

# Choosing words carefully

*A content analysis of the framing contests of the 2015 migrant crisis in Europe*

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## **Abstract**

This research seeks to shed light on the way framing contests developed during the European migration crisis of 2015. In order to do that, it analyses articles, statements and speeches delivered by non-governmental organisations (NGO's), newspapers, the European Commission and European government leaders in order to reconstruct how they sought to influence the dominant narrative surrounding the identity of the migrants and refugees, the perceived solutions within Europe and the solutions that required a deal with a third country. It finds that the NGO's and the European Commission were trying to change the European immigration policy to be more focused around humanitarian values, but that this frame was defeated by a demand for a prevention-oriented immigration policy because the dominant frame of status quo actors proved resilient to change and because the frames of the change advocates were incoherent and at times mutually conflicting.

## Table of contents

1. Introduction	5
1.1 Background	5
1.2 Outline of research puzzle and research question	5
1.3 Outline of research	6
2. Theoretical framework	8
2.1 Role of political elites in public discourse	9
2.2 Legitimacy	10
2.2.1 Input legitimacy	10
2.2.2 Output legitimacy	11
2.2.3 Throughput legitimacy	11
2.3 Framing contests during crises	12
2.4 Immigration policy in the EU	15
3. Cases	18
3.1 ‘The problem’: migrants on European shores	18
3.2 Internal solutions: Resettlement and relocation	20
3.3 External solutions: towards a deal with Turkey	21
3.4 Overview of events	22
4. Research and methodology	23
4.1 Framing contests	23
4.1.1 The framing contest of ‘the problem’	23
4.1.2 The framing contest of internal solutions	23
4.1.3 The framing contest of external solutions	24
4.2 Operationalization	24
4.2.1 NGO’s	25
4.2.2 Media	25
4.2.3 European Commission	27
4.2.4 Government leaders	27
4.2.5 Time frames	28

5. Analysis	29
5.1 First case: the framing contest of ‘the problem’	29
5.1.1 NGO’s	29
5.1.2 Media	30
5.1.3 European Commission	32
5.1.4 Government Leaders	33
5.2 Second case: the framing contest of internal solutions	35
5.2.1 NGO’s	35
5.2.2 Media	36
5.2.3 European Commission	39
5.2.4 Government Leaders	40
5.3 Third case: the framing contest of external solutions	41
5.3.1 NGO’s	41
5.3.2 Media	42
5.3.3 European Commission	44
5.3.4 Government Leaders	46
6. Results	49
6.1 Case 1: the framing contest of ‘the problem’	49
6.2 Case 2: the framing contest of internal solutions	50
6.3 Case 3: the framing contest of external solutions	52
7. Conclusions	54
7.1 Answer to research question	54
7.2 Theoretical and societal implications	55
7.3 Limitations and suggestions for further research	57
8. References	58
9. Appendix	68

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Background**

Over the last two decades, it has become clear that the European Union (EU) and its project of integration and expansion cannot count on the unconditional support of its citizens. Many citizens are critical of the way the EU is organised and the goals it strives for (Karp & Bowler, 2006). The rejections in referenda of the European constitution and the treaty of Lisbon in the beginning of the century showed that once given the opportunity to voice their opinions, citizens are not always inclined to support further European integration. This image was strengthened by events like the referendum on the association treaty with Ukraine which was held in the Netherlands in 2016 and most notably the referendum in the United Kingdom in the same year that resulted in the country leaving the European Union.

Even though turnout was higher than usual in the 2019 European Parliamentary elections, the overall trend in European elections is a decline in turn-out since the 1970's (Statista, 2019). Almost all EU member states now have a relatively successful Eurosceptic party in parliament, with the Spanish Vox party increasing its influence in the 2019 national elections (Greven, 2019), following many other European states (Hooghe & Marks, 2007). Postfunctionalist authors agree that the EU used to be a largely technocratic institution but is highly politicized over the last decades (Hooghe & Marks, 2007).

Many scholars agree that framing is very important when it comes to public opinion within the EU (De Vreese et al., 2011). For years there was little attention for framing research on the EU, because the general consensus was that EU decision making was about the interests of member states rather than about the way in which these decisions could be framed to gain support for them (Hooghe & Marks, 2007).

During these years, the EU institutions mainly tried to paint an image of themselves which shows that they are in everybody's interest, thinking this will lead to a more positive frame of thought for citizens (Daviter, 2011). Nowadays, actors that are critical of the EU try to destabilize that picture by using frames that imply the institutions of the European Union as incomprehensible, elitist, corrupt and inefficient. This leads to so-called framing contests, in which both sides of the argument try to provide the dominant narrative within an issue (Boin et al., 2009).

### **1.2 Outline of research puzzle and research question**

Not only do media platforms publish a lot of news and background stories on EU policy (especially in times of crisis), but political actors such as non-governmental organisations (NGO's), the European Commission and the government leaders of member states all also have press releases and statements. They use these to try to explain their reasoning behind decisions, announce new measures, voice

opinions or formulate critiques. These are all interesting when focusing on framing, because not only can media platforms paint a picture of actors by using frames, these actors also paint a picture of their own, trying to ‘win’ the framing contest in order to increase legitimacy (Schmidt, 2010). Sometimes, actors succeed, while in other instances, other actors come up with stronger frames and metaphors, which can alter the debate as well.

This research revolves around this idea of framing contests. Scholars have an idea of what a framing contest consists of and what its consequences are. It usually starts with crisis and it is a clash of different narratives, promoted by actors on different sides of the argument. Boin et al. (2009) deliberate on these issues and think that skilled actors can use these contests to their advantage. They refer to this as crisis exploitation. It has to be noted that these authors argue that the way in which a crisis can be exploited is very context-dependent so it is hard to draw inferences from cases. This research seeks to add to that theoretical knowledge by investigating how the dominant narrative is formed.

The migration crisis of 2015 was a vital moment for EU policy, as it shook the foundations upon which the EU was built (Jeandesboz & Pallister-Wilkins, 2016). The mutual conflicts of interest made it almost impossible for EU politicians to claim that the institutions are in everyone’s interest. During the crisis, framing contests were going on between invested sides that attempted to influence the debate (Ripoll Servent, 2019). These struggles for the dominant narrative will be described, reconstructed and compared in order to show in which way these framing contests are formed and which frame is the eventual ‘winner’ of the contest, and so which actor successfully exploited it. That is the question this paper asks:

*In what way did the framing contests around the migration crisis of 2015 develop?*

To be clear, the focus will not be on the actions of EU institutions, but on the framing of the problem, the process and the eventual decision. However, in order to fully grasp the frames and their strengths and weaknesses, it is vital that there is an understanding of the events that are being framed. In other words, while this paper is not about the events occurring, it is important to make clear when and how certain events took place in order to understand how strong or weak the frames surrounding them are.

### **1.3 Outline of research**

The discussion of literature and definition of important concepts is important because in order to investigate the research question it is vital to define framing, framing contests and other concepts. Because of the fact that it is important to have a grasp of the events that unfolded during this crisis, the discussion will be followed by an overview of the way the crisis developed from the spring of 2015 until the following year. Then, a number of press statements by NGO’s, the European Commission and

government leaders, as well as media coverage of the migrant crisis of 2015 are investigated in order to identify a number of frames and framing contests that occurred within this crisis. After that, the emerging and development of these frames and contests will be interpreted in order show how different actors have influenced the general debate and each other.

## **2. Theoretical Framework**

In this chapter the main concepts in the thesis will be discussed. This includes a discussion on the concepts of framing, framing contests, discourse, the role legitimacy and crises play in these and on the way migration policy has been approached by EU member states in the past. This is necessary because in order to understand how actors and media influence the policy makers and government leaders of the European Union, it is important to not only know what framing and framing contests consist of and who takes part in it, but also how important they are in the process of policy making. Schmidt (2014) suggests that in the constructivist tradition, judging EU decision making is impossible without taking into account the discourse they use to influence other institutions, actors and citizens. It shows how important framing, discourse and interaction are in European policy making.

Framing is one of the most important concepts in the realm of political communication, and much has been written on the subject. Scheufele (1999) argues that within the realm of political communication, framing has to be defined and operationalized on the basis of social constructivism because he believes that mass media actively set the frames of reference that the public uses to give meaning to certain events. Social constructivism revolves around the power of ideas, which shape the way in which each of us sees the world. In this regard, it is no wonder that a lot of research on framing has been done from the constructivist tradition. Social constructivists compel us to see frames as vehicles that attach values, norms and meaning to events. While one could also argue that this overestimates the role of mass media, because they in turn are dependent on the frames that actors put forward, Scheufele (1999) argues that frames are schemes not only for presenting news or other messages, but also for receiving and comprehending them.

Vivien Schmidt (2014) argues that the constructivists have tended to focus much more on the ideas that are the substantive content of discourse than on the interactive processes involved in discourse. Therefore, she uses what she calls ‘discursive interaction’ to show how ideas may be consciously deployed or unconsciously reflected in EU leaders’ discourse. This happened as the leaders coordinated agreements in the policy sphere and communicated to the markets and the people during the economic crisis that hit the Eurozone in the years leading up to the migration crisis. The clash that occurred between EU leaders’ ideas made it difficult for them to coordinate agreement sufficiently well to produce adequate solutions to the economic crisis (Schmidt, 2014).



## **2.1 Role of political elites in public discourse**

Schmidt (2014) distinguishes ideas in levels of their generality. The most particular are policies, on the middle level are programs and the most abstract level exists of philosophies. In contrast to the more manifest ideas, philosophies are hardly ever contested. Except, she states, in times of crisis (Schmidt, 2014 p. 306).

Another distinction she makes within ideas are based upon the type of content and upon the receiver of the message. In this last case, she distinguishes two basic forms of discourse: the coordinative discourse among policy actors and the communicative discourse between political actors and the public. For the purposes of this research, communicative discourse is deemed more important, because framing contests revolve around public debate rather than within personal discussions. This does not mean that there is no argument to be made that framing could also be an issue within a discussion among policy actors themselves. Schmidt explains how discursive interaction in general and communicative discourse in particular is top-down communication from organisations and institutions, political elites to the public. She refers to the main paradigm that results of a multitude of discourses as the ‘master discourse’, which presents a political program with at least seemingly coherent political views. “The master discourse provides a vision of where the polity is, where it is going, and where it ought to go” (Schmidt, 2014; p. 311). She argues that establishing the terms of the discourse through framing issues for the mass media is vital for shaping mass public opinion. She thinks that judging the ‘output’ of EU decision making is impossible without taking into account this communicative discourse. In her constructivist approach legitimacy depends not just on policy performance but on how such EU policies resonate with the values of European citizens. This is largely influenced by how well the master discourse of the political elites can legitimize the policies (Schmidt, 2013). This discourse has to match with the perceived identity of the receiving party, in the case of communicative discourse that would be ordinary citizens.

It is important to know that a debate which is influenced by framing is usually done by actors, who have interests in the issues at hand. They profoundly influence the discourse. Art’s (2005) suggestions are similar when it comes to deliberation in general. He argues that the outcome of deliberation depends on the structures of power and institutional configurations in which it occurs, and that actors with enough power can shape deliberation to suit their interests. In other words, he states that powerful political elites are in a position to shape paradigms of the public, in order to create or enhance public support for their own causes. “Public deliberation is mediated by political elites” (Art, 2005, p. 25). He hereby states that professional communicators rather than ordinary citizens talk to each other and to the public through mass media. This shows policy makers are not completely reliant on the media for the way the discourse develops, but they too have great influence on the discourse.

Schmidt (2010) adds that framing is usually done actively, with political decision makers actively trying to legitimate their actions by using normative, value-based arguments on the one hand while also emphasizing how citizens will profit from these actions. So while policy makers are in a unique position to influence the debate in order to increase their legitimacy, they always have to take in mind that their statements have to resonate with the normative values held by the citizens while also trying to convince them that the policy maker works in their interest.

Concluding, previous work by scholars suggests that there is reason to assume that political elites have a profound impact on the public discourse and deliberation in mass media. Moreover, the legitimization of policies by these political elites can enhance or create support for these policies if the policies resonate with the identities of receiving citizens.

## **2.2 Legitimacy**

Legitimacy, while not being at the forefront of the questions about framing, is an important incentive for policy makers and other actors to be active in their framing. Leaders and officials who can convince their electorate that they are legitimate defenders of their interests will have a stronger political position than those who cannot. Schmidt (2010) distinguishes between input, output and throughput legitimacy. This distinction is based upon the phase in which a certain issue is approached. In other words, input legitimacy is about how well the EU institutions listen to their citizens, while output legitimacy is about how well the products of the institutions and policy makers reflect the wishes, norms and interests of citizens. The distinction is important for the purposes of this paper because the migration crisis consisted of the continuous process of input, output and throughput.

### **2.2.1 Input legitimacy**

Input legitimacy, according to institutionalists (Scharpf, 2009), refers to the quality of the EU's representative bodies and electoral processes, and how this serves to ensure EU legitimacy. Interactive constructivists however would not agree, they argue it is "all about the quality of the ideas, discourses, political deliberations and contestations that may go on in such institutional settings that may help build citizens' sense of EU legitimacy" (Schmidt, 2010; p.16). While interactive constructivists do agree that there is value in the institutions themselves, they think that political discourse about the content is fundamental to democracy and that this does also build legitimacy.

The EU has some problems when it comes to communicative discourse about input legitimacy towards citizens. Grimm (1997) identifies that this is caused by the fact that EU politicians cannot address many Europeans in a common language and also because coverage of European media diverges widely across the continent. Schmidt (2010) adds that part of the problem comes from the fact that the EU's citizens have little institutional input, because there is no representative and directly elected EU government.

### **2.2.2 Output legitimacy**

Output legitimacy is, unlike input legitimacy, not the extent to which EU policy outcomes are ‘by’ the people, but rather the extent to which they are ‘for’ the people (Schmidt, 2010). She cites Fritz Scharpf (Scharpf, 2009) who takes a rather institutionalist approach to the matter, arguing that output refers to the problem-solving quality of the laws and rules. This means that output legitimacy is determined by how well the institutions and policy makers succeed in providing rules, laws and policy that serves the people.

As with input legitimacy, there are critical interactive construction-oriented scholars who believe that an increase in legitimacy can only be achieved if these laws and rules resonate with citizen values. They also have to serve to build their identities. These scholars focus on how well the policy makers within the EU legitimate their policies through communicative discourses.

There is a lot of scholarly criticism on the output legitimacy of the EU. Not only is this caused by the institutions themselves, but also, according to constructive interaction scholars, by the lack of appeal to national ideals and values. Schmidt (2010) argues that EU elites have done little to attempt improving their narratives and discourses to such a point that it would legitimize their policies. In order to this, the discourse has to appeal to the values of EU citizens, and in this regard, attempts to build a unified European identity are very important. “The sense of being European is generally built not just on *doing*, as in institutional policy outputs, but also on *saying* what the EU is doing, which makes for constructive interactive outputs” (Schmidt, 2010; p. 13).

### **2.2.3 Throughput legitimacy**

Alongside input and output, which generally speaking focus on the accountability of the issues addressed by EU policy makers and the policies they produce, respectively, Schmidt (2010) identifies a third form in which the European Union can gain or lose legitimacy. She defines this ‘throughput legitimacy’ as a “performance criterion centering on what goes on inside the ‘black box’ of the political system, between the input and the output” (Schmidt, 2010; p.5). In other words, it is important for legitimacy what EU institutions decide, but also how they come to their decision. This is important to this research because the framing contests that take place during the migration crisis do not solely exist of frames surrounding the problem or the solution, but also of the way in which the policy makers try to tackle the problems and the discourse on their accountability. “Legitimacy here is focused on the quality of the processes of EU governance, which means not just their efficiency but also, and most importantly, their accountability, meaning that policy actors are responsive and can be held responsible for output decisions” (Schmidt, 2013; p.7).

Throughput legitimacy can, if conducted properly, represent a way in which the interests of minority groups can be respected. While input legitimacy means that the majority usually has its way, throughput

legitimacy gives space for interest groups and societal organisations to make their mark on the output. Throughput governance with societal groups and organisations has therefore deliberately been encouraged as a way of increasing legitimacy by means of political participation and citizen representation (Schmidt, 2010).

Although the analysis will revolve around the framing of the problem (which broadly refers to input) and both internal and external solutions (regarding the output) surrounding the migrant crisis, many political elites do not only produce statements on the problem and the solution but also on the process of political decision making on the European level which is instigated by the input and produces output. It is important to note that when these elites communicate to national or international publics about their ‘throughput’ in the communicative sphere, they attempt to increase their transparency and demonstrate their accountability. All this is in the interest of the policy maker because they are attempts to legitimize their actions to their electorate, as one of the main interests of any politician is re-election and the chances of getting re-elected increase when the political actor in question is regarded as legitimate (Schmidt, 2010).

However, EU actors such as heads of government, ministers and EU commissioners are not or only marginally dependent on the entire EU public for re-election. To a head of government for example, legitimacy from his own constituents is of more value than legitimacy in other European member states. This does not mean that the issue of legitimacy on a European level is irrelevant to them. Legitimacy abroad can make one’s position stronger. Concluding, when taking the interactive construction approach, legitimacy is not just a matter of policy but of how the policy is framed.

### **2.3 Framing contests during crises**

Frames are generated by framing contests. Framing contests are typically generated by crises. Boin et al. (2009) argue that framing contests are essentially a contest between frames and counter-frames concerning the nature and severity of the crisis, its causes, the responsibility for its occurrence or escalation, and implications for the future. For the purposes of this research, it is vital to grasp the notion of framing contests because its main goal is to see how the framing contest between the different actors during the migration crisis developed. Contestants try to have their frame accepted as the dominant discourse, which is the frame that is most commonly accepted by the public. They also argue that officeholders may seek to enhance or save their legitimacy, for example by embracing an investigation and its outcomes on a certain crisis, while those who are not in office and are critical of the governing politicians often seek to further escalate the crisis. The crisis communication literature argues that a proactive, professional media performance enhances an actor’s credibility; reactive and disorganized crisis communication can have the opposite effect (Boin et al., 2009).

They (Boin et al., 2009) make a distinction between status quo-players and change advocates, who can be both politicians and opinion makers but are divided based upon their objectives, which are either to maintain the current political landscape or to change it. This distinction is very central to the framing contests that emerge during times of crisis. They further go on to argue that political actors, when faced with a disturbing high-profile event (for example multiple ships sinking with many casualties in the Mediterranean) that might lead to a crisis, can adopt three different positions. The first is to downplay the event, seeing it as an incident. This means that nobody is to blame and that the status quo is maintained because nothing changes. Actors in this group will attempt to minimize salience of the issue. The second is to see the event as a threat to the status quo, which has had merits before the incident happened and should therefore be protected. This means to protect the political elites and the policies that constituted the status quo from criticism. Third, a political actor can see the incident as an opportunity. This means that the actor in question can blame parts of the status quo for the event, in an effort to bring about meaningful change. These actors try to maximize the salience of the issue.

So the first framing contest revolves around salience of the crisis. Once denying the salience of an issue is no longer an option, the emphasis shifts towards the causes of the crisis. This contest plays on a political level and on a policy level. The political level revolves around determining who is to blame for the crisis, while the policy level is about the discussion if and what measures should be taken to solve the crisis.

Often, incumbent political elites are perceived to be the ones advocating the status quo, while oppositional frames are considered to be supporting change. However, Boin et al. (2009) argue that this is not always the case. Powerful political elites can attempt to use a crisis as pretext for change, while the opposition tries to conserve the status quo. Two examples of this would be United States President George W. Bush invoking a Patriot Act after September 11th, 2001 despite heavy Democratic opposition and US President Barack Obama attempting to change laws on gun control after the mass shooting in Charleston, which were (successfully) opposed by the Republican opposition.

These examples also show that that both sides can eventually win a framing contest. Those who support change can be effective in making their discourse the dominant one, but they can also be defeated by frames that protect the status quo. Simultaneously, political elites can see their frames ‘win’, but they too can be defeated by well-placed oppositional frames. This has to do with a distinction in the way a crisis or event is portrayed: when it is largely seen as an ‘Act of God’, that just happens for no reason and requires society to rebuild as fast as possible, this is in the interests of those that are keen on maintaining the status quo. However, when an event is considered to have been avoidable, this typically makes room for some critical questions about how it could have been avoided. Boin et al. (2009) note that leaders have to answer why they did not see the disaster coming, and that early warnings, hunches

and signals often come to light, which could have been used to prevent the crisis but were not acted upon. Although these are often unclear, scattered and ambiguous, they provide political actors of the third, change-seeking kind with ammunition to blame the incumbent leaders and status quo politicians in order to bring about the change they seek.

A similar distinction is made by De Vries (2004), who ranks crisis framing along two axes: the crisis can be framed as a failure of actors (or not), and as a failure of policy (or not). If the policy is perceived to be at fault, but the actors are not, then a policy change is needed. If both are perceived as causes of the crisis, the entire political system is blamed. If the policy is perceived as legitimate but the actors are not, the actor will be blamed for the crisis. If neither the policy nor the actor is perceived to be at fault, the crisis is framed as sheer bad luck. This explains that political elites who support (or are supported by) the status quo, have an interest in promoting the frame that the crisis is ‘an act of God’ or ‘an unlucky incident’. Once that frame cannot be sustained, they will likely be more inclined to start blaming current policies than to shift the blame to themselves, because changing policy to them is less profound than accepting blame for a crisis. Political actors who try to hold on to the status quo, will initially be more likely to only accept incremental reform rather than profound change (Jacobs, 2011).

Beyond these political stakeholders, there seems to be support for the notion that media constitute a very important factor in deciding the winners of a framing contest. Boin et al. (2009) argue that the media form a very important arena where those who try to manage the crisis are forced to face those who are critical, and those who are served by the political status-quo challenge advocates of change in order to enhance their legitimacy or gain support for their viewpoints. Actors are determined to use the media in order to promote their discourse on the crisis and try to get the public to support their reasoning. They find support in their analysis that “the more the media’s crisis reporting and commentary emphasize exogenous interpretations of a crisis, the less likely it is that government actors will suffer negative political consequences in its aftermath; the more it emphasizes endogenous ones, the more likely they will.” (Boin et al., 2009; p. 96)

Non-governmental organisations (NGO’s) can also play important roles in framing contests. They, like political actors, have an agenda and can either see the crisis as a ‘threat’ or an ‘opportunity’. Wozniak et al. (2017) explain that the current media landscape is not an arena that suits NGO’s well. They find that NGO’s are often only mentioned after other sources, rather than governments and decision makers who are usually at the core of the story. NGO’s also are less likely to attract media attention. Rather, they are mentioned in stories that already are salient. Thrall et al. (2014) even find that a lot of non-governmental organisations do not appear in mainstream media at all and Ihlen et al. (2015) argue that the media management routines are far less coordinated than within administrations. However, not all is negative when it comes to media for NGO’s: Thrall et al. (2014) conclude that if the decision-makers’

framing to seek legitimacy do not match the journalistic frame conceptions, this opens up a chance for NGO's to influence the framing in a much more profound way. This will however only be the case if they can meet journalistic selection criteria. Ihlen et al. (2015) note that NGO's in the context of immigration have an opportunity to exploit media conventions and pitch emotional, individual stories to journalists. This is impossible for policy makers and immigration authorities. This can make framing campaigns by NGO's very successful. Concluding, it can be assumed that incumbent politicians, challengers or change advocates as well as media outlets and civil society are vital in forming and deciding any framing contest.

## **2.4 Immigration policy in the EU**

All this provides us with a theoretical background for how EU policy makers and concerned actors are expected to form their framing contests during crisis in general, but alongside that it is helpful to take into account theoretical arguments of a more context-specific nature. In other words, since this paper revolves around the migration crisis of 2015, it is useful to see how EU actors have been involved in this policy field and what their underlying convictions surrounding migration are, as well as other fields of foreign policy.

The European Council argued in October of 1999 that there was need to establish a common European asylum system as part of an 'area of freedom, security and justice' firmly rooted in a 'shared commitment to human rights' and based on 'the full and inclusive application of the Geneva Convention' (Lavenex, 2001). This belief was built as a response to criticism that the European Union received on its approach towards the refugees from Kosovo in the 1990's and as a response to the idea that Europe had become a fortress. The statement of the European Council is clearly based on norms and values within the EU, and upon article 14 in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that "everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution." (United Nations, 1948)

In addition, Lavenex (2004) cites Duchêne's conception, which he expressed during the 1970's, of the EU as a civilian power. She explains this as 'soft' power exercised by the EU which consists in the external projection of its internal virtues through politico-economic and normative means (Lavenex, 2004). Duchêne himself argued that this soft power means that the distinction between domestic and foreign policy will fade within the EU. "This means trying to bring to international problems the sense of common responsibility and structures of contractual politics which have been in the past associated exclusively with 'home' and not foreign, that is alien, affairs" (Lavenex, 2004; p.684).

However, when looking at how authority on immigration issues is distributed between the EU and its member states, it is clear that much of the capabilities have never left the realm of the latter. The Dublin

agreement prescribes that all asylum seekers must apply for asylum in the European member state where they arrive, rather than being spread throughout Europe using a relocation mechanism. This means that member states are primarily responsible for their own immigration policies. While the EU is allowed to enforce conditions surrounding entry into and legal residence in a member state when it comes to regular migration, member states retain the right to determine how many people they accept. The EU may try to persuade countries to work hard to integrate residents from outside the EU, but there is no attempt within EU law to adjust national policies to each other (European Parliament, 2019)

Instead of forming a common immigration policy covering all EU member states, immigration and asylum policies were made part of the European cooperation of ministers of Justice and Home Affairs, and they were named and framed together with criminal matters as issues of ‘internal security’ in the European ‘area of freedom, security and justice’ (Lavenex 2001; p.860). The issues were not regarded as salient, given that they were rarely the topic of meetings of the government leaders. There were, alongside the Dublin Agreement and the Schengen policy, two Council resolutions that were adopted in 1992 with an influence on immigration: one denoting applications from asylum seekers from ‘safe countries of origin’ as ‘manifestly unfounded’; the other limiting the access to asylum procedures for applicants who travelled through ‘safe third countries’ (Lavenex, 2001; p.858-860).

This means that there are some fundamental paradoxes at the roots of European refugee policy. Not only are these based upon the difference between supranational and transgovernmental governance, but also on the differences between countries when it comes to moral values relating to refugee policy. In practice, that means that despite the normative words and desire for a common European approach, the determining factors in the eventual policies were not universal human rights, nor the idea of a common European refugee policy, but the idea that asylum issues are part of the single market project and that countries would only cooperate if it was seen as important to their national security. “Co-operation focused on reducing the number of (bogus) asylum-seekers in Europe” (Lavenex, 2001; p. 860). All of this makes Vink (2002) conclude that these policies will make it harder for asylum seekers to obtain territorial admission, access to procedures, and recognition as refugee.

If, as Lavenex (2001) argues, there is a discrepancy between what is being said and what is being done on a common EU foreign policy, if in other words there is a mismatch between what the EU pretends to be and what it in fact is, then this evidently was no issue of great salience before the crisis. It is therefore no wonder that the first major frame that Ariadna Ripoll Servent (2009) distinguishes within her assessment of the migration crisis, is an endogenous frame in which critique of the Dublin agreement and the lack of cooperation is a focal point. She argues that many actors, mainly members of the European Parliament and the European Commission, are critical of the way in which immigration policies are not adjusted to one another and the lack of ‘solidarity’ between states (Ripoll Servent, 2009).



Lavenex (2001) predicts in what way the European approach on immigration will develop: given that this ‘intensive transgovernmentalism’ seems to win ground over strives for supranationalism, she predicts that any foreign policy of the European Union member states when it comes to asylum and immigration is likely to become focused around prevention rather than around moral values of harbouring refugees. If there is to be agreed upon any common European approach, she adds, prevention will be at the centre of the agreement (Lavenex, 2001).

As stated before, the paradox was of little influence in non-crisis times. However, the crisis of 2015 puts so much pressure on this discrepancy that it likely poses a dilemma for European Union foreign policy: either the framing has to change, or policy has to change in order to solve the discrepancy. Will the EU start to do as it had claimed to do for a long time, or will it instead change its frame to a less normative, more security-oriented one with the goal to more closely resemble reality, as Lavenex (2001) suggests? And who applies pressure on the EU to go either way? These are questions that this analysis seeks to answer.

### **3. Cases**

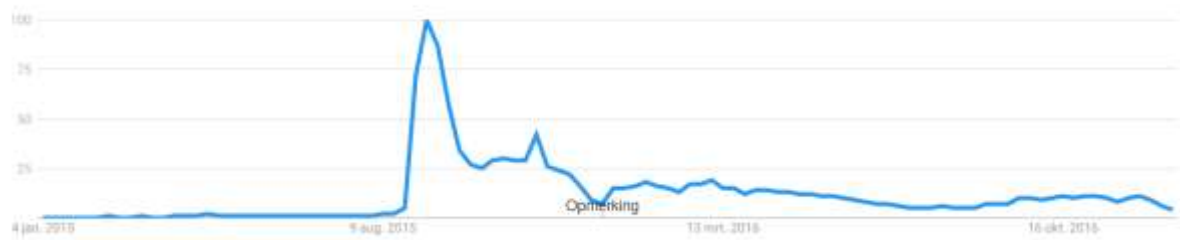
In this study, framing contests surrounding the migration crisis of 2015 will be assessed. The cases will be several accounts of framing contests that occurred during the migration crisis. To be clear, while the difference between the terms ‘migrants’, ‘refugees’ and ‘immigrants’ is an important side of the framing of the issue, in the descriptive analysis these terms will be used interchangeably. This is done in order to make sure that there is no impression that one of the frames is preferable, since this paper is not about taking a normative stance.

In order to understand the way in which media frames were formed during the crisis, it is imperative to assess the different events that took place influencing the flow of events and ultimately, influencing these frames. It is important to focus on the way the European member states operated in these situations, so in the following assessment this will be taken into account. This reconstruction will address the issue of the migration crisis from April 2015 when the migration issue gained international salience, through to April 2016, when the institutional crisis had passed and the processing of refugees could be part of the regular decision-making processes again.

#### **3.1 ‘the problem’: migrants on European shores**

The civil war in Syria has led to an outflow of refugees out of the Middle East and into Europe. The number of migrants already increased drastically in 2011 when the war began. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), more than 1,500 people drowned or went missing while attempting to cross the Mediterranean in that year (UNHCR, 2012). Since 2013, hundreds of thousands of migrants have landed in Italy and Greece. Many of them are from Eritrea, Nigeria and Syria. In 2014, hundreds of refugees drowned in the Mediterranean, aiming for asylum in the European Union (BBC News, 2014).

In the spring of 2015, the refugee flow reached a peak. According to the United Nations-related organisations IOM (the International Organisation for Migration) and refugee agency UNHCR, approximately one million people came to Europe in that year, of whom 97 percent over water (IOM, 2015a). Over 80 percent of them arrived in Greece, most of the others arrived in Italy. IOM counted 3692 people who lost their lives at sea trying to make the crossing (IOM, 2015a). Most of the crossings occurred in the summer, when the sea is calmer. This is also when the term ‘refugee crisis’ is first widely used in public discourse according to the data by Google Trends, shown in figure 1, who measure hypes by the extent to which internet users are interested in certain phrases or topics (Google Trends, 2019).



*Figure 1: interest of Google users in the term 'refugee crisis' from January 2015 to December 2016 (Google Trends, 2019).*

In the spring of 2015, incidents occurred more frequently than in previous years. On the 13th of April, more than 400 people are believed to have perished off the Libyan coast (Scherer & Jones, 2015). In the very same week, three other incidents occurred. Firstly, on a ship near Sicily fifteen Muslim boat refugees pushed twelve Christian fellow refugees overboard (Agnew, 2015). Secondly, on the same day 41 perished near Libya. At this point, 50 times more people had drowned in the Mediterranean than in the same time frame a year earlier. This increased the pressure on the EU to act (Middle East Eye, 2016). Thirdly, three days later, on the 19th, another boat that had just left the port city of Zuwarah, Tripoli capsized off the Libyan coast, during night, with up to 850 migrants aboard. Despite a rescue operation by the Maltese and Italian coast guard, only 28 people were rescued (Kingsley & Kirchgaessner, 2015). This was the gravest incident thus far.

This week of dangers and death on the Mediterranean prompted Italian prime minister Matteo Renzi to call many of his European colleagues, such as French president Francois Hollande and Prime Minister of Malta Joseph Muscat. Renzi called for an emergency meeting of European interior ministers to discuss the migrant deaths and many European states such as Denmark and Germany soon agreed to the summit (La Sicilia, 2015).

Only one day later, on the 20<sup>th</sup> of April, the European Commission released a press statement in which it proposed a tenfold plan to tackle the migration crisis (European Commission, 2015a). However, it did not take long before the sheer number of incoming refugees made the ten-point plan obsolete. In order to get the migrant flows under control, the Commission proposed a so-called 'Agenda on Migration'. This agenda was officially announced by the European Commission on the 13<sup>th</sup> of May. By the end of May, Dimitris Avramopoulos, the European Commissioner for migration, presented a European resettlement scheme for 40.000 people from Italy and Greece "who are in clear need of international protection". This would be an emergency mechanism, which was in line with the agreed-upon agenda.

Refugees would then be relocated to other EU Member States over a period of 2 years (European Commission, 2015b). This was the first concrete proposition for relocation.

The Agenda of Migration did not stop the crossings of refugees. As of June 2015, 124.000 migrants had arrived into Greece, a 750 percent increase from 2014 (BBC News, 2015). This number would continue to rise in July and August. Greece appealed to the European Union for assistance. UNCHR European Director Vincent Cochetel said facilities for migrants on the Greek islands were “totally inadequate” and the islands like Lesbos and Kos were in “total chaos” (BBC News, 2015).

Many of the refugees were not planning on staying in the ‘total chaos’ of Greece and moved on, often on foot, through the Balkans to economically stronger member states such as Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. On the 17<sup>th</sup> of June, the government of Hungary, led by prime minister Viktor Orbán, announced that it would build a 4-metre-high, 175-kilometre-long fence along its southern border with non-EU member Serbia (Gorondi, 2015) in an attempt to keep the migrants out. The first phase of the construction of the fence was finished at the end of August and Orbán announced that it would be fully completed by the end of 2015. Hungary responded to the statement of the Commission by no longer taking back asylum seekers who travelled through Hungary, despite the EU-law based on the Dublin Regulations demanding people seeking refuge to do so in the European country where they first set foot. Hungary stated it did this because it was overburdened and did not have any capacity left.

### **3.2 Internal solutions: Resettlement and relocation**

Two days after this decision by Hungary, the European Council convened. All member states, except the UK, which had an opt-out, agreed on the distribution of migrants among the member states. Furthermore, a dialogue with Turkey would be started and the member states also agreed to hold a high-level conference to discuss the challenges of the Western Balkan route. The initiative for this was taken by Hungary.

July and August of 2015 were the peaks of the migrant crisis. In September, it was clear that the initial proposals under the Agenda of Migration were not enough. European Commission First Vice-President Frans Timmermans, argued for a permanent crisis mechanism for the distribution of asylum seekers (Euronews, 2015). On the 7<sup>th</sup> of September, both Austria and Germany warned that they would not be able to keep up with the current pace of the influx and that it would need to slow down (Smith-Spark, 2015).

A few days later, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of September, the European Commission comes up with a proposal that to a large extent mirrors what Timmermans proposed. This new proposal involves a second emergency

relocation of refugees, up to 120,000 people. Moreover, the idea of quota's is no longer avoided. A permanent relocation mechanism is proposed (European Commission, 2015c).

This proposal then had to be ratified by the Council of Ministers of Justice and Home Affairs. That institution decided to take the decision by qualified majority vote, which meant that countries could oppose the actions and yet not be able to veto them. Slovakia, The Czech Republic, Hungary and Romania opposed the bill and Finland abstained. This was regarded by many media as a highly divisive move (Holehouse, 2015). "Common sense lost today," Czech Interior Minister Milan Chovanec tweeted after the vote.

### **3.3 External solutions: Towards a deal with Turkey**

The day after this controversial vote the European Council held an informal meeting. One of the new priorities upon which the European Council agreed, was intensified dialogue and cooperation with Turkey. The idea here was that Turkey can play an important role in making sure the refugees do not attempt the crossing towards Europe. This changed the dominant paradigm from coping with the problem within the borders of the Union to trying to prevent the migrants from crossing at all by negotiating deals with states where the migrants set sail.

The next point of action was the negotiations with Turkey, because the call to stop the hazardous crossings of the Mediterranean had not ceased. On the contrary, the iconic photo of the dead body of 7-year old boy Alan Kurdi made front pages all over the world and renewed the call for solutions. On the 15<sup>th</sup> of October, the Commission presented the outcome of these negotiations to the European Council, who agreed to move forward in the discussion with the Turkish leaders. Eventually, this resulted in a joint action plan by the end of November. On the summit where this plan was presented, the EU and its member states announced they will increase their cooperation with Turkey and step up their political and financial engagement with 3 billion euros. Furthermore, the frozen negotiations on entering the EU were reopened. In return, Turkey will make sure refugees avoid crossings to Europe.

On top of the deal with Turkey, the EU Commission announced on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December that 350 million euros would be spent to improve living conditions for people who found refuge in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq. Two weeks later, the Commission presented plans to secure the outer borders. This package included, amongst others, the foundation of the European Border and Coast Guard and a possible revision of the Schengen borders code. Instead of fiercely defending the Schengen-agreement, the Commission quite quickly included the revision of the Schengen borders code in the new plans.

On the 17<sup>th</sup> of March 2016 the European Council accepted the joint EU-Turkey statement to end irregular migration towards the EU. The EU-Turkey Refugee Agreement was signed, signalling the end of the

crisis management, which would now evolve towards ‘regular’ policy making. However, the political crisis was not over. Many organisations, as well as citizens, criticized the EU for the way it had handled the crisis. The NGO Medicins Sans Frontières (MSF) argued that European Policy had dramatically worsened the crisis by giving refugees no other option than to attempt to cross over sea and by erecting razor wire fences (MSF, 2015). A poll by the PEW Research Center suggested that an overwhelming majority of citizens across all European countries (up to 94 percent in Greece) disapproved the way in which the EU had handled the crisis (PEW Research, 2016).

### 3.4 Schematic summary of events

Date	Event
20-04-2015	European Commission presents ten-point action plan.
27-05-2015	European Commission proposes relocation of 40.000 asylum seekers from Italy and Greece.
25/26-06-2015	European Council agrees with the voluntary relocation of 40.000 asylum seekers.
09-09-2015	European Commission proposes relocation of 120.000 migrants based on quotas.
22-09-2015	Justice and Home Affairs Council decides to relocate 120.000 migrants using qualified majority voting, against the will of Slovakia, Czech Republic, Hungary and Romania.
23-09-2015	European Council agrees on dialogue with Turkey.
15-10-2015	European Council agrees to focus on borders and on the EU-Turkey joint action plan, made by European Commissioner Frans Timmermans.
29-11-2015	Meeting of EU government leaders with Turkey.
18/19-02-2016	Meeting of European Council, border controls along the Western Balkan Route are enforced
7-03-2016	Meeting of EU government leaders with Turkey.
17/18-03-2016	EU government leaders and Turkey agree to end irregular migration from Turkey to the EU in exchange for 3 billion euros in support and reopened negotiations on entering the EU.

*Figure 2: overview of important political events during the migration crisis*

## **4. Research and methodology**

In order to transform the question ‘In what way did the framing contests around the migration crisis of 2015 develop?’ into a research design, it is imperative that the different framing contests that emerged during the migration crisis are identified. In order to do that properly, there can be no misunderstanding about the research goals. This research seeks to know how these framing contests developed and how the relevant actors sought to influence each other.

To find answers to this question, the main concepts of this analysis must be operationalized. First, a number of framing contests are distinguished that stand out from the reconstruction to analyse in greater depth. Second, a method and operationalization is needed with which it is possible to systematically gather and analyse data to analyse these cases and say anything about their characteristics.

### **4.1 Framing contests**

The analysis will be dividing the entirety of the migration crisis into three separate time frames because of the difference in emphasis and salience that is given to different aspects of the crisis. First will be the beginning of the crisis, in which the main question is what the crisis consists of. Secondly the question revolves around how the European Union should treat the migrants coming in and third, the external solutions, including a deal with Turkey to prevent migrants from making the crossings, become subject of debate.

#### **4.1.1 The framing contest of ‘the problem’**

The cases selected are key episodes of framing contests in the migration crisis. First is the framing of the problem itself. To some, the refugees are perceived as threats to security, the welfare state and to European culture (Berry, Garcia-Blanco & Moore, 2016), while to others, they are forced to make the crossings in chase of safety. The debate on the perception of immigrants was earlier highlighted by Sandra Lavenex (2001) as a result of the Kosovo refugee crisis. She claimed that the Europeanization of refugee policy lies at the heart of political unification and highlights important developments in the evolution of the European Union.

#### **4.1.2 The framing contest of internal solutions**

Secondly, there is the discussion around possible solutions to the perceived problem. One of these solutions would be a refugee-‘quota’. The European Commission proposed these quota (European Commission, 2015d), but they were met with criticism of actors who concluded that the EU is forcing member states against their will to shelter refugees. Forced relocation and resettlement would mean a move away from the Dublin agreement, which states that any asylum seeker must apply for asylum in the country where it enters the EU. So, there are those defending the Dublin agreement and with it,

national sovereignty on the issue of immigration, while others try to unify the approach and come to a common European policy (European Commission, 2015h). This is an internal dimension of the problem in the sense that relocation is a solution which could be handled within and between member states, rather than between EU members states on the one hand and a third party on the other.

#### **4.1.3 The framing contest of external solutions**

Third, an external dimension was added to the discourse, no longer limiting the realm of solutions to the boundaries of the European Union. Many political elites supported the idea to shelter refugees not in Europe but in their own regions, keeping them away from Europe. Initially, while this view had followers among several member states, it was not supported by the European Commission. But when the highly contested relocation of migrants proved to fall short in solving the issue, the negotiations with Turkey showed that there was room for the viewpoint that refugees should be ‘pushed back’ from European shores.

#### **4.2 Operationalisation**

In order to conduct this research, four different institutions are examined that provide public documents trying to explain to the public what the crisis is and how it is being handled. As this research revolves around institutions influencing each other, it is important to establish what their respective positions in the hierarchy are. First, there are NGO’s that have no legislative power but attempt to influence media and decision makers in order to serve their interests. Secondly, the media, who also have no legislative power, can either adopt the notion of the NGO’s or come up with another frame. They have the ability to inform and mobilize the public. Third is the European Commission, which is higher in the hierarchy than NGO’s and the media in the sense that it directly influences policy. They too try to influence the dominant frames in public debate using statements and press releases. Fourthly, there are the government leaders who decide whether to adopt certain legislation. They are not only influenced by the other actors, but also attempt to influence the debate.

In much contemporary political science research, there is the problem that press releases might not represent the true position of an actor, since it is trying to influence the debate. This leads to lowered validity. This research, however, focuses on the influencing of the debate so it implies that sources have to be used which are actively distributed for the public. Internal memo’s for example might give a more in-depth view of the positions of member states, but the fact that they are not meant for the public eye means that framing contests are hardly influenced by these memos. The focus will be on press releases of these governments surrounding the different European Council summits. Most of the topical press releases on this issue are released within that time frame.



#### **4.2.1 NGO's**

Looking at the way in which NGO's frame the issue of migration, it can be noted that they have an agenda to mobilize the public to support them in their attempts to help the migrants wherever possible. At the same time, they also attempt to be a trustworthy source describing the events that occurred in the Mediterranean. In producing papers, essays and press statements, these institutions seek to influence the debate in general and news media in particular on who the people crossing the Mediterranean are, what their reasons for the journey are and what they seek to gain from moving to Europe. Moreover, they voice opinions on the way migrants are treated once they have arrived in a country in which they apply for asylum.

Statements by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations Refugee Council (UNHCR) will be discussed. It is acknowledged that these organisations are often regarded as international organisations (IO's) rather than non-governmental organisations (NGO's) because they both have ties to the United Nations. However, both organisations have very clear interests and expertise on the topic of migration and are not bound to any one government or invested political actor or institution, so for the purposes of this analysis treating them as NGO's is not problematic.

In the case of NGO's, ten statements or articles are examined in each time frame. These ten are a sample, based on relevance, of the statements that UNHCR and IOM released during the time frame. It is evident that most of the NGO statements address migrant issues, so the ten statements were chosen based on the keywords 'Europe' and 'Mediterranean' in order to know that the statements are not about migrant issues elsewhere in the world. This provides the analysis with the most relevant articles on the subject in order to be able to assess the way the NGO's were active in framing.

#### **4.2.2 Media**

In order to analyse a framing contest, it is vital to have opposing frames. The UNHCR has conducted previous research on where, when and how migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants were named as such in national news media. In its report, made in the fall of 2015, the investigators reported that the use of labels (migrant, refugee, immigrant etc.) varied quite a lot when compared across countries. The report assesses media coverage in five countries during the migrant crisis, namely Germany, the UK, Spain, Sweden and Italy. Both Germany (91.0%) and Sweden (75.3%) overwhelmingly used the terms refugee (flüchtling(e)/ flykting) or asylum seeker (asylsuchende(r) or asylsökande). The word migrant (migrante) was the most used term in Italy (35.8%) and even more so in the United Kingdom (54.2%). Refugee (profugo/ rifugiato) was only used 15.7% of the time in Italy and 27.2% of the time in the UK. In Spain, the dominant term was immigrant (immigrante) which was used 67.1% of time whilst refugee (Refugiado) was used only 12.5% of the time (Berry, Garcia-Blanco

& Moore, 2016). They show that the term ‘migrant’ is far more common in UK news broadcasts, and that Spanish media mainly speak of ‘immigrants’. (Berry, Garcia-Blanco and Moore, 2016).

According to this report, refugees and migrants were discussed as threats, but the exact threat would vary. For example, migrants were portrayed as a threat to national security in 10.1% of articles in Italy, 9.2% in Spain, 8.5% in Britain, 4.8% in Germany and 2.3% in Sweden. The discussion of refugees and migrants as a cultural threat or a threat to community cohesion was most prevalent in the British press (10.8%), followed by Swedish (8.2%), Italian (8.1%), Spanish (7.4%) and German (5.3%) newspapers. Another noticeable finding was the high incidence of threats to welfare/health systems in the UK press (18.3%) which was much higher than the other countries in the sample (Sweden 11.4%, 7.9% Germany, 7.3% Italy, 6.7% Spain). The prevalence of negative refugee frames could also be seen in the greater tendency for the British press to link refugees and migrants to crime (8.2%) than in other countries (Italy 4.3%, Germany 3.7%, Italy 2.6%, Spain 1.7%) (Berry, Garcia-Blanco and Moore, 2016).

This might seem like unimportant wordplay that has no effect on the actual substance of the matter, but the use of words and their connotation can have severe consequences in politics. Ruz (2015) wrote an article about the ‘battle over words to describe migrants’. She observes that while ‘migrant’ simply means ‘he/she who moves’, it has obtained another connotation during the migration crisis in 2015. She argues that it now means something along the lines of a ‘member of the influx that is not a refugee’. “‘Refugee’ implies that we have an obligation to people,” says Alexander Betts, director of the Refugee Studies Centre at Oxford University, in the article. “It implies that we have to let them on to our territory and give them the chance to seek asylum.” ‘Migrants’ is a more abstract term. The importance of word choice and framing is obvious here.

Because this investigation revolves around media from the United Kingdom, and media here are found to use this abstract term and to portray migrants as threats significantly more, it is assumed that these media are relatively critical of migration and will therefore pose a frame that differs significantly from the one by the NGO’s. Though there are exceptions, newspapers do not often explicitly take a stance in the debate surrounding the identities of the migrants. They do, however, provide a platform for government leaders, EU officials and NGO’s alike to voice their opinions. This ‘indirect framing’ is quite common and can be considered as effective in influencing public opinion as a statement on behalf of the newspaper. The newspapers analysed here are from the United Kingdom, not only because the United Kingdom in general has been more critical of a welcoming immigration policy, but also because newspapers in English are perceived to be popular among policy makers and other political actors within the European Commission and among government leaders. In order for these actors to be able to be influenced, it is important that they actually are conscious about the framing in the newspapers. While public opinion is also influenced by tabloid newspapers, these are usually not very popular among EU

policy makers and are therefore deemed less likely to influence the decision making. For these reasons, the analysed media are The Guardian and the Financial Times. These two are very influential and available throughout Europe. Their coverage of the migrant crisis will be assessed in a qualitative way by determining what the underlying frames of the article are saying about who the refugees are, what they want and what European countries (especially the UK, since both newspapers are based there) should do in order to cope with the crisis.

For the media, every time frame consists of ten articles by The Guardian and ten by the Financial Times. LexisNexis allows us to sort the articles on relevance using the keywords ‘migrant’, ‘migrants’, ‘refugee’ or ‘refugees’. This then enables us to make a selection based on relevance for these issues. For the third case, the external solutions, the keyword ‘Turkey’ is included. Whenever LexisNexis shows an article twice in its search results, it is only taken into account once. This way, the research only takes into account twenty articles that have the migration crisis as primary subject within the decided time frame. This means sixty articles in total.

#### **4.2.3 European Commission**

The European Commission publishes a lot of press releases and other communications and these can be used for framing research. While there are other institutions within the European Union, these are less qualified to represent the Union as a whole. The European Commission serves as the policy maker in European politics, and pushes an agenda that tries to increase the competences of the European Union. The only other institution one could legitimately consider as mouthpiece of the entire EU would be the European Parliament, but they are not a primary policy maker when crises like the migrant crisis emerge. The European parliament has limited powers when it comes to crisis management.

The statements of the European Commission are part of the framing contests that this research aims to reconstruct. The statements and/or speeches by the European Commission were chosen based on the keywords ‘refugee’, ‘refugees’, ‘migrant’, ‘migrants’, and ‘migration’. In the third case, the word ‘Turkey’ was included. The analysis includes thirty statements in total equally divided over the three cases discussed. This will enable the research to say something about the way the European Commission positioned itself in the framing contests.

#### **4.2.4 Government leaders**

This research will include written remarks and interviews that were distributed by national governments of Great Britain, Germany, The Netherlands and France, as well as statements by European Council president Donald Tusk. These statements contain not only the positions of the countries, as well as the decisions that were agreed upon, but also the frames that serve to legitimize said decisions and serve to resonate with the values, norms and self-perceived identities of citizens. The countries are chosen for

two reasons. There is the practical reason of language deciphering, but they are chosen because they are thought, on average to have a great impact on European deliberations.

For the government leaders, the statements involving migration issues are particularly found surrounding European Council summit meetings revolving around the topic, as these are more likely to contain references to this particular issue. Therefore, the statements of the government leaders and of European Council president Donald Tusk were specifically chosen because they were in the same week as a European Council summit. Responses of government leaders after the summits of June and September are taken into account in both analyses of which they are on the verge, because they are interesting in answering questions from both time frames. So responses of the June summit are taken into account in the first phase, as well as the second. Speeches and statements surrounding the summit in September are taken into account for the second as well as the third case. That way, every case includes ten speeches, statements or press releases, and there are twenty statements in total.

#### **4.2.5 Time frames**

The different cases that are addressed in this research also make for different time frames. The framing contest and discussion surrounding the ‘problem’ (the label and nature of the immigrants) is obviously mainly sparked during the first weeks of the crisis. Therefore, the discussed articles by the media and the European Commission will be published between April 19<sup>th</sup> 2015 and the final remarks on the European Council summit at the-end of June in 2015. This timeframe contains the aftermath of the boat accident on the 20<sup>th</sup> of April, as well as the proposals by the European Commission and the decision by the European Council.

For the framing of internal solutions, a similar period is chosen, from the summit in June up until the end of September, when the discussion about relocation is topical. September is when the decision is taken to relocate tens of thousands of refugees across Europe (Holehouse, 2015). Remarks from that meeting are included and the same goes for remarks on that meeting in the days after the summit.

From that point on, more steps were taken towards an external solution. Negotiations with Turkey were started. The third time frame focuses on the period from the extraordinary JHA council on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September, when the decision is made to start the dialogue with Turkey, to March of 2016, when the European Council agrees to the EU-Turkey statement to end the irregular migration from Turkey to the EU. Here too, the responses after the summit are taken into account.

## **5. Analysis**

### **5.1 First case: The framing contest of the ‘problem’.**

This chapter starts with the ways in which multiple non-governmental organisations use framing or labels to influence the debate. Then, it shows to what extent these labels have been picked up by media networks. British newspapers are expected to take a point of view that is different from the NGO's. Thereafter, the European Commission is expected to be influenced by the content of the media coverage, as well as by the comments of NGO's, so the way in which the Commission refers to these people in press releases and other statements will be examined. Finally, the task of agreeing on solutions on the European level on migration issues rests with the members of the European Council, which are the heads of government of member states (Lavenex, 2001). They convene at the 26<sup>th</sup> of June, and analysing the statements they released there will allow us to say something about how they were influenced.

#### **5.1.1 NGO's**

IOM makes multiple statements during the spring of 2015 highlighting the salience of the situation in the Mediterranean and describes how people are risking their lives trying to set sail for European shores. In the first statements of our sample, IOM speaks of ‘migrants’ or ‘passengers’, whenever they have survived the crossing they are named ‘survivors’.

IOM is explicit about the origins of the migrants. It states that “the majority of them comes from Sub-Saharan Africa” (IOM, 2015b) The reasons for the crossings are mostly that these people were “forced” (IOM, 2015b). IOM asks attention for women from Africa who are making the crossing, “many of whom are being trafficked into the sex industry” (IOM, 2015c). IOM does not speak of ‘refugees’ in our sample until a distinction is made between irregular migrants on the one hand and refugees on the other, based upon the idea that refugees are in genuine need of help while irregular migrants have other reasons for moving towards Europe. The press statement on the 26th of June titled ‘Resettlement in Germany for Group Previously Detained in Egypt’ states that the Egyptian government is making this distinction.

The UNHCR on the other hand, uses the term ‘refugees’ as its standard phrase for people migrating to Europe. The organisation exclusively refers to ‘migrants’ in the phrase ‘refugees and migrants’ except once, when the term is used in the phrase ‘asylum seekers and migrants’. When discussing the reasons for travelling to Europe, the UNHCR is very clear at the start of the crisis. In April, it states that “UNHCR has been advocating for an urgent response from the European Union to deal with the challenges faced by the thousands of people risking their lives to find safety in Europe.” (UNHCR, 2015b). This means the UNHCR pushes the frame that the migrants are risking their lives to find safety. They are not adrift to gain from it in an economic way, they are travelling because they fear for their safety.

UNHCR, more clearly than IOM, emphasizes the need to ‘save lives’ from the start of the crisis. During the first summit on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April, the organisation calls upon European leaders to “put human life, rights, and dignity first today.” (UNHCR, 2015c). It calls these crossing ‘desperate’, which implies that they were involuntary. Furthermore, they want the EU leaders to combat what they call ‘vilifying migrants and refugees’(UNHCR, 2015c). This is the ‘saving lives’-frame, in which migrants are portrayed as innocent and desperate, and there is a moral appeal to the humanitarian obligation the EU has to save these people’s lives.

A few weeks later, on the 13<sup>th</sup> of May, UNHCR states that “record levels of global displacement from wars and conflict in Syria, Iraq, the Horn of Africa and other regions of sub-Saharan Africa, coupled with insecurity in Libya and blocked land routes for mixed migration flows in other regions, have in recent years combined to fuel a sharp increase in refugees seeking to enter Europe by one of the few remaining means possible - travel by sea.” (UNHCR, 2015d) So according to the UNHCR it was conflict that sparked the flow of migrants. The migrants are later in the document referred to as ‘people in (clear) need of international protection’ (UNHCR, 2015e). This new term is regularly used in the press release.

Concluding, whereas NGO’s do not yet agree on how to label the people crossing, they do agree on the image of people ‘trying to find safety’, sparked by conflict, and that Europe has a moral and humanitarian obligation to save their lives. This is called the ‘saving lives’-frame. It revolves around the migrants being innocent people who are forced to leave their homes. They are not coming to Europe out of economic or financial ambition, but because the political situation in their home countries has made it impossible for them to stay there. This frame was very consequently adopted by the NGO’s, with hardly any mention of other reasons for crossing. Nor is there much mention of migrants as threats (or assets) to European society.

### **5.1.2 Media**

When looking at the newspapers, The Guardian had no coverage on the issue of refugees fleeing Syria towards Europe for the first eleven days of March. In this time, the only time Syrian refugees were mentioned at all was in an article on the future of journalism, making an example out of the ‘Refugee Republic’-project of Dutch newspaper De Volkskrant. On the twelfth of March The Guardian posed its own view on the ongoing crisis. The article was an editorial stance on the issue, (The Guardian, 2015a) in which they discussed how most refugees are actually reluctant to travel to Europe: “...the majority of refugees who want to stay close to their country, ready to go home as soon as they possibly can.” They are referred to as “victims” and the editorial claims that “Great Britain has a humanitarian obligation to help these people.” In this sense, they adopt the frame of the NGO’s.

The Guardian quotes prime minister Cameron on the 20th of April saying that “we should put the blame squarely with the criminal human traffickers who are the ones managing, promoting and selling this trade, this trade in human life,” (...) “We are doing everything we can to try and stop them” (Traynor, 2015a). In the same article, the newspaper quotes Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi as he calls the traffickers “slave drivers” of the 21st century. Cameron makes what The Guardian describes as a “U-turn” (Traynor, 2015b) and accepts more search-and-rescue operations. Surrounding the summits, there is little talk of the identity of migrants and of the reasons for crossing. The European political arena is highlighted, looking for ways to deal with the crisis. They are already looking for solutions. Even though the different views of government leaders and EU officials are interesting for the analysis of the political situation, they are not useful when identifying the framing of the perceived problem. They will therefore be discussed in the next section.

One of the institutions frequently quoted by The Guardian is the British Refugee Council, which stresses the ‘saving lives’-frame and portrays migrants as people who are seeking refuge involuntarily on the 11th of May, as they “were fleeing war-torn and brutal regimes.” (Travis, 2015a). It is in the same article that The Guardian first coins the term “people in need of international protection”. Both this phrase and the voice of the British Refugee Council are found recurring in later Guardian publications (Trilling, 2015).

The analysis in the Financial Times by Gideon Rachman (Rachman, 2015) does not revolve around the question what the reasons for crossing the Mediterranean are, but on the different strategies that Europe could adopt to cope with the problem. He started with a comparison with the attacks on Charlie Hebdo, which sparked mass protest. His claim that there will not be such a protest to save lives out on sea is a quite cynical way to touch upon an indifference among the European public.

The Financial Times highlights the background of some migrants by looking for causes in Libya on the 20th of April: “The Libyan civil war has turned the country into the main hub for human traffickers seeking to take advantage of refugees searching for a better life in Europe from across the Middle East and Africa. In many cases migrants are subjected to abuse even as they pay hefty fees to the smugglers which often allegedly go to finance the feuding militias” (Politi et al., 2015). Two striking things happen in these few lines. First, The archetype of the villain is extensively portrayed upon the human traffickers (Van Gorp, 2010) and secondly a reason is given for the refugees to risk their lives crossing the sea: “searching for a better life”. The Financial Times repeats a variant of this last phrase in a report on June 15th from Sicily, where the journalist interviewed some who made the crossing. These people want to go to Germany to work, and they ‘seek a new life’ (Politi, 2015).

Concluding, The Guardian takes a stance to make the British government take in more refugees. The newspapers adopt the notion that Britain has a moral obligation to accept more refugees and they criticize the UK government for not doing that and seeking other solutions. However, by regularly quoting UK government officials, the newspapers leave room for debate on the identity of migrants. On the whole the newspapers are more critical of the migration wave than the NGO's. The term 'looking for a better life', coined multiple times by The Financial Times, implies that they are not just forced to look for safety, but could be seeking economic prosperity.

### **5.1.3 European Commission**

On the discussion on what to call the subjects of this crisis, the European Commission has been rather consistent. In the period of April through to September of 2015, the commission released dozens of press statements with the word 'refugee' in the title. This research includes ten of them. The European Commission referred to migrants as 'People in clear need of international protection' starting the 27<sup>th</sup> of May (European Commission, 2015b).

In the days after the first summit in April, the EU Commissioner for humanitarian aid and crisis management, Christos Stylianides, describes migrants as "people who have been forced to leave their homes and desperately look for a safe place to live. People who lack the opportunity to earn a living. They have suffered enough!" (European Commission, 2015e). In the wake of the first summit, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker adds that "As the richest continent, we must play our part in ensuring that people who take to boats, driven by necessity, do not drown off our coasts. That is our common task!" (European Commission, 2015d). Note that while the word 'necessity' is very broad, it excludes the notion that people come willingly. It supports the 'saving lives'-frame.

While commissioner Avramopoulos did also highlight the fighting smugglers and addressing the root causes for the migration (which would be the unstable situation in Syria), he also denied that migrants come for their own benefit, and reiterated that they come to seek refuge on the 20<sup>th</sup> of May: "And let me be very clear: this is not due to any 'pull factor'. This is because our immediate neighbourhood is on fire. It is because we are living at a time of instability and Europe is seen as a refuge at times of crisis" (European Commission, 2015f). However, in the same speech, he also added a narrative on the identity of those who come to Europe that we have not yet seen before: he tried to convince people that Europe was in need of workers with particular skills, and that these migrants might be those workers. "While the working age population in the European Union will decline by 17.5 million, foreign skilled workers that can complement our own will be important to support Europe's economic development." (European Commission, 2015f).



This is somewhat at odds with the statement released only days later, which is very clear on the identity of most migrants: “The majority of refugees are children and young people, whose future holds little prospect and risks becoming a fertile breeding ground for radicalization if we don’t boost our response” (European Commission, 2015g). The Commission used all available frames to defend its position towards migrants, even if these frames clash among themselves.

For the occasion of World Refugee Day, the European Commission released a joint statement that very much highlighted the moral responsibility and humanitarian obligation that the EU has, as well as the notion that many are forced to leave their homes rather than ‘look for a better life’. “On World Refugee Day, the Commission calls on leaders in Europe to follow through on their commitment to greater solidarity and shared responsibility in addressing refugee crises. These are human lives at stake, and the European Union as a whole has a moral and humanitarian obligation to act” (European Commission, 2015j).

The European Commission can thus be said to take certain points of view from the NGO’s, rather than from the more critical media. The humanitarian obligation that is highlighted is a frame that combines well with the NGO approach, and it states on World Refugee Day that these people are running for their lives instead of looking for a better life. The Commission attempts to make citizens and government leaders more willing to accept refugees by giving all sorts of reasons. First, they focus on the humanitarian responsibility towards refugees, while secondly their focus is sometimes on solidarity with fellow member states. In still other instances, the Commission argues that accepting refugees is good for member states because it will enhance their economies. Finally it also highlights that refugees are vulnerable to becoming radicalized, so it is important to offer them a safe place. The European Commission is not very consistent in its messaging here, even though it is very clear about its goals.

#### **5.1.4 Government leaders**

When looking at statements released by heads of government in the second half of April of 2015, it is striking that the leaders, united in the European Council led by Donald Tusk, had similar views of the people coming to Europe. Donald Tusk stated that the migrant flow “is caused by poverty, war, instability, failing states and a population boom in Africa” (European Council, 2015a). François Hollande, president of France, said that people from Eritrea are ‘fleeing’ and ‘risking their life’ (France in the United States, 2015a). Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel added that there are situations that “force people to flee their homes” (German Federal Government, 2015a).

The statement of Donald Tusk after the meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> of April has many phrases in it that stress the importance of ‘saving lives’, which he explicitly stated is the priority. He referred to those whose lives they must save as ‘innocent people’. Similarly, Angela Merkel stated “We will do all we can to

prevent more people dying in a most excruciating way in the Mediterranean. (...) The most important thing is to prevent any more loss of life in the Mediterranean. That cannot be reconciled with our values.” (German Federal Government, 2015a). Hollande added that taking part in a solution is “a matter of its (France’s, red.) honour and duty” (France in the United States, 2015a).

However, he and the other leaders already agreed that search and rescue missions would not be enough: “The best way to protect people from drowning is to ensure that they do not get on the boats in the first place” (European Council, 2015a). There is much emphasis in almost all statements that a comprehensive approach is needed, which includes dealing with smugglers and with circumstances that incline people to start migrating. David Cameron stated after a phone call with the leaders of Malta and Italy, that “all three leaders agreed that the criminal networks behind human traffickers were primarily to blame for this tragedy, and that the highest priority had to be action to disrupt their activities.” (Prime Minister’s Office, 2015a)

In one of the statements made surrounding the European Council summit in the end of June, British Prime minister David Cameron addressed the House of Commons. He stated that the right course of action was to “alleviate the poverty and failure of governance that so often drives these people from their homes in the first place” (Prime Minister’s Office, 2015b). Angela Merkel did once state that two German naval vessels were involved and “have saved several thousand people from acute distress at sea in the last few weeks” (German Federal Government, 2015b).

François Hollande, while still calling solidarity and responsibility main factors in the effort, focused his short statement not on saving lives in the Mediterranean, but on how to welcome refugees or migrants once they have arrived: “Particularly the reception on European shores, must be settled” (France in the United States, 2015b). Donald Tusk also focused on the reception of refugees as he highlights that “irregular arrivals” should be registered in the front line countries and he call the voluntary relocation of migrants “an agreement with which we can work, and on which we can build” (European Council, 2015b). There was no mention of the way he perceives the ones crossing the Mediterranean.

Concluding, the different government leaders had not yet unified their frames at this point in time. “Preventing more people dying in an excruciating way in the Mediterranean”, as Angela Merkel stated, (German Federal Government, 2015a) was a much heard approach. This is in line with the ‘saving lives’-frame. . Donald Tusk uses frames and narratives that match this narrative as well. On the other hand David Cameron was already focusing on the causes in the background. These were perceived to be war, failing governments and poverty. This supports the notion that the difference in frames seen between NGO’s and British media had infiltrated among state leaders. François Hollande took over one of the narratives of the European Commission, calling for solidarity with other member states.

## **5.2 Second case: the framing contest of internal solutions**

In the summer of 2015, the debate revolved around the way in which European countries were to resettle and relocate migrants among members, relieving overburdened countries like Italy and Greece. This is referred to as ‘internal solutions’, because these are agreements between EU member states rather than between EU member states on the one hand and a third country on the other. The analysis will examine the way the negotiations and the outcome were framed by NGO’s, the media and the European Commission while the government leaders were trying to work out an internal solution. Like before, articles, statements and press releases by NGO’s, media and the European Commission on the subject are analysed. Finally, the way in which this has influenced the discourse among government leaders of EU member states will be discussed by assessing their statements made in September, surrounding the summit of Justice and Home Affairs, as well as the extraordinary council summit of leaders.

### **5.2.1 NGO’s**

When looking at the IOM’s statement in the summer of 2015, only now does the IOM seem to focus on the identity of migrants. Frequent reports are released in which the organisation keeps track of the origins of those who cross the Mediterranean. IOM Director General William Lacy Swing is quoted on the 14th of August saying on the approach that European nations should take to deal with the crisis that “the expected number of arrivals may appear high, but it is a number that could be easily absorbed by the European Union (EU), a huge area with over 500 million people” (IOM, 2015d). Co-operation between EU member states is deemed important if they are to come up with an approach that would improve the policies from a humanitarian and moral point of view. “At the same time, we must promote, at a public level, an open, balanced and unbiased discourse on the issue of migration flows to Europe, since the public debate on this phenomenon is too often based on emotions, stereotypes, and myths - not on reality” (IOM, 2015d). Swing was clearly still challenging the notion that refugees are anything other than harmless and desperate, by using ‘myths’. A month later, on September 24th, he welcomed the announcements by the European Council to significantly increase resources for humanitarian assistance in neighbouring countries to Syria as well as the decision to relocate 120,000 people extra. Swing welcomed these decisions, saying IOM hopes this will be “a beginning to the solution” (IOM, 2015e) and adding that “Europe’s decision is long overdue, and comes as the logical response after the world community waited far too long to face up to its responsibility to tackle conditions in Syria and other trouble zones” (IOM, 2015e). So he argued that there is a responsibility for the whole world in tackling the Syrian crisis, and this means that the EU is at least partly responsible for the crisis in the Mediterranean. Also, it makes clear that the IOM is in favour of relocation.

UNHCR was much more outspoken than the IOM about what it thought the European approach should be. In many statements by different spokespersons it stressed time and again that solving the crisis will

take “solidarity and responsibility-sharing” (UNHCR, 2015d; UNHCR, 2015h). The organisation repeatedly urges European leaders to take action, and insists that these actions should be mandatory for all EU member states. This already happened on the 10<sup>th</sup> of July, two weeks after the European Council summit, as spokesperson William Spindler argued that “An urgent response from Europe is needed before the situation deteriorates further” (UNHCR, 2015f). The same article explicitly argued in favour of relocation schemes: “UNHCR hopes that details to relocate 40,000 people in need of protection within the EU will also soon be finalized, demonstrating solidarity with those EU countries like Greece who are facing unprecedented numbers of refugee arrivals” (UNHCR, 2015f). António Guterres, the head of the UN refugee agency, stated that “People who are found to have a valid protection claim in this initial screening must then benefit from a mass relocation programme, with the mandatory participation of all EU member states” (UNHCR, 2015g). He repeated one phrase three times in this article: “no country can do it alone, and no country can refuse to do its part” (UNHCR, 2015g).

UNHCR Spokesperson Melissa Fleming used similar words on the 7th of August, when she highlighted the situation in the French city of Calais. “UNHCR is reiterating its call made since the summer 2014 for a comprehensive response” and “An exceptional response is urgently needed” (UNHCR, 2015h). The organisation asked for this solidarity again on the 21st of August, as the UNHCR once again urged the EU that “Europe must act together in response to this growing crisis and help overstretched countries like Greece, FYR Macedonia and Serbia” (UNHCR, 2015i).

UNHCR and IOM, in summary, emphasize many times that the matter is urgent and that doing nothing is not an option, without then specifying what exactly should be done. They welcome a relocation scheme, because they reason that ‘no country can do it alone, and no country can refuse to do its part’ and they want it to be comprehensive and mandatory (UNHCR, 2015g) arguing that the EU is big enough to house large numbers of migrants without great consequences to the population. They urge government leaders not to be frightened by ‘stereotypes’ and ‘myths’ that make refugees look bad.

### **5.2.2 Media**

The Guardian spoke with two migrants who were among the few hundred that Great Britain had accepted before the article was published in early July, as well as with UK Citizens-community leader and Rabbi Danny Rich. He argues that “[Our suggestion] isn't an open-door immigration policy, but it is about reviving the proud British tradition of offering shelter and hope to those who are in dire need” (Gentleman, 2015).

In the articles that follow, British policy makers were given the chance to give their views. First, Minister James Brokenshire was quoted as telling the House of Lords’ EU Committee that the focus of UK efforts should be to “break the flow of migrants and that is where the emphasis should lie rather than on

relocation within Europe” (Travis, 2015b). Prime Minister Cameron was later discussed: “On Wednesday the prime minister said taking more refugees wasn’t the answer and talked in vague terms of meeting ‘big challenges’” (Harding et al., 2015). His basic stance was described on the 4th of September as “break the link between people getting into the boats and getting settlement in Europe” (Travis, 2015c). “Cameron’s refusal to participate in the EU relocation scheme is based on the same logic that led to the initial refusal to take part in planned European search and rescue operations in the Mediterranean. As one Foreign Office minister infamously put it: “It creates an unintended “pull factor”, encouraging more migrants to attempt the dangerous sea crossing and thereby leading to more tragic and unnecessary deaths.” This policy of “breaking the link” between getting into Europe via the refugee boats and getting to stay in Europe is what led Cameron to talk about a “swarm of people” trying to cross the Mediterranean and “break into Britain” in search of a better life” (Travis, 2015c).

On the same day, an analysis was made in which State Secretary Theresa May is said to have similar views: “Theresa May has insisted that opening up such legal routes to protection will only act as a “pull factor” encouraging more people to come” (Travis, 2015d). On September 14th, Theresa May offered a soundbite in which she called for European action to “break the business model of the criminal gangs of people smugglers” (Travis, 2015e). A week later, May’s views were described as seeing “Britain's role (...) as being to push for rigorous processing of those who have made it to Europe.” She argues here that “We also need Europe to get on with the job of wider measures that need to be taken of ensuring that we are breaking the link for economic migrants between making this dangerous journey and settling in Europe” (Travis, 2015f).

The article by Patrick Kingsley on the 31<sup>st</sup> of July was very critical of the British efforts, especially in solving the problems in the city of Calais. He argued that Britain failed to “recognise that Calais is a symptom of a much bigger issue: a Europe-wide migration crisis, or even a worldwide one. A crisis that can be mitigated, but not avoided altogether” (Kingsley, 2015b). “For many, the implications of this will be hard to swallow. But the reality is clear: the only logical, long-term response to the Calais crisis is to create a legal means for vast numbers of refugees to reach Europe in safety.” His conclusion was that “The choice is not between a camp at Calais, and blissful isolation. The choice is between a camp at Calais, and an orderly, managed system of mass migration” (Kingsley, 2015b)

Moreover, in multiple articles, the position of the UK government was criticized for being harmful not only on a moral level, but also to UK interests in the long run. This often meant that the UK negotiation about EU membership is included (Harding et al., 2015; Travis, 2015g). The Financial Times also took this stance, saying on the 3rd of August that “British complaints over a few thousand people in Calais trying to cross its borders find few sympathetic ears around Europe, with some EU members having to deal with 10 times the number of asylum seekers” (Robinson et al., 2015a) They added on September

2<sup>nd</sup>: “Although the UK can legally opt out of Europe’s common asylum policy and its efforts to relocate refugees, London’s unwillingness to take more people is burning its political capital with allies, particularly in Berlin and Rome” (Sutherland, 2015).

In this period, the media regularly compared the British and German approach and stance on immigration. The Guardian mentioned that Prime Minister David Cameron had referred to migrants as a “swarm of people” (Harding et al., 2015). This sparked anger in NGO’s as well as opposition leaders. The writers then compared that approach with Chancellor Merkel, who “was widely criticised for acting too slowly in condemning anti-refugee riots in the Saxon villages of Freital and Heidenau. But after she spoke out, both centre-left and centre-right politicians have largely united around Merkel’s leadership on the issue” (Harding et al., 2015). In this article, they did not only compare the approaches of governments, but also of British and German media, highlighting that British media were much more critical of immigration and sometimes even racist. In this regard, one example is The Sun, who referred to migrants as ‘cockroaches’ (Harding et al., 2015).

The opinion article in the Financial Times of July 26<sup>th</sup>, written by Hungarian philanthropist and businessman George Soros was critical of the effectiveness of European efforts: “In the present refugee crisis the EU has failed to act collectively, leading countries to take matters into their own hands. Hungary is building a fence along its border with Serbia. Frontline states are shirking their obligations under the European asylum system, for instance by failing to provide adequate reception and asylum processing capacity, thus encouraging them to move elsewhere in the EU. France and Austria have temporarily reinstated passport controls at borders” (Soros, 2015). The article argued that the relocation scheme should be mandatory rather than voluntary, but the fact that this was impossible to achieve is telling of the ineffectiveness of the EU. This is stated in another article: “These programmes embody the spirit of shared responsibility that lies at the heart of the EU. If they do not become permanent and mandatory features of the common European asylum system, it will fall apart. If improved, however, the European asylum system could serve as a model for international co-operation on refugee protection” (Robinson & Spiegel, 2015). On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of September, The Financial Times added that “The EU is in disarray. Faced with waves of asylum seekers from conflict-ridden states, too many European countries have acted selfishly and unilaterally, undermining any chance of an effective collective response to the crisis. Rather than calmly handling an eminently manageable situation, they have made Europe appear incompetent, near hysterical and without integrity” (Sutherland, 2015).

On September 22<sup>nd</sup>, after the unwilling countries are forced by the qualitative majority vote, the Financial Times cited Camino Mortera-Martinez at the Centre for European Reform, a think-tank. “The sad thing is that many EU member states seem to be following just national logic” (Robinson & Spiegel, 2015).

Concluding, the media are still critical of the approach of the UK and portray this by making positive stories about accepted refugees as well as non-flattering comparisons to the perceived generosity of Germany and Ireland. However, since the crisis becomes more and more political, the newspapers have more room for the opinions of their own UK government leaders and room to evaluate the lack of unity among member states. They are reporting on the ‘disarray’, the ‘following national logic’ and the underlying differences between member states. The comparisons also highlight that there is no unanimous approach. The discourse in newspapers shifts away from migrants and refugees, and revolves more around the political arena in which member states try to have their interests served on the European level.

### **5.2.3 European Commission**

After the meeting of the home affairs council in Luxembourg in the beginning of July, commissioner Avramopoulos praised the Agenda on Migration as a comprehensive package that would determine Europe’s shared migration policy. “Now it was up to the member states to put solidarity in practice” (European Commission, 2015i). He admitted that the members were not there yet, and repeated the goal for the commission: “For the Commission, it is essential to reach the overall targets set by the European Council: 40,000 applicants to be relocated and 20,000 refugees to be resettled over the next two years.” Although negotiations at this point were still ongoing, he ended his statement saying “Europe finally took the lead. We will continue to move forward and implement fully the European Agenda on Migration. We will do our utmost to manage migration better” (European Commission, 201i).

The commission called numerous times on swift and joint action of the member states. It supported the strengthening of cooperation between Member States saying “We all need to do more, together and swiftly. (...) This is a European challenge, and requires a European response.” (European Commission, 2015i). This was meant to mobilize member states to step away from the status quo in order to come to a common European approach.

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of September, the European Commission applauded the member states for agreeing to “express their solidarity with one another by deciding to relocate throughout the EU 40,000 refugees.” It added that “Solidarity must also go hand in hand with responsibility” (European Commission, 2015k). In the same statement, it called upon member states to “work together swiftly, responsibly and with solidarity in managing the refugee crisis.” And once more: “We called for a strong effort in European solidarity when presenting the Commission’s proposals to the European Parliament on 9 September (...) We now need to see the same sense of responsibility and urgency on the new emergency measures we proposed last week. More ambition is needed to respond to the magnitude of the challenge that Europe is facing. We need to come to a more fundamental change of the current system to better combine

responsibility, solidarity and effective management within a truly European Asylum and Migration Policy. The world is watching us. Now is the time for each and every one to take responsibility” (European Commission, 2015k).

Concluding, the European Commission had a very optimistic view about European collaboration, saying that Europe was taking the lead, moving forward, and that solidarity and responsibility are key factors in the European approach. It was trying to bring about change and move away from the status quo that was formed by the Dublin agreement. However, reading closely, it never tried to discuss concrete ideas for relocation but rather remained vague, coining terms as solidarity, together, and comprehensive without coming with suggestions on how to make that more concrete.

#### **5.2.4 Government leaders**

Surrounding the European Council summit in June, a decision was made to agree to a voluntary relocation scheme for 60.000 people. Donald Tusk acknowledged that discussions were at times hard: “Yes, the discussion was difficult and at times divisive. There is a balance to be struck between national sovereignty and action at European level in this matter” (European Council, 2015b). David Cameron focused on the need to “combine saving lives with tackling the root causes of this problem. That means breaking the business model of the smugglers – by breaking the link between getting in a boat and getting a chance to arrive and settle in Europe” (Prime Minister’s Office, 2015b). He added that “focusing primarily on setting up a relocation scheme for migrants who have already arrived in Europe, we believe, could be counterproductive, because instead of breaking the smugglers’ business model, it makes their offer more attractive”, in addition to the remarks made that were mentioned when discussing the previous case.

French president François Hollande argued that “France’s position is that every country must make commitments and there must be solidarity in the face of what is a problem” (France in the United States, 2015b). Chancellor Angela Merkel was optimistic about the French wish, saying that “the common political will to achieve a solution was tangible, so that there should be enough scope even on a voluntary basis” and noting that “solidarity must go hand in hand with the efforts of those affected” (German Federal Government, 2015b).

Dutch Prime minister Mark Rutte agreed, arguing that the crisis needed a “common approach” (European Council, 2015c). He noted that the Netherlands “are willing to help as long as it is in accordance with other states, who also should take responsibility”. He was however uncertain if that responsibility would be taken: “I do not have any certainty on that. I would have, if these had been mandatory quota” (European Council, 2015c).



After the Justice and Home Affairs meeting, which exposed great differences of opinion, Chancellor Merkel expressed that the informal meeting of leaders on the 23<sup>rd</sup> was “in the spirit of wanting to tackle the challenges ahead together” (German Federal Government, 2015c). Tusk went on to interpret the agreement: “The measures we have agreed today will not end the crisis. But they are all necessary steps in the right direction. We expect much work will already be done before we meet again at the October European Council. Tonight we have a common understanding that we cannot continue like we did before. Without changing the current paradigm the Schengen area will only exist in theory.” (European Council, 2015d).

He repeated this threat of the Schengen accord two weeks later, in an address to the European Parliament: “Europe without its external borders equals Europe without Schengen.” He stresses the responsibility for the protection of the European political community and its external borders. “Otherwise (...) all of us will become responsible for the re-emergence of walls and barriers on our internal borders, here in Europe.” (European Council, 2015e)

Although all government leaders stressed the importance of a common approach, they cannot agree on what the common approach should entail. However, they all seemed determined to save Schengen and a diffuse tackling of the migration wave is seen as a threat to that system. What stands out, is that Angela Merkel seemed to be moving in the direction of the British newspapers, focusing on the underlying causes of the crisis rather than saving lives. The narrative of the government leaders does not revolve around saving refugees anymore, but around saving the system of open internal borders.

### **5.3 Third case: The framing contest of external solutions**

After the extraordinary summit of the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> of September 2015, initiative was taken to shift from internal to external solutions, meaning that the focus of solving the crisis shifted from trying to agree among EU member states about relocation and resettlement of migrants towards an approach that requires help from a third country. The analysis here will revolve around the question what the NGO's, media, European Commission and government leaders said about striking a deal on migration with any third country in general and Turkey in particular. Once again, the first step is to look at statements, releases and articles by the NGO's, media and European Commission. Finally, statements from government leaders in the end of 2015 and the beginning of 2016, when the deal with Turkey was made official, are analysed.

#### **5.3.1 NGO's**

The NGO's in this analysis never claimed to be fundamentally opposed to the idea of making deals with third countries in order to better deal with the crisis. However, they did voice many concerns. Particularly on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March, the day after the joint statement by the EU heads of government and

state and the Turkish leaders. UNHCR welcomed the proposal, but was concerned because the deal “involves the blanket return of all individuals from one country to another without sufficiently spelt out refugee protection safeguards in keeping with international obligations” (UNHCR, 2016a).

UNHCR went on to name a number of conditions that the countries and the migrants should meet in order to be returned to a third state, such as protection from refoulement, full and effective access to education, work, health care and, as necessary, social assistance. “Pre-departure screening would also need to be in place to identify heightened risk categories that may not be appropriate for return even if the above conditions are met” (UNHCR, 2016a). It repeated these concerns on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of March: “UNHCR is concerned that the EU-Turkey deal is being implemented before the required safeguards are in place in Greece. At present, Greece does not have sufficient capacity on the islands for assessing asylum claims, nor the proper conditions to accommodate people decently and safely pending an examination of their cases” (UNHCR, 2016b)

Where UNHCR had supported ‘hotspots’ in Greece and Italy on the 12<sup>th</sup> of February, it criticized them in this statement on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of March, explaining its shift by noting that “Under the new provisions, these sites have now become detention facilities”(UNHCR, 2016b).

IOM Turkey meanwhile welcomed the new agreement on the 18<sup>th</sup> of March, saying it was needed to “combat irregular activities at borders (including irregular migration and other types of cross border crime)” (IOM, 2016). It was convinced that “This agreement (...) will increase authorities’ abilities to combat irregular migration, human trafficking, drug trafficking, organized crime, and other serious crimes at the common borders. Improved information exchange will also strengthen cooperation between police and customs officials of Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey” (IOM, 2016).

The NGO’s were not fundamentally opposed to a deal with a third country in general or a deal with Turkey in particular. They advocated safety and good treatment for migrants, and while they used to argue that that goal was to be achieved by resettlement and relocation within Europe, they now accepted that it is not impossible to reach these goals in Turkey. However, they had many technical concerns about the treatment of migrants. They criticized the EU member states for closing a deal that might solve some of their problems, but not the ones of the migrants. It is notable that the NGO’s also acknowledge that something must be done about irregular migration and the IOM argues that the new agreement with Turkey will do that.

### **5.3.2 Media**

The Guardian had inside information from ambassadors and EU officials who were very critical of the decision to make a deal with Turkey. “The amount of money we're offering is ludicrous,” said an

ambassador from one of the bigger countries in the EU. “We’re on our knees begging the Turks to close their border” (Traynor, 2015c). Working with a third country was criticized in general. One of the voices with that view is Donald Tusk, who warned against any “naive” expectations that Turkey alone will solve Europe’s crisis, saying the bloc “cannot outsource” border control. “Without control on our external borders, Schengen will become history,” he said (Traynor, 2015d). In December, Melanie Ward of the International Rescue Committee UK was given a podium to voice her concerns. She added that the agreement “is deeply concerning because it is primarily designed to obstruct the movement of those seeking refuge in the EU, which runs contrary to the EU’s basic founding principles. (Kingsley, 2015a).

Moreover, the decision to strike a deal with Turkey in particular was heavily questioned. "Do you know anyone who believes Erdogan will deliver?" asked another senior diplomat, while a top EU policymaker said the EU was “trapped” (Traynor, 2015c). On December 2<sup>nd</sup>, The Guardian claimed that “police turn a blind eye to the smuggling economy in Izmir, where smugglers do business a few metres from two police facilities. On the beaches near the town of Çesme, where many leave for the Greek island of Chios, the departure points are unpoliced and accessible to all” (Kingsley, 2015a). The title of an article in March suggested “Erdogan is a problematic partner but EU desperately needs Turkey's help” (Tisdall, 2016). According to his analysis, Erdogan “knows pressure can work to his advantage” and he is a “master of the political and personal grievance, does not bury the hatchet easily, if at all. He rarely admits mistakes. And he can quickly fly off the handle. All of which makes him a highly unpredictable partner for a desperate EU.”(Tisdall, 2016). However, according to the Financial Times (Robinson, 2016) Donald Tusk, the European Council president, and Jean-Claude Juncker, the European Commission president, “are anxious that any EU criticism of creeping authoritarianism in Turkey could hamper the refugee talks.” One day later, the paper stated that “A deal with Turkey is crucial for reducing the flow of people entering Europe, according to EU officials. This has overridden concerns about the country’s asylum system and human rights record” (Blackden, 2016).

Because of this, the agreement of November was referred to as a “fragile pact” (Traynor, 2015d). There were however positive voices as well, such as president François Hollande: “As Turkey is making an effort to take in refugees - who will not come to Europe – it’s reasonable that Turkey receives help from Europe to accommodate those refugees” (Traynor, 2015d). In response, Turkish prime minister Davutoglu was also optimistic: “Today is a historic day in our accession process to the EU. I am grateful to all European leaders for this new beginning” (Traynor, 2015d).

In February of 2016, The Guardian stated on the divisions between member states: “In the absence of Turkey, EU countries criticised each other for their handling of the migrant crisis. Some leaders also voiced frustration at being forced to spend hours debating the British renegotiation while Europe was struggling to grapple with the refugee crisis. The European council president, Donald Tusk, called on

countries to ‘avoid a battle among plans A, B and C.’ It makes no sense at all because it creates divisions within the European Union” (Rankin, 2016a). The Financial Times noted on March 12<sup>th</sup> that “the EU has moved a lot closer to the hard line policies of Viktor Orbán, the prime minister of Hungary, who was widely excoriated last summer — and away from the initial generosity of Ms Merkel. The deal reached with Turkey is not just squalid, it also looks unworkable” (Financial Times, 2016)

In the beginning of March, The Guardian noted the negotiations were far from friendly, and that there was mutual distrust among the negotiators. They quoted a Greek MEP who was the vice-chair of the European parliament’s joint committee with Turkey, saying the EU was partly to blame because “we haven’t given any money”, while he compared Turkey’s diplomacy to “an eastern bazaar” where Ankara tried to extract the maximum (Rankin & Oltermann, 2016).

As stated before, NGO’s discussed the importance of safeguards to make sure that human rights would be respected in the deal. The Guardian coined this term as well when Vincent Cochetel, director of the UNHCR for Europe is interviewed: “The worry is that the safeguards will not be in place on 20 March” (Rankin, 2016b). This is repeated on the 20th (Rankin, 2015c). Donald Tusk of the European Council meanwhile adopted the frame “to break the business model of the smugglers” in the Financial Times (Robinson & Barker, 2016).

Although the newspapers were critical of Turkey and portray the country as having a bad record on human rights and a untrustworthy leader in president Erdogan, they recognized that the EU had no other option than to strike a deal with a third country because they couldn’t come to agreement among themselves. This frame, of European leaders squabbling over interests without being able to compromise, is widely reported on and it is enhanced by the way the member states acted during the negotiations with Turkey: “EU countries criticised each other for their handling of the migrant crisis” (Rankin, 2016a). The newspapers warned that a deal with Turkey would leave Europe vulnerable on a geopolitical and a moral level, while acknowledging that there was no other solution due to the lack of cohesion among member states.

### **5.3.3 European Commission**

The European Commission emphasized in many press statements that it works together with Turkey in a productive way. The common phrases that the EU and Turkey ‘agree’ and ‘have an understanding’, that they ‘welcome each other’s proposals’ and that “this joint action will render the message of Europe stronger and more visible. Human dignity is at the core of our common endeavour” (European Commission, 2015l) highlight this. The members of the European Commission argued that cooperation with Turkey is inevitable. As First Vice-President Frans Timmermans stated: “In dealing with the refugee crisis, it is absolutely clear that the European Union needs to step up its cooperation with Turkey

and Turkey with the European Union” (European Commission, 2015m). The meeting of the 29<sup>th</sup> of November was described as “a turning point in creating a new momentum in relations, including through a re-energized accession process. It recognized the importance of overcoming together the common challenges ahead as key partners and strategic allies in our region”(European Commission, 2016a).

Jean-Claude Juncker added in December: “Being a great continent comes with great responsibilities. Today we are recommending that our Member States offer temporary protection to vulnerable people fleeing violent conflict in Syria, in line with their individual capacities. This scheme will help establish a fair sharing of the responsibility for the protection of displaced Syrian refugees in Turkey. Turkey is a key partner in our efforts to support these unfortunate people in a dignified way. Many of these people are already being given protection by Turkey, and some will now be protected by the European Union. We agreed with Turkey to reduce together the human misery which comes with irregular migration and to bring order into migratory flows to the European Union” (European Commission, 2015n).

President Juncker said on the 8th of March, 2016 that: “This is a real game-changer. And this is a good deal because it is beneficial in more than one respect. By doing what we are intending to do, we will break the business model of smugglers exploiting human misery and make clear that the only viable way to come to Europe is through legal channels” (European Commission, 2016b). Vice-president Dombrovskis repeated his words in the European Parliament plenary a day later: “The new plan will help us to break the business model of smugglers who exploit human misery. There will no longer be an incentive for Syrians to pay criminals to smuggle them across the Aegean.” Despite the title of the statement being enthusiastic that ‘EU leaders pursue a European approach to the refugee crisis’, the European Commission takes on rhetoric that was before only used by opponents of the common European strategy of relocation and resettlement that the Commission proposed: Juncker applauds the deal for ‘breaking the business model of smugglers’ (European Commission, 2016b).

The European Commission holds on for a long time to much of the rhetoric of NGO’s, stating for example that ‘being a great continent comes with great responsibilities’ (European Commission, 2015n). Despite all media attention claiming the contrary, the Commission denies that there is great discord between European member states and leaders, claiming that there is a common European approach. Meanwhile, the Commission moves towards a deal with Turkey by highlighting the need to stop irregular migration and by complimenting Turkey and talking about revitalized EU accession talks. The fact that Jean-Claude Juncker acknowledged that the ‘business model of the smugglers’ should be broken, is a clear sign that the prevention-oriented immigration policy has defeated the call for an approach based on humanitarian values. Juncker and the European Commission were among the fiercest advocates for the latter, but he has noticed that the opposition to a united mandatory relocation scheme is too great to overcome.

#### 5.3.4 Government leaders

On the day of the extraordinary summit, 10 Downing Street in London released a statement saying that François Hollande and David Cameron had met at Chequers, the official estate of the British Prime Minister. The statement said that “on migration, they agreed that we must use tomorrow’s European Council to focus on a more comprehensive approach, in particular increasing assistance for the countries neighbouring Syria to enable more refugees to stay there. They also agreed that EU countries should do more to return migrants who don’t have a genuine claim for asylum to their countries of origin”. Moreover, it said that “they discussed how a big part of the answer to the refugee crisis must be a solution to the situation in Syria” (Prime Minister’s Office, 2015c).

Dutch prime minister Mark Rutte agreed, saying that “it is important to improve shelter locations in the region. (...) We will work on enhancing control on the external borders of the EU” (European Council, 2015f). He argued that the new agreement will make sure that the “Dublin-rules will be abided by”, reaffirming that there would not be a common European approach as the European Commission had hoped. “Eventually, the goal is to prevent that thousands of people make the crossing to Europe. (...) That way we break the business model of the human traffickers” (European Council, 2015f). Donald Tusk added that “We finally have to understand it - today millions of potential refugees and migrants are dreaming about Europe - not only from Syria, but also from Africa, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq and other places. For all refugees, easy access to Europe and lack of external borders have become, besides the ‘Willkommenspolitik,’ a magnet attracting them to us” (European Council, 2015e)

As president of the European Council, Donald Tusk said he felt it was his goal in the informal meeting to “end the public finger pointing by having an honest discussion among leaders on the nature of the problem and possible solutions.” Mentioning that the discussion was based on facts rather than emotions, “Now the focus should be on the proper protection of our external borders and on external assistance to refugees and the countries in our neighbourhood” (European Council, 2015d).

After the extraordinary meeting, Angela Merkel added her views on tackling the migration crisis: “We must become more active on the foreign-policy front,” said the Chancellor (German Federal Government, 2015c). The EU also intended to help form a government of national unity in Libya, because, as the Chancellor said after the meeting, “In the final analysis we can only really fight the causes of migration if we can resolve these international crises.” “the heads of state and government also agreed to step up dialogue with Turkey. Cooperation with Turkey, which has taken in a huge number of refugees, is to be extended” (German Federal Government, 2015c).

Donald Tusk took a broader approach, naming the country in a list of others: “Now the focus should be on the proper protection of our external borders and on external assistance to refugees and the countries

in our neighbourhood. Leaders have agreed on increased help to Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and other countries in the region. More assistance will be offered in exchange for reinforced cooperation. At least an additional 1 billion euro will be mobilized for help to the refugees in the region via the UNHCR and the World Food Programme” (European Council, 2015d). Chancellor Merkel spoke of a “breakthrough” in the refugee crisis on the 8th of March, if the plans are to be realized. One has “taken a qualitative step forward” and could see that “Turkey is serious about fighting illegal migration”. In return, Europe must assume its responsibility in connection with the Syria conflict, said Merkel. (German Federal Government, 2016). Her statement also read that “the summit participants also asked all NATO members to support the NATO mission in the Aegean. They welcomed the proposals made by Turkey to deal with the refugee crisis” (German Federal Government, 2016).

Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte explained how the deal with Turkey is defensible from an ‘breaking-the-business-model-of-traffickers’-point of view: “We can only lower the number of people coming to Europe by breaking the business model of the smugglers, of the folks who buy dinghies and ferry people across. We now work with the Turks to end the irregular, uncontrolled and because of that very dangerous boat trips. (...) Turkey is prepared to take back all migrants who arrive in Greece, so Syrians as well as non-Syrians. We now try to come to an agreement where we say: for a couple of weeks, every Syrian who gets sent back, is replaced by someone from a camp. The person who is sent back ends up on the bottom of the list, or will never qualify for programmes and you take someone else out of a camp. You only have to do that, we think, for two, three or four weeks. Then it is clear that if you pay money to cross, that it is of no use. That you do not have a chance to stay in Europe” (Rijksoverheid, 2016).

Donald Tusk agreed that the number of migrants should go down: “We agreed that, despite the proper implementation of the Common Action Plan on Migration, the flow of migrants passing through Turkey to Greece is still far too high and should decrease significantly. I am pleased that we agree with Prime Minister Davutoğlu on strengthening our cooperation to achieve concrete results in the coming days” (European Council, 2016)

President François Hollande added that the leaders had been critical of Turkey’s attitude towards free press, but explained that it did not affect the negotiations: “Turkey must also be helped in what it’s doing, but it must also be supported in what it must do, and particularly those readmission procedures and the fight against trafficking and smugglers. (...) That doesn’t mean we shouldn’t be vigilant as regards Turkey, particularly in relation to the press, freedoms and the law.” (France in the United Kingdom, 2016) He also appealed to citizens who are critical and vigilant about Turkey’s ambitions to join the European Union in the future. “Just because the EU and Turkey cooperate – and that’s necessary –, just because Europe helps Turkey – and that’s essential –, just because Turkey itself is being struck

[by terrorism] – and there too it deserves our consideration and solidarity –, that doesn't mean we must overlook violations of rights or freedoms" (France in the United Kingdom, 2016).

Concluding, the government leaders agreed that external borders of the EU had to be controlled in order to maintain the internal system of open borders. They eventually acted not out of humanitarian obligation to help the refugees, not out of the conviction that migrants can support a domestic economy. They decided that prevention of migration was the best way to relieve the Greek immigration system and to maintain Schengen. This meant 'breaking the business model of the smugglers'.

The government leaders hailed Turkey for the fact that it was willing to help. There is little talk on the leaders' level of how the migrants will be treated in Turkey, which was already hardly picked up by the media, so the concerns of NGO's remain largely unanswered. The issue that was in fact picked up by the media, Turkey's track record on press freedom and human rights, is addressed by the leaders. In response to the concerns of the media they reiterated that they have not ceased their criticism of these circumstances within Turkey.



## **6. Results**

After analysing the way in which these different actors have attempted to influence the framing contest over the course of the migration crisis, it is now possible to interpret the findings and discuss the general implications. All three time frames of the crisis will be discussed in order to draw conclusions from them on an empirical level. The conclusions on a theoretical level will be discussed in the chapter ‘Conclusions’.

### **6.1 Case 1: the framing contest of ‘the problem’**

The NGO’s immediately emphasized consistently that the migrants crossing the Mediterranean were in a dire situation, occasionally dismissing claims that they had other goals than just safety as ‘vilifying’ them. These people were portrayed as innocent and harmless, and ‘saving lives’ was a dominant frame in their statements. The notion that was put forth by Duchêne in the 1970’s that European nations have a moral and humanitarian obligation to help those in need, was amplified by NGO’s and particularly the European Commission has proved susceptible for that narrative, emphasizing the need for solidarity and calling for a unified European response in order to save lives. This frame is also picked up by government leaders.

However, this frame did not dominate the discourse completely. Newspapers in the United Kingdom took a different approach. Their discourse quickly focused on the underlying causes of the crisis, namely the traffickers, the conflict in Syria and unstable regimes in Africa and the Middle East. Often, the papers named the lack of prospect in the native lands of the migrants as causes. Whether these people were in fact making the journey as a result of a desire for safety, for economic reasons or a combination of both, is immediately very politically loaded and therefore often left ambiguous, rather by using the phrase ‘looking for a better life’. This was amplified or even instigated by the tones of State Secretary Theresa May and Prime Minister David Cameron, who were quoted in the news media saying that simply accepting refugees was no answer to the problems if the underlying causes remained unaddressed.

In order to make a distinction between people coming to seek refuge and people who seek economic prosperity, the European Commission uses the phrase ‘people in clear need of international protection’, signalling that these people have no other interest than protection, and that European people, member states and institutions have an obligation to provide that protection. The Commission uses both incentives (stating that migrants are good for Western economies) and threats (claiming that migrants could radicalize if their demands are ignored) to convince member states that receiving migrants is in their own interest, rather than out of ‘solidarity’ with migrants. This is possibly done because the idea of solidarity with migrants does not resonate with the public as well as with fellow EU member states (Schmidt, 2013).

The analysis of the frames shows that in the beginning of the crisis, there were different frames surrounding the different government leaders. They were divided in their approaches and frames. In other words, there is no clear winner of the framing contest yet, as it is still ongoing. So government leaders were not unanimous in their positions, and while some leaders adopted the NGO and Commission rhetoric, others were focusing more on the situation in Africa and the Middle East. In particular, the analysis shows a divide between the frames of ‘underlying causes’ and ‘battling smugglers’ of David Cameron on the one hand, and Donald Tusk, Angela Merkel and François Hollande on the other, who focused on the prevention of loss of life and the idea that saving refugees is a matter of honour and duty on the other.

At the European Council summit in June, when the first time frame ends, there is no clear dominant frame yet. Times of crisis can make actors question their core beliefs (Schmidt, 2014 p. 306). In this case, the humanitarian, pro-migrant approach gains momentum, but the status quo with a focus on prevention and security is not altered yet. As Boin et al. (2009) would say, the status quo actors have, up until this point successfully resisted policy change.

There are a number of inconsistencies in the narrative of the European Commission. The first one already becomes apparent in the first time frame. The problem, according to them, starts out as a humanitarian one, but shifts towards a political one. In other words: the main victims of this crisis are first the migrants who need saving, but the discourse shifts towards the Greek and Italian institutions that are overburdened. European member states need to step up, not mainly because it is their duty to save lives, but out of solidarity with fellow member states and out of self-interest, because of the strain on the Schengen agreement. At this point, the fiercest pro-migrant actors had already decided that their stance of solidarity with migrants does not resonate well with the identities of European citizens (Schmidt, 2013), so they choose to link the relocation scheme with solidarity with Greece and Italy, hoping that changing the narrative from ‘saving the migrants’ to ‘saving the Union’ will enhance pro-migrant sentiments.

## **6.2 Case 2: the framing contest of ‘internal solutions’**

In the second time frame, the discussion revolved around the perceived solutions to the problem. Here, an ideological framing contest emerged. On one side were the actors who sought to solve the migration crisis by internally relocating refugees and migrants in order to ease the pressure on the Italian and Greek immigration systems, while actively search and rescue the ones risking drowning in the Mediterranean. On the other hand there were voices who argued that in order to solve the crisis, there must be solutions to the war in Syria and the lack of prospect in other regions. They argue that the best way to stop migrants from drowning is to stop the boats from leaving shore. Generously accepting and welcoming migrants will only attract more of them, resulting in more deaths.

Non-governmental organisations were trying to convince the European countries to actively take part in a relocation scheme, as ‘no country can do it alone, and no country can refuse to do its part’. UNHCR calls to unite European member states in order to take in more migrants out of solidarity with one another. This inherently meant criticism of the existing Dublin agreement, which is in direct contradiction with the idea of relocation. The NGO’s became aware that the crisis was more of a political crisis than a humanitarian one. The media and government leaders did not pick up on the NGO framing of migrants, so they urged government leaders explicitly not to be frightened by ‘stereotypes’ and ‘myths’ that were detrimental to refugees and migrants. UNHCR urged for solidarity between member states rather than solidarity of Europeans with migrants coming to Europe.

The media did adopt this frame to the extent that they were reporting on the ‘disarray’, the ‘following national logic’ and the underlying differences between member states, making clear that the system of open borders is under serious threat. They compared countries to each other, signalling that there is no unanimous approach. The frame of a European Union that was divided within its own ranks and therefore unable to agree upon comprehensive solutions to the migration crisis, won in salience in media reports. The Guardian made a distinction between government leaders calling for ‘solidarity’ and ‘responsibility’ on the one hand, and British leaders calling for ‘breaking the link between stepping aboard and going to Europe’ on the other. Moreover, they made a lot of comparisons with countries that accepted more refugees, such as Germany and Ireland. In the latter case, it is emphasized that Ireland had an opt-out on the relocation scheme as well, but nevertheless received many migrants.

The European Commission was very optimistic about European collaboration outside the Dublin agreement. Its calls for ‘solidarity’ and ‘everyone doing their part’ were attempts to move from the existing European foreign policy to a more common approach among member states. They copied the NGO narrative that the institutions in place in countries like Italy and Greece are overburdened and that they could be relieved by other nations taking responsibility in order to help fellow member states.

There was unmistakably a window of opportunity there, as the European Commission tried to take advantage to bring about policy change. Given the immense public pressure on the status quo generated by the crisis, one could argue that these were ideal circumstances for policy change to come about. The fact that eventually it did not, provides reason to think of frames as entities that are very resilient to change, as well as reason to rethink the position of the European Commission, which failed to capitalize on this opportunity for policy change.

At this point, as some countries closed their borders and/or opposed the forced resettlement and relocation, European Council president Donald Tusk stressed the fear that the system of internal open

borders might in the future only exist on paper. All analysed government leaders therefore agreed with the European Commission that there should be some kind of common European approach to the migration crisis, but they proved unable to reach consensus about what that approach should look like. The British argued that while counteracting smugglers and securing the outer border of the Union is a shared responsibility, they did not have responsibility to harbour refugees as it would create a ‘pull-factor’ and so they opted out of the relocation scheme that was proposed by, among others, Germany. German chancellor Merkel seeks to compromise, emphasizing that more should be done about the foreign policy. These are signs that the momentum, originally held by the side with ambitious plans to save migrants and welcome them, is shifting towards a more prevention-oriented approach.

### **6.3 Case 3: the framing contest of ‘external solutions’**

After the idea was launched to include a third state in forming the solution to the migration crisis, rather than attempting to ease the burden on Italy and Greece by merely relocation and resettlement, negotiations with Turkey were soon stepped up. These negotiations were a direct result of the inability of the European Commission to convince the member states’ governments to unanimously accept a number of migrants.

Although the NGO’s were not fundamentally opposed to a deal with a third country in general or a deal with Turkey in particular, they had many concerns about the treatment of migrants. Turkey, in their opinion, did not meet the standards the NGO’s have set for guaranteeing the safety and wellbeing of refugees. They criticized the EU member states for closing a deal that might solve some of their own problems, but not the ones of the migrants.

Here, the NGO’s and the media agreed in their framing of a deal with Turkey being less than ideal, although they had different reasons for reaching that judgment. Beyond allowing NGO’s a platform to voice their concerns, there was little media attention for the situation of the migrants. Instead, the media consistently portrayed Turkey as having a bad record on human rights and a untrustworthy leader in president Erdogan. Simultaneously, the media recognized that the EU was forced to negotiate with a third country because of its own inability to reach a consensus among member states. They warned that this would leave Europe vulnerable and dependent on a geopolitical and a moral level. The article title that best sums up the frame of the media surrounding the negotiations with Turkey is “Erdogan is a problematic partner but the EU desperately needs Turkey’s help” (Tisdall, 2016).

The European Commission has accepted after the extraordinary JHA meeting in September that substituting the Dublin regulations for a common European approach was a bridge too far, and therefore shifted away from seeing the crisis as an opportunity, to a more status quo-friendly approach. It had been very critical of the Dublin Agreements, but it never came up with a viable alternative, so it lost the

framing contest on the solution to the crisis. This is noticeable in their framing, as Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker too spoke of ‘breaking the business model of the smugglers’, which was earlier only coined by media and government leaders who focused on stopping the crossings themselves rather than providing shelter for refugees throughout Europe. While conceding that the crossings must stop, and that migrants should be kept in Turkey, they did not completely lose their pro-migrant stance: they still emphasized together with the NGO’s that migrants should be treated in a dignified way in order to reduce the human misery.

The government leaders now fully agreed that external borders of the EU must be controlled in order to maintain the internal system of open borders as laid out by the Schengen agreement. This means that the frame of ‘breaking the business model of the smugglers’ has now become dominant among government leaders. Even Angela Merkel, who before was focusing on reducing the humanitarian disaster, claims in 2016 that one of the goals was “das Geschäftsmodell der Schleuser zu zerschlagen” (“to smash the smugglers’ business model”) (German Federal Government, 2016). Since the Commission had adopted this frame as well, this is considered the ‘winning’ frame of the framing contest. Making a deal with Turkey is therefore inevitable. The government leaders praised Turkey for its willingness to help and were careful not to be too critical because that might negatively impact the negotiations, while at the same time responding to the concerns in the media by reiterating that they have not stopped criticizing Turkey’s lack of press freedom and human rights.

## **7. Conclusions and discussion**

### **7.1 Answer to research question**

This paper sought to explore in what way the framing contests around the migration crisis of 2015 developed. The analysis shows that the original frame was one of humanitarian obligation to ‘save lives’, because the refugees crossing the Mediterranean were forced to flee to Europe. NGO’s and the European Commission sought to influence other actors by calling for solidarity, responsibility and common actions, based upon moral values and humanitarian obligations. This frame was then challenged by a more critical narrative, of migrants not only coming for safety but also for economic benefit. This meant that the situation in Africa and the Middle East, as well as the issue of smugglers persuading people to make the dangerous crossing, were underlying causes that had to be addressed.

These two frames were at the root of the developing contest that ensued: While the European Commission and NGO’s like the UNHCR and IOM promoted the frame that called for a revision of the Dublin agreements and for solidarity among member states to harbour many refugees, many of those member states wanted to ‘break the business model of the smugglers’ by making the crossing impossible. Their reasoning was that a welcoming stance towards refugees would only increase the number of crossings due to the ‘pull-factor’. The media meanwhile reported from different sides, but given that the included newspapers were from the United Kingdom, their reporting focused around the UK government and so the frames that this government pushed, were relatively often included. UK officials were also more quoted than members of the European Commission or pundits from NGO’s.

This contests resembled closely the two possible answers of the paradox described by Lavenex (2001): the Commission wanted the policy to change so that the framing of Europe as a protector of morals and humanitarian efforts could be upheld. Meanwhile, government leaders were using frames such as ‘breaking the business model of smugglers’ in order to better fit the existing prevention-oriented immigration policies. In the vocabulary of Boin et al. (2009), the European Commission increasingly presented itself as a change advocate. The institution was trying to reform the European immigration policy from a prevention-focused approach dominated by national sovereignty towards a more humanitarian, supranational approach. It sees the crisis as an opportunity to increase its influence. However, the frames of the Commission were not consistent enough, which has hurt its legitimacy and credibility. It argued for solidarity, but shifted from solidarity with refugees to solidarity with fellow member states. They gave a number of reasons to welcome refugees, but these arguments were not coherent and at times even contradicting, making it hard to resonate with the public. Concluding, this disorganized crisis communication decreased the actor’s credibility (Boin et al., 2009).

Meanwhile, the status quo actors are expected to attempt to preserve the policies of before the crisis, based on national sovereignty. Therefore, it is noteworthy that government leaders do emphasize the importance of cooperation between states, albeit intergovernmental solutions rather than supranational ones. These actors, who were critical of relocation and resettlement and preferred a focus on preventing the crossings, had a consistent narrative that was a coherent answer to the frame of the European Commission in that it reasoned that relocation would merely cure the symptom, whereas the real problems lay firstly beyond Europe's borders and secondly in the fact that those borders were not solid enough.

Eventually, the European Commission and the NGO's failed to unite all member states for one shared European immigration policy. This led to the other frame deciding the course of action, which was to negotiate with Turkey about preventing migrants from crossing the Mediterranean. While there were some doubts about the trustworthiness of Turkey in a deal like this in both NGO's and media, the EU was forced to negotiate on account of it not being able to find agreement among its own members. The main difference between the two frames is that the frame of the European Commission was used inconsistently, with different reasons for supporting migrants and relocation that were conflicting among themselves, while the other frame was a consistent answer to the question how the humanitarian crisis in the Mediterranean could be resolved, namely through prevention of the crossings.

## **7.2 Theoretical and societal implications**

Lavenex' (2001) prediction was that when European Union member states are forced to work together on matters of immigration, they will focus on prevention rather than humanitarian efforts, since that was the dominant frame in immigration policy, even though the narrative surrounding it was one of humanitarian obligation and moral values. It is remarkable that even under the enormous political pressure and heightened salience that the greatest migration in decades caused, Lavenex' predictions are supported by empirical findings. There still was no significant change in the dominant frame. The dominant discourse or 'master discourse' that European immigration policy revolves around prevention and security was certainly challenged, but by the end of the crisis even its fiercest challengers had to acknowledge the need for solid outer borders and forsake their demand for a humanitarian-oriented policy frame. In general, this analysis therefore suggests that dominant frames, that are commonly shared before a crisis, are seemingly very resistant to change. Boin et al. (2009) already suggested that in order for change to come about, blame has to be focused on one actor, institution or policy. This research suggests that having a coherent discourse with clear answers to a challenging frame and arguments that are in line with one another, are important factors too. These were lacking in the approach of the Commission.

Schmidt (2010) suggested that political actors will legitimize their own actions by trying to shape the discourse using frames not only at the end of negotiations to defend the outcome, but also during the process. This throughput legitimacy can, if conducted properly, represent a way in which the interests of societal organizations can be respected, rather than simply executing whatever the majority wants. While NGO's did shape the debate in a way that influenced for example the European Commission, it proved hard for them to influence the decision making among member states' government leaders.

The status quo, the Dublin agreement, was eventually respected and so Boin et al. (2009) would argue that the status quo actors have successfully resisted policy change. At the same time, the actors that wanted change, wanted a paradigm shift away from the responsibility of member states towards a common European policy. According to Boin et al., a framing contest like this can lead to either a policy stalemate or a politically imposed paradigm shift. Due to the inability of the European Commission to convince the government leaders of its frame, a policy stalemate occurred. Because a prolonged stalemate would mean that the Greek and Italian immigration systems would become increasingly overburdened, the decision to negotiate with Turkey was made to be able to retain the Dublin agreement and with it, the policy status quo.

This tells a number of things about framing contests. First, while Schmidt (2013) describes how even the most deep-rooted of ideas may shift during a crisis, this example shows the opposite: under very high pressure, the guiding ideas and main policies remained the same. Frames, therefore, seem very resilient to change and a deep crisis does not automatically mean that the frame advocating change will win the framing contest. Second, it is not just the way frames resonate with the public that matters for the outcome of a framing contest, but also the consistency with which actors use them.

So what could the European Commission and the other change advocates have done differently? The analysis does not provide clear cut answers to that question. One could for example argue that the change advocates should not have insisted on an ambitious plan to radically change immigration policy. While showing willingness to change fundamentally in the wake of a crisis shows political courage and determination, more incremental change would maybe not have sparked so much opposition. One could also argue that pushing one limited frame, and consistently sticking with it, is more effective than making multiple, contradicting arguments to get a point across. It can be effective to argue that welcoming migrants is important because they are a promising work force that European countries can benefit from, but its effectiveness rapidly decreases when the same organisation also claims that accepting migrants is important because they live in hopeless situations and might radicalize if they are neglected. Even more so if the painted picture shifts again to argue that countries should welcome migrants because it is their humanitarian obligation. All these different reasons and frames add to the inconsistency.



### **7.3 Limitations and suggestions for further research**

This research aimed to reconstruct the framing contest surrounding the European migration crisis of 2015 as closely as possible. However, the framing of the European decision making process in other instances or crises could serve as a future research goal. This section also intends to briefly review the research methodology. It is a qualitative content analysis which results in low generalizability for other crises or cases, but in high internal validity. The empirics gained through this analysis allow for rich inferences, but remain exclusively for this case. Furthermore, research bias, such as selection bias, may have influenced the outcome of this research. This is because the articles for analysis were not chosen at random based on some keywords, but selected for relevance to the subject at hand. Yet, the results may serve as a starting point for further research into the field of recent environmental policies and politics.

The limited resources of this investigation mean that only a limited number of articles and statements could be analysed. This meant that only two newspapers, two NGO's and a handful of member states' government leaders could be researched. Using a more comprehensive approach, with more articles and statements, one could greatly improve the external validity and reliability of the outcomes. To find meaning in texts or sentences can be a highly subjective exercise, and the researcher concedes that while the chosen approach increases the qualitative ability to see beyond the mere words of a text and tries to find the often hidden ideas within them, it is very well defensible to choose a more qualitative content analysis approach in order to see how many times words in a certain frame were used. Why it proved impossible for member states to be united and be framed as such in this matter, while it seems perfectly possible to maintain a united narrative on other matters where unity among member states is asked, such as the Brexit-negotiations, is a puzzle that might be interesting for further research.

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## 9. Appendix

Overview of analysed articles

Case 1: the framing contest of ‘the problem’		
Publisher	Date	Title
IOM	19-04-2015	Migrant Deaths Soar as Mediterranean Sees Worst Tragedy in Living Memory
IOM	08-05-2015	IOM Calls for International Investigation of Mediterranean Shipwreck Deaths
IOM	19-05-2015	Mediterranean Sea Crossings Continue to Climb
IOM	02-06-2015	Peak Sailing Season Sees More Mediterranean Migrant Rescues, Deaths
IOM	23-06-2015	Resettlement in Germany for Group Previously Detained in Egypt
UNHCR	19-04-2015	New Mediterranean boat tragedy may be biggest ever, urgent action is needed now
UNHCR	23-04-2015	Joint statement on Mediterranean crossings
UNHCR	13-05-2015	UNHCR hails today’s EU proposed Agenda on Migration as breakthrough, urges speedy adoption
UNHCR	16-06-2015	UNHCR calls for urgent European support for Greece amid worsening conditions for refugees
UNHCR	26-06-2015	UNHCR urges further EU action on refugees
The Guardian	20-04-2015	Mediterranean refugee crisis: EU reduced to impotent handwringing
The Guardian	20-04-2015	Two more migrant boats issue distress calls in Mediterranean
The Guardian	23-04-2015	EU summit to offer resettlement to only 5,000 refugees
The Guardian	23-04-2015	European leaders pledge to send ships to Mediterranean to pick up migrants
The Guardian	12-05-2015	Home secretary hardens refusal to accept EU resettlement programme
The Guardian	13-05-2015	Theresa May rebuked by European commission over criticism of refugee plan
The Guardian	16-06-2015	UK could withdraw from migrant rescue missions in Mediterranean
The Guardian	24-06-2015	EU to create new quarantine system for Mediterranean migrants
The Guardian	26-06-2015	EU sidestep on migrants will do nothing to curb Mediterranean death toll
The Financial Times	20-04-2015	The cold reality of Europe's migrant crisis
The Financial Times	20-04-2015	EU ministers urged to act after hundreds of migrants feared dead
The Financial Times	22-04-2015	The hour of Europe on the Mediterranean crisis
The Financial Times	10-05-2015	Brussels to propose mandatory refugee quotas for EU states
The Financial Times	13-05-2015	EU seeks emergency powers to make its states share asylum seekers
The Financial Times	21-05-2015	Europe has turned a tragedy into a needless political crisis
The Financial Times	15-06-2015	A question of identity for EU's migrants

Publisher	Date	Title
The Financial Times	17-06-2015	Where Europe's holidaymakers meet the migrants of the Mediterranean
The Financial Times	17-06-2015	Italy's cry of anger over the EU migrant crisis
The Financial Times	26-06-2015	Anger spills over at summit to fix EU migrant policy
European Commission	25-04-2015	EU proposes to boost humanitarian aid by €50 million as Commissioner Stylianides visits South Sudan
European Commission	29-04-2015	Speech by President Jean-Claude Juncker at the debate in the European Parliament on the conclusions of the Special European Council on 23 April: 'Tackling the migration crisis'
European Commission	13-05-2015	Commissioner Avramopoulos' remarks at the presentation of the European Agenda on Migration
European Commission	20-05-2015	Opening Statement by Commissioner Avramopoulos at the European Parliament Plenary Debate on the European Agenda on Migration
European Commission	27-05-2015	Commission fulfils its commitment to act swiftly on migration
European Commission	29-05-2015	Syrian refugee crisis: EU Trust Fund launches first response programmes for €40 million, helping up to 400,000 people in Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan and Iraq
European Commission	04-06-2015	EU boosts humanitarian aid to Iraq with extra €25 million
European Commission	16-06-2015	Remarks by Commissioner Avramopoulos after Home Affairs Council in Luxembourg
European Commission	19-06-2015	Joint Statement ahead of World Refugee Day on 20 June
European Commission	26-06-2015	European Council agrees on the fate of 60,000 migrants
UK Government	20-04-2015	PM call with Prime Ministers Renzi and Muscat
German Government	21-04-2015	Refugee tragedy in Mediterranean
French Government	23-04-2015	Press conference given by M. François Hollande, President of the Republic
Dutch Government	23-04-2015	Rutte: Alleen hulp als rest EU bijspringt
European Council	29-04-2015	Report by President Donald Tusk to the European Parliament on the special European Council on migration
European Council	25-06-2015	National briefing by Mark Rutte, Prime Minister of Netherlands, following the European Council on 25 June 2015, in Brussels
French Government	25-06-2015	Press briefing by M. François Hollande, President of the Republic, prior to the European Council
German Government	26-06-2015	Statement Bundeskanzlerin Angela Merkel on the European Council meeting in Brussels (Part about Migrations)
UK Government	29-06-2015	PM statement on Tunisia and European Council (part about migration)
European Council	08-06-2015	Report by President Donald Tusk to the European Parliament on the June European Council and the situation in Greece (part on Migration)

<b>Case 2: the framing contest of internal solutions</b>		
<b>Publisher</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Title</b>
IOM	07-07-2015	Detained Youth: Study Probes Fate of Young Migrants, Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Libya
IOM	14-08-2015	Mediterranean Migrant Arrivals Approach 250,000
IOM	11-09-2015	Migrant, Refugee Arrivals by Sea Surpass a Record 430,000
IOM	22-09-2015	IOM Assists in Relocation of Vulnerable Women and Children from Iraq to Germany
IOM	24-09-2015	IOM Welcomes EU Decision on Vulnerable Migrants/Refugees
UNHCR	10-07-2015	UNHCR warns of growing asylum crisis in Greece and the Western Balkans amid arrivals of refugees from war
UNHCR	07-08-2015	UNHCR calls for comprehensive response to the Calais situation
UNHCR	20-08-2015	UNHCR welcomes the joint Franco-British declaration to address the situation in Calais
UNHCR	21-08-2015	UNHCR voices concern about developments at border of FYR Macedonia and Greece
UNHCR	04-09-2015	UNHCR chief issues key guidelines for dealing with Europe's refugee crisis
The Guardian	03-07-2015	Syrian refugees in the UK: 'We will be good people. We will build this country'
The Guardian	09-07-2015	UK Mediterranean mission to get information on smugglers, says minister
The Guardian	24-07-2015	EU member states miss target to relocate 40,000 migrants
The Guardian	31-07-2015	We can't stop the flow of migrants to Europe. Rehousing them is our only option
The Guardian	31-07-2015	Europe could solve the migrant crisis – if it wanted
The Guardian	03-09-2015	Refugees welcome? How UK and Germany compare on migration
The Guardian	04-09-2015	David Cameron's refugee promise needs to be more than a gesture
The Guardian	04-09-2015	Cameron must help refugees and bin the economic migrant label
The Guardian	14-09-2015	May and Cameron make excuses while Europe tries to rise to refugee crisis
The Guardian	22-09-2015	Theresa May maintains tough stance on 'economic migrants'
The Guardian	23-09-2015	Refugee crisis: we must act together, says Merkel ahead of emergency summit
The Financial Times	26-07-2015	By failing to help refugees Europe fails itself
The Financial Times	03-08-2015	UK complaints over Calais crisis find little sympathy in the EU
The Financial Times	02-09-2015	A brief chance for Europe to rescue its integrity
The Financial Times	02-09-2015	Europe criticises David Cameron's stance on migrants
The Financial Times	03-09-2015	Q&A: How UK is handling migrant numbers
The Financial Times	04-09-2015	Migrant crisis explained in numbers
The Financial Times	06-09-2015	Jean-Claude Juncker's EU migrants crisis plan takes shape

Publisher	Date	Title
The Financial Times	22-09-2015	EU ministers force through refugee quota plan
The Financial Times	22-09-2015	EU outvotes eastern bloc to impose refugee plans
The Financial Times	24-09-2015	EU migrant ‘hotspot’ policy takes heat from angry governments
European Commission	09-07-2015	Remarks by Commissioner Avramopoulos after informal Home Affairs Council in Luxembourg
European Commission	31-07-2015	Spring 2015 Standard Eurobarometer : Citizens see immigration as top challenge for EU to tackle
European Commission	20-08-2015	Joint statement by First Vice-President Timmermans and Commissioner Avramopoulos on Calais and European migration priorities
European Commission	09-09-2015	Refugee Crisis: European Commission takes decisive action
European Commission	10-09-2015	EU boosts socio-economic development and supports better living conditions in the Southern Mediterranean
European Commission	14-09-2015	Statement of the European Commission following the Extraordinary Justice and Home Affairs Council
European Commission	17-09-2015	European Commission Statement following the vote of the European Parliament in favour of an emergency relocation mechanism for a further 120,000 refugees
European Commission	22-09-2015	European Commission Statement following the decision at the Extraordinary Justice and Home Affairs Council to relocate 120,000 refugees
European Commission	23-09-2015	More Responsibility in managing the refugee crisis: European Commission adopts 40 infringement decisions to make European Asylum System work
European Commission	23-09-2015	Managing the refugee crisis: Immediate operational, budgetary and legal measures under the European Agenda on Migration
European Council	25-06-2015	National briefing by Mark Rutte, Prime Minister of Netherlands, following the European Council on 25 June 2015, in Brussels
French Government	25-06-2015	Press briefing by M. François Hollande, President of the Republic, prior to the European Council
German Government	26-06-2015	Statement Bundeskanzlerin Angela Merkel on the European Council meeting in Brussels (Part about Migrations)
UK Government	29-06-2015	PM statement on Tunisia and European Council (part about migration)
European Council	08-06-2015	Report by President Donald Tusk to the European Parliament on the June European Council and the situation in Greece (part on Migration)
UK Government	23-09-2015	The Prime Minister, David Cameron, welcomed French President Francois Hollande to Chequers for discussions.
European Council	23-09- 2015	Press conference Dutch PM Mark Rutte
European Council	23-09-2015	Remarks by President Donald Tusk after the informal meeting of heads of state or government
German Government	24-09-2015	Extraordinary EU meeting on refugees - Angela Merkel says discussions were “very constructive”
European Council	06-10-2015	Address by President Donald Tusk to the European Parliament on the informal meeting of heads of state or government

<b>Case 3: the framing contest of external solutions</b>		
<b>Publisher</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Title</b>
IOM	05-01-2016	IOM Counts 3,771 Migrant Fatalities in Mediterranean in 2015
IOM	15-01-2016	IOM Welcomes Turkey's New Regulation to Grant Work Permits to Syrians under Temporary Protection
IOM	05-02-2016	Malian Migrants Stranded in Libya Fly Home
IOM	16-02-2016	European Union, IOM Strengthen Strategic Dialogue on Global Migration Issues
IOM	18-03-2016	IOM Welcomes Step to Enhance Coordination at Turkey's Shared European Borders
UNHCR	09-12-2015	Refugees and migrants in Europe need protection and respect for their human rights
UNHCR	12-02-2016	Europe: UNHCR concerned over increasing restrictive measures, urges effective comprehensive European response
UNHCR	07-03-2016	UNHCR's reaction to Statement of the EU Heads of State and Government of Turkey
UNHCR	18-03-2016	UNHCR on EU-Turkey deal: Asylum safeguards must prevail in implementation
UNHCR	22-03-2016	UNHCR redefines role in Greece as EU-Turkey deal comes into effect
The Guardian	27-11-2015	EU seeks to buy Turkish help with migrants at controversial summit
The Guardian	30-11-2015	Germany's plan to strike EU-wide refugee-sharing deal stalls
The Guardian	30-11-2015	Europe split over refugee deal as Germany leads breakaway coalition
The Guardian	02-12-2015	Turkey arrests 1,300 asylum seekers after £2bn EU border control deal
The Guardian	14-01-2016	Foreign secretary urges Turkey to further stem flow of Syrian migrants
The Guardian	19-02-2016	Austria imposes daily migrant limit as EU turns to £2.3bn Turkey plan
The Guardian	07-03-2016	EU-Turkey summit to focus on stemming flow of migrants to Europe
The Guardian	07-03-2016	Erdogan is a problematic partner but EU desperately needs Turkey's help
The Guardian	18-03-2016	Refugees will be sent back across Aegean in EU-Turkey deal
The Guardian	20-03-2016	EU-Turkey deal to return refugees from Greece comes into force
The Financial Times	29-11-2015	Turkey and EU seal deal on cutting migration flows into Europe
The Financial Times	03-03-2016	EU nears migrant deal with Turkey
The Financial Times	06-03-2016	UN warns on legality of EU deal to return migrants to Turkey
The Financial Times	07-03-2016	Turkey's last-ditch demands threaten migrant deal
The Financial Times	08-03-2016	Angela Merkel tested by German doubts on Turkey migrant proposals
The Financial Times	12-03-2016	How has the EU mismanaged the migrant crisis?
The Financial Times	15-03-2016	Donald Tusk moves to patch up EU migrant deal with Turkey



Publisher	Date	Title
The Financial Times	16-03-2016	Returning migrants to Turkey poses huge administrative test
The Financial Times	17-03-2016	Leaked: Tusk's draft EU-Turkey deal
The Financial Times	19-03-2016	Major doubts over workability of EU-Turkey migrant deal
European Commission	15-10-2015	EU-Turkey joint action plan
European Commission	24-11-2015	EU-Turkey Cooperation: A €3 billion Refugee Facility for Turkey
European Commission	29-11-2015	Meeting of heads of state or government with Turkey - EU-Turkey statement
European Commission	29-11-2015	Summit meeting re-energises EU-Turkey relations
European Commission	15-12-2015	Commission presents Recommendation for a Voluntary Humanitarian Admission Scheme with Turkey for refugees from Syria
European Commission	25-01-2016	Joint Statement following the High-Level Political Dialogue between the EU and Turkey
European Commission	04-03-2016	Back to Schengen: Commission proposes Roadmap for restoring fully functioning Schengen system
European Commission	08-03-2016	EU leaders pursue European approach to refugee crisis
European Commission	09-03-2016	Speech of Vice-President Dombrovskis at the EP plenary on the EU-Turkey summit and the European Semester
European Commission	19-03-2016	EU and Turkey agree European response to refugee crisis
UK Government	23-09-2015	The Prime Minister, David Cameron, welcomed French President Francois Hollande to Chequers for discussions.
European Council	23-09- 2015	Press conference Dutch PM Mark Rutte
European Council	23-09-2015	Remarks by President Donald Tusk after the informal meeting of heads of state or government
German Government	24-09-2015	Extraordinary EU meeting on refugees - Angela Merkel says discussions were "very constructive"
European Council	06-10-2015	Address by President Donald Tusk to the European Parliament on the informal meeting of heads of state or government
UK Government	07-03-2016	PM meeting with Turkish Prime Minister
European Council	07-03-2016	Remarks of President Donald Tusk after the meeting of heads of state and government of the EU with Turkey
German Government	08-03-2016	EU-Turkey Migrant Summit – A Qualitative step forward
French Government	08-03-2016	Press conference by M. François Hollande, President of the Republic, following the meeting of heads of state and government from the European Union and Turkey (excerpts)
Dutch Government	11-03-2016	Statement before press conference of Dutch PM Mark Rutte, after the EU-Turkey Summit.