



Universiteit
Leiden

“A matter of life and death”

Dutch media coverage on Italian labor migrants 1947-1957

s2600161

Nina Peeters

n.j.e.peeters@umail.leidenuniv.nl

+316 54 75 59 53

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List of Abbreviations

CPN (*Communistische Partij van Nederland*, English: Communist Party of The Netherlands)

DP (Displaced Person)

ECSC (European Coal and Steel Community)

KVP (*Katholieke Volkspartij*, English: Catholic People's Party)

PvdA (*Partij van de Arbeid*, English: Labor Party – Dutch social-democratic party)

1. Introduction

The first decade after Second World War (1939-1945) was a period of fundamental global changes. Europe was facing several challenges: it had to deal with mass displacement of people and had to rebuild cities that were destroyed in the war. At the same time, political leaders wanted to prevent another war from happening on the European continent. All these challenges came with social, political and financial struggles. In order to improve the livelihoods of their people, the European economies had to be kickstarted.

In the Netherlands, the coal mines were seen as one of the key industries that could be the engine of a thriving post-war economy. As the winter of 1946-1947 broke all temperature records and became the coldest winter since 1789, the Dutch government was prompted to drastically increase the coal production and start recruiting huge numbers of workers for the coal mines.¹ As it became apparent that recruitment in the Netherlands would not be sufficient for acquiring enough workers for the mines, the Dutch government started to recruit foreign workers. Amongst these foreign workers were men from Italy. In 1949, the Netherlands reached a recruitment agreement with Italy.² The agreement was seen as a win-win-situation: the Italian government was confronted with significant unemployment rates, whilst the Dutch government did not have enough work forces to fill the vacancies. In that sense, the mutually beneficial labor migration scheme can be seen as “a matter of life and death” for both countries.³

This research looks at the media discussions on Italian labor migrants. Shedding light on this debate contributes to the debates on post-war labor migration, migrant integration and the first stages of the European integration process. As described further on in this thesis, the study of media perception of Italian labor migrants to the Dutch coal mines remains understudied. Hence, this thesis is interested in the factors that determined the media perception and the frames that appear in the coverage in order to fill this academic gap.

1.1. Central Focus and Research Question

This thesis discusses the different ways in which Italian labor migrants were portrayed by the Dutch media. It has a special interest in which frames appeared in the coverage on Italian labor migration to the Dutch coal mines. In this context, the following question is central to this research:

How did Dutch newspapers portray Italian labor migrants in coal mines in the period from 1947 to 1957, and how can these frames be explained?

This research question will be answered by an analysis of selected newspaper articles published in all Dutch national newspapers and in the regional newspaper *Limburgsch Dagblad*, because of the

¹ In the 1940s, the Dutch energy supply was mainly depending on coal, mainly from the Dutch coal mines.

² ‘Wervingsverdrag Italië-Nederland’ *Vijf eeuwen migratie* <https://vijfeeuwenmigratie.nl/node/61> (26 June 2020).

³ ‘Emigratie, een levenskwesitie voor Italië’, *De Tijd* 13-1-1949, 2.

geographical location of the Dutch coal mines in the province of Limburg. As the question underlines, the main focus of this research lies in articles on Italian labor migration to Dutch coal mines. However, since previous research has shown that labor migration to the Dutch mines was also influenced by migration patterns to other (Western-)European coal mines, Dutch newspaper coverage on Italian labor migration to other mining regions in other European countries was also included in this thesis.⁴

The thesis starts with an overview of relevant academic literature in the historiography and formulates some hypotheses based on academic theories that will guide this research. It continues with a section on the material used for this analysis and provides an overview of the methodological framework. Chapter 2 gives a background on the European economic situation after the Second World War, early guest worker migration to Dutch, Belgian and German coal mines and the political situation in Europe at that time. An in-depth analysis of the material will be made in the Chapters 3 to 5, after which the conclusions of this research will be presented.

1.2. Historiography

Guest worker migration to the Western-European coal mines has been a subject of interest to many academic scholars.⁵ The following section outlines some of the key aspects, focusing on mining in the Netherlands.

Social historians and sociologists have written extensively on working conditions and the everyday life of miners in the Western-European coal mines and continue to do so.⁶ There is also a large body of literature about the arrival of foreign miners to the Dutch province Limburg.⁷ Previous research mainly looks at Dutch recruitment policy or the position of foreign workers in the mining industry. An important scholar in this context is Serge Langeweg. In his dissertation, Langeweg gives an extensive analysis of the recruitment and employment in the mines. The Dutch mines had always employed foreigners from neighboring countries and Langeweg shows how the number of nationalities in the

⁴ An example of an author who has written on this matter: Serge Langeweg *Mijnbouw en arbeidsmarkt in Nederlands-Limburg. Herkomst, werving, mobiliteit en binding van mijnwerkers tussen 1900 en 1965* (Hilversum 2011).

⁵ For example: Will Tinnemans, *Een gouden armband. Een geschiedenis van mediterrane immigranten in Nederland, 1945-1994* (Utrecht 1994); Jan Lucassen and Rinus Penninx, *Nieuwkomers, nakomelingen, Nederlanders, Immigranten in Nederland 1550-1993* (Amsterdam 1994); Tesseltje de Lange, *Staat, markt en migrant: de regulering van arbeidsmigratie naar Nederland 1945-2006* (Den Haag 2007); Herman Obdeijn and Marlou Schrover, *Komen en gaan: Immigratie en Emigratie in Nederland vanaf 1550* (Amsterdam 2008); Nadia Bouras, *Het land van herkomst perspectieven op verbondenheid met Marokko, 1960-2010* (Hilversum 2012).

⁶ Most notable recent work: Ad Knotter *Mijnwerkers in Limburg. Een sociale Geschiedenis* (Nijmegen 2012); Marcia Luyten *Het geluk van Limburg* (Amsterdam 2015); Joep Dohmen *De geur van kolen* (Heerlen 2013).

⁷ Paul Brassé and Willem van Schelven *Assimilatie van vooroorlogse immigranten. Drie generaties Polen, Slovenen, Italianen in Heerlen* ('s-Gravenhage 1980); Loek Kreukels *Mijnarbeid: volgzzaamheid en strijdzaamheid. Geschiedenis van de arbeidsverhoudingen in de Nederlandse steenkolenmijnen* (Assen and Maastricht 1986); Serge Langeweg and Leen Roels, 'Buitenlandse arbeiders in de steenkolenmijnen van Luik en Nederlands-Limburg in de twintigste eeuw: een vergelijking', in: Ad Knotter, *Limburg kolenland, over de geschiedenis van de Limburgse kolenmijnbouw*, (Zwolle, 2015), 152 – 181.

mines grew from the 1930s onwards.⁸ He states that foreign workers in the mines mostly had a ‘back-up’ role (Dutch: *bufferfunctie*) or an educating role in the mines. According to Langeweg, the number of foreign workers in the Dutch coal mines would increase when the Dutch economy provided ample alternatives for Dutch miners.⁹

Next to Langeweg, literature on the perception of foreigners in the Dutch coal mines after the Second World War has mainly focused on the role of media in migration policy. Schrover and Walaardt have looked at media perception and policy making in this time period in articles on migration by displaced persons (DPs) and Hungarian refugees.¹⁰ The literature was helpful for this thesis because it provided a good overview of the Dutch post-war newspaper landscape. Besides that, the articles were used for the frame analysis of this study and helped shape the hypotheses.

There are two interesting interview projects concerned with miner’s communities that are worth mentioning in this chapter. These projects give a good insight in the feelings and experiences of foreign miners. The first project is a Belgian collection of interviews with foreign – non-Belgian – employees of the coal mines. The project, titled *In de mijn is iedereen zwart* (English: In the mine, everybody is black), gathered interviews with 23 former miners from foreign countries like Italy, Greece and Poland.¹¹ The second project is a more recent Dutch oral history project called *Onze Mijnwerkers* (English: Our Miners).¹²

Langeweg not only provides good insight in the labor market in Limburg, he also looks into the bilateral workers agreements between Italy and The Netherlands. According to Langeweg, these agreements were used as a blueprint for labor migration agreements made with other countries later on.¹³

A small number of scholars has written about European labor market integration in relation with migration. The former director of Sociaal Historisch Centrum voor Limburg, Ad Knotter, has argued that the coal mines never really managed to permanently bind cross-border workers in the Euregion

⁸ Langeweg *Mijnbouw en arbeidsmarkt in Nederlands-Limburg*.

⁹ Serge Langeweg ‘Bekende burenen en verre vreemden. Buitenlandse arbeiders in de Nederlandse steenkolenmijnen 1900-1974’ in: *Low Countries Journal of Social and Economic History*, 5(3), 53–79.

¹⁰ Marlou Schrover and Tycho Walaardt, ‘The influence of the media on politics and practices: Hungarian refugee resettlement in the Netherlands in 1956’, *Journal of Migration History* 3 (2017) 22-53; Marlou Schrover and Tycho Walaardt, ‘Displaced persons, returnees and ‘unsuitables’ the Dutch selection of DPs (1945-1951)’, *Continuity and Change* 33 (2018), 413 – 400.

¹¹ Werkgroep Mijngeschiedenis *In de mijn is iedereen zwart. Gesprekken met buitenlandse werknemers die in de kolenmijnen van België werken* (Antwerpen 1984).

¹² Unfortunately, the official website of the *Onze Mijnwerkers* project has not been accessible for a couple of months. Some parts of the project were also broadcasted by the regional TV station L1 Limburg and can be found under <https://l1.nl/onze-mijnwerkers>.

¹³ Langeweg *Mijnbouw en arbeidsmarkt in Nederlands-Limburg*, 186-188.

Meuse-Rhine to their companies.¹⁴ Simone Goedings and Roberto Sala have done interesting work on European labor migration.¹⁵

As this section shows, there is a lot of literature on labor migration to the coal mines. This thesis differs from other literature on labor migration because it focuses on Italian labor migration to the mines in the first decade after the Second World War. This period can be seen as a turning point in European labor migration: society was trying to encourage economic growth whilst finding enough workers for this growth. The frame analyses of Schrover and Walaardt focused on the arrival of Displaced Persons and Poles in the 1940s and the arrival of Hungarian refugees in the 1950s. This thesis looks at the arrival of labor migrants in between these two periods and therefore ‘fills the gap’. It focusses on the dilemmas from the first decade after the Second World War, when newspapers first started writing on subjects like bilateral working agreements.

1.3. Theory and Hypotheses

Based on the literature summarized above and literature on the framing on migrants, several hypotheses can be formulated. The researched subject is a highly interconnected one, e.g. a thriving economic situation has an influence on recruitment policies and political debates, but also on daily life or having recreation facilities within reach. Therefore, it is important to underline that the literature showed that most of these factors are interdependent and cannot be seen separately.

In their article on Hungarian refugees in The Netherlands, Schrover and Walaardt identify five generic (top-down) frames that were used by media.¹⁶ Based on the conclusions of this article, the economic, humanitarian and crisis frame are expected to be of great importance in the analyzed sources. The economic frame is expected to focus on the need for coal on the one hand and the housing shortage in the Netherlands on the other. The humanitarian frame may focus on living conditions and integration of Italian miners. Lastly, the crisis frame likely focuses on the potential threat to culture, economy or security in the host-society. The morality and responsibility frame were expected to be of less relevance, since the subject of labor migration often did not look at these subjects. A more extensive overview of how frame analysis was used in this research is provided in the next chapter.

Several factors are expected to shape the coverage of the analyzed newspapers. It is assumed that (1) different political-cultural orientations of newspapers plays a role in their output. A characteristic of the time is the relation between political parties and newspapers: there were strong ties between the

¹⁴ Ad Knotter ‘Changing Border Regimes, Mining, and Cross-border Labor in the Dutch–Belgian–German Borderlands, 1900–1973’ *Journal of Borderland Studies* 29 (2014) 375 – 387.

¹⁵ Simone A.W. Goedings, *Labor migration in an Integration Europe. National Migration Policies and the Free Movement of Workers, 1950-1968* (Den Haag 2005); Roberto Sala ‘Vom “Fremdarbeiter” zum “Gastarbeiter” Die Anwerbung Italienscher Arbeitskräfte für die deutsche Wirtschaft (1938-1973)’ *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 1 (2007) 93 -120.

¹⁶ Schrover and Walaardt ‘The influence of the media on politics and practices: Hungarian refugee resettlement in the Netherlands in 1956’, 29.

ruling parties and newspapers. From example, the Catholic *Katholieke Volkspartij* (KVP) was affiliated with *De Volkskrant* and *De Tijd* and the social-democratic *Partij van de Arbeid* (PvdA) was linked to *Het Vrije Volk*.¹⁷

De Telegraaf was not allowed to be published right after the Second World War, because of allegations of having cooperated with the Nazis. Once it got back into print, it took an increasingly critical and populist standpoint. The newspaper *De Waarheid* is expected to look at the subject of labor migration of Italians in a skeptical manner as it was affiliated with the Dutch communist party (CPN). The CPN was critical of the recruitment policy because they thought that improved working conditions in the mines would make the work more attractable for Dutch men. On top of that, they criticized the fact that the emigration of Dutch people was stimulated while Italian workers were brought to the Netherlands.¹⁸ Schrover and Walaardt have shown in their frame analyses that *De Waarheid* was critical of foreign laborers in vital economies like the coal industry, because they were expected to undermine the ‘fight for better wages’ of national (Dutch) miners.¹⁹ Both *De Telegraaf* and *De Waarheid* were newspapers of the Dutch opposition and therefore are expected to have a more critical opinion on many topics. With an increase in (foreign) employment in the Dutch coal mines, shortages in housing increased as well. It is expected that these more critical newspapers focus on the connection between these two topics.

The reactions of their readership and the newspaper sales may also have had an influence on the media coverage on Italian labor migration. Framing Italian labor migrants as a ‘threat’ or as ‘sad, poor people’ may sell more newspapers than a purely factual and neutral story. Next to that, Catholic readers may for example be more interested in stories on religious events than Communists or Socialists.

Schrover and Walaardt have also found that in the period of Hungarian refugee resettlement, media coverage was largely supportive of the government’s standpoint. In line with the literature, newspapers which were affiliated to the coalition parties of the time are therefore expected to take a more supportive standpoint in these discussions.²⁰ However, literature on media frames used for the Dutch selections of DPs also shows that this support was not unlimited and that newspapers did not fully support the government’s position.²¹ Consequently, (2) the results of this research are expected to result in a combination of these two factors. Newspapers are expected to have been supportive of the government’s position, but this is not expected to be ‘blind support.’

¹⁷ Schrover and Walaardt ‘Displaced persons, returnees and ‘unsuitables’ the Dutch selection of DPs (1945-1951)’, 421.

¹⁸ De Lange, *Staat, markt en migrant*, 68.

¹⁹ Schrover and Walaardt ‘Displaced persons, returnees and ‘unsuitables’ the Dutch selection of DPs (1945-1951)’, 424.

²⁰ Schrover and Walaardt ‘The influence of the media on politics and practices: Hungarian refugee resettlement in the Netherlands in 1956’, 51.

²¹ Schrover and Walaardt, ‘Displaced persons, returnees and ‘unsuitables’ the Dutch selection of DPs (1945-1951)’, 433.

In line with the difference between different cultural-political standpoints of newspapers, it is expected that (3) national newspapers used different frames than the analyzed regional newspaper. Even though the mining industry was a crucial industry in the first decennium after the Second World War, minor regional events or developments in the employment of miners are expected to have been of less interest to people from outside the mining region compared to the people living in Limburg.

A final factor that is expected to have influenced the media coverage on Italian guest workers is the (4) political situation in the analyzed time period. As already highlighted in the historiography, this timeframe saw many pivotal points when it comes to labor migration and European integration. On top of that, the economic growth in this period may have had an effect on the image painted of Italian workers. Since there were big labor shortages, governments had to accept foreign workers and often had a hand in the recruitment of these laborers. On the one hand, the Dutch society feared that they would be the victims of the arrival of foreign migrants. They feared that the foreigners would take their jobs and the unemployment among Dutch workers would increase. On the other hand, the foreign workers were of great importance to keep the Dutch economy going.²²

Next to the economic necessity, the Dutch society (and therefore Dutch politics) was struggling with housing shortages. The Dutch feared that foreign miners would further increase the shortages on the housing market and because of this, the Dutch government focused on unmarried men in their foreign recruitment campaigns. These labor migrants were mainly hosted in companion houses.²³

1.4. Material and methods

On the material

In order to get an overview of the Dutch media representation of Italian migrant workers in the coal mine region, the primary sources of this study consisted of articles by Dutch newspaper covering this topic. Both national and regional newspaper articles on Italian guest workers were used for this thesis. A ten year time period (1947-1957) was chosen to capture a pivotal moment in the history of guest worker migration to post-war Western-Europe. Newspapers were selected as a source, since they were expected to cover the public discourse on labor migrants of the time.

The articles were selected in the Dutch newspaper database Delpher, using the following search terms: “*Italianen*”, “*Werving Italië*” and “*Gastarbeiders mijnen*” (English: ‘Italians’, ‘recruitment Italy’ and ‘Guest workers mines’). These search terms resulted in over 500 relevant articles. A cross-check with other search terms resulted in finding the same relevant articles that had been found by using the abovementioned search terms. The cross-check also showed that with the abovementioned keywords a longer list of sources occurred than with the cross-check search terms. It was decided to use as few filters

²² Langeweg, *Mijnbouw en arbeidsmarkt*, 154.

²³ Langeweg, *Mijnbouw en arbeidsmarkt*, 127.

as necessary to select the data. The keyword “*Italianen*” produced over 25,000 hits. Therefore, all 541 relevant articles in this search were manually selected from the 25,000 articles. Even though the manual selection was time-consuming, it provided a good impression of the general discourse on Italy and Italians in the analyzed period. By using a manual selection, it may be the case that some relevant articles were accidentally missed and therefore not covered in this research. However, this should not inhibit a representative analysis, since the total number of collected articles was still extensive. Table 1 shows how many articles were used per newspaper.

Table 1: Overview of articles per newspaper

Name of Newspaper	Number of Articles
Algemeen Dagblad	32
Algemeen Handelsblad	25
De Telegraaf	23
De Tijd	55
De Volkskrant	71
De Waarheid	25
Het Parool	41
Het Vrije Volk	49
Limburgsch Dagblad	191
Trouw	29
Total	541

Sources: See main text.

The analysis of Dutch newspaper coverage is based on 541 articles from national Dutch newspapers and from the regional newspaper *Limburgsch Dagblad*.²⁴ As described above, the analyzed newspaper all have a different socio-political position: *De Tijd* and *De Volkskrant* were aligned with the Catholic party KVP, *Algemeen Handelsblad* was a liberal right wing business paper, *Algemeen Dagblad* was also a liberal newspaper, *Het Vrije Volk* was affiliated with the social-democratic party as was *Het Parool*, *Trouw* was considered a protestant newspaper, *De Waarheid* was the paper of the communist party, and, lastly, *De Telegraaf* was considered a right wing populist newspaper.²⁵ *De Telegraaf* was initially prohibited from publishing for thirty years after the war. This ban was lifted in 1949, because the collaboration with the Germans that had led to the ban of *De Telegraaf* was thought to have taken

²⁴ In 1947 *Het Vrije Volk* was the largest national newspaper (300,000 prints), followed by *Trouw* (175,000 prints), *De Waarheid* (150,000 prints) and *De Volkskrant* and *Het Parool* (each 135,000 prints). These numbers had changed significantly by 1960: *De Telegraaf* now was the second largest (200,000), followed by *De Volkskrant* (164,000), *Het Parool* (160,000) and *Algemeen Dagblad* (113,000). *De Waarheid* lost more than 120,000 readers and had a print of 29,000 in 1960. *Limburgsch Dagblad* had around 50,000 readers in 1960.

²⁵ Schrover and Walaardt ‘The influence of the media on politics and practices: Hungarian refugee resettlement in the Netherlands in 1956’, 27; Jan van de Plasse *Kroniek van de Nederlandse dagblad- en opiniepers* (Amsterdam 2005).

place under pressure.²⁶ *Het Parool* and *Trouw* (and to some extent *De Waarheid*) started as resistance newspapers in the war. Regional newspaper *Limburgsch Dagblad* was founded for the workers, especially the miners.²⁷ As this overview shows, The selected newspapers cover practically the entire national political spectrum and form a good basis for a thorough and representative analysis.

Since the Dutch coal mines were located right in the middle of a larger mining area that ran from Wallonia in Belgium to Aachen in Germany, it was decided that Dutch newspaper coverage on foreigner workers in coalmines in other European countries would be included in the first data collection as well.

The only regional newspaper that was used for the analysis was *Limburgsch Dagblad* (currently: *Limburgs Dagblad*). The reason for the selection of only this regional newspaper is twofold. In the first place, including all regional newspapers would have quadrupled the total number of sources. Secondly, the Dutch coal mines were located in the province Limburg, including a regional newspaper from the area felt logical.

The choice of analyzing newspapers for this research was made because newspapers have an influence on the public discourse on a subject. Especially in the 20th century, newspapers still played a big role in the informing people on developments and policies. As several authors have shown, newspapers can influence the opinion of their readership. In addition, the newspapers can be used to legitimize and strengthen government policy.²⁸ However, at the same time, it is difficult to measure to what extent newspaper coverage had an influence on the public discourse and the opinions and reactions of people and a general conclusion on public opinion based solely on newspaper coverage therefore undesirable.

Categorization and Selection process

In the data collection process, all articles were categorized in one (or several) of seven categories. These categories were based on the method described by Matthes and Kohring.²⁹ The categories are listed in the table below and can be seen as one of the framing elements, namely the ‘problem definition’. Some categories were already selected before looking at the sources, since the expectation was that articles from these top-down frames would emerge.³⁰ As stated in the hypothesis, it was to be expected that e.g. a humanitarian point of view (Category A) would emerge. Category B

²⁶ Van de Plasse *Kroniek van de Nederlandse dagblad- en opiniepers*, 154.

²⁷ Maxvandaag, ‘Limburgs Dagblad: afscheid van een bijna 100-jarige krant, 29-12-2017, <https://www.maxvandaag.nl/sessies/themas/terug-naar-toen/limburgs-dagbladafschied-van-een-bijna-100-jarige-krant/> (28-6-2020).

²⁸ Schrover and Walaardt ‘The influence of the media on politics and practices: Hungarian refugee resettlement in the Netherlands in 1956’, 27

²⁹ Jörg Matthes and Matthias Kohring ‘The content analysis of media frames: Toward improving reliability and validity’ *Journal of Communication* 58 (2008) 258 -279, 264 and 267.

³⁰ This applies to categories A, B, C, E and F

was also introduced because of the topic of this thesis and was assumed to be big (generic) enough to identified in advance. However, it was not a static process and it was combined with a bottom up approach, creating several categories during the source collection process.³¹ Since the categorization was done both before and throughout the data collection, it may have resulted in a subjective categorization process. The fact that this was done manually, rather than systematically by a computer system, also means that it is very possible that the frame selection was influenced by the researcher's bias and expectations.

In the categorization process, articles were also given a 'Relevance Score between 1 and 4. In the categorization a relevance score 1 was 'extremely interesting or important' and a relevance of 4 was 'almost completely negligible'. This was mainly done to filter the sources in a more manageable way, but also helped in mapping how much interest specific newspapers took in Italian labor migrant to the Dutch coal mines.

In the categories, the somewhat emotionally focused newspaper coverage on matters like accidents, danger and personal preferences were separated from topics like the economy and political repercussions of certain actions. This division is therefore in line with the hypotheses formulated in Chapter 1.3 and enabled looking at different aspects of the newspaper coverage, just like the hypotheses do.

Table 2: Overview of categorization used during and after data collection

A	The Italian guest worker, including recreation, criminal offences and homesickness
B	Guest worker migration to The Netherlands, Recruitment of Italian workers/miners, Numbers of foreigners in The Netherlands
C	European Integration and the E.C.S.C.
D	Accidents in Belgian coal mines
D1	The disaster of Marcinelle
E	Italian guest workers in other European countries, mainly Belgium and Germany
F	Remaining articles

Sources: See main text.

Method

For this frame analysis, an approach that focused on both generic (top-down) and issue-specific frames (bottom-up) was chosen, because a combination of both approaches was expected to result in a thorough analysis. The bottom-up frames were identified during the coding and analyzation process, since they were difficult to predict before the actual analysis of the articles. The generic frames like

³¹ This goes for categories D, D1, but also for the addition of including "recreation, criminal offences and homesickness" in the description of category A.

conflict, human interest, economic interest, morality and responsibility were used throughout the analysis as well and these categories were used next to the additional issue-specific categories.³² Generally, it has to be underlined that the categories and frames in this thesis were not mutually exclusive and articles were frequently categorized in two or more categories. In the attached source overview, the sources have been listed in their ‘prime’ category. All titles, quotes and other content from the analyzed sources have been translated into English by the author.

2. Background and Scope: Coal mines and labor migration to the Province Limburg

This chapter provides a general overview of the political and economic climate in the coal mining industry in the first fifteen years after the Second World War. The focus lies on the Dutch situation, but a more general Western-European perspective is added to emphasize certain statements and events.

Mining after 1945: *Bataille du Charbon* and the Common Market for Coal and Steel

Compared to neighboring countries, Dutch coal mines had a late and slow start: they started operating late in the nineteenth century. However, the Dutch mining industry experienced a significant growth in the 1920s and 1930s and had become a serious industry when the Second World War started. The Second World War had a devastating effect on the Netherlands and its economy. Dutch coal mines were also affected. During the war, the full production capacity of the then twelve Dutch coal mines had been in German hands. The Belgian coal mines had come out of the Second World War virtually intact, but the German, French and Dutch mines had been destroyed upon the departure of the Nazis.³³

After the Second World War, the coal mines were seen as the engine of the economic recovery process. After the war, the mines held major recruitment campaigns among the Dutch population to supplement the workforce. However, Dutch men were not very enthusiastic about working in the mines: Although the work paid fairly well, the work was physically demanding and came with a lot of safety risks. The scarcity of local laborers working in the mines resulted in great labor shortages in the mines. In order to increase the coal production and lay energetic foundations for economic growth, the Belgian government soon declared the so-called *Bataille du Charbon* (English: Coal Battle, Dutch: *kolenslag*). As part of this policy, thousands of Italian guest workers were recruited to work in the Belgian mines.³⁴

In the first decade after the Second World War, Dutch politics were characterized by the cooperation of the catholic party (KVP) and the social-democratic party (PvdA). The cooperation was referred to as the *Rooms-Rode Coalitie* (Catholic-Red Coalition). These cabinets were in office from

³² Matthes and Kohring, ‘The content analysis of media frames: Toward improving reliability and validity’, 262.

³³ Langeweg, *Mijnbouw en arbeidsmarkt in Nederlands-Limburg*, 45.

³⁴ Ibid.

1948 to 1958 and were led by Prime Minister Willem Drees (PvdA).³⁵ The Dutch government faced several challenges in this period, most importantly rebuilding the country and strengthening the economy after the war. A speedy restoration of the economy was expected to give the Dutch (mining) industry a head start on the export markets. The mining industry was seen as the engine of economic growth. This soon turned out to be true: from 1950 the Dutch national income significantly increased, resulting in hardly any unemployment.³⁶

At the same time, the Dutch population was growing rapidly. The country was struggling with the number of people and had to deal with a severe housing shortage. As a result, about half a million people emigrated to other continents between 1945 and 1967. The government stimulated their departure and cooperated with other governments to improve emigration opportunities.³⁷

Dutch coal mines: Companies, employment and (foreign) recruitment

As briefly mentioned in the previous section, the Netherlands had twelve operating mines: four exploited by the Dutch state and eight private mining sites owned by four different operators.³⁸ Most of the mines were located in the so-called Eastern Mining Area, near the cities of Heerlen and Kerkrade. As the mines were located in the border region with Belgium and Germany, there was a high degree of exchange between the miners in this area. Ad Knotter shows in his article on cross-border labor migration in Belgium, Germany and The Netherlands that the location of these Dutch mines had both advantages and disadvantages for the Dutch mines. On the one hand, they hosted commuters from Belgium and Germany, who could come and work in the mines and go back home after their shift. However, this mobility also enabled the miners to choose to work where the facilities and wages were the best.³⁹

Serge Langeweg emphasized that Dutch mines were regularly struggling to find enough employees. The mining companies had a strong preference for workers who were rooted in the region and who would want to pass on the profession of miner to their sons and ensure future employment.⁴⁰ However, until the coal crisis of 1958, the Dutch labor market never managed to provide the coal mines with enough national miners. As a result, mining companies regularly had to employ workers from economically less developed regions. Three periods in which foreign workers were recruited for the mines were 1945-1947, 1955-1957 and 1961-1965.⁴¹

³⁵ Jac Bosmans and Alexander van Kessel *Parlementaire geschiedenis van Nederland* (Amsterdam 2011), 54.

³⁶ Langeweg, *Mijnbouw en arbeidsmarkt in Nederlands-Limburg*, 113.

³⁷ Obdeijn and Schrover, *Komen en gaan*, 197-198.

³⁸ Langeweg, *Mijnbouw en arbeidsmarkt in Nederlands-Limburg*, 27-28.

³⁹ Knotter 'Changing Border Regimes, Mining, and Cross-border Labor in the Dutch-Belgian-German Borderlands', 382.

⁴⁰ Langeweg, *Mijnbouw en arbeidsmarkt in Nederlands-Limburg*, 115.

⁴¹ Langeweg, *Mijnbouw en arbeidsmarkt in Nederlands-Limburg*, 177.

The first recruitment period started immediately after the end of the Second World War. The Dutch mines had to deal with a serious labor shortage. The companies therefore made requests to the National Labor Office of the Ministry of Social Affairs to bring workers to the Netherlands. Between 1946 and 1948 the mines recruited so-called displaced persons from Poland and other Eastern European regions who were living in camps in Germany and could not or did not want to return home after the war.⁴² After the Second World War many Western-European countries and mining companies recruited in other (European) countries. These recruitment campaigns were possible because of the introduction of bilateral migration agreements. The first Dutch bilateral agreement was signed between The Netherlands and Italy in 1948. The countries agreed to cooperate on employment opportunities in the Dutch coal mines in exchange for a reimbursement for the home country.⁴³ The poster below shows a campaign to recruit Italian men for the Dutch mines.

Image 1: Italian recruitment brochure on working in the Dutch coal mines (1962)



Source: <https://www.demijnen.nl/actueel/artikel/lavoro-voi>

⁴² Langeweg, *Mijnbouw en arbeidsmarkt in Nederlands-Limburg*, 107.

⁴³ Langeweg, *Mijnbouw en arbeidsmarkt in Nederlands-Limburg*, 184.

European integration

At the same time, the first steps in the European integration process were taken. As mentioned above, the Second World War had destroyed European industries. Mines supplied the coal needed to power households and businesses and it was considered necessary for the mines to quickly return to full capacity. As a reaction to this the Schuman Plan was introduced in 1950. This plan was designed to prevent another war on the European continent and stimulate economic growth in Europe. The plan resulted in the founding of the European Coals and Steel Community (ECSC), in which the production of coal and steel was placed under the authority of a common High Authority. The Community exercised joint control over the most important raw materials of the war industry and merged coal and steel production as a first step towards economic cooperation in Europe. This cooperation was later intensified with the 1957 agreement on Free Movement of Workers and the founding of the European Economic Community (the forerunner of the European Union).⁴⁴

Internationally, the 1951 Refugee Convention also had an influence on European migration. In the 1950s, the Cold War was in full swing and the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 provided the first challenge on the broader implementation of the treaty. The Netherlands hosted 3,200 Hungarian refugees from camps in Austria and recruited them to work in the mines.⁴⁵

3. Source analysis of all sources per category

This chapter looks at the frames that were used in different categories. Within each section, the generic and issue-specific frames that were detected are analyzed. Some categories have been clustered in one section. This was partially done because of similarities (e.g. category D and E), but the size of some of the categories was also considered. As mentioned in the methods chapter, some articles have been categorized in more than one category and in the corresponding diagrams.

3.1. Category A - The Italian guest worker

All articles that looked at the livelihood, characteristics and communities of Italian guest workers were collected in Category A. It was interesting to see that the articles in this category were not spread equally over the analyzed time: Only two of the 94 articles in this category were written in the year 1947, whilst a much bigger number of articles were found in 1957.⁴⁶ Personal stories of articles on

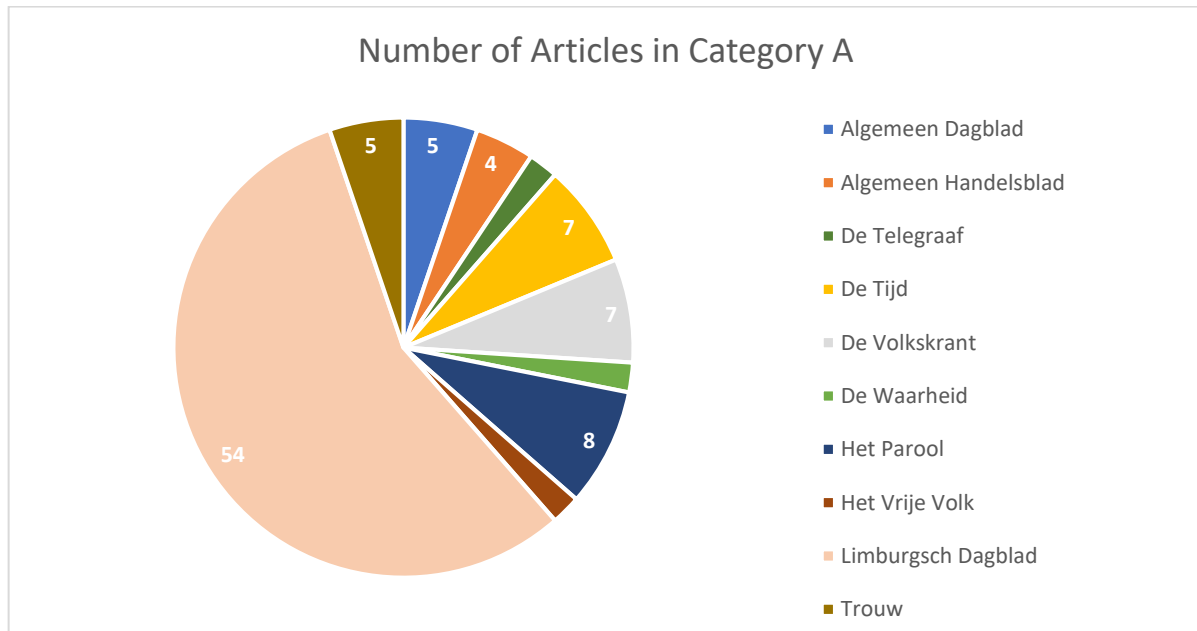
⁴⁴ Europa Nu *Verdrag tot oprichting van een Europese Gemeenschap voor Kolen en Staal (EGKS-Verdrag)* https://www.europa-nu.nl/id/vh7doush0hzs/verdrag_tot_oprichting_van_een_europese (14 June 2020).

⁴⁵ Schrover and Walaardt 'The influence of the media on politics and practices: Hungarian refugee resettlement in the Netherlands in 1956', 23.

⁴⁶ In 1947: 'Amsterdam – Mijnstreek' *Limburgsch Dagblad*, 8-8-1959, 2; 'Mijnwerkersbond eens met ontworpen bedrijfsrechtspraak' *De Volkskrant*, 4-3-1947, 3.

the life of Italian guest workers increased both in length and in frequency throughout the analyzed period. The diagram pictured below shows the division of the articles in this category per newspaper.

Diagram 1: Articles in category A per newspaper



Source: See main text.

The language and tone of articles in category evolved over time. In 1949, *De Tijd* described the Italians as “sloppy” and wrote: “They appear to be used to living in a more chaotic world.”⁴⁷ On top of that, the author does not understand why these Italians are homesick and underlines that “one can wonder what these people have got left to wish for.”⁴⁸ In the 1950s, newspapers started to publish more elaborate articles on the Italian miners and took on a more nuanced tone. *Trouw* published a lengthy human interest article on “Southern Europe in Southern Limburg” and wrote about the habits of the Italians in the mines.⁴⁹ On the one hand, it is more nuanced about the Italians and tells their own stories and worries. On the other hand, the article adds that these men are “pin-up boys” and that they think potatoes and cabbage are strange foods.⁵⁰ In 1956, *Het Parool* also published a long article on how the Italian labor migrants experienced working (and eating) in the Netherlands. Just as most articles in this category, food interests the author. He highlights that Italians prefer pasta over potatoes and “think drinking a glass of milk is for children.”⁵¹ The author also painted a nice general picture of the Italian community in the Netherlands. His main argument was the fact that Italian guest workers were very happy in the Netherlands, but that they were disappointed by their wages. Over all, one can say that by the end of the

⁴⁷ ‘Italianen in Mijnstreek verlangen naar huis’, *De Tijd*, 5-8-1949, 4.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ ‘Zuid-Europa in Zuid-Limburg’, *Trouw*, 23-12-1955, page unknown.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ ‘Italianen in Nederland. Harde werkers met grote zorgen’, *Het Parool*, 14-7-1956, 3.

1950s, this third moral argument of low wages (for Italian miners) started to gain ground and could be read in most newspapers. *De Waarheid*, wrote about the Italian migrants' wishes for a pay rise as well. However, unlike the other newspapers, *De Waarheid* was highly critical of the policy Dutch mining companies, who supposedly "isolate Italians as much as possible from their Dutch colleagues" to stop the demands for higher wages.⁵²

The example of *De Waarheid* is a good example of another frame that was used in relation to individual Italians: the threat scenario. As Schrover and Walaardt write in their article on the media coverage on DPs in the Netherlands, *De Waarheid* was highly critical of the migration and recruitment policy. *De Waarheid* used a different argument than other newspapers, but the critical view towards (some of the) Italian migrants in the Netherlands did make up a part of the newspaper coverage in this category. These newspapers often connected specific crimes in which individual Italians may have been involved to the group of Italians. *De Telegraaf* wrote about an Italian miner who stabbed a man and continued to explain the consequences of this incident in Limburg.⁵³ Even though the article was only two paragraphs long, it underlined that local "pub owners have decided to no longer allow Italians in their establishment."⁵⁴ Besides that, it emphasized that the village has started to protest the imminent arrival of Italians a nearby boardinghouse. Another good example of this frame can be found in the next chapter, where a more detailed comparison of newspaper coverage on Hungarian migrants in Limburg is outlined.

The threat scenario is not always as concrete as the two examples mentioned above. Several articles in this category suggested a threat through their title. Regional newspaper *Limburgsch Dagblad* published an article on the number of foreigners in the municipality of Kerkrade.⁵⁵ The title of the article suggests a connection between an increase in sex crime cases and the growing number of foreigners in the municipality. However, a closer look at the article shows that it merely stated that the increase in sex crime was "to blame to forced cohabitation" due to housing shortages.⁵⁶

⁵² "Minatori" en kompels samen in één mijn. Italiaanse mijnwerkers in Limburg voelen zich bedrogen', *De Waarheid*, 19-1-1957, 5.

⁵³ 'Italiaanse mijnwerker steekt man neer', *De Telegraaf*, 17-12-1957, 5.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ 'Groot aantal vreemdelingen in Kerkrade. Aantal zedendelicten vrij aanzienlijk toegenomen', *Limburgsch Dagblad*, 21-6-1950, 5.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

Image 2: A group Italians in the canteen of the companion house in Brunssum (1956)



Source: Fotocollectie DSM (PR8324)

Lastly, a change was detected in the language that was used in the articles of this category. There are two interesting remarks to make in this context. First, populist newspapers gradually started to use more explicit language throughout the analyzed period. Newspapers like *De Telegraaf* were still searching for their position towards these migrants in the 1940s and started to establish a clearer standpoint in the 1950s. The second point refers to the way the newspapers described the Italian migrants. As described above, many of the articles were filled with ‘clichés’ on Italian characteristics and food preferences. Many newspaper merely painted them as young men who like to drink Chianti and eat pasta and who care about their looks. These clichés hardly changed throughout the analyzed timeframe. This cliché has often been described in scientific literature on Italians as migrants and is even used in current framing of Italy and Italians.⁵⁷

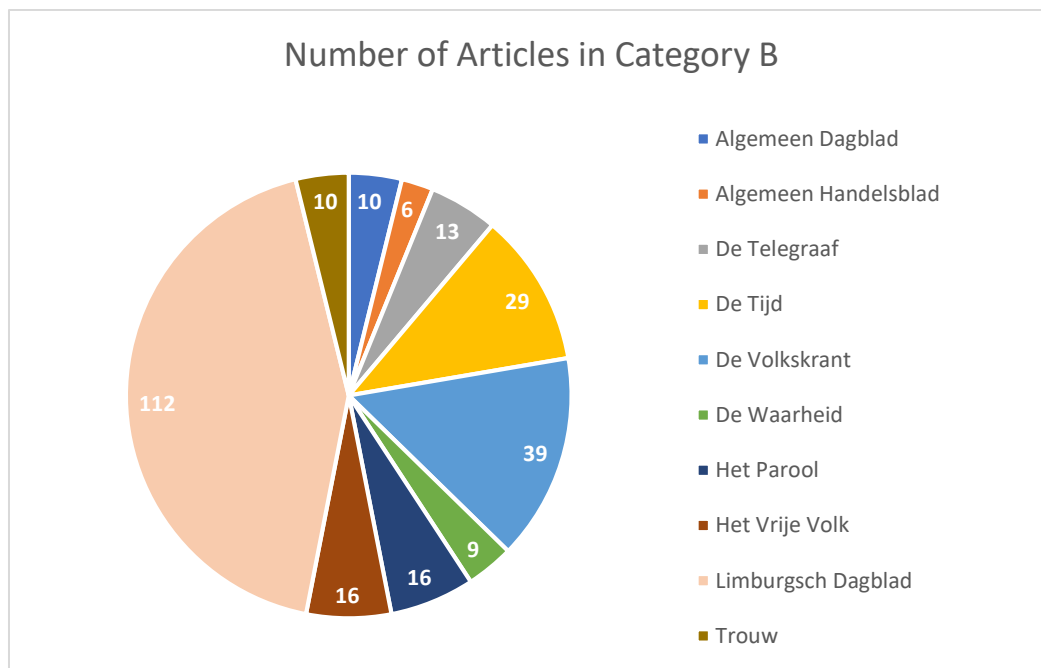
As the examples above show, several generic frames were not used in this category: the responsibility and economic consequences frames were not used at or only very little.

⁵⁷ Maartje Bakker and Jarl van der Ploeg, ‘Wat klopt er van de vooroordelen over Noord- en Zuid-Europa’ *De Volkskrant*, 19-9-2020, <https://www.volkskrant.nl/nieuws-achtergrond/wat-klopt-er-van-de-vooroordelen-over-noord-en-zuid-europa~be759a28/> (26-6-2020).

3.2. Category B - Guest worker migration to the Netherlands, Recruitment of Italian workers/miners, Numbers of foreigners in The Netherlands

The vast majority of the articles used for this analysis talked about Italian migrants from a top-down perspective. These articles (260 in total) were gathered in Category B. Diagram 2 shows the division of articles per newspaper. In contrast to the previous category, articles on (the arrival of) Italian guest workers and the recruitment of Italians were being written relatively consistently throughout the analyzed time period.

Diagram 2: Articles in category B per newspaper



Source: See main text.

Even if there was a consistent newspaper coverage on the recruitment and arrival of Italians, there was a difference in the length of the articles in the analyzed period. In 1947, the articles on the arrival of labor migrants to the mines were relatively long. Some of the newspapers were more critical towards the arrival of Polish and Italian migrants than others. *De Waarheid* highlighted a discussion on the possibility of Polish and Italian migrants being “fascists”, while other newspapers were more supportive of government policies and found the worries of *De Waarheid* exaggerated.⁵⁸ This difference is discussed further in Chapter 4, but is mentioned here because it shows the fluctuation in the length of these articles. Because it did fluctuate: In 1948 and 1949 – shortly after the arrival of the first groups of Italian migrants – the articles on Italian labor migration started to become shorter. In 1952 and 1953 the length of the articles decreased even more, only to increase again from 1954 onwards. A possible explanation for this lies in the fact that amount of news on the recruitment and arrival Italians was not

⁵⁸ ‘Tewerkstelling Polen in de mijnen’, *De Waarheid*, 14-5-1947, 1.

constant, nor were the numbers of Italians arriving. Next to a change in the length of the articles, there is a topical shift towards the end of analyzed period. From 1956, the scope of the newspaper articles started to get bigger. As Italian migrant started to work in more industries than just the coal mines, articles on Italians in other regions appeared. *Het Parool* started to write about Italian labor migrants coming to Amsterdam, *De Tijd* published an article on Italian workers in Twente and *Het Vrije Volk* wrote one on labor migrants in Rotterdam.⁵⁹

Literature suggests that foreign workers in the mines often had a ‘back-up’ role in the mines.⁶⁰ This bottom-up frame is regularly used in newspaper articles on the arrival and recruitment of Italian labor migrants. On the 7th of January in 1950, *De Tijd* wrote about the end of the Italian recruitment to the Dutch coal mines. In their article, they emphasized that this recruitment would no longer be necessary because “it is expected that existing vacancies can be filled by Dutch workers”.⁶¹ *Algemeen Handelsblad* even mentioned the “preference for Dutch miners” in the headline of their article on recruiting of Italian miners.⁶² *De Waarheid* is the only newspaper who thinks that (Italian) labor migrants will be bad for the Dutch miners:

*“The miners are rightly of the opinion that the mining directorates will use these Italians in the mines against the interests of the Dutch. Before the war the directorates also used foreigners to push the production to impossible proportions.”*⁶³

This opinion fits in with how the post-war news coverage of *De Waarheid* is presented in the literature.⁶⁴

Another narrative that is interesting to highlight here is the balance between labor shortage on the one hand and Dutch emigration on the other. In the 1950s, several newspapers published somewhat critical articles about the fact that so many Dutch people were emigrating because of “overpopulation” whilst some Dutch industries – like mining – were struggling to find enough employees.⁶⁵ In 1955, after a government announcement of better emigration opportunities to South-Africa, *De Telegraaf* questioned the logistics behind the Dutch plans: “the shortage of workers in our country has become so large that they have decided to start recruiting miners in Italy, as well as in Austria.”⁶⁶ The newspaper highlighted that the number of recruited Italians would be limited to 150, “due to language difficulties.”⁶⁷ *De Telegraaf* seems to make this point to underline its criticism of the emigration policy. The frame on

⁵⁹ ‘Italianen werken in Amsterdam’ *Het Parool*, 24-11-1956, 13; ‘Italiaanse arbeidskrachten in Twente’, *De Tijd*, 14-6-1957, 7; ‘In Rotterdam werken 20.000 arbeiders uit andere gemeenten’, *Het Vrije Volk*, 16-2-1957, page unknown.

⁶⁰ Langeweg ‘Bekende burenen en verre vreemden’, 56.

⁶¹ ‘Werving Italianen voor de mijnen. Naar het Einde’, *De Tijd*, 7-1-1950, 4.

⁶² ‘Voorkeur voor Nederlandse mijnwerkers’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 15-3-1949, 5.

⁶³ ‘KAB mijnwerkers tegen tewerkstelling Italianen’, *De Waarheid*, 8-11-1949, 4.

⁶⁴ Schrover and Walaardt ‘Displaced persons, returnees and ‘unsuitables’ the Dutch selection of DPs (1945-1951)’, 421.

⁶⁵ ‘Nederlands bevolking en emigratie’, *De Tijd*, 16-4-1955, 2.

⁶⁶ ‘Nederland voert arbeiders in en uit’, *De Telegraaf*, 5-7-1955, 1.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

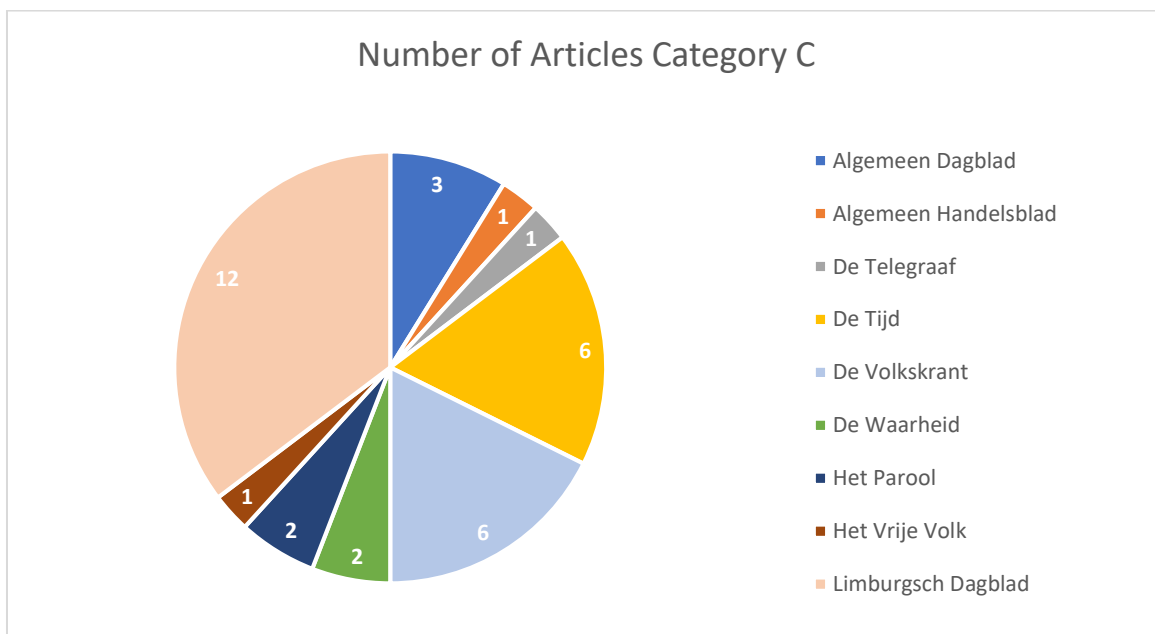
Dutch emigration is a bit of a niche frame and only includes a handful of articles. The subject lost interest of most newspapers by 1957 and was no longer written on in relation to Italian migration to the Netherlands.

The newspaper coverage on the Italian labor migration to Limburg in specific and the Netherlands in general mostly took on a neutral tone. With the exception of the newspapers that were supportive of the opposition (*De Waarheid* and *De Telegraaf*), newspapers reported in a supportive manner on government recruitment policies. Most generic frames were used in this frame. The ‘threat’ and ‘conflict’ frames were used more regularly by *De Waarheid*, *De Telegraaf* and *Trouw*, but cannot be seen as a big lens in the analysis. The frame on ‘economic consequences’ could mainly be identified in *Algemeen Handelsblad* and *De Tijd*, but was regularly used in combination with a bottom-up frame.

3.3. Category C - European Integration and the ECSC

The time period 1947 – 1957 was an eventful time for Europe and (early) European integration. Because of the creation of the ECSC, the mining industry and its workers were at the heart of this process. This explains how Dutch newspapers looked at the relationship between European integration and Italian labor migration to the Netherlands in specific and Western-European countries in general.

Diagram 3: Articles in category C per newspaper



Source: See main text.

As the diagram above shows, the category ‘European Integration and the ECSC’ counted a relatively small number of articles (37 in total). However, they painted a clear picture of several aspects of early European integration and how the media was interested in these developments. What is

interesting to see is that, compared to most other categories, the articles on the ECSC or European integration in general are always rather long. Another interesting point to make in advance is that no newspapers wrote about Italians against the background of European integration prior to 1954.

The 'European Project'

Political cooperation and the responsibility to contribute to 'the European project' are topics that guide many articles in this category. Against the background of European integration and guest worker migration, ensuring safety for workers in coal mines is often discussed. *De Telegraaf* pointed out a specific discussion on the possibility of a supra-national police for the coal mines. They emphasize that "Italians asked for such an institute, because of all the Italians working abroad."⁶⁸

"High Authority as home builders", *De Volkskrant* wrote in 1954 as it described what the living situation for guest workers in the mines was like.⁶⁹ In its article, it combined a moral frame as it continued by stating that these bad living conditions were a "dark stain." However, at the same time the author looked into the financial arrangements around planned houses that would be partially financed by the High Authority. The article also provided a nice insight in possible fears regarding these houses, as it stated that the High Authority was "in no way planning to fill the entire continent with mediocre uniformity."⁷⁰

Economic consequences and human interest go hand in hand

A frame that is used far more often in the context of European cooperation is the frame of economic consequences. For example, in December 1956, *Limburgsch Dagblad* reported on a ECSC-study regarding migration. In their analysis of the study, they underlined that labor migrants did not stay to work in the mines for a very long time and that employment was a continuous problem in the tight labor market.⁷¹ However, interestingly enough the newspaper also emphasized that "only in Italy and The Netherlands, overpopulation can be detected [...] and should be resolved by further industrialization."⁷² *Het Parool* also used the economic frame and stated that "the common European market can only function if the free movement of workers" is fully established and functional.⁷³ They continue their analysis by underlining that the difficulties between Belgium and Italy when it comes to labor migration inhibits this free movement. The relationship between migration, employment and the economy was also discussed by *De Tijd*, who wrote:

⁶⁸ 'Geen supranationale politie in de mijnen', *De Telegraaf*, 7-9-1956, 4.

⁶⁹ 'Vijftig Schuman huizen in Limburg. Buitenlandse mijnwerkers in KSG zijn slecht gehuisvest', *De Volkskrant*, 3-6-1954, 2.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ 'Studie van EGKS over migratie: Verloop in mijnindustrie blijft onverminderd groot', *Limburgsch Dagblad*, 8-12-1956, 11.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ 'Vrije beweging van arbeidskrachten ter sprake in EGKS verband', *Het Parool*, 7-11-1957, 9.

*“The turnover of workers at the European coal mines remains so high that the total number of miners can only just be maintained. [...] For migrants, a choice between adaptation and assimilation is often not an easy one. In many cases, for example among Italians, it is doubtful in advance whether the migrants want to settle permanently.”*⁷⁴

What is interesting in this statement is the fact that *De Tijd* was not only supportive of hosting Italian labor migrants in the mines, it would also like to see them stay for longer or even settle permanently. Another interesting part of the article looked at the migration of people from the Northern part of the Netherlands to Eindhoven (Province of North-Brabant) and stated that “Some of them feel quite alright in Eindhoven, within their migrant community that is.”⁷⁵ Serge Langeweg looks at the national recruitment in his book and shows that the Dutch coal mines tried to recruit Dutch men from the Northern parts of the Netherlands with slogans like ‘emigrate in your own country.’ This quote from *De Tijd* on ‘migrants’ in Eindhoven is in line with the image presented by Langeweg of Dutch men from the North being like migrants in their own country.⁷⁶

Even against the background of a fairly political and multilateral topic like the ECSC, several human interest frame were used by the analyzed newspapers. Sometimes, this was done in the margins of a more lengthy analytical article. For example, *De Volkskrant* looked at “assimilation of immigrants” in an article on a safety convention in the coal mines.⁷⁷ It looked at Italians and observed that “Italians always feel like they are not part of the community once they leave their jobs”.⁷⁸ According to *De Volkskrant* this could be solved by hiring “special experts” who “speak their language, but also know their way of life.”⁷⁹ An even more personal story is told by *Limburgsch Dagblad*, who published a report on a young teacher from Limburg who is going to work at the ‘ESCS international school’.⁸⁰ The newspaper spoke to the young lady right before she embarked on her journey to Luxembourg and painted a detailed image of the teacher and her new employment. Based on the title one assumes there will be a top-down storyline as well as a human interest one, but this was not the case. The reasons why the regional was girl moving to Luxembourg (i.e. European integration and the foundation of a European school) takes center stage in the article.

The Marcinelle-disaster

Another issue-specific frame that was used in relation with the ECSC, were the consequences of the Marcinelle disaster. In 1956, a fire in the Belgium coal mine in Marcinelle killed 262 miners, 136

⁷⁴ ‘Aantal arbeiders in de Europese kolenmijnen blijft nauwelijks op peil’, *De Tijd*, 31-12-1956, 9.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Langeweg *Mijnbouw en arbeidsmarkt in Nederlands-Limburg*, 115.

⁷⁷ ‘Conventie over veiligheid in de mijnen is een illusie’, *De Volkskrant*, 7-11-1957, 3.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ ‘Kinderen van Fransen, Duitsers, Italianen en Nederlanders. Meisje uit Geleen onderwijzeres aan K.S.G.-school te Luxemburg’, *Limburgsch Dagblad*, 22-9-1956, 2.

of whom were Italians. As a result of this Belgian catastrophe, the Italian government stopped labor migration (to Belgium) until safety was improved for Italian miners.⁸¹ The analysis of newspaper coverage on the Marcinelle disaster can be found in chapter 3.4, but several newspapers wrote about the connection between the Marcinelle disaster and the reaction of the ECSC. All of these articles looked at the Marcinelle catastrophe from a macro (or top-down) perspective and focused on the political repercussions and economic consequences of the disaster. For instance, *Limburgsch Dagblad* wrote about a Dutch parliamentary debate and underlined that “the effects of the Marcinelle disaster could be felt in the entire ECSC region”.⁸² *De Tijd* focused more on the diplomatic and political discussions between Belgium and Italy and stated that the High Authority of the ECSC had “offered its services to Italy and Belgium [...] to speed up the negotiations for a new labor migration agreement.”⁸³ This article sheds a good light on how the High Authority interpreted its role in this time. It also shows that European labor market integration was starting to take on more institutionalized forms.

All in all, one can conclude that newspapers used three frames within the category on European integration. First of all, the humanitarian frame is used in the context of Category C. Secondly, the economic consequences and economic situation in Europe was a prominent generic frame used by newspapers in discussions regarding the ESCS and European integration. Thirdly, the conflict frame can be seen quite regularly in this category. This can be the conflict between national interests and European cooperation, but also the conflicts between countries like Belgium and Italy after the Marcinelle-disaster.

3.4. Category D, D1 & E - Accidents in Belgian coal mines and Italian labor migration to other European countries

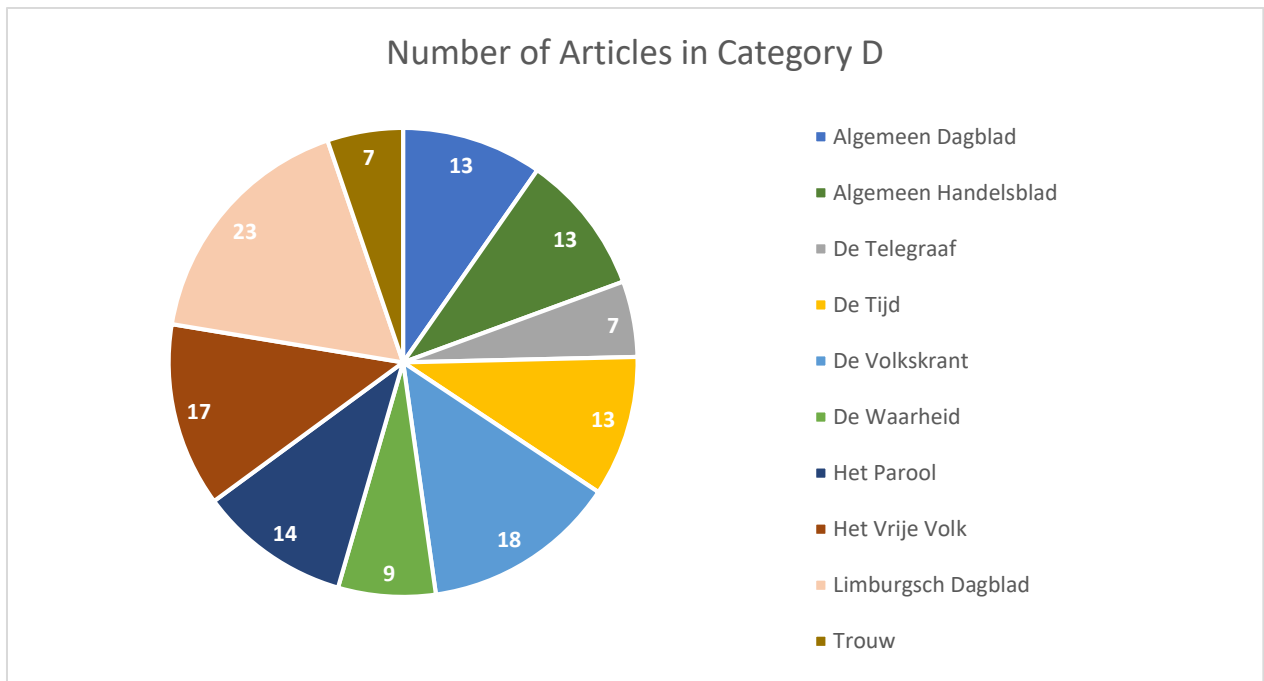
In the analysis of the sources, it became apparent that a lot of the newspaper coverage on Italian labor migrants in other European coal mines (Category E) specifically looked at Belgium. On top of that, most of the articles on accidents in coal mines were also related to the Belgian mines. Therefore, this section looks at both category D and E. The frame analysis sometimes combines both categories, but also uses specific examples from both categories to paint a good picture of the frames used in these categories.

⁸¹ Nico Zijlstra ‘De Mijnramp in Marcinelle, 8 augustus 1956’, *De Mijnen*, 16-7-2011, https://www.demijnen.nl/actueel/arti_kelde-mijnramp-marcinelle-8-augustus-1956 (16-6-2020).

⁸² ‘Marcinelle-ramp trof hele EGKS’, *Limburgsch Dagblad*, 24-11-1956, front page.

⁸³ ‘De emigratie van Italiaanse mijnwerkers naar België. Hoge Autoriteit biedt goede diensten aan’ *De Tijd*, 30-4-1956, 2.

Diagram 4: Articles in category D per newspaper⁸⁴

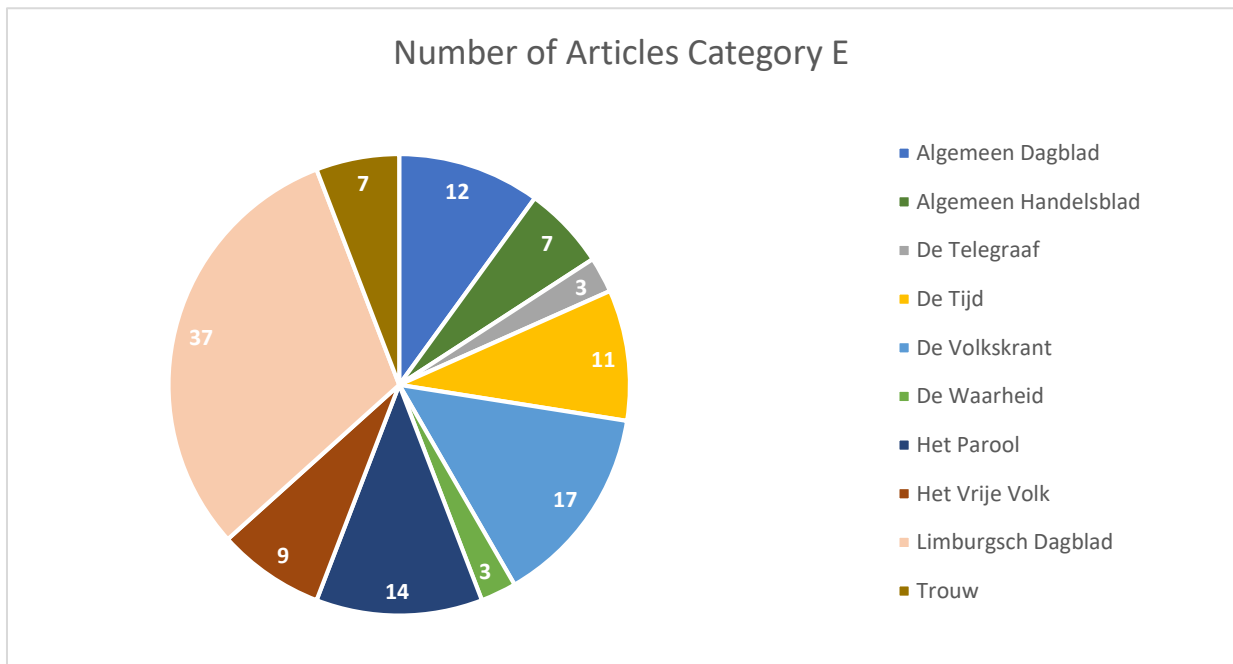


Source: See main text.

The diagrams show the number of articles per newspaper in categories D and E. It is very interesting to see how the coverage differs per category. In category D, *Limburgsch Dagblad* makes up less than 20 percent (23) of the total number of articles (134). Even though the percentage shifts to 30 percent of the 120 articles in category E, it still is a significantly smaller part of the total number of articles than in category A.

⁸⁴ The articles categorized D1 are included in this diagram.

Diagram 5: Articles in category E per newspaper



Source: See main text.

In the articles from these categories, three storylines could be detected. The first argument many newspaper made, is the argument of ‘safety’. It is likely that accidents in Belgian coal mines were such a big topic because of the existence of Dutch coal mines. Although the number of accidents was much lower in the Dutch mines, the work was still rather dangerous and it is likely that people were concerned about possible accidents. This might explain the Dutch interest in the safety in coal mines in general and the disasters in (Belgian) mines in specific.

The second group of articles talked about recruitment policies of other countries and how these impact the economic situation in other countries. “100,000 Italians to Germany” wrote *De Telegraaf* on its front page.⁸⁵ *Het Vrije Volk* stated that Germany “needs 300,000 workers” because of the labor shortage that emerged after the “establishment of a German army”, which meant that many young men had to go into military service and therefore were not available for industrial work⁸⁶ “The arrival of these Italian workers will not have an influence on German wages” stated *De Volkskrant* in an article on the arrival of these workers to Germany.⁸⁷ As written in chapter 3.2., this argument was used by *De Waarheid* against the recruitment of Italian workers. The fact *De Volkskrant* did not write about this concern in a national context, but feels the need to add it in an article on international labor migration is

⁸⁵ ‘100.000 Italianen naar Duitsland’ *De Telegraaf*, 29-11-1954, 1.

⁸⁶ ‘Duitsland kan arbeiders uit Italië gebruiken’, *Het Vrije Volk*, 25-11-1954, page unknown.

⁸⁷ ‘TWAALFhonderd Italianen in Duitse landbouw tewerkgesteld’, *De Volkskrant*, 5-4-1955, 2.

difficult to explain. However, since national policies were mainly defended and supported by *De Volkskrant*, it is possible that it did not want to raise concerns nationally.

Generally, the tone of most of the articles on the Belgian mines can be called ‘disdainful.’ All newspapers had a critical tone when talking about the Belgian working conditions and the disasters that happened as a consequence of this. *De Waarheid* focused on safety for those working in the mines and on the possibility that the number of Italians in the Belgian mines (45,000) would lead to unemployment for Belgians.⁸⁸ *De Volkskrant* talked about the “aftereffects of the reckless *bataille du charbon*” and highlighted that Italian migrants became “unemployed drifters” because of the way they were treated in the mines.⁸⁹ And *Limburgsch Dagblad* wrote about the “immoral [living] conditions” of the foreign miners in Belgium.⁹⁰ These are just a handful of examples of how moral frame is used in these categories and how it intertwines with the economic frame and the frame of threat. This morality applies to subjects like accidents and bad living conditions. Often, the other side of the coin is the economic reasoning behind these decisions. The abovementioned example of *De Waarheid* shows this nicely: on the one hand, they focused on safety at work. On the other, they described the Italians as a threat in case of unemployment at a later time.

The articles gathered in Category D and D1 (the category that specifically looked at the mining disaster in Marcinelle), addressed the abovementioned disasters, but mainly focused on the connection between disasters in the mines and the reaction of migrants. These reactions can be clustered in two main types. First, there were the reactions of the Italian government, who decided to stop labor migration to (Belgian) coal mines. In these articles a relatively neutral tone was taken by most newspapers. In the articles on the governmental reaction to the Marcinelle disaster, the Italian decision was often backed up and supported. *Algemeen Dagblad* underlined:

*“Italian minister of Labor Ezio Vigorelli has personally travelled to Belgium to find out why Italians are so often victims in Belgian mining disasters. The safety measures in the Belgian mines are not sufficient according to the Italian government. They think that Italians are intentionally employed in the unsafe mines.”*⁹¹

⁸⁸ Schrover and Walaardt, ‘The influence of the media on politics and practices: Hungarian refugee resettlement in the Netherlands in 1956’, 27.

⁸⁹ ‘Naweeën van roekeloze kolenslag’, *De Volkskrant*, 8-11-1949, front page.

⁹⁰ ‘Mislukte werving in België. Immorele toestanden onder vreemde arbeidskrachten’, *Limburgsch Dagblad*, 20-3-1948, 2.

⁹¹ ‘Italië stelt schuldvrage’ *Algemeen Dagblad*, 10-8-1956, 1,

Image 3: Front page picture of *Algemeen Dagblad* showing the arrival of the Italian delegation to the Marcinelle site



Source: *Algemeen Dagblad* (10-8-1956).

A second type of articles on the disasters in the Belgian mines focused on the reaction of the Italian local community and the wives of the victims. In these articles, the pain and grief of the (Italian) mining community was portrayed. A good example for this is an article from *De Tijd*. The newspaper wrote about the sorrow in Marcinelle:

*“As time passed, further details about the victims became known. It has been calculated that there are 166 house fathers among the dead, leaving 406 children behind. [...] Hundreds of Italian relatives of the victims have already arrived in Marcinelle. They were wearing mourning clothes for the mass burial, the date of which no one knows yet, even though the grave has already been dug.”*⁹²

Although the nationality of the victims of the Marcinelle disaster was a crucial part of the newspaper coverage on the Italian governmental reaction to the disaster, it seems that in articles on the ‘human’ reactions in Belgian and the reactions of the relatives of the victims nationality was emphasized less.

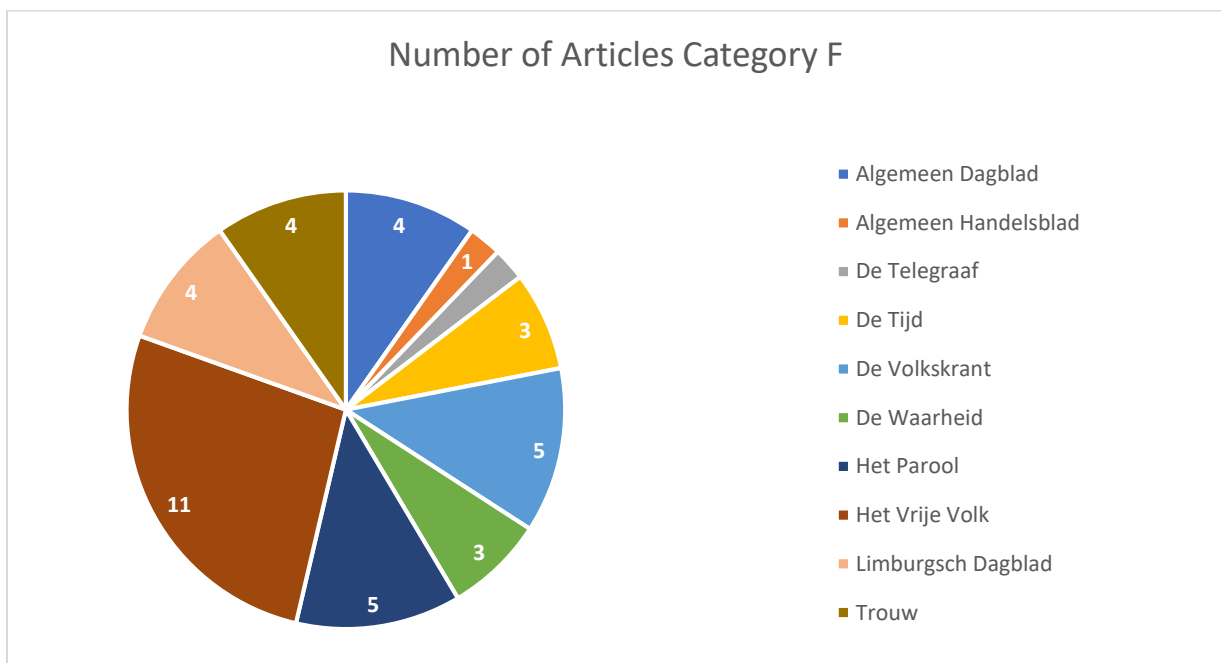
⁹² ‘Italianen dragen reeds rouw’ *De Tijd*, 13-8-1956, 1.

The humanitarian coverage on the event looked beyond nationalities and focused on the people and what they left behind.

3.5. Category F – Remaining articles

In the source analysis, there was a number of articles that did not fit in with any of the other frames discussed above. Therefore, this section has gathered the remaining frames in a separate category. In this category of ‘remaining articles’ there are quite a lot of articles on the (economic) necessity of emigration for Italy. Furthermore, a few interesting articles on other subjects will be briefly discussed here. Diagram 5 shows the division of the articles per newspaper. This category was made up of 55 articles.

Diagram 6: Articles in category F per newspaper



Source: See main text.

Emigration

In this category, the subject of Italian emigration and the Italian situation occurred regularly. In contrast to articles in category B, this paragraph discusses the Dutch coverage on Italian emigration from an Italian point of view. This subject is discussed relatively steadily and similarly throughout the analyzed period. Generally speaking, most newspapers emphasized that “overpopulation is a pressing issue for the Italians [and that] work is not seen as a duty, but as a privilege for most Italians.”⁹³ The main narrative of articles on this matters was in fact the narrative of the (economic) necessity for Italian

⁹³ ‘Overbevolking nijpende kwestie voor Italië’, *Het Parool*, 26-11-1953, 9.

emigration. *De Tijd* looked at this through a broader lens and balanced the different interests Italy and recruiting countries have: he stated that Rome is “piling up with people” whilst France “only wants skilled workers and does not want a mass invasion.”⁹⁴ Another exception to the rule in this context would be an article on Italian elections by *De Waarheid*. This newspaper – affiliated with the Dutch communist party CPN – looked at Italian emigration in a more critical manner:

*“As a result of the American intervention, there are already 2.5 million people unemployed. The daily benefits they receive are about half the price of a packet of cigarettes. As a result of this poverty, workers are brought to foreign countries as idle livestock.”*⁹⁵

This quote nicely shows the main narrative used by *De Waarheid* in relation to labor migration: the class struggle and fair wages. This argument was regularly used by *De Waarheid* and as Schrover and Walaardt state, it was one of the main counter-arguments used in discussions on the arrival of new migrants. It is therefore extremely interesting to see that *De Waarheid* tended to choose the side of the native worker, whatever their nationality was.

Het Vrije Volk published a seven part series on the living conditions and daily life in the Italian region of Calabria. Many Italian miners working in Belgium were recruited from this region, maybe most prominently the father of the Italian-Belgian singer Rocco Granata.⁹⁶

Image 4: Rocco Granata (far right) with his parents and sister in Belgium



Source: roccogranata.be

⁹⁴ ‘Emigratie, een levenskwestie voor Italië’, *De Tijd*, 13-1-1949, 2.

⁹⁵ ‘Marshall-importen: werkloosheid, mitrailleurs en honger’, *De Waarheid*, 25-3-1948, 5.

⁹⁶ ‘Over Rocco Granata’, *Rocco Granata*

<https://www.roccogranata.be/nl/biografie/#:~:text=Rocco%20Granata%20werd%20geboren%20in,werkte%20in%20de%20Limburgse%20mijnen>. (23-6-2020).

A reporter of the newspaper wrote about how people living in Calabria “own nothing, nothing at all.. For years...”⁹⁷ As both the title and this quote show, the series mainly used a generic human interest frame and looked at the daily lives and struggles of Italians.

Various

Finally, there were a number of articles that were relevant enough to include in the list of sources, but that did not fit in with any of the other categories. For instance, *De Volkskrant* wrote about growing popularity of Fiat cars and the influence this had on migration from Italy and about the growing Dutch diplomatic community in Italy.⁹⁸

There were a handful of columns and two interesting letters submitted by readers. The latter were interesting to look at because they are likely to have been a less edited and more critical argument on a subject. One letter, published in *Limburgsch Dagblad* in 1954, is highly critical of the positive picture the newspaper painted of the living conditions of migrants in the Netherlands, compared to those of Italian migrants in Belgium. The author wrote that Ambonese migrants in the Netherlands were “forced to live in these camps [...] Italians decide to move there.”⁹⁹ The letter was accusing the journalist of not being critical towards national living conditions, as well as acting “superior to the Belgians.”¹⁰⁰ Lastly, *De Telegraaf* published a letter on migrants learning Dutch. The writer underlined that Dutch is an easy language and that “most migrants [Italians, Swedes, Hungarians] seem to learn it easily.”¹⁰¹ Peculiarly enough, this conflicts with what all other newspapers have written on the integration of Italian migrants in the Netherlands.

3.6. Conclusion

Based on this analysis, several preliminary conclusions can be drawn. In most analyzed categories, the number of articles and their length grew exponentially over the years. This can be explained by the fact that in the first couple of years after the war, paper was scarce.¹⁰² However, it is also possible that the proportion of articles on the analyzed subject grew over time and that interest in the topic did in fact increase. More research would be necessary to come up with a conclusive answer on this matter.

Second, it was interesting to see that the generic humanitarian frame was mainly used in categories A and D1. As described, many clichés were used in category A. The image Italians had was

⁹⁷ ‘Calabrië, vijf miljoen mensen te veel’, *Het Vrije Volk*, 13-6-1956, 2.

⁹⁸ ‘De "500" activeert strijd tussen kleine wagens. Dagelijks verlaten 1200 auto’s Fiatfabrieken’, *De Volkskrant*, 2-8-1957, 2; ‘Ambassadeur versterkte band met consuls. Verdieping contact kan bijdragen tot beter handelsverkeer’, *De Volkskrant*, 9-6-1955, 2.

⁹⁹ ‘Lezers schrijven’, *Limburgsch Dagblad*, 19-2-1954, 11.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ ‘Inclusief Accent’, *De Telegraaf*, 13-3-1954, 2.

¹⁰² Plasse, *Kroniek van de Nederlandse dagblad- en opiniepers*, 27.

shaped by their eating habits (pasta, Chianti), their interest in cars and motorbikes and by their vanity. This image was omnipresent in many countries and the fact that most Italian migrants to the Dutch mines were young men may have played a role in this representation.¹⁰³ The newspaper coverage on the effects of the Marcinelle disaster hardly used these clichés and mainly focused on the emotional side of this great loss. It seems in the shock of such a big disaster, nationality was a subordinate characteristic.

With the exception of category C, the generic frame of economic consequences was never combined with a humanitarian frame as described above. Since the narrative and messages of articles from these frames were very different in the analyzed sources, this seems logical. However, it is necessary to underline it here because it also shows that newspapers would either talk about politics, governance and the economy or they would talk about the people behind the recruitment goals, the lives these people lead and the threads these people possibly posed.

Lastly, it has to be underlined that the tone of most of the articles was positive and supportive of government's decisions and policies. *De Waarheid* and *De Telegraaf*, newspapers that were aligned with the opposition parties, were less supportive. *De Waarheid* had quite a lot of attention for (Italian) miners and was critical of the working conditions and the wages, whereas *De Telegraaf* was less outspoken. Since *De Telegraaf* was still finding its standpoint on many subjects, after having been prohibited right after the Second World War, a less extreme narrative can be explained. It is therefore interesting to see that criticism of *De Telegraaf* increased in the 1950s, as their opinion on political subjects started to take more shape.

4. Differences between newspapers

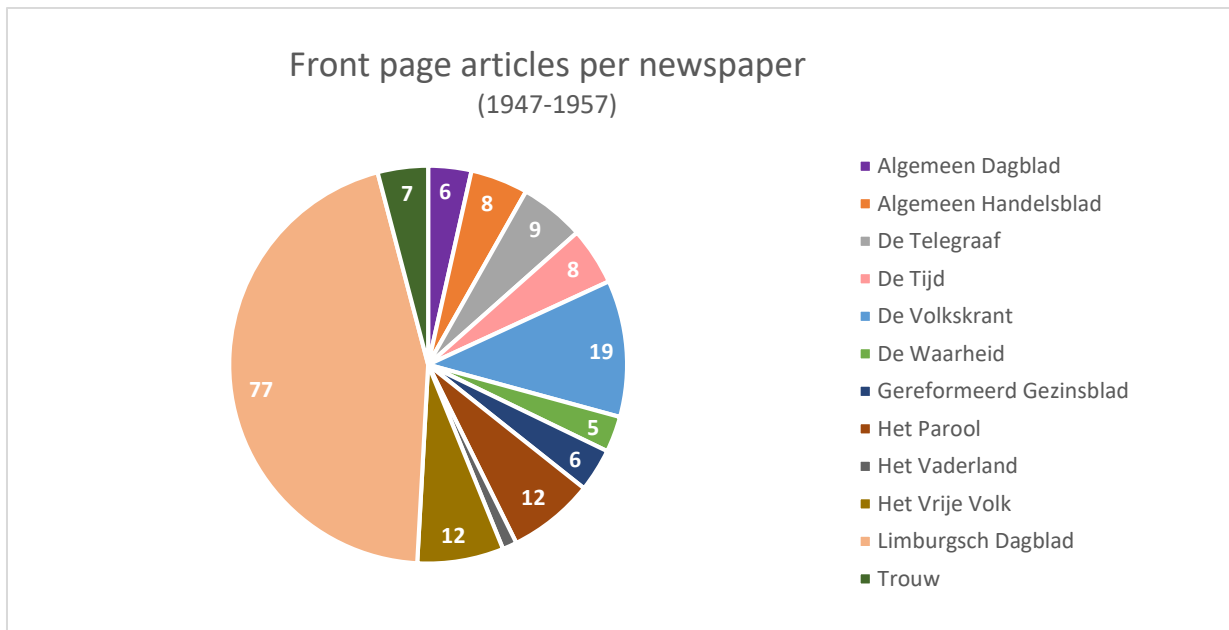
In the theoretical chapter of this thesis, possible differences in frames between newspapers were expected to shape the outcome of this research. This chapter presents the differences and similarities between the selected sources. The first section looks at the number and statistics regarding the sources. The rest of the chapter looks at different frames and discourses of the analyzed newspapers, with a special interest in the regional newspaper *Limburgsch Dagblad*.

4.1. Relevance score of the articles

The interest a newspaper takes in a topic cannot only be measured by looking at the number of articles written or the length of them. The placement of articles can also tell us a lot about the relevance of an article for the readership of a specific newspaper. The diagram below shows how often the analyzed newspaper articles were placed on the front page. In total, 170 (about 30 percent) of the articles were published on the front page.

¹⁰³ Langeweg, *Mijnbouw en arbeidsmarkt in Nederlands-Limburg*, 187.

Diagram 7: Number of front page articles per newspaper 1947 -1957



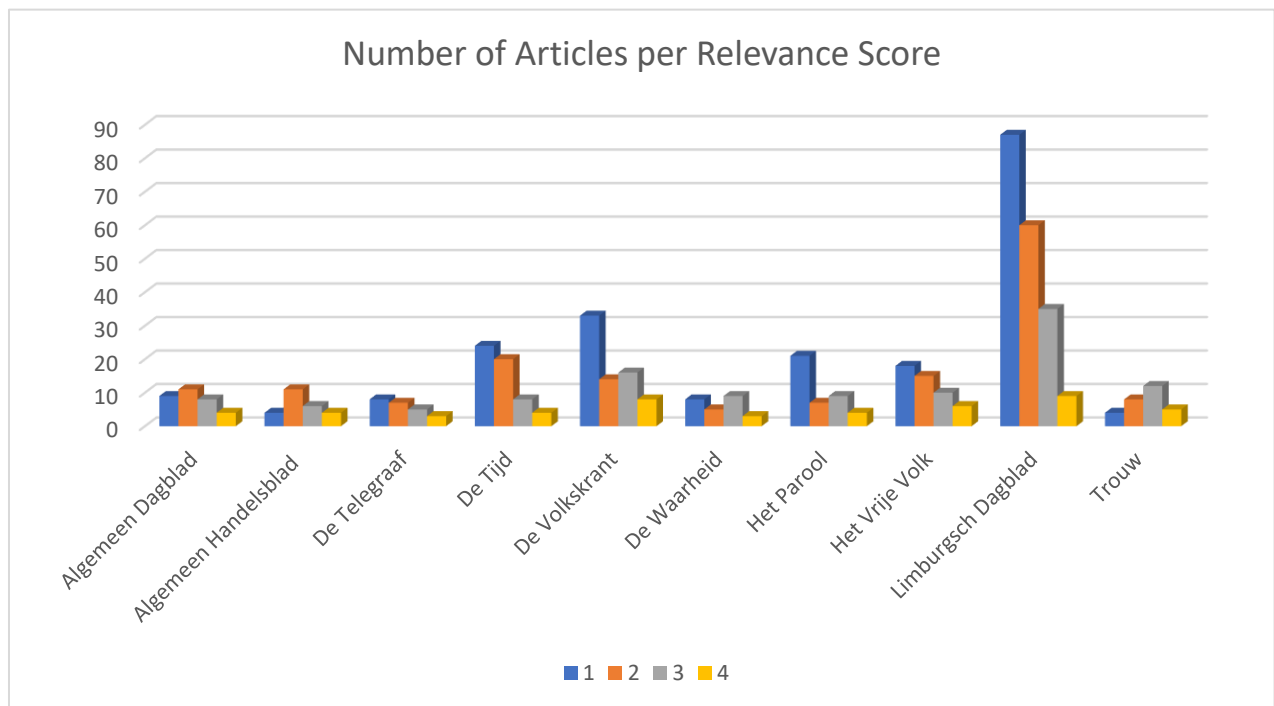
Source: See main text.

As stated in the methods section, all sources were manually given a relevance score ranging from 1 to 4. The diagram below shows the division of these scores for each newspaper. There are a number of things that stand out. Articles from *Algemeen Dagblad*, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, *De Telegraaf*, *De Waarheid* and *Trouw* are fairly evenly distributed over the four relevance scores. It is very difficult to draw a conclusion based on this. This thesis shows that some of these newspapers could have a very explicit standpoint (e.g. *De Telegraaf* and *De Waarheid*), but this surely does not go for all newspapers. Even though some articles of *De Waarheid* and *De Telegraaf* were highlighted because of their criticism, the relevance score they were given also shows that many articles were not terribly striking. Only a handful of articles was actually so different or interesting that they should be given a relevance score 1.

As pictured in Diagram 7, the newspapers with a Catholic orientation (*De Tijd* and *De Volkskrant*) were given a relevance score of 1 or 2 more often than other newspapers.. This can in fact be explained by their Catholic orientation. The coal mines were located in Limburg, a predominantly Catholic region in the 1940s and 1950s.¹⁰⁴ That Catholic newspapers wrote more elaborately on the (local) events that are relevant for their readership therefore seems logical.

¹⁰⁴ Luyten, *Het geluk van Limburg*, 50 – 55.

Diagram 8: Number of articles per relevance score



Source: See main text.

4.2. Italians in national newspapers

How did the national newspapers look at Italian labor migrants to the Dutch coal mines and were there big differences between the different newspapers? By comparing the media coverage of specific themes that were written about by all the papers, it is possible to get an impression on the stance of those media towards the wider issue of migrant workers in the Dutch coal mines. This section does this by looking at two topics that were discussed by all newspapers and compares the narrative of these national newspapers: The arrival of the Italian labor migrants and the conflicts between Italian miners and the of Hungarian migrants arriving in the 1950s.

Italian labor migrants in the coal mines

In the analyzed period, all newspapers wrote about the arrival of guest workers for the Dutch coal mines. In 1947, discussions from the Dutch *Commissie voor Productieverhoging* (Production growth committee) made headlines. The decision of the chairman of the communist trade union (*Algemene Bond van Werkers in het Mijnbedrijf*) to leave the committee because of an imminent decision on the recruitment of Polish and Italian miners was criticized by most newspapers. *De Volkskrant* published a long article in which it spoke to the Catholic trade union and wrote:

*“Mr. Mulders [Catholic trade union representative] was not concerned about the employment of a relatively small number of Poles in the mines [...], nor about the quality of these people. [...] Mr. Mulders firmly denied the idea that these Poles were fascists.”*¹⁰⁵

De Tijd was also supportive of the proposed plans and added that “a national recruitment campaign” did not have the desired effects¹⁰⁶ *Limburgsch Dagblad* gave a similar argument and added that the recruitment of foreign workers was “contre coeur”.¹⁰⁷ The only paper who was defensive of *Algemene Bond van Werkers in het Mijnbedrijf* is the communist paper *De Waarheid*, who did not understand how the recruitment of 50 Polish men could significantly increase the production of the Dutch mines.¹⁰⁸

What is interesting about the examples mentioned above is the fact that Italians and Poles were almost always mentioned in these articles, but that the debate of possibly hosting fascists in the mines was only linked to the Polish labor migrants. A possible explanation for this may be the fact that the number of Polish displaced persons arriving directly after the war was larger than the number of Italians arriving. This possible explanation is however difficult to back up with existing literature.

However, in the Summer of 1955, Italian labor migration to the mines took center stage in articles on their arrival. “Mines will recruit Italians” wrote *De Waarheid*. In the article, it stated that the Dutch government had stressed the “desirability of attracting Italian workers. This was because of the connection with the Coal and Steel Community.”¹⁰⁹ *De Waarheid* did not sound as critical in 1955 as it did 8 years earlier and did not plead for recruitment of Dutch miners. *Het Vrije Volk* talked about the ECSC as well and even specifically mentioned the “free movement of workers” in its article.¹¹⁰ These interesting remarks show that (Italian) labor migration was increasingly being looked at in the context of European integration.

In 1957, the role of the ECSC in labor migration flows from Italy was mentioned in several newspapers. *De Telegraaf* and *Algemeen Dagblad* quote an Associate Press article and talk about an agreement between the Italian government and the ECSC regarding safety in the coal mines:

*“The organized emigration of Italian miners had been temporarily suspended pending consideration by the ECSC of a number of Italian proposals to improve security measures in the mines.”*¹¹¹

¹⁰⁵ ‘Voorzitter “Algemene Bond” verlaat commissie’, *De Volkskrant*, 16-5-1947, 1.

¹⁰⁶ ‘Buitenlanders in onze mijnen’, *De Tijd*, 16-5-1947, 2.

¹⁰⁷ ‘Buitenlanders naar onze Mijnen. ’t Gaat om een klein aantal Polen.’, *Limburgsch Dagblad*, 15-5-1947, 2.

¹⁰⁸ ‘Tewerkstelling Polen in de mijnen’, *De Waarheid*, 14-5-1947, 1.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ ‘Ook Italianen in onze mijnen’, *Het Vrije Volk*, 5-7-1955, page unknown.

¹¹¹ ‘Italianen komen weer in onze mijnen’, *De Telegraaf*, 18-4-1957, 3; ‘Weer Italianen naar mijnen in buitenland’, *Algemeen Dagblad* 18-4-1957, 5.

Although *Limburgsch Dagblad* mentioned the ECSC in its article on the emigration of Italian workers, it mainly focused on the arriving Italians. In their description they specified that these “young men are from Sardinia and Abruzzo”, rather than just talking about ‘Italians.’ By mentioning this, *Limburgsch Dagblad* provided a more detailed description of the Italian labor migrants region of origin than any other newspaper.¹¹²

In summary, most newspapers were supportive of the government’s decisions on Italian labor migration to the Dutch mines. In 1947, *De Waarheid* was still very critical of the migration of Poles and Italians to the Netherlands, fearing they may be fascist. By the 1950s however, this argument was not found in articles of *De Waarheid*. Some newspapers emphasized the relation between Italian migration and the ECSC more than others, but this section does show that interest in this topic increased in the 1950s.

Hungarians shake things up in Limburg

A second example of a theme that was covered in all Dutch newspapers, was the quarrels between Italian miners and (newly arrived) Hungarian migrants. In 1957, foreign workers in the Dutch coal mines made headlines as Hungarian miners were involved in several fights in the region. These Hungarians had fled from their country in 1956 and were recruited to work in the coal mines.¹¹³ How these migrants were perceived by the Dutch media was recently researched by Audrey Noteboren in her thesis on labor migration to the coal mines.¹¹⁴ The image of the Hungarian migrants is not what will be used to portray different frames used by Dutch newspapers, but their presence did lead to an increase in negative press on guest workers in the coal mines. Specifically, the fact that Hungarians and Italians regularly got into fights made headlines. In the news coverage on these developments, three frames can be identified: Italians as victims, ‘temperamental’ Italians and conflict between Hungarians and Italians as a threat.

Most newspaper articles underlined that before the arrival of the Hungarian migrants “complaints about fighting Italians were rare” and that “Italians were mostly provoked in the fights they were involved in.”¹¹⁵ On January 3rd, *Algemeen Dagblad* was also defensive when it comes to the role of Italians in the fights and states: “Rarely in the past was the police obliged to take action against foreign miners. Italians also gave very little ground to complain.”¹¹⁶ These newspapers were critical towards the

¹¹² ‘Weer groep Sardijnen naar Limburgse mijnen’, *Limburgsch Dagblad*, 18-4-1957, 1.

¹¹³ Marlou Schrover and Tycho Walaardt, ‘The influence of the media on politics and practices: Hungarian refugee resettlement in the Netherlands in 1956’, 38 – 41.

¹¹⁴ Audrey Noteboren *Een zegen of een vloek? De representatie van buitenlandse mijnwerkers in de Nederlandse media* (2020, Unpublished thesis Leiden University Repository).

¹¹⁵ ‘Mijnstreek ernstig ontstemd over wangedrag Hongaarse vluchtelingen’, *De Tijd*, 2-1-1957, 4.

¹¹⁶ ‘Vechtlustige Hongaren zetten mijnstreek op stelten’, *Algemeen Dagblad*, 3-1-1957, 5.

developments in the region but have looked at the bigger picture and put the events in a broader perspective. They clearly saw the Italians as ‘victims’ of the Hungarian behavior.

Het Parool wrote extensively on the situation in the region and even places an extremely lengthy article on the events on its front page. The newspaper also used a humanitarian point of view and emphasized that it could be “difficult to adapt” in a new habitat for these migrants.¹¹⁷ At the same time however, the newspaper looked at the repercussions of these events and underlined that the police of Heerlen wanted to isolate Italians and Hungarians in companion houses to prevent any further damage.

One day later, *De Telegraaf* wrote about the issues in Limburg and stated there was “no rivalry between Hungarian and Italians [but that] a feud has formed.”¹¹⁸ *De Telegraaf* attributed the heated fights and this feud to the “fiery temperament of these southern natures.” Although *Het Parool* wrote in a somewhat similar style, one can say that *De Telegraaf* is the most emotionally toned.

All in all, this section has shown that although most newspaper did have a different way of describing Italian labor migrants and events in which they were involved, none of them was terrible critical towards the (arrival of) Italian labor migrants.

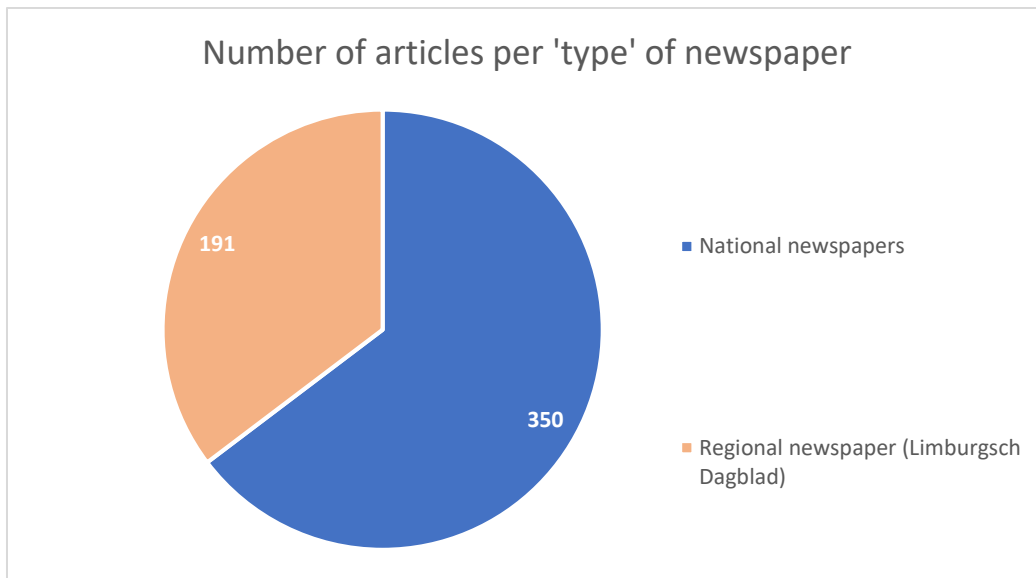
4.3. *Limburgsch Dagblad* versus national newspapers

The comparison above showed that there were differences between the perspectives of Dutch national newspapers. However, it also showed that the picture of Italian labor migrants that was painted by most newspapers was rather similar, with the exception of the newspapers that were affiliated with the opposition (*De Telegraaf* and *De Waarheid*). Next to the national newspapers, the regional newspaper *Limburgsch Dagblad* was also included in the analyzed sources. This section investigates whether there are differences in the media coverage between the national newspapers and *Limburgsch Dagblad*. This analysis focusses on the quantitative side of the list of sources: how many articles were written by national and regional newspapers and on which page in the paper could these be found. A more in-depth analysis of the coverage of *Limburgsch Dagblad* can be found in the Chapter 5.

¹¹⁷ ‘Hongaren onrustig in Limburgse mijnstreek’, *Het Parool*, 3-1-1957, 1.

¹¹⁸ ‘Vrije lucht is voor menig Hongaar nog te pittig’, *De Telegraaf*, 4-1-1957, 3.

Diagram 8: Division of articles national newspapers vis-à-vis regional newspaper *Limburgsch Dagblad*



Source: See text.

The diagram above clearly shows why including a regional newspaper in this analysis was an interesting addition: the regional newspaper *Limburgsch Dagblad* made up approximately a third of the total number of analyzed articles. As already suggested in the first chapter, the local newspaper seems to have shown a bigger interest in the Italian labor migrants to the region. This can be explained by the fact that (a) the region was most directly impacted by the arrival of Italian labor migrants because of their geographical proximity. Besides this, another likely explanation for this is (b) the total number of articles that were written on 'mining related' topics. If *Limburgsch Dagblad* published more articles on the Dutch coal mines in general, it seems logical there were also more articles on Italian migrants to the mines. However, an overview of the total number of articles in *Limburgsch Dagblad* that had to do with the coal mines in Limburg is not available and this thesis therefore cannot be confirmed.

Another factor that proves that *Limburgsch Dagblad* was more attentive towards the researched topic, is the placement of articles on Italian labor migration to the Dutch coal mines. In general, articles placed on the front page of a newspaper are considered to be of more importance to the readership of that newspaper. In Chapter 4.1. Diagram 6 showed that based on this assumption, *Limburgsch Dagblad* had a greater interest in the matter: almost half of the total number of front page articles was published on the front page of *Limburgsch Dagblad*.

This section showed that *Limburgsch Dagblad* was very interested in the subject of Italian labor migration to the Dutch coal mines. This is demonstrated by the large number of articles written on the subject and by the placement of these articles in the newspaper. Nevertheless, it cannot be confirmed whether there is a comparatively high level of interest in the Italians as a group in the context of this research.

4.4. Conclusion

This chapter showed that the differences between national newspapers in their coverage on Italian labor migrants in the Dutch mines mainly lies in the importance and interest different newspapers give to the matter, rather than in the way they portray Italian labor migration. Although slight differences in the media coverage of the analyzed newspapers could be detected, most newspapers were found to be supportive of the government's decisions and policies. The fact that around 30 percent of the analyzed articles were front page articles, shows the general interest media took in Italian labor migrants.

The differences between national newspapers therefore was more noticeable in the number of (front page) articles per newspaper than in the content of the articles. The diagrams in this chapter showed that the Catholic newspapers *Limburgsch Dagblad*, *De Volkskrant* and *De Tijd* took a bigger interest in the Italian labor migration to the mines. As already mentioned in this chapter, this can be explained by the fact that (a) the Catholic party KVP was part of the coalition and that (b) the vast majority of people in Limburg was Catholic.

Again, *De Waarheid* and *De Telegraaf* were found to have the most critical articles. However, *De Telegraaf* was mainly critical in the sense that they focused on the 'sensational' part of (political) events. The populist character of the newspaper explain this approach. On top of that, this can be explained by one of the hypotheses from Chapter 1: sensation is likely to sell more newspapers than a long nuanced article on the same event.

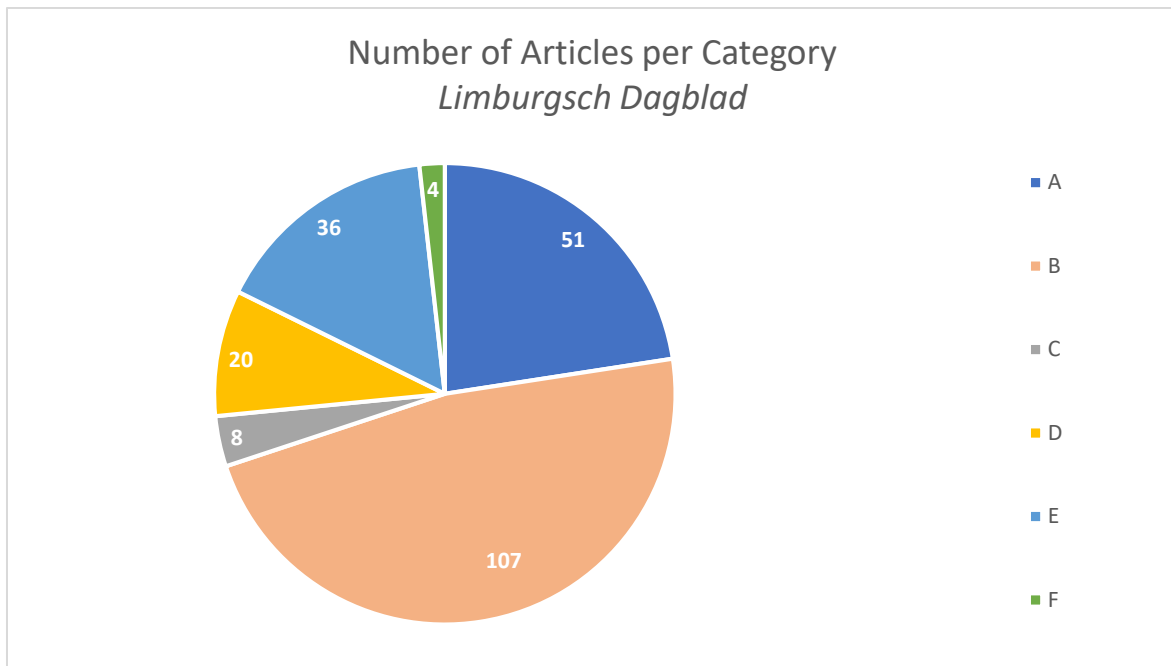
5. Perception of Italian migration in Limburg: *Limburgsch Dagblad*

As mentioned in Chapter 1, *Limburgsch Dagblad* was a regional newspaper targeted at the mining community. The newspaper had an outspoken Catholic signature in the predominantly Catholic province Limburg. This chapter analyzes the newspaper coverage on Italian labor migrants and looks at the main frames that were used in these articles.

5.1. General

As the diagrams in chapter three showed, articles of *Limburgsch Dagblad* made up a large portion of the analyzed sources. The diagram below shows how these selected articles from *Limburgsch Dagblad* were spread across the identified categories.

Diagram 9: Number of articles per category in *Limburgsch Dagblad*



Source: see text.

The most articles of the *Limburgsch Dagblad* were to be found in Category B. The articles in this category were of an informative and clear tone. They briefly described the situation and hardly ever added an opinion or a deeper analysis. In June 1948, the newspaper wrote about the possibility of having to recruit Italian workers for the mines:

*“The mines have drawn the government's attention to the fact that it will not be possible to bring coal production up to the level estimated for 1949 without the adoption of a sufficient number of new miners, which, according to the information available, can only be obtained from Italy.”*¹¹⁹

Within Category E, *Limburgsch Dagblad* showed a particular interest in (migration to) the Belgian mines. Most of these articles are also of a purely informative tone. For example, a front page article on the high number of foreign workers in the Belgian coal mines:

*“There are currently 91,000 Belgians working in the Belgian coal mines against 72,000 foreigners. [...] Of the foreigners, the Italians, with 51,000 miners, constitute the largest share.”*¹²⁰

What was interesting to see in this context, is the fact that although the Dutch mining area was located right in between Belgium and Germany, *Limburgsch Dagblad* had more interest in the Belgian situation

¹¹⁹ ‘Italianen naar onze mijnen’, *Limburgsch Dagblad*, 29-6-1948, 3.

¹²⁰ ‘Ongezonde verhoudingen in België. In Limburgse mijnen werken weinig buitenlanders’, *Limburgsch Dagblad*, 27-01-1955, 2.

than the German one. A possible explanation might be the fact that there were more Italians – and labor migrants in general – working in the Belgian than in the German mines. Because of this, *Limburgsch Dagblad* may have been inclined to look at the Belgian situation if it wanted to reference Dutch migration. Another possible explanation may lie in the fact that, for obvious reasons, Germany had a different reputation than Belgium right after the Second World War, which would make it a less logical country to look at for examples. However, due to the close cross-border ties in the region, the latter explanation seems unlikely.¹²¹

5.2. Human interest

Although most of the articles analyzed in this research talk about ‘the bigger picture’ rather than about individual migrants, *Limburgsch Dagblad* published several relevant articles on individual migrants in the region. An example is an interview with female Italian migrants in Limburg, published in 1951. As the vast majority of labor migrants to Limburg were male, most of the material covered in this thesis talks about male Italian migrants. In the interview with girls who were recruited to work in the Regout China factory in Maastricht, the girls were referred to as “*Italiaantjes*” (English: Little Italians) in a disdainful tone.¹²² Such wording was not detected in articles about male labor migrants in the province of Limburg. As was discussed in the previous chapters, newspapers often connect the human interest storyline to a more practical or economical one. In this example, the article goes on to explain that these women did not “embark on an adventure” but that it is “difficult to find a job in Italy. Even for men, so especially for girls.”¹²³

Another relevant article within this frame is an article on a sick Italian miner in The Netherlands. The article discussed how the National Mining Company (*Staatsmijnen*) flew in the parents of this young man (aged 20) from Sardinia when he suddenly fell very ill. The article took up a remarkably large part of the front page.¹²⁴ The article itself is quite straightforward, but one cannot help but wonder why such an article would be placed on the front page of the regional newspaper. A possible explanation can be found in the narrative of the story. In this article, the sick man nor his parents spark attention. The fact that the parents were flown in on a plane “at the expense of the *Staatsmijnen*” is what makes this an interesting read. The Dutch mining system was known to care for its workers ‘from cradle to grave’, but such an act of kindness seems to have impressed the local newspaper too. The article did actually talk about the parents, one of whom had never left Italy – let alone been on a plane – but neither the condition of the sick boy nor the reaction of the parents is discussed in the article. Based on current literature, one

¹²¹ Ad Knotter ‘Changing Border Regimes, Mining, and Cross-border Labor in the Dutch–Belgian–German Borderlands, 1900–1973’, 380.

¹²² ‘Italiaanse meisjes geïnterviewd met assistentie van Meli Hen uit Heerlerheide’, *Limburgsch Dagblad*, 25-7-1951, 2.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ ‘Op kosten van de Staatsmijnen. Ouders Casu per vliegtuig naar hun zieke zoon Omero te Heerlen’, *Limburgsch Dagblad*, 18-6-1956, 1.

cannot prove the fact that these kinds of articles were being used to portray the mining companies in a positive and human manner. However, based on the analyzed sources from this thesis, it seems striking that *Limburgsch Dagblad* writes this extensively on the matter.

5.3. Issue specific frames: Sports, religion and crime

Next to the generic frames discussed above, some issue specific frames were identified in the newspaper coverage of *Limburgsch Dagblad*. This section looks at articles on Italians in their daily lives. First, there is a brief analysis of media coverage on the Italian team from the local soccer club. Second, the aspect of religion in relation to Italian labor migrants is discussed. And, lastly, the third section looks at how criminal offences and other incidents were discussed by *Limburgsch Dagblad*.

Sports: “Squadra Italiana”¹²⁵

The chapter on Category A showed that the interest in the lives of (Italian) labor migrants to the Dutch mines grew over the analyzed period. This comment also goes for the articles in *Limburgsch Dagblad*. Sports was one of the topics that the paper started to take an interest in when it came to the migrant community. In 1956, *Limburgsch Dagblad* wrote several articles on a soccer team that was made up entirely of Italian miners, a so-called “squadra Italiana.”¹²⁶

“Every Sunday, a full team is formed, while a number of players also play in the other teams of Langeberg. [...] The Italians play in the red-white Langeberg colours, but have the Italian flag as a special decoration on their shirt as well.”¹²⁷

Within the articles on this Italian team – and on a smaller Austrian team - two narratives could be identified. First, there are the already described clichés that were used to describe Italians. As described in Chapter 3, Italians were often portrayed as temperamental men. In the very entertaining article on the team, the newspaper wrote:

“The teams were founded for the foreign miners to provide them with proper recreation opportunities. That is why there is also sufficient cooperation from the State Mines. [...] And that they would benefit from this relaxation is clear enough if, for example, you were to take a walk along the Langeberg football field on Sunday afternoons when the fourth team is playing. Around 200 Italians will be loudly encouraging their favorites with southern temperament.”¹²⁸

This quote nicely shows how the Italians were seen as ‘temperamental’. However, it also shows the second issue specific frame that could be detected in articles on the recreation of Italians: the mining

¹²⁵ ‘Voetballende buitenlandse mijnwerkers. Langeberg heeft een echte “squadra Italiana”, *Limburgsch Dagblad*, 26-11-1956, 7.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

companies tried to prevent these foreign miners from leaving the region. As Serge Langeweg showed in his dissertation, many Italians left the Netherlands before the end of their contract. The main explanation for this was their homesickness.¹²⁹ This quote adequately shows how the mining companies tried to make the Italians feel at home, which might decrease the chance that they would leave their jobs early. It may also be possible that the mining companies wanted to prevent the Italians from coming in contact with local residents for some reason. However, there is no literature to confirm this suggestion with sufficient evidence. Another reason why this interpretation is quite unlikely is the fact that no articles by *Limburgsch Dagblad* suggest that such a policy was in place. The only newspaper claiming that the mining companies were actively separating Italian from Dutch miners was *De Waarheid*. An example of an article *De Waarheid* wrote about such a policy was given in Chapter 3.1.¹³⁰

Image 5: Soccer playing Italians from the companion house on Pelgrimsweg in Brunssum



Source: Photocollection DSM (1956).

¹²⁹ Langeweg, *Mijnbouw en arbeidsmarkt in Nederlands-Limburg*, 188.

¹³⁰ "Minatori" en kompels samen in één mijn. Italiaanse mijnwerkers in Limburg voelen zich bedrogen', *De Waarheid*, 19-1-1957, 5.

Religion: “Enthusiast Catholics”¹³¹

As mentioned, people in the Province of Limburg were mainly of Catholic faith. *Limburgsch Dagblad* very regularly looked at Italian migrants through a bottom-up, religious lens. As written in the previous chapters, rarely any articles on the possible fascist-nature of Italian miners could be found. In *Limburgsch Dagblad* Italians were mostly portrayed as Catholics as well and visits of church officials to these Italian miners were often published. The paper wrote about the visit of an Italian church official to Italian workers in the Emma Mine: “Talking to each and every one of the miners personally, one can imagine the enthusiasm with which the Italian comrades received the priest and fellow countryman.”¹³² This quote nicely shows captures the image that was presented of the religion of the Italian labor migrants. The placement of the article (on the front page) underlines the interest *Limburgsch Dagblad* takes in the matter. Another fitting example of this is a number of articles on the visit of Msgr. Paulo Giobbe, the Papal Nuncio in the Netherlands. In articles on this event *Limburgsch Dagblad* highlighted the fact that Italians from all across Limburg would come to visit the mass held by Msgr. Giobbe in Leyenbroek.¹³³

Image 6: Front page image of Monseigneur Paulo Giobbe visiting Italian miners in Limburg



Source: *Limburgsch Dagblad* (28-1-1957)

¹³¹ ‘Generaal der Conventiellen in de Emma’, *Limburgsch Dagblad*, 19-4-1956, front page.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ ‘Mgr. Paulo Giobbe komt de Italianen bezoeken’, *Limburgsch Dagblad*, 16-1-1957, front page.

What was interesting to see in the analysis of these newspapers, was the fact that their ‘temperament’ was referred to in these articles on the religion of Italians. In the abovementioned articles on the visit of Msgr. Giobbe, *Limburgsch Dagblad* described their enthusiasm as follows: “After breakfast, Msgr. Giobbe spent quite some time in the canteen of the companion house amongst the Italians. There was a lot of Italian commotion and enthusiasm.”¹³⁴

When it comes to the newspaper coverage of Italian religion, there was one article that painted a different picture. *Limburgsch Dagblad* published an article on a new academic publication about Catholicism in Europe. The article looks at the Belgian and Dutch provinces of Limburg and establishes that “both Provinces of Limburg are the most Catholic part of Western-Europe.”¹³⁵ This fact in itself is not very interesting for this argument, however there is one section that sparks the interest. The article looked at religion in different European region and noted that some Belgian regions were rapidly secularizing. It continued: “This may be because of the influence of foreigners, both the DPs and the Italians [...] and all the unreligious thoughts they bring with them with their weak morals.”¹³⁶ This comment differs majorly from the other articles analyzed to such an extent that possible explanations for such a sudden and brief shift in perspective cannot be deducted easily. A possible reason for this sudden shift may be found in the author of the article. In contrast to most articles on Italian labor migrants to the mining region, this specific article was written by a correspondent from Belgium. It might be the case that the Belgian situation and the image of Italians may have differed from the general image painted in Dutch – or in this case, regional – media. On top of that, it is also possible that this specific journalist held different views than other journalists from *Limburgsch Dagblad*.

All in all, articles on the religion of Italian labor migrants in the Dutch province Limburg mostly portrayed these Italians as very Catholic and religious. Several aspects played a supporting role, e.g. Italian temperament, rational governance considerations and homesickness. The placement of the articles in this paragraph (on the front page) emphasizes the interest *Limburgsch Dagblad* took in the matter.

Crimes and incidents: ‘Us’ versus ‘them’

Over the analyzed period *Limburgsch Dagblad* also took an interest in incidents or crimes in which Italians were involved. Eight articles on such events were used for this section, most of which were written after 1954. With the exception of one article, all articles on the subject talked about cases where Italians got in an argument with non-Italians.¹³⁷ In January 1957, the newspaper reported on a

¹³⁴ ‘Italianen in Zuid-Limburg ontvingen Pauselijke gezant’, *Limburgsch Dagblad*, 28-1-1957, 1.

¹³⁵ ‘Beide Limburgen zijn meest katholieke deel van W-Europa’, *Limburgsch Dagblad*, 11-6-1954, 7.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ The only exception was: ‘Steekpartij in IJssalon’, *Limburgsch Dagblad*, 16-9-1949, 5.

fight between Dutch and Italian men in a mining village called Brunssum.¹³⁸ The article repeatedly mentioned the fact that Italians were involved in two fights: “a fight between Dutch and Italian men [and] between Italians and Hungarians living in companion’s houses.”¹³⁹ This conflict between two different nationalities seems to be very relevant for the newspaper, as the 50-word article contained no less than six mentions of nationality. This differentiation between ‘us’ and ‘them’ came across even stronger in an article on a homicide in Limburg. The person responsible for the death of a Dutch bartender in a bar was an Italian miner who, according to *Limburgsch Dagblad* committed a “cowardly act”.¹⁴⁰ It is interesting to see that all of the articles provide the reader with personal information on the victims. This personalization was not only used on the Dutch victims, but also in an article about an Italian victim of a fight in Belgium.¹⁴¹

A third factor that is often highlighted in the articles is the fact that the fights between Italian and Dutch men often started because of women. An article on the death of a miner in Belgium explained the cause of the fight: “The motive for this bloody act is to be found in the fact that the victim's wife had refused to dance with a group of Italians.”¹⁴² Articles like these confirm the image of Italians as ‘young (vain) Casanovas’, who are fiery and proud. This point of view is similar to the one on fights between Hungarians and Italians in Chapter 4 and may have been a common public image.

The image of the Italians as ‘the other’ is also confirmed by the fact that the newspaper often underlined that a group of Italians was involved – or at least present – in the incident. This is not strange in itself, as literature suggests that there often was a language barrier for Italians arriving in the Netherlands in the 1950s and that this complicated their integration in Dutch daily life.¹⁴³ However, the fact that *Limburgsch Dagblad* regularly mentioned the group of Italians and uses this in their argument on ‘us’ versus ‘them’ shows how integration of Italians was seen in the press.

5.4. Conclusion

The newspaper coverage on Italian labor migrants to the Dutch coal mines by *Limburgsch Dagblad* can be summarized by highlighting the generic frames on the one side and the issue-specific frames on the other. There were several generic frames that could be identified, i.e. economic consequences or human interest. These frames were mostly in line with previous conclusions in this thesis and the image painted of Italian labor migrants was very similar to the image found in national newspapers.

¹³⁸ ‘Vechtpartijen te Brunssum’, *Limburgsch Dagblad*, 3-1-1957, 1.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ ‘Man te Stein neergestoken’, *Limburgsch Dagblad*, 17-12-1957, 1.

¹⁴¹ ‘Italiaanse mijnwerker vermoord’, *Limburgsch Dagblad*, 13-9-1955, 7.

¹⁴² ‘Mijnwerker doodgestoken’ *Limburgsch Dagblad*, 12-12-1956, 11.

¹⁴³ *Langeweg Mijnbouw en arbeidsmarkt in Nederlands-Limburg*, 117.

At the same time however, a number of issue-specific frames were also used by *Limburgsch Dagblad*. The newspaper showed an interest in the religion of these Italians and largely portrayed them as Catholics. This finding is in line with the findings on Italians not being seen as fascists or communists. Apparently, the presumed marker for the Italian identity was the Catholic faith, rather than their political preferences. A possible explanation for this is that by the time *Limburgsch Dagblad* started writing about these Italian Catholics, their presence had been established in the community and nobody believed these men were fascists or communists. However, another explanation for this may lie in the influence the Dutch mining company had in the region. Since it was difficult to find enough miners, it was in the interest of the mining companies that these Italian labor migrants were accepted in the mining region. The mining companies therefore may have pushed or emphasized the Catholicism of these Italian migrants to ensure a successful reception in the region.

The sections on sports and criminality have one thing in common: they approach the Italians as ‘the other’ and talk about them as if they weren’t part of the conversation. Due to the previously mentioned language difficulties, it is very likely the Italians did in fact not follow these Dutch publications and that the articles were in fact written with the Dutch public in mind. This shows that in the analyzed period, these Italians were seen as outsiders in Limburg.

6. Conclusion

This thesis looked at the way the Dutch newspapers wrote about Italian labor migrants to the Dutch coal mines from 1947 – 1957 and asked how the frames these newspapers used can be explained. Several aspects make up the answer to the research question: the generic frames, the issue-specific frames and the reflection on the formulated hypotheses.

The sources from national and regional newspapers were not equally divided over the analyzed time period. The paper scarcity of the Second World War made newspapers thin and as paper got widely available, the number of articles in newspapers generally increased. The diversity of the topics discussed also grew as the total number of articles on Italian migrants to the Dutch coal mines did. However, generally, the subject of (Italian) migration to the coal mines seemed to be of interest for most newspapers.

Two big generic frames were identified in the analysis: economic consequences and the humanitarian frame. As was repeatedly stated, most newspapers were supportive of the governmental policies regarding Italian labor migration to the coal mines. This can mainly be explained with the frame of economic necessity and the consequences of not recruiting these people. The economic argument was mainly used in times when mining companies were struggling to find enough workers for the mines. In these situations, the back-up role of foreign workers was very often underlined and the possibility of these Italians staying was rarely mentioned or discussed.

The second generic frame that was identified regularly, was the humanitarian frame. Newspapers took an interest in the (daily) lives of Italian workers, as the articles in Category A showed. These human interest articles increased over time and especially *Limburgsch Dagblad* started to publish more articles on these Italians throughout the 1950s. An explanation for this may lie in the fact that as the numbers of Italian migrants in the Netherlands increased, so did the interest in these Italians. In general, *Limburgsch Dagblad* published more on the Italian labor migration to the coal mines. As was illustrated in this thesis, this can easily be explain by the mere fact that the coal mines were located in the province of Limburg. An interest in newcomers coming to the region seems logical.

In line with this humanitarian frame is the way these Italians were mostly portrayed. The main issue-specific frame that was used to describe Italian labor migrants was what I have called the cliché frame of the Italian ‘Casanovas’. In most articles such a frame was used in combination with the argumentation of ‘us’ versus ‘them’. The Italians were mostly described as exotic outsiders, rather than as part of the mining community. In many articles, the nationality of the Italian miners was explicitly mentioned – even if that did not add any value to the story.

The second big issue-specific frame that was identified was that of European integration and foreign coal mines. Most Dutch newspapers wrote about foreign miners in the coal mines in articles on non-

Dutch coal mines, of which the Belgian coal mines received the most attention in Dutch newspapers. This can probably be explained with the high numbers of foreign workers in the Belgian mines. Dutch newspapers may have reported on these mines to put the scale of the Dutch foreign recruitment into perspective, or to learn from developments in Belgium. The ECSC and multilateral cooperation were often discussed in this context. It was interesting to see that European integration and labor migration were linked more as time went on. It is possible the 1957 'Free Movement of Workers' Agreement played a role in the awareness of this connection.

The last issue-specific frame adds up to the 'Casanova-frame' and focusses on the Catholicism of these Italians. As expected in the hypotheses, the political-cultural orientation of newspapers played a role in the newspaper coverage on Italian labor migrants. This could be seen in *De Waarheid*, but far more prominently in the Catholicly oriented newspapers *De Volkskrant*, *De Tijd* and regional newspaper *Limburgsch Dagblad*. This focus connects to a general conclusion on the readership of all analyzed newspapers: media tends to write articles that sell newspapers (to their readership). It is therefore logical that Catholicly oriented newspapers focus on such topics. It also underlines why a newspaper that had a critical position towards government policies, like *De Telegraaf*, generally published more critical articles on labor migration.

The last hypotheses focused on how the political situation influenced the newspaper coverage on Italian labor migration to the Dutch coal mines in the analyzed period. On the one hand, there was the economic necessity of recruiting miners. On the other, there were big housing shortages in The Netherlands. In this research the subject of housing shortages was not very present and no argument against the possible recruitment of foreign workers for the mines focused on these shortages. Many articles from *Limburgsch Dagblad* specifically named which companion's house would be hosting the newcomers. However, this was always done in an informative manner. In no way did these articles focus on the possibility of Italians taking up the scarce houses. As already explained above, the economic situation was far more present in the newspaper coverage on Italian labor migration to the mines. Some articles would underline the fact that the Italians would be coming to the Netherlands temporarily and that they had a back-up role in the mines, but most newspapers did not even focus on this aspect to much.

This research adds to the existing literature in several ways. This thesis showed that the Dutch newspapers were mostly supportive of the Dutch national governmental policies on labor migration. This analysis therefore shows that – in contrast to the newspaper reception of the arrival of DPs to the Dutch mines – newspapers were supportive of Italian labor migration in specific.

In line with this argument, this thesis also showed that Italian migrants were generally not seen as fascist or communist threats. The fact that one or both of these arguments were against the recruitment of DPs and Hungarian miners, underlines that there was a specific reason why this argument was not

used for Italians. A clear answer to the question why Italian migrants – who had been on ‘the wrong side of history’ only a decade earlier – were not perceived as a threat could not be found in the analyzed sources. However, as described in the last chapter, an opposite frame was used by the regional newspaper *Limburgsch Dagblad*: that of the religious, Catholic Italian miner.

As stated in the introduction of this research, this analysis captures a pivotal point in time: the first decade after the Second World War. It is extremely likely that the behavior of the Italian labor migrants played a role in the recruitment of foreign workers in a later stage. The articles on the Hungarian migrants ‘shaking things up in Limburg’ prove this point. As described, most of the articles compare the troubles and complains about Italian labor migrants in Limburg to the complaints on Hungarian miners in the late 1950s. It is possible the behavior of the Italian workers set a precedent for the recruitment of these Hungarians, but also for the later recruited Austrians, Moroccans and so on.

This research also showed that although there was an interest in the European integration process, most newspapers did not see the project as a big part of the migration scheme of the time. In the newspapers, the founding of the ECSC and the ‘Free Movement of Workers’ was rarely seen in relation to the actual arrival of (Italian) labor migrants. The ECSC as an organization was more often referred to in articles on the safety of coal mines and as a mediator in issues that derived from the (un)safety of these mines. Further research might look into the policy maker’s perspective on the relation between the European integration process and labor migration to Western-European coal mines. Research on this has not been done about the period of time before the ‘Free movement of Workers’ and would be an addition to the mentioned work of Marlou Schrover, Tycho Walaardt and Simone Goedings.¹⁴⁴

Further research might also focus on the general political discussions on Italian labor migration to the mines and the policy that emerged from these debates.¹⁴⁵ In line with the findings from the presumed role of the Dutch mining companies in the opinion making process, research might focus on the agenda setting role these mining companies had in the migration to the Dutch mines. Serge Langeweg focusses on the recruitment of workers to the mines in his research, but a bigger scope would paint a more complete picture on the societal debate regarding Italian labor migration in the late 1940s and the 1950s.

A final aspect that would interesting to research is a comparison of media coverage on the Italian arrival of migrants to other regions. This could either be other regions in the Netherlands – for example the Demka Steelfactory in Deventer or the *Hoogovens* in IJmuiden – but it could also compare coverage

¹⁴⁴ Goedings, *Labor migration in an Integration Europe*; Schrover and Walaardt ‘Displaced persons, returnees and ‘unsuitables’; Schrover and Walaardt ‘The influence of the media on politics and practices: Hungarian refugee resettlement in the Netherlands in 1956’.

¹⁴⁵ Unfortunately, the Dutch National Archive was closed due to the COVID-19 outbreak, which made such research (temporarily) impossible.

in regions from different Western-European countries – for example the Belgian mining industry or the German steel industry.

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