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Dynamics in Dutch immigration policy: Creating policy frames applicable to Dutch immigration policies from 2015 to 2019

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**Universiteit
Leiden**

Governance and
Global Affairs

Dynamics in Dutch immigration policy

Creating policy frames applicable to Dutch immigration policies from
2015 to 2019

Master Thesis Public Administration – International and European Governance
by Y.L de Wolf

Supervision:
Dr. G.E. Breeman, Leiden University

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I would like to start this thesis by thanking my supervisor, Gerard Breeman, for being flexible, open-minded and helpful during this process. Covid-19 made this last year of my studies quite challenging, generally and personally, but a supervisor like him made sure no extra stress was added to the experience.

Abstract

Due to escalating circumstances in Africa and the Middle East, the European Union was flooded with refugees in 2015. This phenomenon raised many issues regarding asylum for these displaced individuals and families.

By performing a qualitative inductive framing research, this thesis creates new policy frames applicable to Dutch governmental debates on immigration policy from 2015-2019. Uncovering whether politicians use frames to express their standpoints and in which ways this occurs. This research emphasizes which frames politicians used during their debates on immigration policy, establishing the three main frames and their usage, as well as the difference in use by right and left wing politicians.

Key words: punctuated equilibrium, European refugee crisis, immigration policy, inductive research, policy framing

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1 Introduction

The staggering increase of immigrants and refugees arriving in Europe reached its peak in 2015. In that year alone, 1,014,836 people entered the EU via the dangerous routes of the Mediterranean sea. These hundred thousands of people fled war and prosecution in their home countries via the Mediterranean sea into the southern borders of Europe. Over three quarters of these refugees fled their homes in Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan through the highly dangerous routes from Libya to Italy, and from Turkey to the Greek islands (Spindler, 2015).

The refugee crisis of 2015 reached everyone in the European Union; social media exploded with images of the barbaric circumstances that these people had to go through, costing the lives of 3,771 people. In September of the same year, the world was in shock when the image of the lifeless body of a young Syrian boy, named Aylan Kurdi, washed up on a Turkish beach. (Smith, McGarty & Thomas, 2018). As a response to the horrific scenes at sea and at the southern borders of Europe, the European Union tried to portray a unified framework of refugee reception that focused on both keeping their own people safe, but also grant help to those in need. It searched for a balance between humanitarianism and the need to uphold their sovereignty. Multiple states of the EU broke this agreement when they closed off their borders about a year after the peak of the crisis, leaving Greece with +/- 60,000 stranded refugees (Chouliaraki & Zaborowski, 2017).

1.1 Research objective

In a publication of the Scientific Council for Governmental Policy in December of 2020, it states that the Dutch government's current immigration policy does not take today's reality into account. The Netherlands has been taking in more than 200,000 immigrants since 2015. This is notable in the country's dynamic society, where immigration plays an important role. The current immigration policy is still focused on the historical type of immigration the Netherlands used to have after World War II, with labour immigrants coming in from Turkey and Morocco. Nowadays, it has a more diverse scope of immigrants coming in from eastern Europe, India and China, as well as the ongoing stream of refugees (Wetenschappelijke raad voor het Regeringsbeleid, 2020).

This thesis will identify in tangible numbers and graphs how immigration has increased in Europe, emphasizing the Netherlands, from 2015 to 2019, as well as identify how attitudes towards immigration in Dutch governmental policy has evolved in those years. After identifying these independent factors, the changes in policy will be treated as a dependent

factor. I will attempt to identify these changes by mapping the frames present in Dutch immigration policies from 2015 to 2019.

1.2 Societal and scientific relevance

Immigration is one of the biggest global issues we face today. It contains many challenges, such as human trafficking and the lack of safe immigration routes. The United Nations states how immigration is a very cross-cutting issue and applies to all their 17 Sustainable Development Goals. With this thesis I hope to emphasize the dynamics in immigration issues and the need for immigration policies to adhere to those dynamics, as well as the importance for an evolving policy (Migration Data Portal, n.d.).

Besides a certain societal need for the research into immigration policy, there is also a scientific importance to such research. The majority of framing analyses are focused on framing within (social) media, and framing of perceived issues of immigration amongst the public (e.g. Heidenricht et al., 2019 ; Greussing & Boomgaarden, 2017, Perez, 2017 ; Georgiou & Zabarowski, 2017). Little research is done on framing analyses of governmental policy documents, and the research that focuses on such policy framing is often outdated and meant to describe the earlier wave of immigration, regarding immigrants from Italy, Turkey and Morocco (e.g. Roggeband & Vliegthart, 2017 ; Bonjour & Schrover, 2015). By creating new policy frames applicable to modern day policy documents, new research into this topic can be started and extended for a more holistic understanding of dynamics in Dutch immigration policy.

1.3 Outline and research question

This thesis will introduce the topic by discussing classic literature focusing on policy change, containing the theories behind a punctuated equilibrium in the policy process, and the change brought about by the dramatic focusing events present in the years surrounding the refugee crisis in Europe (Lindner, 2003; True, Jones & Baumgartner, 2006/2019; Birkland, 1998/2017). Furthermore, the use of scientific venues in immigration policy and the issue ownership of immigration in Dutch politics will be discussed (Hajdinjak et al., 2020; Bélanger & Meguid, 2008).

The inductive research approach used in this paper will be focused on the generation of new theory, specifically the generation of new policy frames. Inductive research required me to have an open mind without preconceived ideas, and as such, this paper will not contain hypotheses derived from a theoretical background. The theoretical background discussed in the

next section of this paper will rather be used to provide a theoretical framework on which I based my further framework generation. By following this research analysis, I aim to answer the following research question:

RQ: How do politicians use framing to influence Dutch governmental immigration policy debates from 2015-2019?

The layout of this paper will be as follows; firstly, I will discuss theories behind policy change as a foundation on which I will later base my new frame generation, after this I will extensively discuss the methods and analysis used to come to these new frames. And finally, I will conclude my findings and discuss options for further future research, as well as shortcomings of my current research.

Note: Dutch governmental documents on immigration use the word ‘vreemdeling’, since the English translation of this (illegal alien) is not very common, this paper will use the terms refugees and immigrants interchangeably to describe these ‘vreemdelingen’.

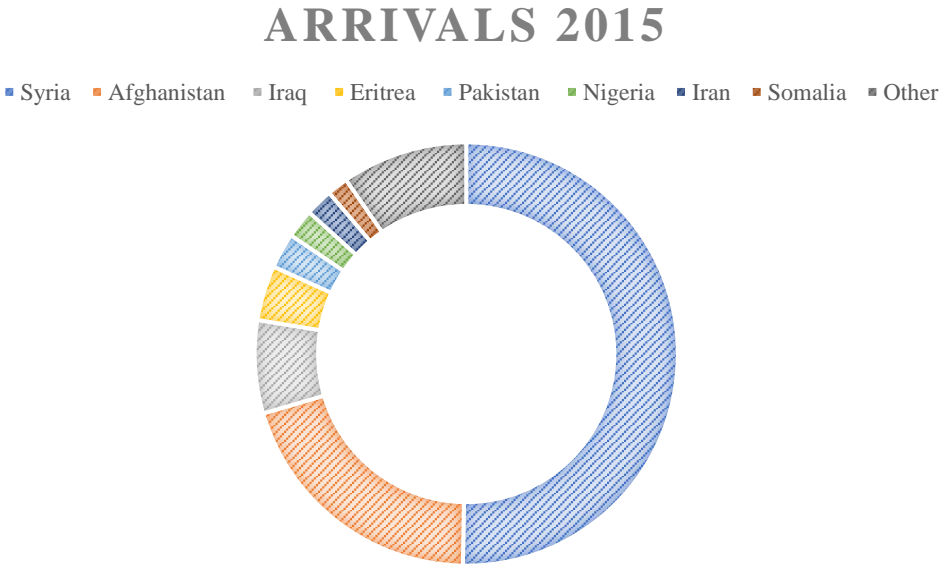
2 Theoretical background

2.1 The 2015 migrant crisis

Before discussing the dynamics in Dutch immigration policy and how it responded to the migrant crisis of 2015, I deemed it important to explain how the crisis that sparked the interest for this thesis, could have happened.

Since the summer of 2015, the immigration flow to the Greek and Italian shores had reached a certain peak. Undeniably, one of the biggest causes for this crisis was the Syrian conflict. This war, a civil war of unrest and violent protests opposing the government, already cost more than 380,000 lives and caused 6,6 million Syrians to be internally displaced and 4,9 million Syrians to become refugees. Besides these Syrian refugees, the largest groups of refugees arriving in Italy were Eritreans, Nigerians, Somalis and Sudanese, and the largest groups arriving in Greece consisted of Syrians, Afghans, Pakistani, Iranians and Iraqi. Figure 1, presented below, gives a visual representation of the different nationalities of refugees entering Europe in 2015.

Figure 1
Nationalities of immigrants arriving in Europe in 2015



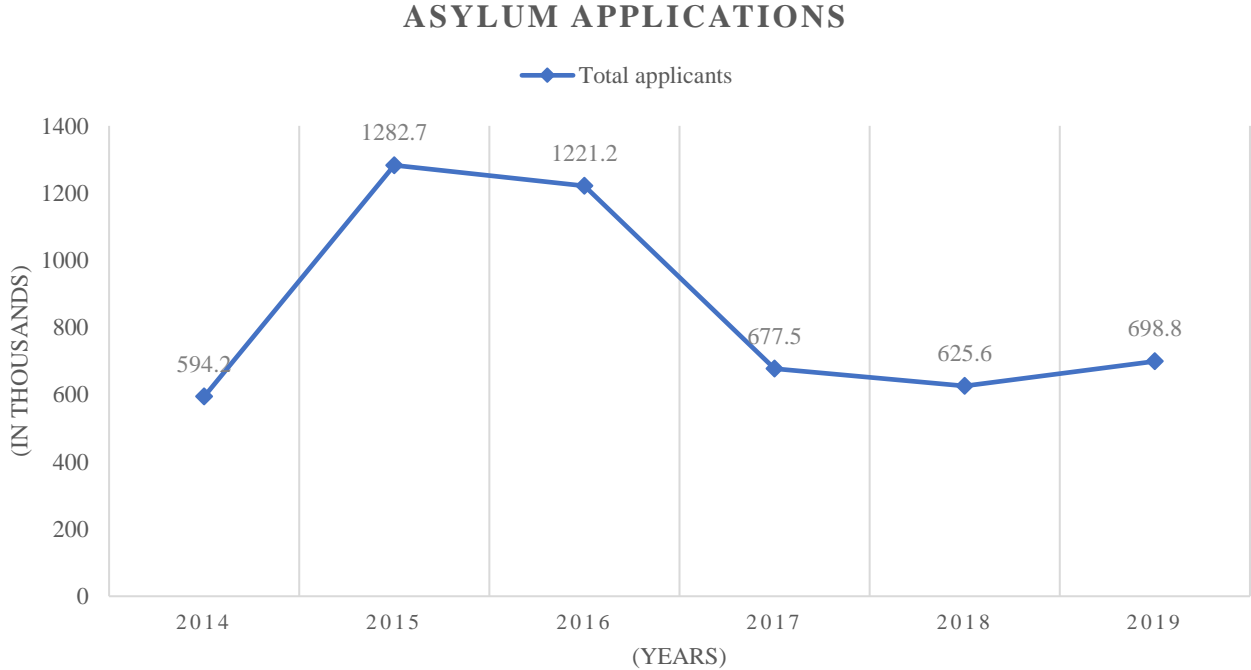
Source: International Organisation for Migration, n.d.

The number of refugees entering Greece between August and November of 2015, is equal to the number of refugees entering Greece and Italy combined in the two years before that. Figure 2, presented below, shows the number of new asylum applications to EU member states before, during and after the immigration crisis of 2015. These people sought refuge in Europe since their home countries in the Middle East and Africa were facing extremely violence and unstable times. E.g. Afghanistan was suffering economic and political instability as well as violent oppression of the Taliban, Iraq suffered from a surge in violent actions of the Islamic State, Eritrea was branded one of the most oppressive regimes in Africa and described as an ‘open-air’ prison and Nigeria suffered under the control of the Boko Haram (Zaragoza-Cristiani, 2015).

In the Middle East, Turkey functioned as a safe haven for many refugees and operated an ‘open-border’ policy as well as built several refugee camps. In 2015 however, after suffering terrorist attacks in their own country, the Turkish government switched strategies and closed their borders. All these oppressive and inhumane conditions in the home countries of refugees together with losing the opportunity to find refuge in the Middle East itself coincided to a humanitarian migrant crisis causing an increase in people trying to reach Europe in 2015 (Zaragoza-Cristiani, 2015).

Figure 2

Non-EU asylum applications to EU member states from 2014 to 2020



Source: Eurostat, 2021

This major humanitarian crisis caused drastic issues for the biggest European aid agencies, such as the World Food Programme. The fact that funding for organizations, such as the World Health Organisation and the Syria Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan, was cut severely had a secondary consequence: the decline in living conditions and e.g. health clinics in regions of conflict led to a secondary immigration; refugees not only fled from their home countries to refugee camps in their own region, but were now fleeing from those refugee camps to Europe.

However, a positive consequence flowed from this humanitarian crisis, as the European Union decided to invest more in humanitarian projects and development aid in the Middle East and Africa; freeing up a budget of around 11 billion euro (Kugiel, 2016).

2.2 The role of frames in policy making

Since this thesis will discuss Dutch immigration policy, and its framing and changes over time, it is crucial to establish an important theory behind policy change; the theory of punctuated equilibrium (True, Jones & Baumgartner, 2006). The punctuated equilibrium theory aims to explain both the stability and change of public policymaking. Political processes are often characterized by stability, where stasis occurs in most policy areas. This phenomenon of stability could be explained through path dependency. The theory behind path dependency states how institutions, such as governments, are constrained to stay on their 'path' once they have made a certain policy choice and adopted the set of rules that comes with it (Lindner, 2003). The definition of issues in public discourse often reinforces existing policies, since issue definitions convey to the public how a policy is understood or perceived at that moment in time. This issue definition is often biased and emphasizes some aspects of the problem that uphold the existing ideas, whereas other aspects that could bring about change will be neglected (Gilardi, Shipan & Wuest, 2003).

The interaction between political institutions and their behavioral decision-making creates that pattern of stability and change that the punctuated equilibrium theory encompasses. This behavioral type decision-making, often found in governmental institutions, focuses on maintaining structure and stability, based on a cost-benefit analysis. The benefits have to be rather high in order to bring about change (Sahu, Padhy & Dhir, 2020). However, crises and changes occur, giving political programs a chance for radical change along with the public questioning of current policy.

The theory of punctuated equilibrium puts an emphasis on these first stages of a policy cycle; issue definition and agenda setting (True, Jones & Baumgartner, 2006). Issues are

defined in the public sphere, and their importance on the agenda increases and decreases by the public's hand. Besides issue definition, this process also entails agenda setting. In agenda setting, different factions in society fight to earn their issues' place on the agenda. The groups that in the most successful way provide information on an issue or a new solution to an existing issue will earn the right to let their voices be heard (Birkland, 2017). National governments tend to favour the status quo when it comes to their institutions and policies, and therefore an excessive effort is usually necessary in order to change this (True, Jones & Baumgartner, 2019).

Frames are a very important part of policy making, and by mapping frames and e.g. their behaviour over time, one can also identify policy changes. Framing is that part of issue definition and agenda setting that certain people and/or groups use in order to grab the attention of the public and politics. To control the media attention and then frame your standpoint in such a way that gives you power over the public agenda, is what many wish to achieve.

Frames can be seen as a system through which to organize thoughts and feelings, they transform complex issues into comprehensible statements by focusing on certain elements of the issue, and thus deciding what is relevant for the public to know. This way, meaning is added to an issue (Nisbet & Huges, 2006). Framing is a luring way of changing the public's opinion on matters, since it influences how people process their information. When the normative foundation of an issue is challenged, framing can be extra effective. Immigration has significant implications when it comes to human rights and national security, making it an easy contender against other high-profile issues regarding these securities (Singh & Swanson, 2017).

Politicians use this framing in media and policy in order to influence the amount of attention and time spent on an issue. They can use language as a way to convey their standpoint, and either negatively or positively speak of an issue. E.g. using the terms 'illegal immigrants' and 'chain immigration' allows them to portray the topic as scary and threatening, whilst using terms such as 'undocumented workers' and 'family reunification' would be a softer approach (de Bruijn, 2019).

Besides politicians, the media plays a big part in framing an issue as well. The media promotes a biased, and often partial, account of events. Public figures, like politicians, will use their place in (social) media so they can link issues, such as immigration, to other issues like national security, in order to convey people of their and their parties' solutions to the issue. Throughout the years, several different negative and positive frames focused on immigration

have occurred on the public agenda; frames based on e.g. economic threats, security threats, as well as upholding democratic values and human rights (Fryberg et al., 2012).

2.3 Factors that change policies and policy frames

Therefore, after establishing the importance of frames in the dynamics of policy, it is important to discuss which factors influence those frames and could bring about policy change.

Public policy can undergo moments of change, generated by the emergence of certain issues on the public agenda, sparked by conflict or crises, such as e.g. the European refugee crisis of 2015. Positive feedback creates (future) change, whereas negative feedback maintains stasis in a system. Positive feedback can be understood as circumstances and actions which create a change in the perception of the issue, e.g. new evidence on the matter. Whereas negative feedback can be understood as circumstances and actions that uphold the current status quo, in which the issue finds itself. Positive feedback often occurs in the form of focusing events; they draw the attention towards issues that need to be discussed. This attention is created e.g. through policy entrepreneurs, such as research agencies or the media (True, Jones & Baumgartner, 2019). These focusing events can be seen as important, sudden, attention-grabbing occurrences. Birkland (1998) calls them “triggers for policy change”. The event is rather unusual and uncovers harm or potential future harm to the public, while showing clearly that the government has the ability to change the situation. They are often geographically centred, rather than global, emphasizing in this case the shores of Italy and Greece. The bigger the importance and the longer the duration of the issue also leads to more extensive media coverage (Bekkers et al., 2011), creating more opportunity for interest groups to mobilize and appeal for e.g. donations.

In the case of the refugee crisis of 2015, the year is filled with focusing events grabbing the public’s attention by thorough media coverage: hundreds of people drown in the sea near Italy’s Lampedusa on April 18th after a boat capsized, Austrian authorities discover the lifeless bodies of 70 refugees in an abandoned refrigerator truck in August, and in September the small body of Aylan Kurdi washed up on a Turkish beach (Spindler, 2015).

When discussing the punctuated equilibrium theory, True, Jones and Baumgartner (2019) state how policy entrepreneurs can choose from several policy venues in order to control and create the desired positive or negative feedback in the agenda setting of a public issue; also called venue shopping. Most common policy venues are institutional sites, such as legislatures and the

media. These policy venues prove their importance in showing the public which problems are at hand and which solutions could be possible.

When it comes to the creation of immigration policies in the Netherlands, scientific expertise and scientific venues, such as think tanks and research institutes, play a big role in the agenda setting phase of policy making; defining problems, as well as their solutions. As scientific knowledge can be used to provide evidence, it is a compelling weapon for e.g. politicians to support their claims. Politicians often choose to use scientific evidence when it comes to issues that are morally complex (Timmermans & Scholten, 2006). Immigration and refugee policies can be seen as such ‘wicked problems’. A wicked problem contains a unique situation, involving many different stakeholders, and of which the causes and especially solutions can be complex (Raadschelders et al., 2019).

The use of ‘immigration’ as a political selling point is quite common. Political parties use immigration as an issue to stay away from, or as a problem that needs our attention. The way that politicians seem to handle these issues and problems in their e.g. election campaign is a theoretical framework called ‘issue ownership’ (Hajdinjak et al., 2020). In this process of issue ownership, politicians use certain policy frames to express their standpoints, and uphold the reputation they historically have when it comes to certain topics. This theory of issue ownership gives the possibility to predict parties’ behavior in election campaigns, as well as voter behavior. Parties will put emphasis on issues they feel ownership over, and voters base their judgement on the competence they accredit these parties in handling these issues, such as welfare, immigration, and education (Bélanger & Meguid, 2008).

2.4 Framing immigration policy in the Netherlands

In the Netherlands, this phenomenon has occurred over the last decade as well. Economic and cultural standpoints are intertwining, and political identity is more pronounced than ever. Immigration and refugees have been a sensitive topic, and have almost led to breaking points in the past Dutch cabinet. Where D66, CDA and CU have fought for the entry of more refugees, the VVD keeps opposing them or uses this as an option to get something they want in return; e.g. the ‘Moira deal’ made in 2020, where the VVD accepted the entry of 100 refugees from a Greek refugee camp, where a horrible fire had occurred, but only on the condition that the Netherlands had to accept 100 UN-recognized refugees less in that year (Boersema, 2021).

The sensitivity of the issue can be seen in the right wing populist parties and their rhetoric when it comes to immigration and refugees. The debate is often intertwined with issues of the Dutch culture and identity, creating an issue of 'we' versus 'them'. These parties focus on issues, such as security and terrorism, and use immigration as a scare tactic in order to protect Europe, and insist upon the safekeeping of 'Dutch' values and safety. The leader of the right-wing party PVV (Party for Freedom) invariably connects immigration to the Islam and the totalitarian threat Islamic people bring with them (de Telegraaf, 2013). He claimed that 99% of the refugees the Netherlands was planning on taking in, was part of the Islamic religion and that around 60 of the 3100 refugees that entered the country that week would be a terrorist (Isitman, 2015). In their party programs, the FVD and VVD also put an emphasis on diminishing immigration, and more extensive tactics for remigration and asylum requests that would disadvantage immigrants/refugees (Akbaba, 2018).

Around the crisis of 2015, immigration policy played an important role on the agenda of the EU. Member states have varying ideas on how to tackle the issue, and took unilateral action, varying from creating fences at the borders in Hungary, to Germany claiming to be open and taking in all the refugees that had nowhere else to go (van der Bij & Zweers, n.d.). This divide between different ideas on how to handle the crisis was visible in Dutch politics as well. The focus was mainly on the competence the Netherlands would have in accepting and taking care of refugees. The right wing parties such as PVV emphasized the need to decrease the amount of refugees entering the Netherlands, because we would not be able to take in and take care of that many people without hurting our own welfare, and stated how the refugee centres should be as sober as possible to discourage people to want to come here. The left wing parties, such as the SP and GroenLinks, challenged these statements and took this as an opportunity to encourage the redesign of the immigration policy. There was a need for a more realistic and open admission policy, and the Netherlands should always be open for those in need. They showed their disapproval of the scare tactics used by other parties and called for a realistic idea about how the Netherlands could support these refugees, shaped by the government (Molen Kuipers, 2016).

Based on the increase of the amount of refugees entering Europe after 2015, the Dutch government opted for an integral approach to their immigration policy. They created the following policy, focused on a 'broad, integrated approach'. They wish to address the concerns people have with immigration, but also show the possible benefits there are, they want to weigh the challenges and opportunities of immigration in the best way possible. Immigration should

be as safe and controlled as possible (protection for those who really need it). Aside from this, the immigration flow has to fit into the Dutch society and its needs as well. This policy is based on six pillars:

1. The prevention of irregular immigration. People entering the country illegally, without a visa or passport (often coupled with human trafficking, drowning and extortion) have to be stopped. The government wants to stop this by focusing on the issues in the country of origin (to prevent them from needing to leave in the first place).
2. Fortifying the protection and reception of refugees and displaced people in their own region. By offering a respectable reception in the region of conflict itself, they can stay there and return to their country of origin more easily if the opportunity were to present itself.
3. Solidarity and solid asylum system within the European Union. The European asylum system needs to be a flexible one, that is easy to adapt to the change in numbers and types of asylum seekers. This is all about flexibility and efficiency.
4. Less illegal immigrants, more return to the country of origin. Refugees without the right to stay have to leave as independently and quickly as possible, this return process should be supported by the Dutch government, in order to diminish illegal activities. The Dutch government tries to collaborate with the countries of origin in this process, applying a system of rewards and punishments.
5. Promote legal immigration routes. Regular immigration because of work, study or family should be promoted.
6. Stimulation of integration and participation. Certain integration obligations will be further developed, in order for migrants to really become a part of the Dutch society. They try to achieve this mainly through paid labor.

In my research, I aim to uncover whether these policy goals are visible in the way politicians frame themselves during governmental debates on immigration policy, and in which way this framing occurs. I will try to do so by answering the following sub-questions:

Q1: Which frames are present in the debates on migration policy in Dutch government?

Q2: Through which mechanisms do politicians offer such framing?

Q2a: Will the differences in standpoints and backgrounds of politicians be expressed through the different frames used?

3 Methods

3.1 Inductive framing research

In many research papers, policy framing is explored by means of deductive framing analysis (E.g Hajdinjak, Morris & Amos, 2020; Daviter, 2007; Block, 2021; McConnon, 2020). In such research, frames are created beforehand and then discussed whether these specific frames are found in the documents and texts used. Whether these frames are relevant for the study or the history behind these frames is lesser known; the emphasis lies on the testing of the frames.

And thus a more inductive type of research, based on grounded theory, could be central in deciding which specific frames could be used in a policy research paper. Grounded theory, originally coined by Glaser and Strauss (1967), became the foremost way of analysing qualitative data inductively. Their idea is that the theory is grounded in the data, and thus to uncover this theory, the data needs to be analysed first. In this inductive way of research, through systematic analysis, a researcher aims to create new elements of a theory, such as policy frames, ready to use in the further deductive research of a framing analysis. They create not only new frames, but also show and explain the elements on which these frames are based. After gaining information on how these frames were constructed and the ways they are used, a new theory might be generated.

In this thesis, I do not claim to create a new grounded theory, but I will use an inductive way of analysis inspired by this branch of research, in order to create policy frames applicable to the Dutch migration policy in the 5 years after the European migrant crisis (2015 to 2019), derived from Dutch governmental documents (specified in Appendix 1A – 5B). Inductively reconstructing policy frames contains a process of simultaneously collecting, coding and analysing the data. Creating a flowing process, in which new frames are created and confirmed by the data.

The layout on this papers analysis will thus follow the following lines; first, an inductive analysis of the hereafter following described documents will be performed in order to uncover the frames present in migration policy debates. By doing so, research question 1 will be answered. Secondly, a theoretic discussion will be held in order to determine whether the mechanisms behind changing frames in migration policy are found in these frames and in which ways these are then expressed by politicians in different areas of the political spectrum. By doing so, research question 2 and 2a will be answered.

3.2 Document selection

Before my coding process could start, I needed to decide which documents would be appropriate to use in my thesis research. Due to the limited length of this thesis, as well as time constraints, I decided to use two documents per year that I would research. I used the official website of the Dutch government, where all governmental legal documents and notes of governmental processes can be found: Overheid.nl. I used a selective search method, focusing on parliamentary documents (kamerstukken) containing topics of refugees, immigration and integration. I had a preference for reports of general debates (Verslag Algemeen Overleg), since there would be the largest amount of framing used by politicians, in order to persuade others of their standpoints and propositions.

Table 1 below shows the final selection of documents I hand-selected for this inductive policy framing analysis, collectively adding up to 340 pages. Furthermore, the complete documents will be added as hyperlinks in Appendix 1A to 5B.

Table 1.
Document selection

Year	Documents used
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Verslag van een algemeen overleg Vreemdelingenbeleid 26 november 2015- Regels met betrekking tot de terugkeer van vreemdelingen en vreemdelingenbewaring (Wet terugkeer en vreemdelingenbewaring) 23 december 2015
2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Verslag van een algemeen overleg Onderwijs aan vreemdelingen 18 mei 2016- Verslag van een algemeen overleg Vreemdelingenbeleid 20 juli 2016
2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Verslag van een algemeen overleg Vreemdelingenbeleid 7 September 2017- Verslag van een algemeen overleg JBZ-Raad 28 december 2017

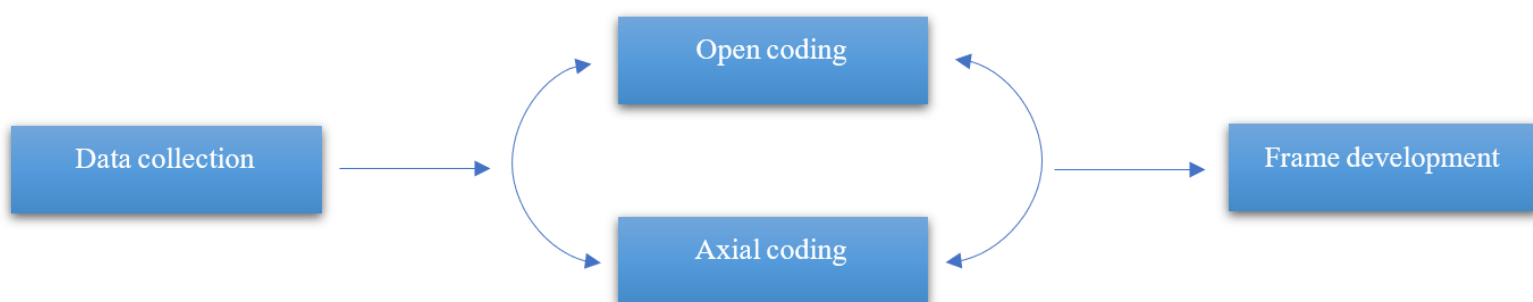
2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Verslag van een algemeen overleg EU-voorstellen: Migratievoorstellen 2018 COM 28 november 2018 - Debat Marrakeshimmigratiepact 4 december 2018
2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Verslag van een algemeen overleg Vreemdelingenbeleid 6 december 2019 - Verslag algemeen overleg Vreemdelingen- en asielbeleid 18 december 2019

3.3 The process of analysis

Before going into further detail of the steps I took during my inductive research, the next graph will give a more visual overview of the process:

Figure 3

Process of analysis



The open and axial coding described above is an ongoing process of re-evaluation and adaptation during the analysis of the documents used. New codes are constantly added and accordingly, the patterns they reveal in the process of axial coding can be changed or reinforced as well.

3.3.1 Open coding

The first step in my coding process was the step of *open coding*. In this process, the first step was to thoroughly read all documents to familiarize myself with the topics and tactics of framing present in the text, aiming to recognize the uses of framing described in the theory section of this thesis.

After this, I carefully read through the text again, opening them up by breaking them up into comparable statements, assigning codes to these framing aspects of the texts (focusing on elements such as choice of words, metaphors, stereotypes, examples and visualization of issues). I continuously added more codes, and evolved the existing ones into the most fitting codes possible for the text. This coding process was done in the computer program Atlas.ti, suitable for qualitative research. This program keeps track of the code created, to which texts they are assigned and more statistical matters, such as the frequency that they are used. During this process, I created 30 codes, which will be specified below in table 2. Their meaning and use will be further explained in the ‘analysis section’ of this paper.

Table 2

List of codes

Codes
Anti-immigration standpoint
Call for regulation of migration
Disobedience and nuisance of refugees/immigrants
Financial burden
Focus on integration and the future
International relations
Investing in countries of origin and countries of transfer
Issues regarding asylum policy and asylum centres
Issues regarding entrance to the country
Issues regarding family- and partner reunification
Issues regarding housing
Issues regarding human rights
Issues regarding the following of families
Issues regarding the increase in numbers of refugees/immigrants
Issues regarding the return policy
Justice for the Dutch society
Justice for the refugees/immigrants
Obedience of refugees/immigrants
Reception of refugees in their own region as a solution
Refugees/immigrants as the ‘bad guys’
Refugees/immigrants as the victims
Religious injustice
Rights of LGBTQ+ refugees/immigrants
Self-protection of the government
Support of and communication with Dutch society

Sympathy and pity
Terrorism
Threat to and protection of Dutch norms and values/culture
Threat to and protection of Dutch safety
Vulnerability

After the open coding, the next step in the process entails axial coding. By creating graphic and textual presentations, I will be able to recognize the dynamics in the framing performed by politicians in governmental debate, regarding refugee and immigration policies.

3.3.2 Axial coding

Axial coding is used to relate previously handled data together, in order to reveal certain patterns, and in this case; frames. So, after creating my 30 codes, I started axial coding in which I assigned these codes to core categories, which then eventually created overarching themes; in this case frames applicable when studying policy framing in Dutch immigration policy. In order to present my findings in the most comprehensible way, I portrayed them visually in the next section of this paper in figures 1 to 3.

4 Analysis

This analysis will be divided into different sections discussing both parts of my inductive research. Firstly I will discuss the inductive analysis performed, and specify the frames evolved from this analysis of government documents. These will then be used to answer the first part of my research focussed on the tangible increase of immigrants in Europe in 2015, and its effect on migration policy debate.

I will then discuss the meaning and use of these frames more in depth, in order to create a theoretical discussion of the mechanisms used in this framing. This will then be used to answer the second part of my research focussed on the attitudes of politicians and their framing process, and discuss possible different mechanisms found in these frames, not discussed in theory before.

4.1 Application of codes

In this analysis, I will further discuss the form and meaning of the frames, as well as discuss whether they are in line with the theoretical concepts discussed. To add to this understanding, the following table will explain when the codes created in Atlas.ti, as defined in the methods section above, were applied to the documents during the analysis and what their use portrays.

Table 2

Specification of open coding

Code	Applied when (...)
Anti-immigration standpoint	Applied when politicians were evidently against immigration and pro closing the borders.
Call for regulation of immigration	Applied when politicians emphasized the need to regulate the increase of immigration and its chaotic results
Disobedience and nuisance of refugees/immigrants	Applied when politicians discussed the criminal activities of refugees/immigrants and their nuisance in asylum centres
Financial burden	Applied when politicians discussed the financial cost of refugee and immigration policies
Focus on integration and the future	Applied when politicians emphasized the need for proper integration into Dutch society and its benefits for the future

International relations	Applied when politicians discussed international obligations and treaties
Investing in countries of origin and countries of transfer	Applied when politicians discussed the options to invest in countries of origin and reception in their own region, in order to prevent them coming to the Netherlands
Issues regarding asylum policy and asylum centres	Applied when politicians discussed the issues in our asylum system, and the issues surrounding too full or empty asylum centres
Issues regarding entrance to the country	Applied when politicians discussed the issues in entering the country such as screening and identification, and issues regarding our coastal borders
Issues regarding family- and partner reunification	Applied when politicians discussed the increase and amount of partners and children entering the country
Issues regarding housing	Applied when politicians discussed the issues in housing where refugees/immigrants have to wait extremely long for housing as well as the unjust divide of housing
Issues regarding human rights	Applied when politicians emphasized the violation of basic human rights such as dignity, medical care and shelter
Issues regarding the following of families	Applied when politicians discussed this special version of partner- and family reunification (nareisbeleid)
Issues regarding the increase in numbers of refugees/immigrants	Applied when politicians emphasized all the issues that came as consequences of the increase in refugees/immigrants since the crisis in 2015
Issues regarding the return policy	Applied when politicians discussed the issues regarding the return policy such as refugees/immigrants refusing to or being unable to return to their home country
Justice for the Dutch society	Applied when politicians called for a need for justice, such as criminal justice after refugees/immigrants broke the law
Justice for the refugees/immigrants	Applied when politicians called for a need for justice for the refugees/immigrants after they have e.g. been deported unjustly
Obedience of refugees/immigrants	Applied when politicians wished to emphasize that not all refugees/immigrants were fortune seekers
Reception of refugees in their own region as a solution	Applied when politicians discussed the possibilities to help the countries of origin supply better asylum, in order to prevent them coming to the Netherlands
Refugees/immigrants as the 'bad guys'	Applied when politicians tried to portray the refugees/immigrants as the bad guys; fortune seekers that come here for economic reasons

Refugees/immigrants as the victims	Applied when politicians tried to portray the refugees/immigrants as a victim of higher and uncontrollable powers and systems
Religious injustice	Applied when politicians discussed the religious injustice that occurred towards Christians and Muslims in several settings
Rights of LGBTQ+ refugees/immigrants	Applied when politicians emphasized the importance to pay special attention to LGBTQ+ refugees and their safety
Self-protection of the government	Applied when politicians defended their own and their government's actions
Support of and communication with Dutch society	Applied when politicians emphasized the need to inform the Dutch society well, in order to have them back up government agenda
Sympathy and pity	Applied when politicians used an emphasis on certain elements of immigration issues, such as the horrible conditions of refugee camps in order to create sympathy
Terrorism	Applied when politicians used terrorism as a scare tactic applicable to all refugees/immigrants
Threat to and protection of Dutch norms and values/culture	Applied when politicians discussed how other cultures and religions could threaten their own
Threat to and protection of Dutch safety	Applied when politicians discussed how the actions of disobedient refugees/immigrants could be a threat to Dutch people, e.g. the sexual assault of a Dutch girl by refugees in Almere
Vulnerability	Applied when politicians emphasized the helplessness of certain groups, such as children and the ill

4.2 Frequency of codes

This paper extensively discusses the European migrant crisis in 2015, specifically in the Netherlands, and the expected effects it has on immigration policy. As noted in the introduction of this paper, the independent factors of the research question are focussed on the increase of immigration and the attitudes towards these issues. This first factor can be discussed by determining the tangible statistics provided by my initial inductive analysis.

In the theoretic section of this thesis, the possible effects of crises, especially the effects it has on the public's attention and thus the agenda setting phase of policy making, is discussed. The importance of this topic seemed to earn the right to become visible on the public agenda

and eventually make its way onto the political agenda. This created a positive feedback, strong enough to make the European refugee crisis a topic influencing Dutch migration policy debates.

When studying the frequency statistics of the qualitative data, it becomes clear how this issue entered the Dutch political agenda quite often, and was used as a way of promoting policy standpoints in debates. The table on the frequency of the codes, shows statistics on how the high numbers of refugees arriving at the Dutch borders were used to emphasize the seriousness of the situation, and as a cry for a stop to immigration. When looking at the frequency table of the codes used in my research (generated in Atlas.ti), table 3 presented below, you can see the total frequency of the term used to describe ‘the issues around the increased refugee flow’ occurred 61 times in the researched data, whereas a term used to e.g. describe issues regarding the housing of refugees/immigrants was only a third of this (21 times).

This issue was also more pronounced surrounding the peak of the crisis in 2015 where in e.g. the documents of 2015 and 2016, issues regarding the increase of the number of refugees/immigrants were mentioned 35 times, whereas in 2019, it was only mentioned 12 times. Another code that shows this peak of the crisis was the one emphasizing the issues regarding human rights. The dangerous sea routes and barbaric circumstances in the make-shift refugee camps during the first year of the crisis caused this term to be used more often in the first three years (81 times), versus the last two years (28 times).

Furthermore, the use of certain standpoints not only varies with the ‘peak’ of the crisis as well as with the current political and public agenda. An example of this ‘trend related’ behaviour can be seen in the use of issues regarding the rights of LGBTQ+ refugees/immigrants. In the beginning of the crisis, there was no mention of this topic whatsoever, whereas in the last year researched, 2019, it was mentioned 20 times. Another example of this focus of politics lies in the dynamics of the urgency of the topics. When the crisis just occurred, much focus was on urgent issues that needed attention first, such as the focus on human rights, the call for sympathy and the vulnerability of the refugees. The media displayed the horrible circumstances people were forced to flee, think of the oppression of the Taliban and Boko Haram, as well as the circumstances of the immigration routes itself, evoking a feeling of solidarity (Sajir & Aouragh, 2019). But, when the crisis settled and immigration became more regular, there was more time to focus on policy and governance and the codes focussing on e.g. civic integration and border security policy are mentioned more often.

Table 3
Frequency table codes

	document 1 2015 Gr=122	document 1 2016 Gr=205	document 1 2017 Gr=87	document 1 2018 Gr=47	document 1 2019 Gr=149	document 2 2015 Gr=187	document 2 2016 Gr=94	document 2 2017 Gr=35	document 2 2018 Gr=110	document 2 2019 Gr=45	Totals
○ Anti-immigration standpoint Gr=26	0	5	5	5	4	0	2	0	4	1	26
○ Call for regulation of migration Gr=24	0	2	5	4	4	0	3	0	5	1	24
○ Disobedience and nuisance of refugees/migrants Gr=79	7	17	1	2	15	19	0	0	13	5	79
○ Financial burden Gr=60	1	7	7	3	10	10	19	0	3	0	60
○ Focus on integration and the future Gr=54	0	13	3	1	4	14	16	1	1	1	54
○ International relations Gr=118	10	18	20	9	20	15	4	0	19	3	118
○ Investing in countries of origin and countries of transfer Gr=26	0	5	12	0	5	0	1	0	3	0	26
○ Issues regarding asylum policy and asylum centres Gr=120	18	19	0	1	28	24	8	10	8	4	120
○ Issues regarding entrance to the country Gr=62	3	11	4	2	20	9	1	0	11	1	62
○ Issues regarding family- and partner reunification Gr=13	0	1	0	1	0	8	3	0	0	0	13
○ Issues regarding housing Gr=21	0	11	0	0	0	4	6	0	0	0	21
○ Issues regarding human rights Gr=109	37	12	12	1	9	11	5	4	14	4	109
○ Issues regarding the following of families Gr=7	0	1	0	0	0	5	1	0	0	0	7

○ Issues regarding the increase in numbers of refugees/migrants Gr=61	0	9	5	5	7	16	10	2	2	5	61
○ Issues regarding the return policy Gr=72	18	12	4	1	13	5	0	1	15	3	72
○ Justice for the Dutch society Gr=29	0	4	2	2	4	14	0	0	1	2	29
○ Justice for the refugees/migrants Gr=74	45	4	3	0	4	6	2	4	4	2	74
○ Obedience of refugees/migrants Gr=5	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	5
○ Reception of refugees in their own region as a solution Gr=11	0	1	0	3	1	2	2	0	2	0	11
○ Refugees/migrants as the 'bad guys' Gr=13	0	1	0	6	2	0	0	0	2	2	13
○ Refugees/migrants as the victims Gr=62	5	13	7	2	7	6	8	8	3	3	62
○ Religious injustice Gr=32	0	10	0	2	6	7	0	0	0	7	32
○ Rights of LGBTQ+ refugees/migrants Gr=27	0	7	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	10	27
○ Self-protection of the government Gr=20	3	1	1	1	0	9	0	5	0	0	20
○ Support of and communication with Dutch society Gr=12	0	2	0	0	3	7	0	0	0	0	12
○ Sympathy and pity Gr=84	13	15	15	1	16	4	7	5	5	3	84
○ Terrorism Gr=11	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	11
○ Threat to and protection of Dutch norms and values/culture Gr=38	0	7	0	5	1	12	7	0	6	0	38
○ Threat to and protection of	3	12	2	3	3	13	1	0	7	0	44

Dutch safety Gr=44											
○ Vulnerability Gr=106	17	22	6	1	15	17	9	4	6	9	106
Totals	182	253	114	61	212	237	115	44	136	66	1420

After discussing these statistics, this paper will now visualize the policy frames created by use of these codes and their application. This led to the creation of three frames, specified in figures 4, 5 and 6 below. After this visualization, I will extensively explain and discuss these frames in the next part of this analysis section.

Figure 4

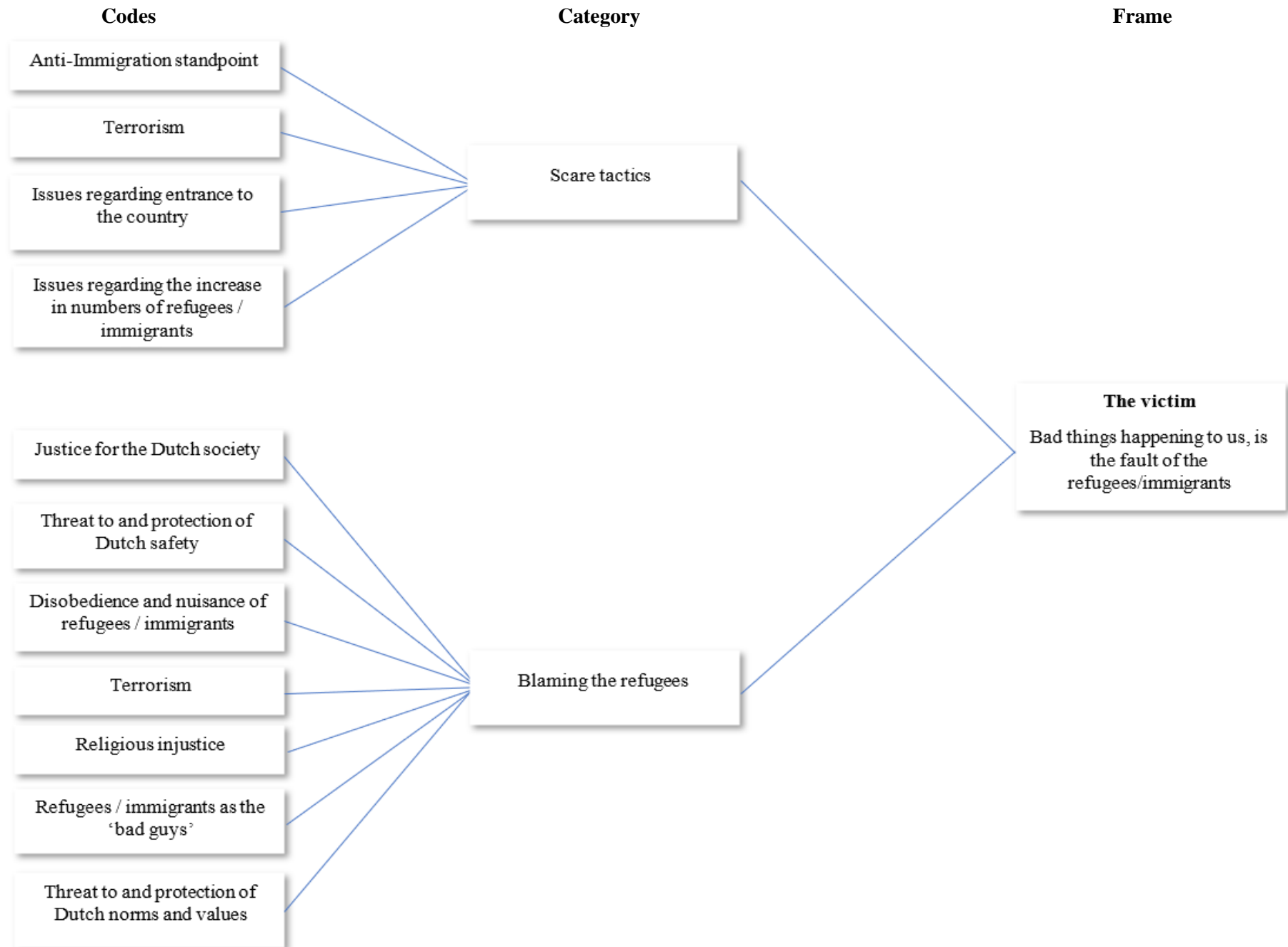


Figure 5

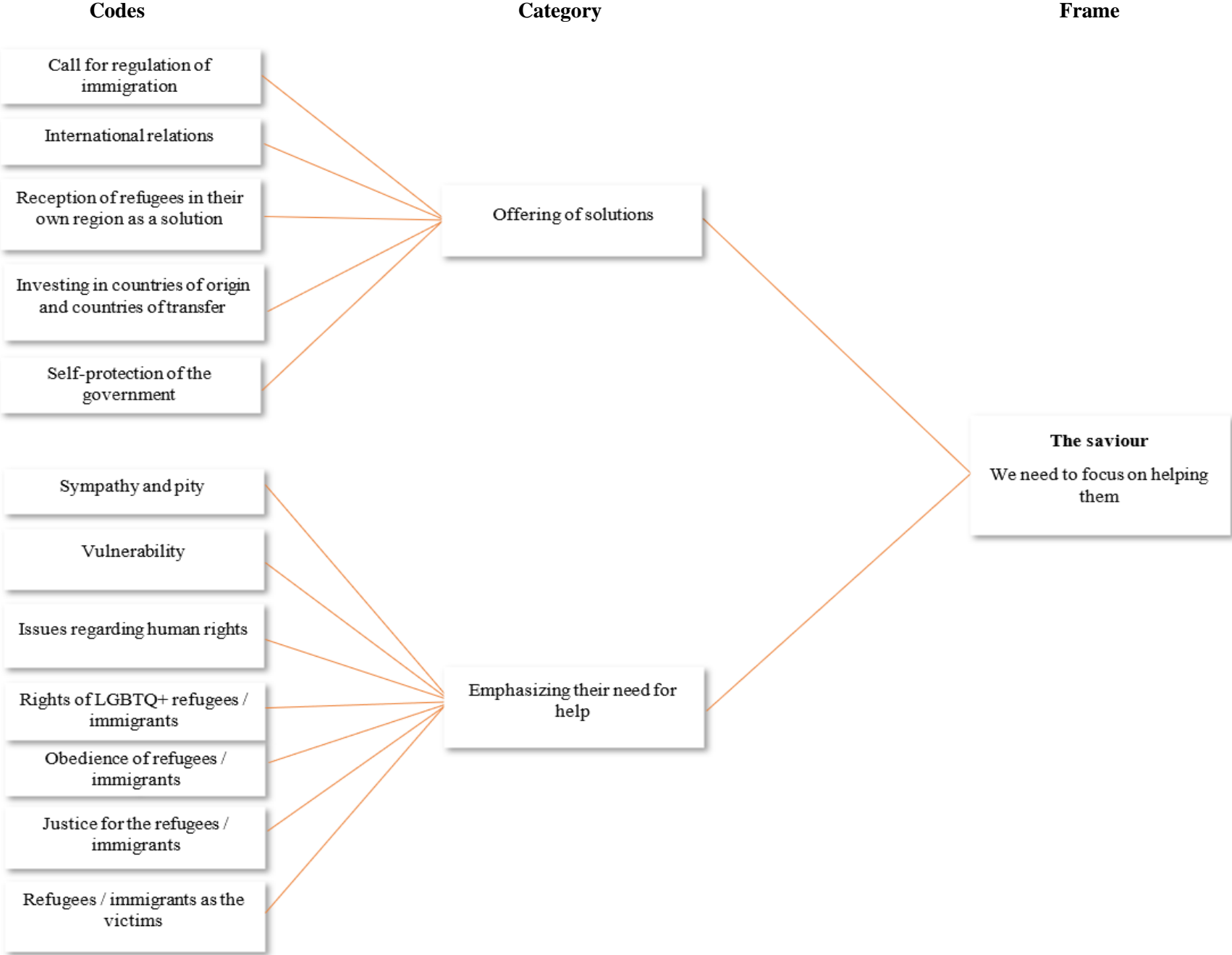
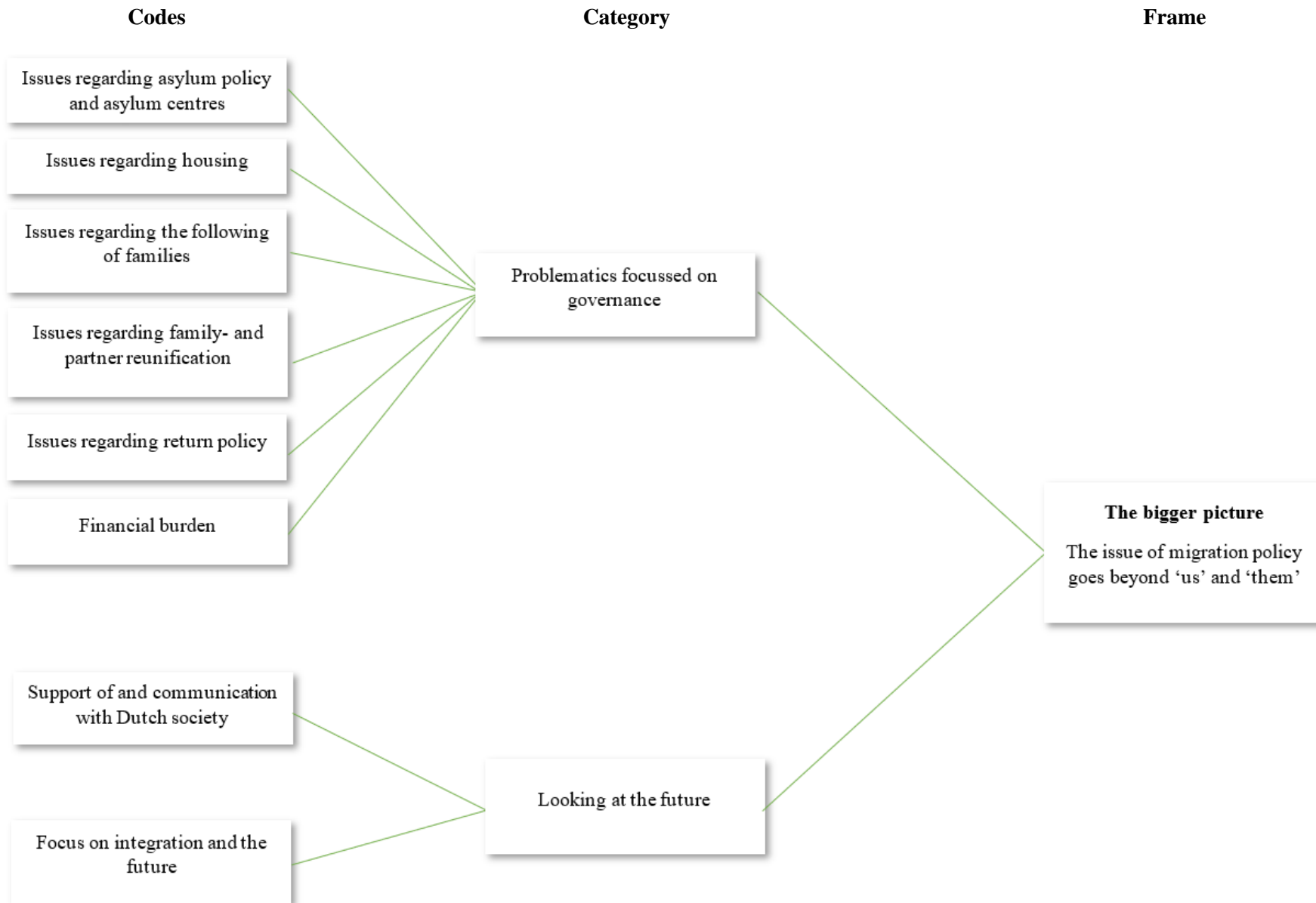


Figure 6



4.3 The frames further explained

As noted in the introduction of this paper, the independent factors of the research question are focussed on the increase of immigration and the attitudes towards these issues. In the theoretic section of this thesis, the importance of frames and the meaning they add to policy debates is discussed. The way the frames, displayed above, are specified and used in these general debates on migration policy in order to add meaning to the politicians statements will now be discussed. Emphasizing that second independent factor of my research question focussed on the attitudes towards the migration crises issues.

Figure 1 shows the framework from the most negatively used frame; negative in the sense that negative character traits are being projected onto immigrants. Politicians used terms such as ‘terrorism’ and ‘threat’, in order to create a picture in which the refugees/immigrants are the bad guys. These verbal tactics, using negative language in order to portray the topic as threatening (de Bruijn, 2019) shows the influence politicians try to have on the way it is framed in e.g. the media.

In the documents used for this analysis, it showed how parties that reside on the (far) right part of Dutch politics, such as the VVD (People’s party for Freedom and Democracy) FvD (Forum for Democracy) and PVV (Party for Freedom), are the ones contributing to the debates by speaking in terms of this frame. Such standpoints were expressed in quotes such as the; De Graaf from the PVV stating in 2016 how the asylum procedure is one big mess and *“Terrorists, war criminals and imposters have free entrance into the Netherlands”* (p.4). In 2018, Baudet of the FvD stated how The Dutch government was not protecting its citizens in discussions with the EU; *“(…) In The Hague they are not standing up for our own values, our culture, our way of life and our freedoms”* (p.31-48-1) and in 2019, Becker of the VVD emphasized how old-fashioned the asylum system is, which creates the opportunity for fortune seeking refugees to enter the country and how *“The police in Amsterdam and Ter Apel have their hands full with criminal refugees who come from safe countries”* (p.14).

The negative traits of refugees/immigrants, such as the nuisance they create in the rural villages where their asylum centre is, and the lack of Dutch norms and values are combined with the fear of terrorism and Islamic traditions, in order to create a frame where the Dutch society is the victim of the crimes of the refugees/immigrants that they impose on our society.

And so, the first frame I propose to be used when studying Dutch immigration policy framing, is thus the ‘victim frame’, in which Dutch citizens suffer under the presence of refugees/immigrants and their needs.

Figure 2 shows the framework from the opposite frame of the one described in figure 1. Here, the softer approach of verbal tactics (de Bruijn, 2019) is portrayed as politicians use terms such as ‘vulnerability’ and ‘lack of human rights’, in order to create a picture in which the refugees/immigrants come across as fragile beings that need our help in order to survive and have a future. In the documents used for this analysis, it showed how parties that reside on the left and left progressive part of Dutch politics, such as the SP (Socialist Party) and D66 (Democrats 66) are the ones contributing to the debates by speaking in terms of this frame. Such standpoints were expressed when e.g. discussing the imprisonment and deprivation of liberty of refugees/immigrants in 2015, when the SP emphasized how the system is inappropriate and how e.g. *‘(...) psychiatric patients who needs extra help when being unmanageable are being locked up in isolation, bringing major issues with it’* (p.10), and in 2018, Groothuizen from D66 shone a light on the distressing situation on the Greek islands full of refugee camps, and especially how we could resolve and prevent such circumstances. The emphasis here lies on the victimhood of the refugees/immigrants and the ways in which we can take their pain away, combining factors that can have effect here in the Netherlands or in their country of origin.

Therefore, the second frame I propose to be used when studying Dutch immigration policy framing, is the ‘saviour frame’, in which the Dutch government acts as the saviour of refugees/immigrants offering them a safe haven and a future.

Figure 3 shows a more neutral framework, which describes a frame mainly focused on governance, policy and bureaucracy. Politicians spend a lot of time and attention on issues regarding all kinds of specifics of immigration policy, such as housing and family reunification. By doing so, they create a frame in which the emphasis lies on the bigger picture and goes beyond the, either good or bad, traits and circumstances of individuals.

In the reports of the general debates, this can be seen in the emphasis politicians put on general policy features and adjustments yielding big results, such as in 2015, when Fritsma from the PVV asked the secretary of state to adjust the family reunification policy slightly in such a way that unmarried partners are no longer eligible for the possibility to join their partner, because otherwise the *‘[i]nvasion of partners and families that are following will keep on existing’* (p.4). Furthermore, this can be seen in the way politicians speak of the future and the

'bigger picture', when e.g. discussing the possibility for financing the education of refugee children in 2016 Ypma of the PvdA (Dutch Labour Party) asked how "*(...) integration instead of segregation should be the starting point for good policy*" (p.33).

The third frame I propose to be used when studying Dutch immigration policy framing, is the 'bigger picture frame', in which the emphasis lies on governance systems and bureaucratic needs instead of on individuals and individual opinions.

4.4 Use of frames by politicians

This crisis, and the circumstances that were a consequence of this crisis, were used, and sometimes exploited, by politicians. In this case, they were the type of policy entrepreneurs described in the theory of punctuated equilibrium, exploiting negative or positive frames and its effects in order to try and influence policy change. They created a certain type of attention to specific issues that supported their ideas. The left and right wing parties took issue ownership over the sides of immigration that suited them, as described in the theory on policy making, and used the topic of refugees/immigration as a selling point of their party rhetoric. By doing so, they took ownership of the issues they have the most credibility and experience over, since their party standpoints are historically opposing when it comes to immigration (Akbaba, 2018; Molen Kuipers, 2016).

It was either a way for left wing and Christian parties to emphasize the vulnerability and lack of human rights of refugees/immigrants, in order to promote the 'saviour' framework, where we as a Western country are responsible for their safety and dignity. Or, it was used by right wing and conservative parties as a way to emphasize the danger refugees/immigrants imposed on our safety and our culture, as a way to promote the 'victim' framework where Dutch citizens are suffering under their presence. This is emphasized in the frequency of codes as seen in table 3 as well, where you can see codes, such as 'vulnerability' and 'sympathy', or the opposite 'criminality' and 'threat' are used around 80 to 100 times. This frequency is high, compared to statements that would evoke less emotions, such as the code that described in what way the government would need the support of the Dutch, and communicate well with the Dutch society (mentioned only 12 times in total).

As discussed before, after the crisis of 2015, the Dutch government displayed an integral approach when it came to immigration policy, wanting to focus on a broad integrated approach containing of six pillars of interest. When looking at what immigration policy the Netherlands tries to uphold and what they actually portray in their e.g. general debates, there is a certain overlap. The Dutch immigration policy was focused on those six pillars: 1) the prevention of irregular immigration, 2) fortifying the reception of refugees in their own region, 3) solidarity and a solid asylum system within Europe, 4) less illegal immigrants, more return to their own country, 5) promotion of legal immigration routes and 6) stimulation of integration and participation.

When looking at these pillars and the three policy frames proposed in the research of this paper, you can see this policy goes beyond the first two frames. In the third frame, there is less emphasis on individual circumstances and emotional ways to the heart. This policy focuses on the bigger picture, putting attention mainly on specific governance of immigration. Looking at the sub branches of immigration policy such as housing, border security, integration approaches, family reunification and return policies. When it comes to these codes and the way they are used by politicians there is less speak of ‘negative’ and ‘positive’ sides of immigration, but more a look at how to approach the situation governmentally.

4.5 Beyond discussed theory

The frames developed after the inductive research approach are mostly in line with existing theory, and the mechanisms such as issue ownership and the power of crises in agenda setting are displayed.

However, the axial coding process and creation of the frames brought a topic to my attention that has received less consideration in existing theory. When researching theory based on an international approach to immigration policy in the Netherlands, there is little theoretic attention to such an approach besides standard governmental documents on the approach the EU wishes to see and theories on e.g. international approached on human trafficking.

Politicians often speak of immigration as a national or domestic issue and how to protect the Dutch society from this. Theory also focusses on this standpoint and discusses the ways in which an international crisis has national effects and how politicians use this attention to create new national policy debates. Yet, whilst analysing the documents, three codes were created emphasizing topics and standpoints that had to do with a more international view on immigration. These three codes are; 1) international relations, applied when politicians

discussed international obligations and treaties, 2) investing in countries of origin and countries of transfer, applied when politicians discussed the options to invest in countries of origin and reception in their own region, in order to prevent them coming to the Netherlands and 3) reception of refugees in their own region as a solution applied when politicians discussed the possibilities to help the countries of origin supply better asylum. When looking at the frequency table these codes were discussed 155 times (resp. 118, 26, 11)., with the code ‘international relations’ being discussed by far the most out of these internationally oriented topics.

Further theory could be generated on this topic and in which ways politicians use it in order to persuade others of their standpoint. In the documents researched in this thesis, it became visible how this topic was used in a certain way; as ‘leverage’. This could be interpreted in many ways so I will discuss what I mean by this using quotes and data from the coding process of my inductive analysis research.

Politicians often use the focus on international relations as a way to emphasize something else they want. Thinks of statements claiming that before we should speak of and create new international agreements we should focus on our own policy or statements that emphasize the need for international policy in order to achieve successful national policy. When speaking of a proposed stop to offering asylum by the VVD, in the first documents of 2016 Gesthuizen from the SP emphasizes how *“If we wish to make new agreements with other countries we should at least adhere to our own agreements first. To this day, the promised 9.400 refugees are still not transferred to the Netherlands and taken in (...)”* (p.7). And, in response to Baudet of Fvd claiming that no illegal person should ever be able to ask for asylum in the Netherlands, van Ojik of GL (the Green Left) states how; *(...) those people will still arrive at our borders. If he wants this to be prevented, he should have to succumb to international agreements on how to prevent this”* (p. 31-45-5).

This focus on international relations is also negatively used by right-wing politicians who have a known preference for national autonomy, Wilders from the PVV having said to want to leave the EU as well as Baudet from FvD stating to be pro-Nexit (Akkerman, 2019; Brandhorst, 2016). This can be seen in statements such as that of Fritsma (PVV) in 2017; *“ (...) why the cabinet is accepting extra immigrants from Italy, on top of the immigrants already forced upon us by the EU. The cabinet obviously wishes to be the best kid in the EU-class, but the Dutch citizen pays a much too high price for this, and thus the PVV will keep calling for a stop to that ‘open door’ policy”* (p.2). As well as, in 2019, van Dijk of the PVV states how; *I have heard*

no propositions to remove refugees and criminals and such from the country. Doesn't the VVD think its time to quit all those treaties, all those rules and all those laws that prohibit us from this? (p. 18).

More research on this topic and the way politicians use it to their advantage could lead to a fourth, more internationally formulated frame, and could spark new theoretical discussion of the workings of such mechanisms and the effect they have on debates on immigration policy.

5 Conclusion and discussion

With this thesis I aimed to identify how immigration has increased in Europe since 2015, as well as the attitudes towards immigration that came with it. I tried to do so by answering the questions of 1) which frames were present in the debates on migration policy in Dutch government and 2) through which mechanisms such frames were presented and in which way.

To answer the first question I performed an inductive frame analysis on the governmental documents on migration policy. By doing so, I unveiled three frames politicians used to portray their standpoints when it came to immigration policy: 1) the victim frame, in which Dutch citizens suffer under the burdens and threats by accepting more refugees and immigrants, 2) the saviour frame, in which the Dutch governments portrays itself as the saviour of refugees and immigrants, and offers them what they need, and 3) the bigger picture frame, in which politicians highlight the policy elements needed, in order to focus on integration and the future, which goes beyond individualistic traits.

To answer the second research question, this thesis included a theoretic discussion of the mechanisms found in the frames created. The mechanisms discussed in the theoretic section of this thesis that were unveiled by the inductive theoretic discussion in the analysis were; politicians using their position as policy entrepreneur in order to use positive feedback to influence change in immigration policy. As well as the issue ownership politicians took over certain aspects of the immigration policy and issues surrounding this policy, exploiting frames that fit their standpoint. Which leads to the differences in standpoints and backgrounds of these politicians shining through, by the use of verbal tactics such as emphasizing negative/positive traits of refugees and immigrants, speaking in terms of the negative/positive frames they created through their tactics and thus creating a sphere of threat or sympathy in order to influence immigration policy.

In conclusion, the three frames created from this inductive framing research are in line with theoretical expectations of the Dutch immigration policy. They can be applied to qualitative policy data on immigration, and hopefully offer insight into the framing processes used by politicians in governmental immigration policy.

However, this inductive way of research could present shortcomings. If it were not for a time limitation, I would have liked to study more data, more texts, to come to frameworks that were more thoroughly supported by data. As this way of research is limited, conclusions drawn from this type of research can never be ‘proven’. It is rather a way of validating certain theoretical standpoints, using extensive analysis of the data. A deductive approach could have been more strongly tested, hypotheses could have been confirmed or not, which provides more sturdiness in answers. The advantage of this type of research, however, is that my inductive approach opens the way to deductive research. Now these frames are known, further research into the presence of these frames in different types of documents, different countries or future times could be conducted.

Furthermore, the current global health pandemic caused by the COVID-19 virus has a great impact on immigration. Borders are closed, there is a shift in attention to this topic, and a lot of other processes come to a halt. An interesting approach for future research would be to study the effects this new focusing event has on immigration processes and the attitudes towards immigration.

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Appendix 1A



document 1 2015.pdf

Appendix 1B



document 2 2015.pdf

Appendix 2A



document 1 2016.pdf

Appendix 2B



document 2 2016.pdf

Appendix 3A



document 1 2017.pdf

Appendix 3B



document 2 2017.pdf

Appendix 4A



document 1 2018.pdf

Appendix 4B



document 2 2018.pdf

Appendix 5A



document 1 2019.pdf

Appendix 5B



document 2 2019.pdf