around 800 people die in another shipwreck in the Mediterranean, attempting to cross the sea to Italy
23 April 2015	The European Council holds an emergency meeting to discuss the "migrant crisis" and agrees to triple funding for rescue operations aimed at migrant boats (namely Operation Triton and Poseidon)
13 May 2015	The European Agenda on Migration is presented by the European Commission, introducing the Hotspot approach in frontline Member States, and proposes the relocation and resettlement quota scheme
22 June 2015	EUNavfor Med is launched
13 July 2015	Hungary begins to erect a razor-wire fence along its border with Serbia, which is completed and sealed on the 15 September 2015 (Žagar et al. 2018: 8)
20 July 2015	EU leaders agree to accept 32,256 refugees from Italy and Greece. This is almost 8,000 less than proposed by the Agenda on Migration by the European Commission
20-22 August 2015	Macedonia seals its border with Greece, and declares a state of emergency in order to cope with the influx of migrants (Žagar et al. 2018: 9)
25 August 2015	Germany announces that it will not enforce the Dublin procedures for Syrian citizens
27 August 2015	71 people are found dead in an unventilated food truck in Austria near Vienna
27 August 2015	200 migrants are believed to have drowned after two boats sink off the coast of Libya, while almost 200 others were rescued by the Libyan coastguard
31 August 2015	German Cancellor Angela Merkel declares "Wir schaffen das" (We can do this") in regards to the accommodation of the rising number of refugees arriving in Germany
September 2015	The slogan "Refugees Welcome" becomes a symbol for solidarity movements across Europe
02 September 2015	Pictures of three-year-old Alan Kurdi, drowned on the Turkish coast, after attempting to reach Greece from Turkey surfaces, creating a public sympathy for refugees (Žagar et al. 2018: 9)
09 September 2015	The European Commission presents the second implementation package, which includes the relocation of 120,000 refugees within the EU, bringing the total to 160,000

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13 September 2015	Germany introduces temporary border controls at its border with Austria (Žagar et al. 2018: 12)
14 September 2015	Austria introduces border controls at its border with Hungary, and deploys its army at the borders to help cope with the inflow of migrants (Žagar et al. 2018: 12)
15 September 2015	Hungary closes its border with Serbia, effectively closing the Balkan Route, turning the migration routes toward Croatia and Slovenia (Žagar et al. 2018: 12)
22 September 2015	The second implementation package is voted by a majority vote by the EU interior ministers. The Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia vote against the plan but are overruled (Žagar et al. 2018: 13)
07 October 2015	Operation Sophia, a new operation in the southern Mediterranean to intercept boats smuggling migrants, is launched (Žagar et al. 2018: 13)
16 October 2015	Hungary completes a fence along its border with Croatia
25 October 2015	The heads of 11 EU states and three Balkan states hold an emergency summit in Brussels on the Balkan route and to discuss the "refugee crisis", and a 17-point plan of cooperation is agreed (Žagar et al. 2018: 14)
10 November 2015	Germany announces it will begin enforcing the Dublin Regulation for new arrivals
11-12 November 2015	The Valletta Summit on Migration takes place
13 November 2015	Islamic State militants carry out a series of terrorist attacks in Paris, which kills 130 people, it was later claimed that the perpetrators have entered Europe through the flows of migrants and refugees (Žagar et al. 2018: 15)
24 November 2015	Sweden introduces temporary border checks
02 December 2015	Slovakia files a lawsuit at the European Court of Justice against the EU relocation plan (Žagar et al. 2018: 16)
03 December 2015	Hungary files a lawsuit at the European Court of Justice against the EU relocation plan (Žagar et al. 2018: 16)
07 December 2015	Austria begins erecting a wire fence at its border with Slovenia
15 December 2015	The European Commission put forward a package of proposals aiming at securing the EU's external borders, and proposes to establish the European Border and Coast Guard (Žagar et al. 2018: 17)
01 January 2016	During New Year's Eve celebrations several sexual assaults takes place mostly in Cologne, and the Chief Prosecutor states that the overwhelming majority of the suspects were asylum seekers and migrants from North Africa and the Middle

	East (Žagar et al. 2018: 18)
04 January 2016	Sweden introduces checks at its borders with Denmark
26 January 2016	The Danish Parliament passes a law allowing the government to seize valuables from asylum seekers to pay for their upkeep (Žagar et al. 2018: 18)
04 February 2016	Council president Donald Tusk join world leaders at a conference in London, announcing 3 billion euros of EU contribution to assist the Syrian people in 2016 (Žagar et al. 2018: 19)
11 February 2016	Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan threatens to send millions of refugees from Turkey to the EU unless Turkey is given more funds to host the refugees (Žagar et al. 2018: 19)
17 February 2016	Austria announces that it will set a daily cap on the number of asylum seekers allowed to enter the country (3,200) and limit daily asylum claims (80), while the EU says the cap on asylum claims would break EU and international law (Žagar et al. 2018: 20)
23 February 2016	Belgium introduces temporary controls at its borders with France, to prevent potential inflow of UK-bound migrants from the Calais camps (Žagar et al. 2018: 21)
29 February 2016	Clashes erupt in France, as authorities begin demolishing part of the "Calais Jungle" migrant camp (Žagar et al. 2018: 21)
04 March 2016	Balkan countries announce tighter restrictions on migrant entry in a bid to close the "Balkan route". Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, and Macedonia announce that only migrants who plan to seek asylum in the country, or those with clear humanitarian needs will be allowed entry and that those without the valid documents will be turned back (Žagar et al. 2018: 22)
18 March 2016	The EU-Turkey Statement is agreed, and from 20 March, irregular migrants arriving in Greece will be sent back to Turkey if they do not apply for asylum or their claim is rejected. Each Syrian sent back will be replaced with a Syrian refugee who will be resettled in the EU. (Žagar et al. 2018: 23)
22 March 2016	Brussels terrorist attacks kills 32
16 April 2016	Pope Francis takes 12 Syrian refugees back with him to Vatican City after visiting a camp on the Greek Island of Lesbos.
26 April 2016	Rioting breaks out at the Moria detention center on the Greek Island of Lesbos
04 May 2016	The European Commission proposes fining the Member States if they do not take their quota of asylum seekers (Žagar et al. 2018: 24)

23 June 2016	The UK holds a referendum on whether the country should leave the EU, and Brexit is voted through by 51.9%
13 July 2016	The Commission presents a second round of proposals to reform the common European Asylum System, and a proposal to create a Common EU resettlement framework (Žagar et al. 2018: 24)
19 September 2016	Riots and fire break out in Moria detention center in Greece
21 September 2016	A shipwreck off the Egyptian coast with around 600 refugees headed to Europe leaves over 200 people dead
06 October 2016	The European Border and Coast Guard Agency launches
04 November 2016	Over 340 migrants die as several boats capsize off the coast of Libya
19 December 2016	Rejected asylum seeker from Tunisia drives a truck into a Christmas market in Berlin, killing 12 people and injuring 56
February 2017	Italy strikes a controversial deal with Libya to stem migrant arrivals, training the Libyan coast guard to turn back vessels and return migrants to Libya
03 February 2017	At an informal EU summit, the EU leaders adopt the Malta Declaration, which focuses on stemming the flow of migrants along the Central Mediterranean route. In particular, the 28 EU heads of state agree to increase cooperation with Libya, where 90 per cent of migrants departed from in 2016 (Žagar et al. 2018: 25)
17 March 2017	Following tension between Turkey and several European countries in regards to the 2017 Turkish constitutional referendum, Turkish interior minister Süleyman Soylu threatened to send 15,000 refugees to the European Union every month while foreign minister Mevlut Cavusoglu also threatens to cancel the March 2016 EU-Turkey deal
24 March 2017	Over 200 migrants are feared to have died following two boats capsizing in the Mediterranean Sea
08 May 2017	80 migrants dies in the Mediterranean Sea trying to reach Italy from Libya
13 June 2017	The EU launches a formal "infringement procedure" against three of its Member States, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland, failing to comply with a 2015 agreement to harbor asylum-seekers (Žagar et al. 2018: 26)
28 August 2017	The Paris summit on migration takes place, between seven EU and African leaders (France, Germany, Spain, Italy, Niger, Chad and Libya), aiming at reducing the number of people undertaking the journey along the so-called central Mediterranean route (Žagar et al. 2018: 27)
06 September 2017	The European Court of Justice dismisses claims by Slovakia and Hungary

	regarding the EU relocation plan, finding that the EU was entitled to order national governments to take in quotas of mainly Syrian refugees relocating from Italy and Greece (Žagar et al. 2018: 27)
November 2017	CNN footage shows migrants being sold off at slave auctions in Libya, prompting outrage in Europe and Africa
20 December 2017	The Commission triggers Article 7 disciplinary proceedings against Poland for breach of EU values

APPENDIX D: NUMBER OF ARRIVALS TO EUROPE FROM 2013 TO 2017

Table D1: The number of arrivals to Europe 2013 to 2017 (detected border crossings)[8] (Eurostat, 2024)

Flags in the data:

ep: estimated, provisional

be: break in time series, estimated

b: break in time series

e: estimated

p: provisional

COUNTRY	2013		2014		2015		2016		2017	
Belgium	120,078		123,158		146,626		123,702		126,703	
Bulgaria	18,570		26,615	p	25,223	p	21,241	p	25,597	p
Czechia	30,124	b	29,897		29,602		64,083		51,847	
Denmark	60,312		68,388		78,492		74,383		68,579	
Germany	692,713	e	884,893	e	1,571,047	e	1,029,852	be	917,109	be
Estonia	4,109		3,904		15,413	be	14,822		17,616	
Ireland	65,539		73,519		80,792		85,185		78,499	
Greece	57,946		59,013		64,446		116,867	b	112,247	
Spain	280,772		305,454		342,114		414,746		532,132	
France	338,752		340,383		364,221		377,709		369,621	
Croatia	10,378		10,638		11,706		13,985		15,553	
Italy	307,454		277,631		280,078		300,823		343,440	
Cyprus	:		:		:		:		:	
Latvia	8,299		10,365		9,479		8,345		9,916	
Lithuania	22,011		24,294		22,130		20,162		20,368	
Luxembourg	21,098	e	22,332		23,803		22,888		24,379	

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[8] Immigration from outside EU to the EU between 2013 to 2017. Cyprus (2013-2019) data include the United Kingdom in the composition of the EU. Source: Eurostat (online data codes: migr_imm5prv – as published by the European Commission

Hungary	38,968		54,581		58,344		53,618		68,070	
Malta	10,897		14,454		16,936		17,051		21,676	
Netherlands	129,428		145,323		166,872		189,232		189,646	
Austria	101,866		116,262		166,323		129,509		111,801	
Poland	220,311		222,275	p	218,147	p	208,302	ep	209,353	ep
Portugal	17,554	e	19,516	e	29,896	e	29,925	e	36,639	e
Romania	153,646	e	136,035	e	132,795		137,455		177,435	e
Slovenia	13,871		13,846		15,420		16,623		18,808	
Slovakia	5,149	p	5,357	p	6,997		7,686	p	7,188	
Finland	31,941		31,507		28,746		34,905		31,797	
Sweden	115,845		126,966		134,240		163,005		144,489	
United Kingdom	526,046		631,991		631,452		588,993		644,209	
TOTAL	3,403,677		3,778,597		4,671,340		4,265,097		4,374,717	

Figure D1: Number asylum applications in the EU between 2013 to 2017[9] (Eurostat, 2024a)
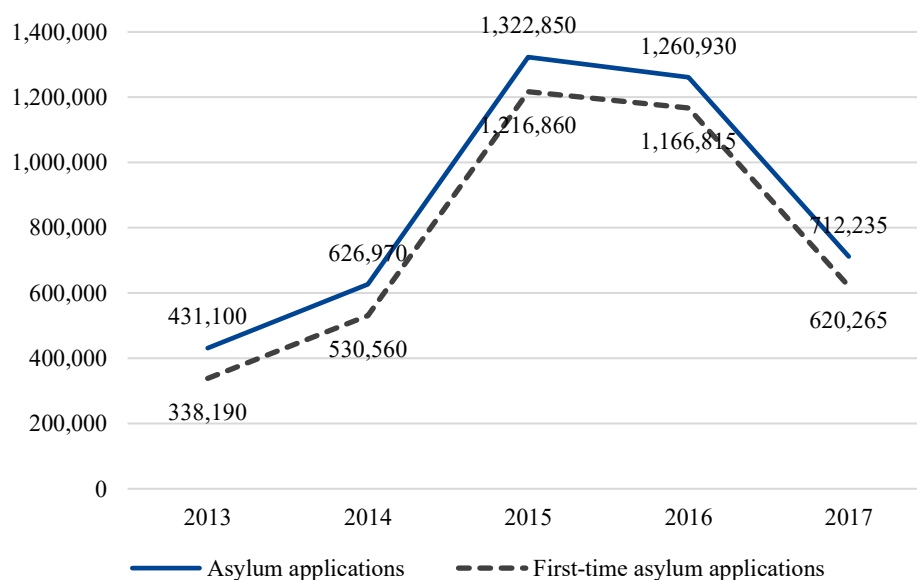
[9] Asylum applications are people who have submitted an application for international protection or have been included in such application as family members during the reference period available by Eurostat First-time asylum applications (non-EU) in the EU Member States, 2013 to 2017 available by Eurostat, published by the European Commission

Table D2: Positive decisions[10] on asylum applications in the EU (Eurostat, 2024a)

	Total number	Refugee status	Subsidiary protection	Humanitarian reasons	Resettled refugees
2013	135,725	64,465	50,895	20,365	4,840
2014	183,365	103,595	59,470	20,300	6,380
2015	333,350	246,175	60,680	26,500	8,155
2016	710,395	389,670	263,755	56,970	14,205
2017	538,120	271,630	188,960	77,530	23,925

Data subtracted from:

- Eurostat news release 98/2014 – 19 June 2014: Asylum decisions in the EU28, EU Member States granted protection to 135 700 asylum seekers in 2013 (Eurostat, 2014)
- Eurostat news release 82/2015 – 12 May 2015: Asylum decisions in the EU, EU Member States granted protection to more than 185 000 asylum seekers in 2014 (Eurostat, 2015)
- Eurostat news release 75/2016 – 20 April 2016: Asylum decisions in the EU, EU Member States granted protection to more than 330 000 asylum seekers in 2015 (Eurostat, 2016)
- Eurostat news release 70/2017 – 26 April 2017: Asylum decisions in the EU, EU Member States granted protection to more than 700 000 asylum seekers in 2016 (Eurostat, 2017)
- Eurostat news release 67/2018 – 19 April 2018: Asylum decisions in the EU, EU Member States granted protection to more than half a million asylum seekers in 2017 (Eurostat, 2018)

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[10] Rate of recognition is the share of positive decisions (first instance or final on appeal) in the total number of decisions at the given stage. Rates of recognition for humanitarian status are not shown in this table, but are part of the total recognition rate.

Figure D2: Number of recorded deaths of migrants in the Mediterranean Sea between 2013 to 2017 (Statista, 2021)
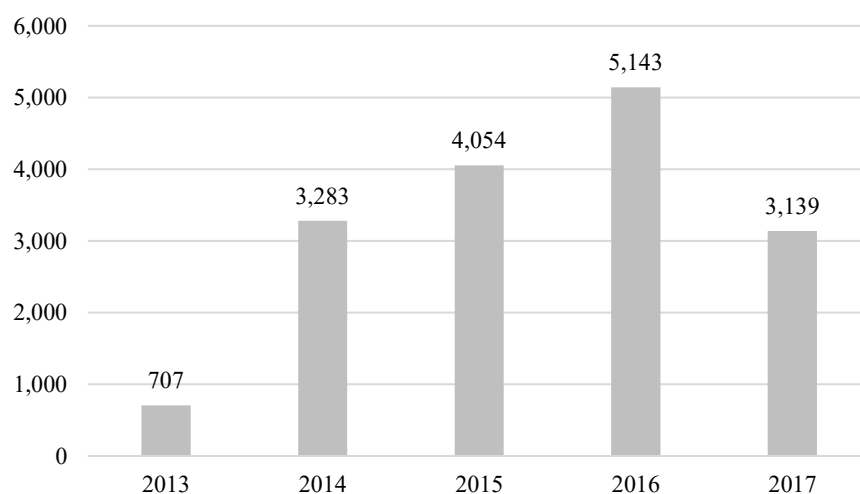
APPENDIX E: THE HISTORY OF EUROPEAN MIGRATION AND ASYLUM POLICIES UNTIL 2017 (OWN RESEARCH)

Date	Policy
25 March 1957	**The Treaty of Rome** was signed, establishing the European Economic Community (EEC) – Mentioning migration once, affirming that the Community *"must take measures concerning the entry and movement of persons"*
14 June 1985	The Schengen Agreement was signed
15 June 1990	**The Dublin Convention** (Convention determining the State responsible for examining applications for asylum lodged in one of the Member States of the European Communities) was signed. It entered into force in 1997
19 June 1990	**The Schengen acquis** (Convention implementing the Schengen Agreement of 14 June 1985 between the Governments of the States of the Benelux Economic Union, the Federal Republic of Germany and the French Republic on the gradual abolition of checks at their common borders) was signed. It entered into force in 1995
7 February 1992	**The Maastricht Treaty** *(The Treaty of the European Union)* was signed. This Treaty placed migration under the third pillar – the cooperation in the fields of justice and home affairs. It entered into force in 1993
26 March 1995	The Convention Implementing the Schengen Agreement entered into force
1 September 1997	The Dublin Convention entered into force
2 October 1997	**The Treaty of Amsterdam** was signed. This called for the establishment of an "area of freedom, security and justice", increasing the use of the EU venues for migration and asylum policies. This also shifted the area of migration and asylum from the intergovernmental third pillar to the first pillar of the community. It entered into force in 1999. The Treaty of Amsterdam also began the development of the harmonization process by providing the legal basis for the creation of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS)
1 May 1999	The Treaty of Amsterdam entered into force

16 October 1999	**The Tampere Programme** was agreed by the Tampere European Council Conclusions. This set, for the first time, a common policy programme on Justice and Home Affairs, and began the creation of the CEAS
11 December 2000	**The Eurodac Regulation** (Council Regulation (EC) No 2725/2000 concerning the establishment of "Eurodac" for the comparison of fingerprints for the effective application of the Dublin Convention) was adopted
20 July 2001	**Temporary Protection Directive** (Council Directive 2001/55/EC on minimum standards for giving temporary protection in the event of a mass influx of displaced persons and on measures promoting a balance of efforts between Member States in receiving such persons and bearing the consequences thereof) was adopted
27 January 2003	**The Reception Conditions Directive** (Council Directive 2003/9/EC laying down minimum standards for the reception of asylum seekers) was adopted
18 February 2003	**The Dublin II Regulation** (Council Regulation (EC) No 343/2003 establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an asylum application lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national) was adopted, replacing the Dublin Convention
29 April 2004	**The Qualification Directive** (Council Directive 2004/83/EC on minimum standards for the qualification and status of third country nationals or stateless persons as refugees or as persons who otherwise need international protection and the content of the protection granted) was adopted
26 October 2004	**The Frontex Regulation** (Council Regulation (EC) No 2007/2004 establishing a European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union) was adopted
3 March 2005	**The Hague Programme**: strengthening freedom, security and justice in the European Union was introduced. The Hague Programme introduced the second phase of the CEAS, highlighting the necessity to develop the instruments further, to meet the expectations of creating an effective and genuine common asylum system in the EU, and was set to run from 2005 to 2009
1 December 2005	**The Asylum Procedures Directive** (Council Directive 2005/85/EC on minimum standards on procedures in Member States for granting and withdrawing refugee status) was adopted

13 December 2007	**The Treaty of Lisbon** *(The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU))* was signed. The TFEU took important steps in the development of the CEAS, by further strengthening the EU competence in the area of Justice and Home Affairs. The TFEU formalized the goals for an integrated border management system of the external borders and proposed policies relating to asylum and immigration
25 May 2009	**The Blue Card Directive** (Council Directive 2009/50/EC on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of highly qualified employment) was adopted
1 December 2009	The Treaty of Lisbon (TFEU) entered into force
4 May 2010	**The Stockholm Programme:** an open and secure Europe serving and protecting citizens was introduced. The Stockholm Programme initiated the third phase of the CEAS, and amendments to the CEAS instruments was initiated
19 June 2010	**The European Asylum Support Office (EASO) Regulation** came into force. EASO became an operational EU agency on 1 February 2011
13 December 2011	**Recast Qualification Directive** (Directive 2011/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on standards for the qualification of third-country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection, for a uniform status for refugees or for persons eligible for subsidiary protection, and for the content of the protection granted (recast)) adopted
8 June 2013	**Recast Reception Conditions Directive** (Directive 2013/33/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection (recast)) adopted
16 June 2013	**Recast Eurodac Regulation adopted (Regulation** (EU) No 603/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of "Eurodac" for the comparison of fingerprints for the effective application of Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national or a stateless person and on requests for the comparison with Eurodac data by Member States' law enforcement authorities and Europol for law enforcement purposes, and amending Regulation (EU) No 1077/2011 establishing a European Agency for the operational management of large-scale IT systems in the area of freedom, security

	and justice (recast)) adopted
26 June 2013	**Recast Asylum Procedures Directive** (Directive 2013/32/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on common procedures for granting and withdrawing international protection (recast)) adopted
26 June 2013	**The Dublin III Regulation** (Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national or a stateless person (recast)) adopted
13 May 2015	The European Agenda on Migration was presented
18 March 2016	**The EU-Turkey Statement** was presented to decrease the border crossings from Turkey into the EU through Greece. This agreement meant that as of 20 March 2016, any irregular migrant arriving in Greece could be sent back to Turkey, if they did not apply for asylum or if the asylum application was rejected. Furthermore, for each Syrian "migrant" sent back to Turkey from Greece, a Syrian refugee would be resettled from Turkey to the EU. In addition to the readmission agreement, Turkey would also implement tougher action in order to prevent irregular border crossings, supported by EUR 3 billion from the EU
4 May 2016	**Proposal for a Regulation to reform the Dublin System** (As part of the third phase of CEAS, the Dublin III Regulation is to be replaced by the Asylum and Migration Management Regulation (AMMR). The Justice and Home Affairs Council reached agreement on a negotiating position towards the European Parliament on 8 June 2023
4 May 2016	Proposal for a Regulation to amend the Eurodac Regulation
4 May 2016	**Proposal for a Regulation to establish an EU Asylum Agency (EUAA)** repealing Regulation (EU) No 439/2010 establishing the European Asylum Support Office (EASO). The Regulation was adopted on 15 December 2021, and subsequently entered into force on 19 January 2022
13 July 2016	**Proposal for a new Regulation to replace the Asylum Procedures Directive**. The Justice and Home Affairs Council reached an agreement on a negotiating position towards the European Parliament on 8 June 2023

13 July 2016	**Proposal for a new Regulation to replace the Qualification Directive.** The Justice and Home Affairs Council reached an agreement on a negotiating position towards the European Parliament on 20 December 2022
13 July 2016	**Proposed targeted modifications of the Reception Conditions Directive.** The Justice and Home Affairs Council reached agreement on a negotiating position towards the European Parliament on 20 December 2022
27 September 2017	Proposal amending Regulation (EU) 2016/399 as regards the rules applicable to the temporary reintroduction of border control at internal borders