THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S FRAMING OF SOLIDARITY IN MIGRATION POLITICS

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to analyze how the European Commission has framed the concept of solidarity differently in migration policies between the European Agenda on Migration and the New Pact on Migration and Solidarity, in order to comprehend how framing and reframing of policies can affect the development of European migration politics. In doing so, the driving ideas behind the Commission's way of framing the issue will also be studied. Previous research shows that solidarity is a complex concept with many interpretations, which has created numerous misunderstandings in the EU's agendas on migration. Based on the theories of agenda-setting strategies, bounded rationality and issue frames, a framing analysis is conducted on different policy documents and the two main agendas. The results of the analysis furthermore show that solidarity has been framed differently in the documents, depending on the situation and time in which it is written. It is also shown that the Commission's way of framing the issue differently depends on its ideas of arousing interest or gaining authority. The overall result is thus that the concept of solidarity has become more important in the aftermaths of the crisis.

Table of content

1. Introduction

One of the fundamental values of the European Union (EU) in its work of integration has always been solidarity. The concept of solidarity has continuously been used alongside cohesion with the purpose of binding together both Member States and the citizens of each Member State (Sangiovanni, 2013). In recent years solidarity has come to play an important role in the EU's work on migration and asylum politics, especially in relation to the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). The system has thus come to be criticized due to its inefficiency and its lack of legally binding obligations concerning solidarity (Tsourdi, 2017).

The extreme migration flows in 2015 are commonly framed by the EU as a refugee crisis. This crisis discourse emerged when it became clear that the common system for asylum and migration was not equipped with the right tools to handle an emergency. Consequently, the unfair sharing of responsibility between Member States became visible, where some countries suffered more than others. The external border countries such as Greece and Italy were faced with huge challenges concerning the numerous arrivals and the handling of asylum applications, which showed the inefficiency of the Dublin Regulation. Countries in the north of Europe such as Sweden and Germany took on great responsibility in relocating refugees to their countries. On the contrary, some Member States such as Slovakia and Hungary did barely anything to help relocate the refugees on the external border, nor did they assist Greece and Italy through other types of actions (Karageorgiou, 2019).

Furthermore, this resulted in conflicts between the Member States, where some were determined to protect their own borders, while others were in desperate need of assistance. The conflict reflects the challenge the EU is facing in balancing its normative powers and its constitutional implementation mechanism, which is why migration was faced with increased politicization. Simultaneously, while protectionism started to appear in the CEAS and while Member States disagreed with each other, the lack of solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility became more visible than ever (Lavenex, 2018).

Using the method of policy framing, this research seeks to understand how the concept of solidarity has been portrayed in the political debate over time in order to understand how the framing of the concept has affected the European Commission's development of its migration

policy. This will be performed through a comparative framing analysis of the European Agenda on Migration from 2015 and the New Pact on Migration and Asylum from 2020, which will be further discussed below.

1.1 Aim

Plenty of research has been directed at the Commission's ways of handling the migration crisis and the functioning of the European Agenda on Migration. What is thus less researched is the New Pact on Migration and Asylum and its effects on the migration policy. It includes a common framework with a new solidarity mechanism, which is supposed to replace the latest proposal on the Dublin Regulation (European Commission, 2020). This has raised questions around how the new emphasis on solidarity is to be interpreted in politics (Karageorgiou, 2019). It is also evident that the field lacks research on how the concept has been used in agenda-setting before and how the significance of the wording has changed within the Commission. The aim of this research is consequently to analyze how and why the Commission has framed the concept of solidarity differently over time in order to understand how the framing of certain policies can affect the overall development of European migration politics.

In order to do so, the research question I will be asking is: How has the framing of the solidarity issue within the European Commission changed between the *European Agenda on Migration* and the *New Pact on Migration and Asylum*? And what have been the driving ideas behind the way the Commission has been framing solidarity?

2. Previous research

This section will provide a systematic review of the previous research on solidarity within the EU's migration policy. First, a brief description of the European Commission's role and the CEAS will illustrate a number of issues the union has been facing due to migration. Following this section, a deeper discussion on the different perspectives on solidarity will be presented. The last part will describe how the solidarity issue is connected to allocation of refugees. Here the dilemma of human rights will be discussed in terms of emergency-driven responses and burdens for Member States.

2. 1. Solidarity within the European Commission and the Common European Asylum System

Article 17(1) in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) clarifies one of the European Commission's most important responsibilities, namely to "promote the general interest of the Union and take appropriate initiatives to that end". In practice this means that the commission is meant to work as an institution which represents the union rather than directly representing the Member States. The Commission is doing so by, for instance preparing agenda-setting, working with legislation and working with executive tasks such as fiscal management and non-legislative actions (Nugent & Rhinard, 2016). In recent years it has been argued that the Commission has faced a decline in power, something that according to research has resulted in frame analyses showing how the Commission frequently sets out to reach political support for its policies despite political resistance (Daviter, 2007). In the work of the agenda-setting the Commission plays a crucial role, but in order to please supporters it has been argued that interests are formed as a response to policy initiatives rather than vice versa (Daviter, 2007). It therefore becomes interesting to study whether this might be the case also in the agenda-setting for the migration policies and to find out if this might have changed in different contexts.

In order to perform a framing analysis on the Commission's perspective on solidarity, it is important to understand the background of the concept of solidarity and why it came to play an important role in the CEAS. Grey (2013) argue that the CEAS is an expression of solidarity between Member States due to the fact that the system was constructed on the basis of fair sharing and solidarity in dealing with refugees. It has thus been criticized since the expression

of solidarity does not clarify the ways of which it relates to fair sharing of responsibility. Furthermore, the Article 80 TFEU also emphasizes fair sharing of responsibility and solidarity but it lacks an explanation of the content and descriptions on how it should be implemented by the Member States. Even though some harmonization measures have been adopted by the Member States because of the common system, it has still mostly been solidarity shown through funding and financial aid (Grey, 2013). A more recent research by Lavenex (2018) is also skeptical about the CEAS' role in the union and argues that the previous conflicts reflect the unions difficulties to find a normative balance between security, justice and freedom.

The increased migration from Syria and the Middle East that reached Europe in 2015 is usually framed as a "migration crisis" (Bousiou & Papada, 2020) and Lavenex specifies this by arguing that it is also reflecting a governance crisis in CEAS. This so-called crisis became the ultimate test for the solidarity mechanisms implementation possibilities, which unfortunately most research would describe as a failure. The Dublin rules showed to be inefficient since they determine that the first country of entry for the refugees is the country responsible for the asylum process, which results in unfair sharing of responsibility. With the extreme increase in asylum seekers along the European borders this created a conflict between Member States, where some were more desperate for assistance and solidarity than ever whilst others became determined to protect their own borders. This conflict reflects the issues the union is facing in terms of the balance between its normative powers and the practical, constitutional mechanism. Furthermore, this has led to the Commission promoting more common protectionist policies to be the norm of asylum policies, but the lack of practical capabilities creates an imbalance between the two. The crisis showed how protectionism had come to play a big role in the CEAS and the conflicts between Member States clearly indicate the lack of solidarity in the system (Lavenex, 2018).

2.2 The definitions of solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility

As mentioned above, the relation between solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility within the union is rather complex. In order to perform a framing analysis on solidarity it is important to understand this complex relation and be aware of the different conceptualizations of the solidarity concept. A major discussion within the field is the discourse between two functions

of solidarity within the refugee regime; the *state-refugee* solidarity and the *interstate* solidarity (Karageorgiou, 2019).

The interstate dimension of solidarity is apparent through the collaboration between different Member States, meaning that Member States show each other solidarity by assisting with financial and procedural responsibilities. Member States are obliged to share the responsibility related to allocation of refugees (Karageorgiou, 2016) and help each other to meet recognized protection standards (Karageorgiou, 2019). The other dimension of solidarity, state-refugee solidarity, is to be understood as the solidarity shown by states directly towards individuals in need of protection, where the state is legally obliged to protect a person with certain needs (Karageorgiou, 2016). These two dimensions are difficult to distinguish between since one can bring forward the other and vice versa, but they are both encouraged by the EU in order to create a communitarian approach to refugee protection and a system that guarantees the same protection rights across Europe. Karageorgiou (2016) thus demonstrates the deficiency within CEAS by showing how the deficit of solidarity in both dimensions was evident during the migration crisis and the protection of Syrian refugees. Member States failed to show each other solidarity and the unfair sharing of responsibility was clear. At the same time neither the solidarity towards individuals nor humanitarian aspects of the protection process seemed to work in favor of solidarity. Furthermore, the author argues that the EU needs to "revisit solidarity as a concept with normative significance and not as a mere political rhetoric" (Karageorgiou, 2016). Solidarity has thus worked on a more normative level where the Member States have been able to interpret the actual meaning of the concept, instead of it being a legally binding obligation (Karageorgiou, 2019).

To gain a deeper understanding of the issues related to solidarity it is important to discuss the second part of Article 80 TFEU which states that Member States should act with fair sharing of responsibility. The EU is expected to include appropriate measures that can give effect to the principle in their adopted acts "when necessary", which requires concrete measures to be adopted. This wording is proof that the responsibility principle should not be linked exclusively with emergencies but as research shows, the mainstream perception of solidarity before the migration crisis was that it mostly works as an emergency-based measure. Even if the article clearly states the need for the union to act, the implementation strategies for fair sharing of

responsibility have still shown to be indefinite. Consequently this has led to the notion that Member States have to implement their obligations in order to deserve other solidarity measures, hence if the Member States at the external border were to follow the obligations and finance the asylum procedures there would be no need for exceptional solidarity from other Member States or the EU. Furthermore, a vicious circle is created where responsibility and solidarity become impossible to co-exist. The loyalty, solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility are therefore to be understood as complementary to each other in order for fair sharing to actually be rationalized (Tsourdi, 2017).

Within a political context Karageorgiou (2019) argues that solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility has become an euphemism for increasing exclusion, avoidance of responsibility and for maintaining a view of the responsibility as a "burden". The balance between solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility has created a form of paradox where solidarity is usually only shown towards states who show responsibility, but in order to be responsible they are in need of solidarity. Accordingly, there would be no need for assistance as long as all countries showed great responsibility. The author thus argues that responsibility should be seen holistically and be focused on long term solutions rather than emergency driven responses (Karageorgiou, 2019).

Again, the so-called migration crisis constitutes clear evidence of how the fair sharing mechanism had failed in practice. With the hotspot approach implemented by the Commission, a couple of measures on solidarity were adopted which for instance obliged the Member States to temporarily assist in the distribution of refugees and help the national authorities of Italy and Greece with administrative means such as registration and fingerprinting. Despite these actions Italy and Greece were still expected to deal with the structural problems themselves which thus reflect the long-term responsibilities that are set on them (Karageorgiou, 2019). Ultimately Tsourdi (2017) argues that these asymmetrical burdens should not occur at all if the Article 80 TFEU was redesigned in a way that the policy obliged the states to act in advance of an emergency rather than after.

2.3 Political responses to solidarity - allocation, relocation and burdens

A crucial harmonization measure for the EU's interstate politics within migration is a cooperative system for allocation of responsibility within the asylum procedures (Mitsilegas, 2014). The main purpose of the allocation mechanism within EU law is to make the Member States share protection responsibilities, but it has thus been shown that the responsibility allocation has put heavy burdens on certain countries (Karageorgiou, 2019). This can be explained by the fact that the Dublin regulation contains a mechanism concerned with the allocation of responsibility, even though it does not include any mechanism for the sharing of responsibility in the examination of asylum claims. Consequently, this goes against solidarity since the responsibility has shifted towards the border states and the regulation fails to work as a mechanism for burden sharing (Karageorgiou, 2019).

Within the allocation mechanism relocation plans are commonly discussed, but lately it has been frequently framed as a burden sharing with focus on the financial aspects (Scipioni, 2018). Relocation of humans and beneficiaries of international protection are important measures of fair sharing available for Member States within the union. It has thus been problematic to create a fair system of relocation since the responsibility of Member States towards each other is not clearly stated. As a result, the relocation mechanism has turned into an issue of sharing people and allocating money (Karageorgiou, 2016). The relocation mechanism was also particularly questioned during the migration crisis when the border countries were desperate for assistance in relocating the refugees (Scipioni, 2018). This is because the lack of emergency procedures for sharing within the union became apparent and the countries with the most capability to host refugees were the ones who most frequently showed responsibility through voluntary actions (Karageorgiou, 2016). In response to the crisis the Commission implemented short term aims focusing on relocating a number of refugees from the border countries. This strategy worked temporarily but the fair sharing aspect of the relocation was clearly missing (Tsourdi, 2017).

Finally, the relocation aspect of solidarity within the migration policy can be interpreted as one of the emergency-driven responses the EU adopted as a result of the crisis. It led to the conceptualization of relocation being related to burden sharing rather than solidarity and fair sharing, while also assuming certain states to be more responsible than others due to their

capacity of receiving refugees (Tsourdi, 2017). In the debate of these interstate dilemmas it is important to reflect on the refugee-state perspective, meaning that even if the fair sharing mechanisms would actually succeed to be fair to the states, it might not also be the case for the refugees. The human rights concern is not to be forgotten since one of the most important aspects of the sharing is the protection of the refugee and its rights (Karageorgiou, 2019).

2.4 Summary of the Previous Research

Since solidarity is such a complex concept, the discussion on whether the solidarity in European law is meant to work between Member States and individuals or if it is constructed to work on a basis of the Member States' interest has been very wide. Researchers argue that the solidarity within the asylum system has been securitized and reflects a crisis mentality which has led to solidarity being framed as a mechanism for protection of the Member States rather than protection of the individuals (Mitsilegas, 2014). The issues of solidarity within the migration politics in the EU does also include the problem of responsibility and how it should be interpreted, the issue of burdens, the relocation aspect and the emergency-driven responses (Tsourdi, 2017). Despite all the research that has been done on the solidarity concept, it remains unclear how the expression has been used in the political debate over time and how the importance of the wording has changed within the Commission. In conclusion, solidarity is a concept with many different interpretations, and it is of crucial importance to understand the framing of this problem in order to understand how the Commission has developed its migration policy.

3. Theory

This section will present two theoretical approaches, which will be used in the research in order to easily comprehend the reasons for the Commission's way of framing solidarity and to understand the necessary theoretical tools for performing a framing analysis. *Agenda-setting strategies* in the EU will help provide a deeper understanding of why certain tactics are performed within framing, while *issue framing* and *bounded rationality* will explore the rationales behind policy problem framing.

3.1 Agenda-setting strategies in the EU

Agenda-setting is an important part of policymaking because it means that an issue is being considered by policymakers. Not until an issue is seriously considered by policymakers can an actual decision on the matter be taken, which makes it a crucial part of the strategies that political actors pursue. The EU agenda-setting might lead to two different challenges, firstly the problem of getting supporters to *pay attention to the issue at stake* and secondly to *reach credibility* for the fact that the EU is the right actor to deal with the issue. Furthermore, two important elements of agenda-setting strategies are concerned with decision-making venues and issue frames. Decision-making venues are about gaining attention through directing an issue at a specific venue and gaining supporters by picking the right venue, where most participants would be convinced that the cause is of relevance. The challenge here is for the agenda-setters to direct the issue towards a venue that is most receptive to their claims in order to involve as many supporters as possible and gain attention from the right participants. Consequently, the second element is concerned with the determination of the venue, which depends on how the issue is defined or framed. While the element of decision-making venue is concerned with mobilizing supporters, issue framing is concerned with arousing the interest of the supporters (Princen, 2011).

It is furthermore important to understand what an issue is in the context of agenda-setting. An issue in this setting is interpreted as a part of an agenda that the agenda-setters define as problematic and choose to raise as a priority. In politics, issues are often concerned with different topics, which becomes issues when political actors have different opinions about what should be done about them. Agenda-setting therefore includes both the creation of new conflicts

over old topics and the identification of conflicts over new topics, which makes it interesting to focus on the question of why these actors raise an issue and why it is defined as a political issue. Two theoretical explanations to why an issue appears on a political agenda is that it either arises from the international environment, on conditions external to the political process or that it arises from activities and interests of political actors themselves, on conditions integral to the political process. Domestic or integral agenda-setting strategies have been found to become visible within the context of EU, mostly through issue framing. It is argued that the issues that make it on the agenda are strategically chosen by policy makers in order to prove that the issue is more important than others. In the context of the EU this means that framing is not only focused on the way a problem and a solution is defined but also on the argument that European action is needed to handle it and that the issue is European in scope (Princen, 2007). This research will therefore be focused on the Commissions ideas behind which issues that get to be prioritized and through which frames.

First, Princen (2011) identifies two strategies for gaining attention and building credibility in terms of framing, namely *arousing interest* and *claiming authority*. Research on agenda-setting in the EU has identified two ways in which an issue can be framed in order to arouse interest, through *big words* and through *small steps*. The strategy of framing through big words means that the agenda-setters try to tie the proposals to the overall values that are central to the purpose and identity of the EU. For example, it can be tied to human rights, democracy or the rule of law, which are all central values within the EU. The strategy of big words can also be that agenda-setters tie in with central commitments and stated policy priorities. In this sense issues can profit from focusing on events that are open for reframing, which often occur when certain crises appear. Small steps on the other hand, can be used as a strategy when the link to central moral values cannot be done convincingly. This approach gradually builds up support for policies in a specific area through addressing technical aspects of an issue. There are many small steps that can be taken, for example by doing studies, holding conferences or by focusing more on non-controversial elements in order to slowly arouse interest (Princen, 2011).

Claiming authority is rather about creating a story of why an issue is European at scope. Two strategies that are commonly used here is to link an issue to existing policies within the EU or identify common ground. A common way to link issues to existing policies is to frame the

policy in relation to the internal market, since economic development has long been one of the EU's main focus areas. If the issue is difficult to place within EU-typical policies, a common strategy in order to claim authority is to find common challenges. The argument used by agenda-setters in this case is that if many Member States are facing the same problems, they can gain benefits from tackling them together. In this way new policy initiatives may be constructed, and the debate can be of relevance on EU-level (Princen, 2011).

Finally, Princen (2007) noticed that expansion of conflicts in order to place issues on an agenda may not be as important within the EU as it is for national governments. How the EU chooses to frame those issues has thus proven to be of deeper relevance in agenda-setting. Lastly institutional factors need to be considered, since the fact that all EU-institutions have a say in the agenda-setting definitely will affect which issues that are prioritized in the Commission's agenda (Princen, 2007).

3.2 Bounded Rationality and Issue Framing

This research is interested in understanding how the European Commission has changed their perception of solidarity within migration politics and in which way the communication on the issue has changed. To this end the method used is a framing analysis based on the theoretical framework of agenda-setting. In combination with this perspective the framing analysis will be using the perspective of policy analysis and the theoretical tool of *bounded rationality* and *issue framing*.

Bounded rationality is focused on "the question of how problem representations find expression in institutional structures" and how their constructions are challenged in policy debates. It is based on the notion that humans and organizations can never be fully rational which makes it impossible to comprehend all the implications of policy problems, even if you try. As a result, policy actors usually choose to focus on a specific aspect of the choice in a policy issue depending on the situation and time. In other words, this theory can be seen as a process in which the complex policy problems include certain aspects which thus will be more outstanding than others depending on the importance of the problem at that time. This theoretical foundation also assumes that in the case when a policy debate shifts and a new aspect of the policy problem becomes more important, the actors rediscover the crucial parts of the

issue and re-evaluate their policy positions. The reason for these common shifts in policy direction is explained by the policy actors lack of consistent and precise goals. Rather than fixing this problem, which is what rationalists would do, bounded rationalists argue that it is generally more efficient to simply shift the focus in a political debate. Consequently, this theory is not concerned with potential for conflict solving. The purpose is rather to gain a better understanding of how framing and reframing of certain policy problems can affect the rise and fall of the balance of power in different areas of the policy (Daviter, 2017).

Empirically, this theory leads the analysis to also focus on institutional aspects and how the institutional responsibilities change over time. One of the assumptions here is that if the framing of an issue becomes contested, there is a risk that the institutional structures which are responsible for that issue frame might lose their authoritative role within that specific policy process. Furthermore, this theory interprets institutional dimensions to be expressions of existing policy frames which are more structured, and policy problems are understood as endogenous to the policy process. Formal institutions thus face a battle over the right to frame policy problems in a way that will sustain their authority and allow them to decide how the institution should be created (Daviter, 2017). While analyzing the Commissions way of framing solidarity it can thus be relevant to use this theory to understand if the reason for the re-framing might have to do with the institutional need to sustain their authority.

In the perspective of bounded rationality, policy issues are rather complex and even multidimensional (Daviter, 2017), which is why it is important to define what an issue is in this context and understand how issue frames can be used in this theoretical framework. Issue frames were constructed on the basis that problem definitions are conceptualized as integral parts of the policy formulation and as the outcome of policymaking. They might have strong influence on power dynamics of policies in a long-term perspective, in such a way that the definitions and representations of policy issues can shape the interests and even reconstruct political constituencies (Daviter, 2007). Issue frames can thus be defined as "policy frames that provide a relatively coherent story/reasoning in which issue specific prognostic elements responds to issue specific diagnostic elements". This furthermore means that they are abstract constructs since they do not necessarily have to be linked to one whole text, but rather can be linked to certain problem formulations or different actors (Dombos, 2012).

Lastly, issue frames can be argued to be normative and value-driven, since their purpose is to identify certain problematic social facts and propose changes which would create a more desirable sphere. These proposed changes will naturally be based on norms or values since they are the most dominant factors in determining what is wrong and what is right for the world (Dombos, 2012). In relation to the Commission this theory thus suggests that issue frames are created to frame certain values and norms that are important for the main purpose of the EU. Issue frames are however issue specific, which means that normative claims often are included in empirical statements about policies and they can furthermore not be slimmed down to their normative background (Dombos, 2012).

4. Research Design

The research design will explain the chosen method - policy framing analysis -, how it will be used and why this is the better choice for this research. Further on, a discussion on the material will follow, where the used documents will be discussed in relation to the two Commissions different political guidelines. Lastly a framework for the analysis will be presented, where an explanation on the practical use of the frames will be included.

4.1 Method

The framing analysis in this research will be through the perspective of policy analysis, and unlike many studies on framing within migration this research is not focused on the media's framing (Daviter, 2007), but rather the documents of the Commission. Framing of policy issues is a good tool to use in order to understand the multiple dimensions of a problem and find the different purposes of specific actors (Eising, Rasch & Rozbicka, 2015). The policy frame in this research will work as an instrument which will assist the analysis in understanding the representation of the problem and the solution suggested to resolve the problem, while also being able to identify the balance between them (Verloo, 2005). Since the question of the research is focused on the changes within the Commission's view on solidarity and its ideas behind the framing, a comparative text analysis will help us understand the pattern of alteration. In order to comprehend the structure of thought within the Commission it is also relevant to perform a qualitative analysis, which is useful when certain expressions of a text are to be studied, rather than when analyzing a whole text (Esaiasson, Gilljam, Oscarsson & Wängnerud, 2003, p. 233).

There are many forms of qualitative text analysis within the field of social science and they are usually performed with the aim of studying meaning and values in texts in order to understand how certain actors respond to different phenomenon. These types of analyses are commonly focused on how the ideas are articulated in different contexts and in what way these ideas have changed over time, rather than aiming to find causal connections (Esaiasson, Gilljam, Oscarsson, Towns & Wängnerud, 2017, p. 211-212). Since this research is interested in how the ideas and meanings regarding migration and solidarity have changed in the Commission over time, a qualitative text analysis constitutes a fitting method. However, if I was concerned

with finding objective similarities and differences between the chosen documents, a quantitative content analysis would be a more fitting approach (Esaiasson et al. 2017, p.199-200). A framing analysis thus, usually has the purpose of trying to understand how policy framing processes sometimes construct policy problems and how these conceptualizations of the problem further affects the actions of the actors (Bousiou & Papada, 2020). Since I strive to find out how the policy framing has changed within the EC and how the actor has been affected by contextual changes, a framing analysis will be of good assistance. A discourse analysis might also have been useful, but it can thus be challenging to use in order to capture the actors within the society (Bergström & Boréus, 2005, p.351) which would be a disadvantage in this research since the role of the Commission is crucial for the research question.

The framing analysis I will perform is strongly focused on the problem definition, how the solution to the problem is portrayed and how the problem and solution affect each other. Problem definitions have been conceptualized as an integral part of an adopted policy and as the outcome of policymaking. These problem definitions furthermore create certain frames which influence policymaking and can be interpreted in different ways depending on the theoretical framework (Daviter, 2007). This framing analysis will be based on Verloo's explanation of a policy frame which defines it as an "organizing principle that transforms fragmentary or incidental information into a structured and meaningful problem, in which a solution is implicitly or explicitly included" (Dombos, 2012). This definition will help me create a more structured research of the problem, whilst also assist in understanding the meaning of the formulations.

Furthermore, I have used policy frames based on the different problematizations concerning the concept of solidarity in order to structure the results in a relevant way. In this research, policy frames will be used to easier distinguish between the issues articulated in the different documents and to help sort out the role of the actor, the Commission. The use of the chosen frames will be further explained in the analysis framework (4.3).

An important factor to keep in mind is thus the theoretical lens of bounded rationality and issue framing which I will be using. This perspective provides a certain aim of the analysis which is to create a better understanding for how the framing and reframing of problems contribute to

more or less power construction in specific areas of the policy, rather than trying to understand the potential for problem resolution. In practice, this results in the analysis focusing on the assignment of institutional responsibilities and in which ways these change over time. Consequently, when an issue frame becomes contested, the institutional structures who are responsible for the policy frame might risk losing their authoritative role in the policy process (Daviter, 2017). Furthermore, this perspective will be useful in the analysis when attempting to understand how and why the Commission's perspective on solidarity has changed. It will allow us to see whether the reframing of issues has affected the degree of which certain policies have been discussed and how the changed perceptions of the concept has affected the overall development of European migration politics.

4.2 Material

The framing analysis will be based on different policy documents written by the Commission. Since the research question is focused on the changes made by the Commission since the migration crisis in 2015 the first document to be analyzed is the Agenda on Migration from 2015. Earlier this year, the new Commission presented a New Pact on Migration and Asylum, which in this research is used as a representation of one of the most recently released documents. Furthermore, other policy documents will also be used in the analysis. In order to understand the context of the different agendas I have decided to include a brief description of the two Commissions and their political standpoints. This will serve as a background for a further discussion on the material and its relevance for this research.

4.2.1 The Agenda on Migration and the 2014 European Commission

Every fifth year a new team of Commissioners representing each EU Member State are chosen to steer the work of the Commission. The team is officially called the College which is led by the Commission President and are set out to "defend the interests of the EU as a whole – rather than national interests" (European Commission, 2014a). In 2014 a new Commission was implemented, led by the new Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker who promised a "new start for Europe" emphasizing that they should be "open to change and ready to adapt to it". Importance was among many things given to responsibility, mutual trust, transparency and flexibility to adapt to new situations (European Commission, 2014b). In order to differentiate the new Commission from the former ones, Juncker repeatedly used the formulation *political*

Commission to describe the new Commission as a democratic institution. The framing of a *political Commission* was mostly based on the strategy of taking a targeted and selective approach to policy. Hence the Commission was expected to prioritize action in areas where it could be more ambitious on bigger things while being more modest on smaller things (Kassim & Laffan, 2019).

The political Commission also presented political priorities set out in a ten-point policy program consisting of political guidelines for the work of the Commission (Kassim & Laffan, 2019). One of the prioritized guidelines was "a new EU policy on migration; making the EU a stronger global actor; and bringing about a Union of democratic change." (European Commission, 2014a), which brings us to the first chosen material of this analysis, namely the European Agenda on Migration.

The European Agenda on Migration was constructed in response to challenges of migration and border security that continuously affects the Member States and its aim was to reform migration management and border protection across Europe (COM(2015) 240). Like the political priorities of the new Commission, the Agenda on Migration was supposed to represent change and focus on the root causes of migration. The Agenda proposed a set of core measures which were set out to create a clear common policy where Member States together with the EU institutions would work together to meet international and ethical obligations. Furthermore, the Agenda suggested a more European approach to migration in accordance with shared responsibility and solidarity, combining external and internal policies, and proposing different ways of action on the migration issue (COM(2015) 240).

Since this research is interested in finding out how solidarity has been framed by the Commission in migration policies, this document will be relevant to study due to the fact that it is a first-hand source constructed by the Commission. It also represents the politics of the former Commission which is of interest while comparing how the framing has changed over time. Since the Agenda solely represents the migration plan set out in 2015, other documents in the years between the two Agendas will come in handy. In order to create a more nuanced analysis of the changed issue framing, this research will include follow up documents on the Agenda such as reports on the implementations of the Agenda, communications by the

Commission on actions and documents illustrating changes on the Agenda. A disadvantage with these kinds of documents is thus that they usually are very similar with many repeated formulations, which is why I have chosen to focus more on the ones which include clear disparities. This will be more helpful in order to find changing results.

4.2.2 The New Pact on Migration and Asylum and the 2019 European Commission

In 2019 the Juncker Commission was replaced with a new Commission led by the Commission president Ursula von der Leyen. In her Agenda for Europe she emphasizes a "Union that strives for more" by arguing that the members of Europe have aspirations of what it is to be a part of the continent, which she wishes to match with action through unity and inner strength. While sustainability is a recurring priority within the guidelines of the Commission's work, a strong focus is also put on openness and transparency (European Commission, 2019). The working methods of the new Commission further explains how the Commission needs to represent a modern institution which will continuously adapt to changes in the world and provide efficient solutions to arising challenges. The president is also requesting good governance with clear responsibilities, a strong commitment to performance management and high standards of ethical behavior. This will be achieved by strong collaborations both internally and externally in order to create a better Europe and live up to the people's aspirations (European Commission, 2019).

One of the priorities in the guidelines for 2019-2024 is the "Promoting our European way of life" which is focused on protecting our citizens and our values. Furthermore, this priority includes the suggestion of a fresh start on migration in Europe which is represented by the New Pact on Migration and Asylum. The biggest task of migration facing the EU and the Member States is building a long-term system for normalizing migration fully based on European values and international law. The new pact therefore consists of a new set of guidelines for which the EU will act upon. Emphasis is being put on a common system where all Member States should contribute to solidarity and no state should be given disproportionate responsibility. Focus is also being given to stronger governance, faster migration processes, better management of the external borders, less irregular migration and migrant smuggling and also well-managed protection of legal migrants (COM(2020) 609).

Most importantly for this research is the common framework for solidarity and responsibility sharing, which is introduced in the new pact. This includes the withdrawing of the latest Dublin Regulation and the implementation of the Asylum and Migration Management Regulation as a replacement of the former. The principles of the new Regulation are based on the need for an integrated approach which ensures fair sharing of responsibility (COM(2020) 609). This framework is new to this Pact and is not directly mentioned in the Agenda on Migration made by the Juncker Commission. The fact that solidarity and responsibility sharing is included as a framework in the new Agenda rather than only being mentioned as important concepts of migration policies can easily be interpreted as an increase of significance. For this reason, the New Pact on Migration and Asylum reflects a relevant document for an analysis of the Commission's framing of solidarity. The fact that it is written and published by the Commission is also an advantage in a framing analysis since it is directly representing their values and standpoints.

A disadvantage that thus needs to be addressed is the fact that both of the Agendas are rather large at scale and therefore might be time consuming to analyze properly. They, as well as the other chosen documents, are also structured in different ways which can make it problematic while performing a comparative analysis. It is important to know what to look for and make representable interpretations of the material, in order to not miss out on important factors. I have thus decided to focus on different themes which can be placed in the chosen frames and, search for similarities and differences between the frames in the documents. It has also led me to only choose documents with the most influence on the Commission's politics, which unarguably are the two Agendas that represent the official documents on the Commission's strategy.

4.3 Framework for the Analysis

Since the use of policy framing can be a rather complex method, I will now explain how the issue frames will be used in practice in order to answer my research question. The qualitative analysis is focused on understanding how the Commissions framing of solidarity has changed between the European Agenda on Migration and the New Pact on Migration and Asylum and what the driving ideas in the framing has been, in order to comprehend if the reframing of problems may contribute to more or less power construction in certain areas of the policy.

Consequently, I have constructed certain issue frames based on the problematization of solidarity, illustrated in the previous research.

The frames that will compose the analytical framework are the following:

- **Interstate Solidarity and State-refugee Solidarity:**

  This frame will be used with the purpose of finding out whether the Commission has framed the solidarity as something that is to be shown between Member States or if it is framed as a concept used between countries and refugees.

- **Fair Sharing of Responsibility and Burden Sharing:**

  The issue of the balance between fair sharing of responsibility and solidarity will be analyzed here. This frame allows me to find results on how this relationship has been illustrated by the Commission and whether responsibility has or has not been related to burden sharing.

- **Allocation and Relocation:**

  The issue of solidarity related to allocation and relocation will be analyzed in order to find out how the Commission has communicated this relationship. It will focus on the question of whether common relocation policies are framed as a solidarity mechanism or not.

- **Emergency-driven Responses:**

  This frame will focus on the assumption that solidarity seems to be of deeper relevance when an emergency occurs rather than being a consistent part of the policy. I will analyze if this in fact is true or not and how the emergencies are framed in relation to solidarity.

4. Results

The research questions for the framing analysis are; How has the framing of the solidarity problem within the European Commission changed between the *Agenda on Migration* and the *New Pact on Migration and Asylum*? And what have been the driving ideas behind the way the Commission has been framing solidarity? This part of the research will try to answer these questions by presenting the results of the analysis through a systematic review where each frame will be introduced in a thematic way. Each frame will be discussed in relation to the theories of agenda-setting strategies and bounded rationality and issue framing. The results are concerned with the qualitative findings rather than quantitative aspects. An interesting finding through a quantitative perspective is thus the fact that the word solidarity is used four times in the Agenda on Migration while it is mentioned twenty-two times in the New Pact on Migration and Asylum. This can clearly be interpreted as an increasing importance of the concept of solidarity, but the qualitative analysis will show deeper findings which can be used for a more nuanced conclusion.

4.1 Interstate solidarity and state-refugee solidarity

One of the mentioned issues in the research on solidarity is the question of whether the solidarity stated by the Commission is meant to be shown from one state to the other or whether states are supposed to show solidarity towards the refugees as individuals. This part will therefore try to answer the question of how the Commission has framed solidarity in relation to interstate- and state-refugee solidarity over the years.

First, the Agenda on Migration from 2015 emphasis the EU's duty to protect those in need already in the introduction of the document. It states that "Europe should continue to be a safe haven for those fleeing persecution" (COM(2015) 240, p. 2). Initially the document frames the problem of solidarity as an issue where Member States and the union must work together to provide security and protection for the refugees. The Agenda furthermore states that Member States should give assistance to the persons in need in order to protect the fundamental human rights of the asylum-seekers (COM(2015) 240). This indicates some level of recommended solidarity towards the refugees; however, the word solidarity is never used in this context. The usage of words such as human rights and protection suggests that the ideas of the Commission

has been based on an agenda-setting strategy of big words, where they frame the problem in relation to central values of the union in order to arouse interest.

In the context of interstate solidarity though, the word solidarity is used more frequently. When discussing immediate action in the Agenda the Commission states that increases in EU funding and funding from the Member States can help Frontex to extend operational support towards the border Member States under pressure (COM(2015) 240, p. 3). Also concerning the question of relocation, the Commission argues the following; "Member States will need to show solidarity and redouble their efforts to assist those countries on the frontline" (COM(2015) 240, p. 4), which implies that a challenge within solidarity is for Member States to show solidarity between themselves. The Agenda furthermore states that Member States have performed an unequal contribution to global resettlement efforts, where some countries "are not making an alternative contribution in terms of receiving and accepting asylum requests or helping to fund the efforts of others." (COM(2015) 240, p.4). Framing the issue as a mutual problem might indicate that the Commission is claiming authority through the finding of common challenges, which suggests that the issue should be better handled by the EU.

Further parts of the Agenda suggest some kind of requested solidarity between the Member States in the context of sharing responsibility, but it is never thoroughly explained how this solidarity is meant to be operationalized. However, in a later communication document from 2015 by the Commission, a further explanation of the concept of solidarity is presented. It states; "The Agenda follows the twin logic of balancing responsibility and solidarity", which is further defined as an obligation towards all members to show support and for Member States under most pressure to "make restoring an orderly process their top priority" (COM(2015) 490, p. 3). In this context the Commission also claims that the Member States have succeeded in showing solidarity through the initiative to relocate 160 000 people in need for international protection from the most affected Member States to other EU Member States (COM(2015) 490). This illustrates a clear shift from the interstate solidarity, loosely defined in the Agenda on Migration, to the more concrete definition in the document about the Managing the refugee crisis. The shift in the debate might, in the perspective of bounded rationality, indicate that the ideas of the Commission is to re-evaluate the important parts of the policies in the Agenda in order to shed light on new aspects of the problem.

A later document from 2017 illustrates a deepened focus on solidarity, mostly in the sense that it evaluates the refugee crisis and frequently refers to the importance of Member States showing solidarity towards each other. The concept of solidarity here is more connected to the Member States ability to trust each other and show responsibility, certainly considering the question of relocation (COM(2017) 558). Interestingly enough, state-refugee solidarity is also clearly stated in this document through the following argument; "Having an effective system to return those who have no right to stay is the only way Europe will be able to show solidarity with refugees in real need of protection." (COM(2017) 558, p. 20). This shows a second shift in the debate which might have occurred due to changes in the situation and time. The reframing of the problem suggest that other parts of the problem has become more important which makes the Commission eager to rediscover parts of the policy in order to keep it relevant.

Finally, the New Pact on Migration and Asylum from 2020 discusses the concept of solidarity even more frequently. Solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility constitutes key priorities in the new Pact (COM(2020) 609); however, it is difficult to find clear evidence on state-refugee solidarity. The document presents many arguments on what the union must do to secure the protection of refugees in statements such as the following; "Assisting those in distress at sea is a moral duty and an obligation under international law." and "...rescue is also a key element of the European integrated border management" (COM(2020) 609, p. 13). It is thus not mentioned in relation to solidarity. Furthermore, the new Pact continuously emphasizes that the solidarity shown during the refugee crisis in terms of relocation and shared responsibility must become a constant contribution by all Member States (COM(2020) 609). The document states that no Member State should have to handle asylum seekers alone and defines solidarity as; "Solidarity implies that all Member States should contribute, as clarified by the European Court of Justice" (COM(2020) 609, p. 5). In contrast to the European Agenda on Migration, the new Pact also addresses the interstate solidarity with more operational explanations. This is displayed through the suggested actions in clearer rules for determining which Member State is responsible for asylum claims, a more common screening system and a common EU system for returns (COM(2020) 609), rather than the strong focus on solidarity through funding and relocation which the Agenda from 2015 showed.

4.2 Fair Sharing of Responsibility and Burden Sharing

As the previous research has shown, the balance between solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility can be rather complex. Some authors argue that solidarity is only shown towards Member States who take responsibility (Tsourdi, 2017), while others argue that fair sharing has come to be related to the sharing of burdens (Karageorgiou, 2019). This section will therefore focus on how these concepts have been framed in relation to solidarity while trying to understand whether this might build on the ideas of the Commission's agenda-setting strategies or its bounded rationality.

The European Agenda on Migration begins to claim that the Member States have to act in accordance with solidarity and shared responsibility in order to address migration. This sharing of responsibility is further discussed in relation to distributing the refugees, which this following phrase emphasizes; "The EU needs a permanent system for sharing the responsibility for large numbers of refugees and asylum seekers among Member States" (COM(2015) 240, p.4). To support this statement the Commission suggests legislative measures and refers to the EU's duty to protect and pay attention to humanitarian aspects. The use of wordings such as legislative, protection and humanitarian indicate that the Commission's ideas on which aspects to prioritize might be based on a big words kind of agenda-setting strategy, where these formulations are supposed to tie the agenda to the general policy priorities of the EU and arouse interest.

Results can also be found in line with the bounded rationality theory, which suggests that actors usually focus on specific aspects of a policy issue depending on the situation and time. In the Agenda on Migration from 2015 responsibility is repeatedly mentioned in relation to the migration crisis, where the coveted responsibility is directed towards the most affected countries, "More will be done to help deal with the immediate challenge faced by Member States in the frontline of migrant arrivals" (COM(2015) 240, p. 6). Moreover, the relation between responsibility sharing and the migration crisis can show signs of framing the issue as a burden. The Agenda emphasizes that the Dublin regulation is not working properly and single Member States should not have to face the difficulties alone (COM(2015) 240, p. 6).

In a document from 2015 about managing the crisis, responsibility is mentioned less often and mostly in relation to a good balance between solidarity and responsibility, without any further explanation. It is only described in the sense that Member States should show support towards the Member States under most pressure (COM(2015) 490). This prioritization indicates the ideas from the strategy of big words, where solidarity and responsibility mostly are used as indicators of overall values within migration politics.

In a further proposal from the Commission in 2016, they propose a new criterion for determining the responsible Member State in application examination, which upholds a stronger focus on responsibility sharing (COM(2016) 270). It requests that all members must show responsibility and emphasizes the fact that the extreme migration flows are a common problem. The document even points out that the external border states should be "relieved of some of the burden" and that other Member States must show responsibility in order to do so (COM(2016) 270, p. 5). This proposal might indicate that the idea of the Commission is to claim authority, since it is focused on finding common challenges. Furthermore, documents from 2016 and 2017 (COM(2016) 270 & COM(2017) 558) indicate shifts where responsibility goes from being framed as big words to being framed as an important mechanism for relocation of refugees. This clearly shows how the importance of the problem at that time increased and how the importance of responsibility in the documents became more discussed.

The New Pact on Migration and Asylum suggests that the driving ideas of the framing is to claim authority by framing the problem as a collective one and by indicating that responsibility is strongly connected to relocation since this is one of the main issues in the debate (COM(2020) 609). Because of the migration crisis and the uneven sharing of responsibility the Commission states that "A comprehensive approach is therefore needed which acknowledges collective responsibilities" (COM(2020) 609, p. 3). The New Pact thus shows a shifting focus in the debate where responsibility is more concerned with return, than it was in the previous documents. Once again this can be a sign of a shifting focus in the debate and a new way to frame the issue in order for it to be more relevant in the time and situation. Since return is not a word which represents the central values of the union, it is possible to identify the driving ideas to be more of a small steps type of agenda-setting strategy. For instance, there are signs

of technical aspects of the policy, such as rules for return responsibility and return sponsorships that will be used as a sharing of responsibility mechanism.

Lastly, the relationship between solidarity and responsibility is more discussed in the New Pact. Under the new solidarity mechanism, the Commission states that "Member States would provide all necessary support to the Member State under pressure to swiftly return those who have no right to stay, with the supporting Member State taking full responsibility if return is not carried out within a set period." (COM(2020) 609, p. 5), which suggests that the Member State that has the capacity to take responsibility is also the one who has to show solidarity. This shows that the responsibility issue suddenly is framed in a more operational setting, rather than in a more value based one.

An additional result from the analysis is from the Proposal on Asylum and Migration Management from 2020. Here the Commission claims that the only time Member States were obliged to show solidarity were in terms of relocation, based on the 2015 Council Decisions. In that sense, it addresses the burden Member States have faced in fair sharing of responsibility due to the Dublin Regulation. It furthermore suggests new actions to be taken in terms of showing solidarity and proposes new rulings on fair sharing of responsibility (COM(2020) 610). However, "The current responsibility criterion linked to first entry remains" (COM(2020) 610, p. 12), which shows the consensus of the Dublin Regulation and the challenges that exist with making the responsibility sharing a functioning concept in relation to solidarity.

4.3 Allocation and Relocation

Solidarity is commonly discussed in the EU in the context of allocation and relocation. The relation between these concepts can thus be vague, which is why it is interesting to analyze how this has been framed by the Commission. This part will therefore present the results on how allocation and relocation has been used in the framing of solidarity and what these results suggest in relation to the theoretical framework.

In the European Agenda on Migration the Commission defines relocation in relation to fair sharing of responsibility but does however not discuss relocation in terms of a solidarity mechanism. They also present "A proposal for a permanent common EU system for relocation

for emergency situations by the end of 2015" which emphasizes a shared responsibility between Member States through a relocation scheme (COM(2015) 240, p. 6). As discussed above, this indicates a collective problem approach where the Commission frames the issue as one where all members will be affected, further suggesting the driving idea to be about creating credibility. Relocation is strongly discussed as a solution to the migration crisis, but not in terms of a way forward towards more solidarity. It might therefore indicate the presence of bounded rationality, where relocation is framed as a solution to a crisis due to the situation and time, rather than being discussed in the context of solidarity which was way less discussed overall in this agenda.

In a communication from the Commission on the managing of the refugee crisis from 2015, relocation is actually stated as a proof of solidarity between Member States (COM(2015) 490). This suggests a shift in the debate where the importance of framing solidarity as a main principle of the policy has gained deeper relevance. Through the perspective of issue framing, this shift towards more solidarity might indicate that the driving ideas for the institution are to sustain its authority by reframing the issue.

Furthermore, the Commission has released numerous reports on the relocation and resettlement schemes that were implemented, where some additional shifts in the framing can be recognized. The first report from 2016 is suddenly more concerned with showing solidarity towards affected third countries by suggesting that the Member States must be able to relocate the refugees arriving in Europe and offer them protection (COM(2016) 165). In terms of agenda-setting strategies, the framing of the problem in relation to external countries might build on the idea that this issue arises on the political agenda due to conflicts in the international environment. It is also interesting to note the fact that certain Member States, such as Hungary and Slovakia have not been open to the relocation plans and have failed to contribute to the expected allocation. This is suggested to be solved by legal investigations and assistance from other Member States in order to help build up their capacity (COM(2016) 165).

In 2017 the framing of relocation and solidarity shifted slightly once again in a communication on the Delivery of the European Agenda on Migration. While evaluating the relocation scheme the Commission states the following: "...the number of people relocated through the schemes has been constantly rising, showing that solidarity can work in practice." (COM(2017) 558, p.

5), which again indicates that relocation can be interpreted as a measure of solidarity. Arguing that relocation and numbers of relocated migrants are signs of solidarity, most likely build on the idea that the Commission seeks to arouse interest and credibility to the concept of solidarity by arguing that it is a main value in the policy. The disappointment of the Member States that are not contributing to the relocation scheme also becomes more evident in the fourteenth report on relocation and resettlement from 2017 (COM(2017) 405). Here the Commission states that; "Regrettably, despite repeated calls, Hungary and Poland have still not relocated a single person and the Czech Republic has relocated only a few", and with that said, the Commission asks all Member States to contribute and show solidarity by helping with the relocations of the refugees arriving in Greece and Italy (COM(2017) 405, p. 10). It is clear that the urge towards all states to contribute is getting deeper while the word solidarity is being used more frequently, possibly to emphasize the main values of the union.

Interestingly enough, the farther away from the refugee crisis the documents are written, the less evidence of framing relocation as a solution to migration can be found. Instead, relocation is more commonly framed as a solidarity mechanism focused on a long-term perspective. In the Progress reports on the Implementation of the European Agenda on Migration from 2018 and 2019 the achieved relocation measures are presented and repeatedly suggested that it represents solidarity and is something that must continue also when Europe is not faced with a crisis (COM(2018) 250 & COM(2019) 481). This is shown in this setting for instance: "The Commission continues to support activities that could lead to tangible solidarity also in the Eastern Mediterranean. Requests for assistance through relocation from Cyprus and Greece require a response from Member States in a timely manner." (COM(2019) 481, p. 8)

These continuously mentioned shifts in framing support the theory of bounded rationality which explains that shifts in the political debate and the external sphere usually result in the reframing of issues. The last proof to support this theory is reflected in the New Pact on Migration and Asylum, where solidarity once again is clearly framed as a mechanism of relocation. The pact states that; "The new solidarity mechanism will primarily focus on relocation or return sponsorship." (COM(2020) 609, p. 5), which might indicate that the norms around migration have changed since the last agenda, where solidarity is now of greater importance. Rather than framing relocation as a solution to the crisis this agenda presents different requested actions to

contribute to solidarity, for instance actions such as "capacity building, operational support, technical and operational expertise, as well as support on the external aspects of migration" (COM(2020) 609, p. 5-6). Finally, Member States are required to contribute to relocation sponsorships and an applied distribution key in order to show solidarity. This proves that the Commission's driving ideas are based on is using small steps as a strategy to slowly gain more attention in this policy.

4.4 Emergency-driven Responses

One of the main debates around the concept of solidarity is the fact that solidarity often is used as a response to emergencies. Researchers argue that solidarity has appeared in the EU only when an emergency occurred, instead of being represented as a normative concept. These results will furthermore present how the Commission has framed this relationship between solidarity and emergencies and give explanations on why.

Since the extreme migration flows began around the time when the Agenda on Migration was written, this agenda presented a list of immediate actions as a response to the crisis. In this context they request more solidarity from the Member States which will need to be maintained "for as long as the migratory pressure persists" (COM(2015) 240, p. 2). An interpretation can therefore be that the solidarity becomes more significant when there is migratory pressure. This way of framing the issue of solidarity as a measure to solve a crisis is in line with the theory of bounded rationality where certain focus is being put on solidarity due to its importance in that time. Using an emergency in the discussion of solidarity might therefore drive the ideas of the Commission to maintain its authoritative position by claiming that the issue is of relevance for the policy.

The First report on relocation and resettlement from 2016 further discusses emergency in relation to relocation. In this context the Commission suggests that all Member States must help in the emergency relocation process in order to show solidarity. This is for instance presented in relation to actions on a limited number of pledges; "These pledges should be consistent with the quota allocated to the Member State of relocation and take full account of the emergency situation on the ground." (COM(2016) 165, p. 13). The issue of solidarity is repeatedly framed as a solution to the problem of relocation and the urgent emergency that is facing the continent

(COM(2016) 165). Framing the issue of solidarity in relation to an emergency can, according to the theory of issue framing, furthermore influence the power dynamics within the policy since this definition can shape the interests of the supporters. Using the word emergency might also be a sign of urgency and increased importance.

Later documents such as the reports on the Implementation of the European Agenda on Migration from 2018 and 2019 show less focus on emergency in relation to relocation and a deeper focus on solutions to the emergency that are more concerned with assistance and financial support (COM(2018) 250 & COM(2019) 481). This is shown in the priorities concerning African refugees; "This includes direct emergency assistance as well as protection such as medical assistance or psycho-social aid" (COM(2019) 481, p. 9). It is less concerned with emergency-driven responses such as relocation and resettlement and more focused on the actual emergency situations that are facing the refugees and how these problems can be solved. Once again it becomes evident that a shift in the debate has been made where in this case, the priorities are becoming more concerned with humanitarian aspects rather than distributional ones.

The New Pact on Migration and Asylum uses the word emergency less frequently and focuses less on immediate actions. Instead, emphasis is put on solidarity on a constant basis, rather than a concept used as a solution to emergencies (COM(2020) 609). This is shown in relation to border management with the following sentence; "It will also make procedures at the border more consistent and more efficient" (COM(2020) 609, p. 3). In order to avoid emergency-driven responses the new agenda suggests that solidarity will be a permanent feature and new guidelines that will make the EU constantly prepared for the unexpected (COM(2020) 609). This shift clearly shows that the Commission no longer wishes to frame solidarity as an emergency response but rather as a constant feature of the policy. It can furthermore be a sign of bounded rationality where the Commission has re-evaluated their policy when a new part of the policy problem has become more important.

5. Conclusions and Discussion

In this research I have tried to respond to the question of how the framing of solidarity has changed by the Commission between the Agenda on Migration from 2015 and the New Pact on Migration and Asylum from 2020. And the question of what the driving ideas behind the way the Commission has been framing solidarity has been. I have furthermore used theories of agenda-setting strategy, bounded rationality and issue framing in order to answer these questions. Based on the results of the framing analysis, a number of conclusions can be made, which will be presented and discussed below.

To begin with, one of the most distinct results is the overall increased importance of the word solidarity. It becomes clear that the usage of solidarity as a concept has shifted between the two agendas, especially in terms of the context in which it is being discussed. The first agenda shows clear evidence of a big word approach where solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility is framed as a solution to the migratory pressures that have been facing the continent. On the contrary, later documents frame solidarity more as a problem in the sense that Member States have failed to act in solidarity. Therefore, solidarity is defined more as an evidence of a failed strategy. Moreover, it becomes apparent that the new pact attempts to reframe solidarity in a way that it introduces a solidarity mechanism and suggests more operational proposals on the implementation of it. This shows a clear shift, where certain policy problems are presented in a new setting due to the way solidarity has been framed.

In terms of interstate solidarity and state-refugee solidarity, there is some resemblance between all the documents in the sense that solidarity is usually framed in an interstate perspective. However, there is a visible shift in the way interstate solidarity has been framed. In the earliest documents solidarity between Member States is framed as a solution to the issue of relocation and funding, while in the later documents more operational actions are suggested in order to reach more solidarity. This shift also represents a more common approach towards migration and the driving idea behind it seems to be that the Commission strives at claiming authority by framing the issue as collective. Within migration policies this can thus be questioned, since many countries might argue that the arising problems are not affecting them and that a common approach is not necessary. The ideas of framing the issue in this way can therefore be that the Commission tries to convince the Member States that the issue is in fact affecting all of them.

The same driving ideas can be identified in relation to solidarity and responsibility, where responsibility is repeatedly framed as a collective issue. It thus seems like the driving ideas of the Commission in the way the issue has been framed has changed over the course of time. In the earliest documents, responsibility is framed as an action needed in order to protect the refugees and to help other Member States avoid being affected by unfair burdens. Further on, responsibility is used alongside solidarity as words representing the main values of the union. A driving idea of the Commission here seems to be to frame the issue in a way that it will arouse interest, by using big words. In later documents, the idea still seems to be to arouse interest in the policy, but rather by using a small step approach. Responsibility then becomes framed as more of a problem that needs to be solved, in which the Commission is requesting more operational actions and a new bigger focus on returns. It is thus clear that the Dublin Regulation still is described as a problematic system and the unfair sharing of responsibility does seem like a difficult issue to fix only by requesting more solidarity.

The framing of solidarity in relocation and allocation shows some significant shifts. In the first documents when the migration crisis was still an actuality, relocation was framed as a solution to the crisis, rather than a strategy to reach solidarity. The further away from the crisis, the more evident it becomes that the Commission is prioritizing different aspects of the policy. Relocation and allocation then become framed as measurements of how much solidarity the Member States have shown each other and is eventually framed as a crucial part of the solidarity mechanism. These shifts can be explained as a sign of bounded rationality, where the situation and time affects the parts of the issue the Commission chose to prioritize. The frustration related to the non-contributing Member States presumably made the Commission reframe relocation as a solidarity mechanism, in order to sustain its authority and raise new aspects of the issue.

The visible shift in the debate is thus mostly illustrated in the way solidarity has gone from being an emergency-driven response to crises to being requested as a constant, normative part of the agenda. Interestingly enough, the new requested constant solidarity seems to still be based on many of the same guidelines that are visible in the earlier agenda. Even though more concrete actions are suggested, the solidarity still builds on the notion that relocation is one of

the most crucial aspects of solidarity, and the Dublin Regulation still creates difficulties in responsibility sharing and the unfair relocation of refugees.

Finally, this research has proved that the way the Commission has framed solidarity in its migration policy clearly has changed. The most astonishing result is the way solidarity has come to be framed as a strategy for a well-functioning relocation system, rather than only being framed as a concept representing the values of the union. It is also evident that the framing and re-framing of the concept has affected the way certain policy problems are presented. Even though this research has been able to answer how the framing of solidarity has changed and used theories in exploring the framing of the Commission on why this might be the case, a further study could be made on how these different frames have affected the role of the Commission. This could lead to more nuanced discussions on how actors and institutions are affected by frames and consequently help in understanding the effect agenda formulations have on politics.

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