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Examining EU Influence on Divergent Dutch Integration Policies for Ukrainian Refugees: Uncovering Political Motivations of Dutch MPs and Government

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**Examining EU Influence on Divergent Dutch Integration
Policies for Ukrainian Refugees: Uncovering Political
Motivations of Dutch MPs and Government**

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List of Abbreviations

COA	Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers
ECHR	European Convention on Human Rights
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
MPs	Members of Parliament
TPD	Temporary Protection Directive
TWV	Work Permit
QCA	Qualitative Content Analysis

1. Introduction

Why are some refugees subject to different refugee integration policies than others when seeking refuge? Despite their shared circumstances, the Netherlands has implemented distinct integration policies for Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian refugees (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2023). Ukrainian refugees are different from other refugees because they fall under the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD), which was orchestrated by the European Union (EU) to accommodate large numbers of refugees (European Commission, n.d.-a). For example, the EU plays an important role in providing a legal framework for the reception and treatment of asylum seekers and refugees, and in supporting integration policies and actions by national governments (Servent & Zaun, 2020). This study attempts to uncover the underlying causes of the policy differences between Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian refugees by scrutinizing the role of the EU. In particular, how did the EU influence the political motivation of Dutch Members of Parliament (MPs) and the government responsible for divergent refugee integration policies, especially for Ukrainian refugees? Herein, the government refers to Dutch ministers and state secretaries.

As a result of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, more than one hundred thousand Ukrainian refugees are registered in Dutch municipalities as of September 2023 (Ministry of General Affairs, 2023). This most recent invasion of Ukrainian territory by Russia prompted the EU to adopt the TPD (Council of the European Union, 2001). This directive ensures Ukrainian refugees' entitlement to asylum, medical care, employment, and education (Ministry of Justice and Security, 2022). It represents a divergence from multiple Dutch laws that provide the legal framework for non-Ukrainian refugee groups within the Netherlands. As a consequence, Ukrainian refugees are subject to rights and obligations that differ from those of other refugees, notably regarding their right to work and place of residence.

The different legal frameworks have implications for the integration of these two refugee groups, for example, concerning their economic integration. As such, there are different employment rates between Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian refugees in the Netherlands. For example, Ukrainians in the Netherlands had an employment rate of 46% in November 2022, while Syrian refugees, who are a large refugee group in the Netherlands, did not reach an employment rate of 26% until 2023 (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2023). This divergence can be explained, at least partly, by the policies granting immediate work rights to Ukrainians, while Syrians are mandated to undergo an integration period before gaining access to certain employment domains (Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, 2020).

The Dutch State Secretary responsible for refugee integration policies since 2022, Eric van der Burg, argues the differences in policy are due to European policy, mainly the TPD, on refugee integration (Van Der Burg & Commission on Immigration & Asylum, 2023). Therefore, one might ask in what way the EU influenced the political motivations of the Dutch MPs and the Dutch government responsible for the divergence in refugee policies. Leading from this, the objective of this thesis is to explain and understand the influence exerted by the EU on the political motivations of Dutch MPs and the Dutch government, ultimately resulting in the formulation of divergent integration policies for Ukrainian refugees in the Netherlands. Therefore, the following research question is formulated as such: *How did the European Union influence the different political motivations of Dutch MPs and government, leading to divergent integration policies for Ukrainian refugees in the Netherlands?* As stated before, the government refers to Dutch ministers and state secretaries.

The analysis of this research question is relevant from both a societal and an academic perspective. On one hand, from a societal perspective, EU policy on integration issues has put pressure on EU member states to comply with EU rules, potentially undermining their ability to pursue policies they support (Zhelyazkova, 2022). However, research suggests that member states still have the freedom to tailor supranational policies to national contexts, and differentiated integration may increase the autonomy of governments to pursue restrictive policy preferences (Nagtzaam & Louwerse, 2022). Meanwhile, the EU asserts more and more influence on national policies, which leads to an increasing concern among citizens of EU member states about the influence of the EU (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2021). Overall, this research question is important because it helps to understand how EU policies and national political motivations interact to shape integration policies in the Netherlands.

From an academic perspective, there is still a scarcity of studies that examine how the EU can explain the different trajectories of refugee integration policies influenced by the political motivations of EU member states' MPs and governments. This thesis focuses on the Dutch context since integration differences among refugee groups are prevalent. Conducting an analysis based on relevant literature and theoretical frameworks is crucial for understanding the determinants behind policymaking in this area. This research seeks to make a contribution to academic dialogues in different disciplines, such as migration studies, public policy, and comparative policy analysis, by providing nuanced insights into the complex landscape of refugee integration within the Dutch context.

Having touched on the social and academic significance of refugee integration, key terminologies will now be clarified, and the temporal scope will be outlined for a more

precise understanding of the research focus. The study will refer to asylum seekers, refugees, and displaced persons. In the case of asylum seekers, this term is understood as follows: An asylum seeker is someone whose request for asylum has yet to be processed (UNHCR, n.d.-a). A refugee is a person who has fled their country to escape conflict, violence, or persecution and has sought safety in another country (UNHCR, n.d.-b). A displaced person is defined as third-country nationals or stateless persons who have had to leave their country or region of origin or have been evacuated (Council of the European Union, 2001). Mainly, the term refugee will be used, but in some cases, also because of the language used by government agencies, this will sometimes be deviated from. Regarding the temporal scope, most of the analyzed documents span from 1999 to the present. This time frame is chosen due to the significance of the Aliens Act 2000 (2000) and the TPD (Council of the European Union, 2001), both of which are pivotal in this study and were enacted in 2000 and 2001, respectively.

As we delve into the subsequent chapters of this research, chapter 2 starts with an overview of earlier literature regarding advanced Western democracies, the EU, and its relation to refugee integration policies. Chapter 3 will discuss the theoretical framework and how the chosen theories will help to explain the research question. Moreover, in this chapter, the hypotheses are stated. Chapter 4 will talk about the methodology and research design used for analyzing the governmental documents. Chapter 5 will discuss the analysis, where the evidence is linked to the hypotheses, and see whether these passages extracted from the documents provide a clear answer. At last, Chapter 6 will contain the conclusion, limitations of the study, and its academic and societal contribution.

2. Literature Review

This literature review first examines the meaning of integration policies for refugees. It then looks in more detail at differences in advanced Western democracies to understand the different mechanisms that explain variations in integration policies and how they design and implement integration policies. The EU's influence on refugee integration policies and the resulting motivations of member states, debates, and gaps are then discussed. This literature review helps to contextualize the factors that influence refugee integration policies in the Netherlands. Since the Netherlands is an advanced Western democracy and a member of the EU, covering similar countries can help identify debates and gaps. Thus, this literature review can help analyze the different integration policies for Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian refugees in the Netherlands and help examine the role of the EU in the political motivations of Dutch MPs and government.

2.1 Refugee Integration Policies in Advanced Western Democracies

Since the turn of the 20th century, social scientists, as noted by Valenta and Bunar (2010), have conceived and developed concepts, theories, and empirical discoveries that have influenced contemporary refugee integration policies in advanced Western democracies. The conceptualization of integration processes in the literature, according to Valenta and Bunar (2010), frequently includes criteria that are used to evaluate and assess the degree of integration that individuals and groups have attained within the systems of society. One of the earliest examples can be found in Durkheim's (1935) classic sociological position, which addresses, among other things, the maintenance of a functioning society, especially after social transformation. The first articles dealing primarily with integration as a general concept were a series of refugee and migration studies that provided a theoretical impetus to the concept of integration (Park, 1928; Portes & Zhou, 1993). Scholars frequently categorize integration into four categories: social, cultural, residential, and economic integration of immigrants and refugees (Valenta & Bunar, 2010). According to Portes and Zhou (1993), one of the migrant integration subprocesses is dependent on the reception context or the host government's immigration policy, which can range from harsh and unsupportive to kind and extremely supportive. According to Korać (2001), government policies concerning refugees, including those pertaining to reception and settlement, integration, and welfare support, play a crucial role in shaping refugee integration. In doing so, countries may have explicit policies regarding the rights of refugees and asylum seekers that restrict their employment or allow them access to social services, housing, and education, as noted by Bloch & Schuster (2002).

It further seems that advanced Western democracies, such as EU member states, implement international refugee rights guidelines in different ways. According to Ferris (2020), one of the foundations is that although refugees undergo various selection processes, they are entitled to the same rights, obligations, and benefits under international law. Ferris (2020) claims that there are differences in the degree of state support for integration, even in spite of the rules established by international treaties. As such, the governments of most European nations determine where applicants for asylum would reside during the asylum procedure and, in certain situations, where they will initially live in the event that their claim is granted. In addition, Ferris (2020) states that while asylum applicants wait for decisions regarding their refugee status, governments may also provide language instruction.

Historical, political, and socioeconomic factors also seem to influence the shaping of refugee integration policies among EU member states. These contexts encompass the political discourse, historical background, and policy decisions of respective nations. A study by Ferris (2020) on policies for integrating refugees in advanced Western democracies, specifically among EU member states, revealed notable differences among these nations, mirroring their diverse historical backgrounds and policy choices. In addition, Koenemund (2016) studied one specific factor, namely the relationship between the openness of immigration policies and the ideological stance of political parties in national parliaments, demonstrating the complexity of the political party spectrum in influencing refugee integration policies. According to Koenemund (2016), macroeconomic and sociodemographic factors, including robust economic growth and elevated levels of refugees and migrants, drive the adoption of more liberal integration policies. Additionally, these factors alter the traditional ideological and social cleavage alignment of political parties across the political spectrum. Furthermore, Koenemund (2016) states, the share of far-right parties in parliament, on the other hand, appears to be an appropriate determinant of less favorable attitudes towards refugees. Abbas (2020) asserts that the growth of right-wing parties and the refugee crisis have led EU states such as Denmark and Sweden to push for stronger integration measures and harsher immigration rules. Policies pertaining to refugee integration have also been impacted by the historicization of national identity in Western European discourse. For instance, the Netherlands has seen a resurgence of interest in traditional national legacies and customs, as highlighted by Duyvendak (2020). This has influenced criticism among native majority members in the Netherlands about immigration and cultural diversity (Duyvendak, 2020). To conclude, the relationship between a country and its citizens is influenced by its migration policies.

2.2 Differences in Refugee Integration Policies among Advanced Western Democracies

As discussed briefly in the previous section, advanced Western democracies differ in their policies and approaches to refugee integration. This section discusses some of the differences between these advanced Western democracies and those within the EU. A number of European countries are covered when comparing refugee integration policies. Additionally, more general observations of integration policies in European democracies are highlighted. By looking at the policies of EU member states, it becomes possible to determine the extent to which EU directives influence the formation of refugee integration policies. In other words, it becomes possible to see how EU membership affects the development and implementation of their policies.

Three distinctly different approaches emerge in the literature that affect refugee integration policies. These include a centralized versus decentralized character, a market-based versus non-market-based approach, and ad hoc versus comprehensive policies. Firstly, the degree of centralization will be discussed. It appears that various factors influencing refugee integration policies are all the more apparent when party ideologies and sociodemographic factors are also considered. As such, Sacramento et al. (2019) conducted a comparative analysis of existing refugee policies in Portugal and Finland, both EU member states at the border of the EU. Sacramento et al. (2019) find a major difference, possibly influencing the degree of organization, which is that Finland provides an articulated framework at the national level, which is executed by governmental actors, while Portugal focuses on local, municipal, governmental, and non-governmental authorities. In other words, Finland is more centralized, while Portugal has a more decentralized character. Secondly, another example, according to Ravn et al. (2022), of different approaches to refugee integration policy concerns market based approaches versus non-market based approaches. For example, in the Netherlands, there is a market-based approach in terms of integration opportunities; this means that, among others, language courses are outsourced to private actors. Contrary to this, Germany does not let the market deal with the integration of refugees (Ravn et al., 2022). Furthermore, according to Ravn et al. (2022), national labor integration programs and policies vary depending on whether they emphasize supply side, demand-side, or matching, with supply side policies being the most prevalent worldwide. Lastly, regarding refugee integration, European nations generally combine comprehensive and ad-hoc approaches. According to Ferris (2020), certain nations, such as the Netherlands, Hungary, and Greece, have more ad hoc approaches, whereas the Czech Republic, Italy, and Sweden have comprehensive policies that have extensive coverage across a wide range of events or

risks. In other words, these countries score higher on some policy indicators than other countries, which researchers attribute to the lack of a comprehensive approach to integration (Ferris, 2020). Thus, the strategy and framework for refugee integration policy differ across advanced Western democracies. It is clear that there are differences in the level of centralization, market-basedness, and comprehensiveness of the policies. Therefore, although these countries act on the same guidelines of various international treaties, they have different ways of implementing and facilitating opportunities for integration in the host country.

Furthermore, the literature reveals differences in policy effectiveness and their consequences. As such, there are significant policy disparities among EU member states in a number of areas when it comes to refugee integration. Asderaki and Markozani (2022) note that nations like the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Denmark have attained diverse policy disparities when it comes to asylum measures through the adoption of opt-ins, opt-outs, and opt-back-ins within the framework of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). Furthermore, disparities have been noted in integration categories such as housing, residency permits, and language programs (Asderaki & Markozani, 2022). In addition, according to Feinstein et al. (2022), finding housing is more difficult in Germany, accessing language programs is more difficult in France, and residence permits restrict the rights of refugees in Switzerland more than in other nations. Furthermore, when looking at different aspects of refugee integration policy, Ferris (2020) asserts that in advanced Western democracies, policies to promote access to healthcare and education are generally successful when it comes to integration, while housing and vocational training are less so. The degree of restrictiveness of refugee policies between EU member states and the difference in them results in refugees leaving for a second time within the EU to another EU country with less restrictive policies, as highlighted by Rossi & Vitali (2021). Puspoayu (2022) adds to the literature, by saying these disparities in policy have impacted refugees, resulting in attitudes toward immigrants, border surveillance, and refugee rejection based on religion.

Based on the previous paragraph, it is useful to discuss EU member states, as they are advanced Western democracies with different motivations for adopting refugee integration policies. One motivation, as outlined by Asderaki and Markozani (2022), is linked to achieving domestic objectives; certain EU nations have implemented restrictive policies aimed at preventing immigration and diverting refugees to other nations. According to D'Appollonia (2019), differential integration in immigration policy is seen as a legitimate means to combat fragmentation at the EU level. According to Malang & Schraff (2023), the selective exemption or exclusion of member states from EU policies and regulations is

referred to as "differentiated integration" within the EU. Furthermore, according to Rossi & Vitali (2021), these regulations may have an impact on refugees' well-being and standard of living, as well as their decisions to go abroad. At least partly as a result, the European Asylum Policy lacks coherence and consistency because of this latitude in enforcing EU regulations, as highlighted by Schimmelfennig and Winzen (2022). Furthermore, sustained differentiation in this policy domain resulted from integration crises such as the migration crisis, which, according to D'Appollonia (2019), did not cause major adjustments to the asylum system. Vélez & Pachocka (2020), on the other hand, assert that various EU member states participate in differential integration to varying degrees because of the intricate and multifaceted structure of the EU migration policy. Generally, a combination of national interests, differentiated integration within the EU, and the complexity of the migration policy framework serve as motivations for the adoption of various refugee integration programs.

2.3 European Union and Refugee Integration Policies

This section focuses on the influence of the EU on the refugee integration policies of its member states. It will further discuss the motivations of EU member states influenced by EU refugee integration policies, but first this section will look at different EU instruments that influence EU member states' refugee integration policies. These instruments differ in the degree of how "binding" they are, and this will be discussed with the help of some examples. Firstly, an example of EU policy that affects refugee integration policy is the new Pact on Migration and Asylum (European Commission, 2020). This new pact was set up by the European Commission (EC) and falls under the new Action Plan for Integration and Inclusion 2021–2027 (Kiner, 2021). According to Kiner (2021), this plan aims to strengthen and support integration in key policy areas such as education, training, employment, skills, housing, and health. In doing so, the EU Action Plan for Integration and Inclusion emphasizes multi-stakeholder, multi-level policy processes involving heterogeneous actors, especially migrant groups, as highlighted by Conte et al. (2022). However, the Action Plan is not of a binding nature and therefore cannot force EU member states to follow these guidelines. Secondly, the EU, for example, provides scientific advice, which is not binding, on public health principles for infection and prevention control of COVID-19 in refugee reception and detention centers in the EU and elsewhere (European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, 2020). Third, in contrast, Henrekson et al. (2019) point out that the EU's influence on refugee integration policy can be seen, for example, through the CEAS, which includes directives, regulations, and decisions that are of a binding nature. This means

EU member states are legally obliged to follow these rules. According to Servent & Zaun (2020), CEAS aims to standardize the definition of refugees, asylum procedures, and the rights of asylum seekers. This is because these countries must work together to create a seamless border zone, which is in line with the EU's community-based migration strategy, as argued by Servent and Zaun (2020). Moreover, there is systemic uncertainty and fragility resulting from the unstable implementation of CEAS. Following this, EU member states have determined how to get out of CEAS commitments (Servent & Zaun, 2020). Additionally, according to Servent & Zaun (2020), there are requirements for border control and responsibility for international refugee defense (Servent & Zaun, 2020). Lastly, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU and the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR) are binding. These treaties enforce certain rights for refugees, such as the right to respect private and family life (European Court of Human Rights and Council of Europe, 2013). Thus, according to the EC (2020), in some cases, member states are free to choose whether to work with these recommendations. This freedom to choose gives member states room to act on their own national motivations, instead of following EU policy blindly. In some other cases, it is obligatory to follow the rules.

2.4 Motivations of EU Member States Regarding EU Refugee Integration Policies

The actions of EU member states are thus motivated by EU refugee integration policies. First, we will look at how the harmonizing principle of the EU influences the motivations of EU member states to pursue certain refugee integration policies and how European solidarity plays a role. This is followed by how EU member states are justified in taking into account security concerns with respect to refugee integration. Finally, the consequences of different motivations among EU member states will be shown. As such, the lack of a common policy on integration and the divergent motivations of member states have contributed to the failure of EU refugee policy, as noted by Henrekson et al. (2019) and Maldini & Takahashi (2017). Other scholars have highlighted the challenges and limitations of such cooperation. According to the study by Osterloh and Frey (2017), cooperation on refugee issues is more likely among nations with similar circumstances, as those with significant disparities may be less motivated to participate. Cooperation is further complicated by the division between mainstream health and social agencies and specialist refugee services, which can lead to gaps in the treatment provided to refugees, as noted by Czaika (2009). As such, according to Eylemer & Söylemez (2020) and Milazzo (2023b), the EU's approach to the refugee crisis is characterized by a struggle between the normative principle of solidarity and the dominance

of national self-interest. This disparity, as noted by Di Nunzio (2023), has made member states more divided and created a distributive dilemma that has destroyed cooperation. In another article, by Milazzo (2023a), it is stated that a uniform European framework for managing migration that is efficient and consistent with EU ideals cannot be developed because of the division among member states and the tendency for a "Fortress Europe" mentality. Moreover, as noted by Topal & Radeljić (2023), if the solidarity paradigm is not changed, the asylum system may continue to be split and unable to handle future difficulties related to migration. For example, according to Di Nunzio (2023), the crisis made flaws in the CEAS evident and brought attention to the need for reform in the EU's policies regarding external borders, asylum, and migration. The crisis's developments, as pointed out by Brsakoska-Bazerkoska (2022), have called into doubt the idea of EU solidarity, which is still in its infancy and has exposed a distributive problem across member states. This is remarkable because, as emphasized by Hatton (2015), cooperation can help reduce costs and uncertainty, minimize the detour of asylum seekers from one destination to another, and help maintain international security. Nonetheless, according to Van Wijk (2010), there are instances of effective collaboration, such as global collaboration in pre-screening and primary care for refugees.

As such, the idea of European solidarity, which is essential for the defense of fundamental human rights both inside and outside the EU, is eventually impacted by these difficulties and conflicts and needs more attention to help explain the research question of this thesis. In summary, the EU's approach to refugee integration is characterized by pursuing a common asylum policy and binding resources to find harmonization in terms of refugee integration efforts, but because of the lack of common policies, member states have chosen to pursue their own policies. Consequently, EU member states have taken various national measures in response to the refugee crisis, which may also be due to the lack of a common EU solution, as noted by Kriesi et al. (2021). In general, different nations and circumstances differ in their efficacy and readiness to collaborate when it comes to handling asylum and refugee flows. This is an interesting debate and deserves more attention, as it seems to influence political actors' political motivations.

Following the 9/11 attacks, according to Demirkol (2022), the EU has become more securitized in terms of immigration, with politicians and the media characterizing it as a possible danger to the welfare state, European identity, and internal security. In addition, according to Aslan (2022), the EU's efforts to create an efficient immigration strategy have been hampered by the securitization of migration, as decisions made in response to this

pressure have proven ineffective. Due to the tactics used during the refugee crisis in 2015–2016, asylum seekers in the EU have been socially constructed as security threats because of their so-called affiliation with terrorism, as noted by Léonard & Kaunert (2021). Furthermore, Ramadhani et al. (2022) assert that in order to preserve the EU's central integration, the Schengen Agreement, the EU's securitization of cross-border refugees has caused a recursive interaction with its member states, resulting in a shift from a humanitarian discourse to a border security discourse. How security concerns in Dutch politics have played a role in the political motivation for divergent refugee policy therefore deserves more attention, as this is not evident in current debates.

According to Maldini & Takahashi (2017), the lack of a common immigration policy has led to the failure of EU policies on the integration of refugees. Furthermore, according to Maldini & Takahashi (2017), the refugee crisis also affected the fundamental values of European integration, such as human rights, unity, cooperation, solidarity, freedom, and democracy. EU refugee integration policies that do exist and are in effect have had both positive and negative effects. In particular, the outcomes for refugees, such as the recently discussed Action Plan for Integration and Inclusion 2021–2027, are anticipated to bring about positive changes in refugee integration, as noted by Kiner (2021). However, Kiner (2021) notes that there are also challenges in policy areas such as employment and social inclusion because, despite efforts being made for refugees, they do worse than national citizens in terms of employment, social inclusion, and education. In addition, refugees are more likely to face barriers in the education system, labor market, and access to adequate housing and healthcare than national citizens (Kiner, 2021).

3. Theoretical Framework

As described earlier, this study attempts to answer the question to what extent political motivations among Dutch MPs and government are influenced by the EU, leading to different integration policies for Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian refugees. For this purpose, the theoretical framework will comprehensively explore important theoretical foundations that relate to explaining policymaking processes. In addition, it will look at the role of the EU in this policymaking process by using the example of refugee integration. Starting with the conceptual framework of Ager and Strang (2008) on refugee integration, that should help with understanding policy. This is followed by an examination of theories related to explaining policymaking. To explain the research question, the choice was made to use the theories of policy diffusion and policy learning in addition to the theory of Europeanization. The integration of these theories will then be elaborated, highlighting their relevance to the identified problem statement, objectives, and research question. Finally, hypotheses designed to clarify and potentially answer the research question will be presented. Proving or rejecting these hypotheses can provide empirical evidence about the extent to which the EU and various political motivations have influenced the divergent integration policies for Ukrainian refugees in the Netherlands. In addition, the hypotheses together will help to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the research question.

3.1 Understanding Integration: A Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework by Ager and Strang (2008) serves as a basis for the conceptualization of refugee integration within this thesis. The research done by Ager and Strang (2008) describes a framework that suggests ten core domains reflecting normative understandings of integration and provides a potential structure for the analysis of relevant outcomes. Key integration domains are suggested in relation to four overarching themes: attainment and access in the areas of employment, housing, education, and health; citizenship and rights assumptions and practices; social connection processes within and between community groups; and structural barriers to such connections pertaining to language, culture, and the surrounding environment (Ager & Strang, 2008). A number of key activities in the public domain (education, employment, etc.) that are often proposed as markers of effective integration emerged during the examination of future indicators (Ager & Strang, 2008). Such markers and means are also often used to shape integration thinking in policy documents and evaluations (Korać, 2001). This research will be based on Ager and Strang's (2008) conceptual framework, using the four key integration domains to measure and

operationalize integration. This will help to gain a deeper understanding of the complexities of integration and their relevance to the policy landscape. It will help define differences within integration policies for refugees, especially for Ukrainian refugees in the Netherlands.

3.2 Policy Diffusion and Policy Learning

Policy diffusion refers to the interdependence between the policies of one unit and those of other units and is influenced by learning, competition, coercion, and emulation mechanisms (Gilardi & Wasserfallen, 2019). This process, fueled by learning, competition, coercion, and emulation, can have a significant impact on the development and evolution of refugee integration policies. The way that EU policies on refugee integration have impacted Dutch policymakers can be understood in terms of policy diffusion. By investigating the issue-defining phase of policy diffusion, it is possible to examine the framing of policy and the extent to which previous policy assumptions anticipate these frames (Shaw, 2022). As such, the analysis can provide perspectives on the extent to which Dutch MPs and government have been influenced by EU policies and the factors that shaped their policy choices.

Moreover, policy learning, a significant mechanism within policy diffusion, entails comparing policy issues across different jurisdictions (Goodin et al., 2008). Understanding how Dutch policymakers assimilated into EU policies, such as the TPD and other measures concerning refugee integration, is especially important in the context of policy learning. When it comes to putting EU policies like the TPD into practice, Dutch policymakers can draw on the experiences of other EU members and modify those lessons for their own situation (Zaki & Wayenberg, 2023). Moreover, Dutch policymakers can benefit from policy learning by improving their knowledge of EU policies and their own policy responses to problems like refugee integration (Domorenok & Zito, 2021; Zaki et al., 2022). Analyzing how Dutch policymakers assimilated insights from EU policies and how these learnings influenced their decisions can provide a deeper understanding of the factors that contributed to divergent integration policies for Ukrainian refugees in the Netherlands.

3.3 Europeanization

The concept of Europeanization is highly relevant in understanding divergent integration policies for Ukrainian refugees in the Netherlands. Europeanization, as defined by Ladrech (1994), means an incremental process that reorients the direction and structure of politics,

integrating the political and economic dynamics of the EU into the organizational logic of national politics and policymaking.

The process of Europeanization can have varying effects on member states, depending on change pressures and adjustment mechanisms (Schmidt, 2006). Factors such as EU-mandated policy-making procedures, lessons learned from EU processes, and incentives offered by new EU policies can motivate state and societal actors to alter national processes. These pressures can be influenced by lessons learned from EU processes and the incentives offered by new EU policies (Schmidt, 2006). A classic example of a policy domain where supranational and transgovernmental actors argue not only over the extent of Europeanization but also about the factual portrayal of the refugee issue and the normative direction of a shared policy is the field of refugee policies (Lavenex, 2001). As such, Europeanization is a crucial concept in shaping national policy as it relates EU dynamics to the organizational logic of national politics and policy formation, for example, refugee integration strategies (Lavenex, 2001; Schmidt, 2006).

3.4 Theories and Hypotheses

The theories of policy diffusion and policy learning (3.3) and Europeanization (3.4) provide theoretical frameworks directly related to the problem statement, the objective, and the research question. Both theories highlight mechanisms and influences that may lead to these differences and help explain the motivations of policymakers in a different way. For example, policy diffusion highlights how policies can be influenced by other units, indicating how different units' policies can influence refugee integration strategies and also highlighting the influence of policymakers on policies. On the other hand, Europeanization highlights the dynamics of the EU being part of national policymaking. In summary, the theories will help explain the research question of this thesis.

Drawing from the literature review and theoretical framework, five hypotheses have been formulated. These hypotheses are established based on prior research findings and the application of relevant theories to elucidate the hypotheses and address the research question. One such hypothesis highlights the absence of a specific, binding common refugee integration policy within the EU (Henrekson et al., 2019; Maldini & Takahashi, 2017), in contrast to the existence of a binding directive for 'special' refugees known as the TPD (Henrekson et al., 2019). The purpose of this hypothesis is to show that binding policy is not the only reason for implementing this policy, but is also based on their willingness to adhere to or implement the policy:

Hypothesis 1: Dutch MPs and government motivate their adoption of divergent integration policies for Ukrainian refugees by presenting the TPD as more binding than other 'general' EU refugee integration policies.

If Hypothesis 1 is true, it suggests that politicians are using the perception of the TPD as more binding than it really is to justify the adoption of disparate policies for Ukrainian refugees. If it cannot be supported, it indicates that the TPD, and thus the EU, played a lesser role in shaping the political motivation of Dutch MPs and government.

Other existing literature suggests a trend toward European solidarity in the reception of Ukrainian refugees among EU member states. However, there is evidence that EU countries are prioritizing their national self-interest (Eylemer & Söylemez, 2020), particularly with regard to policies for non-Ukrainian refugees, and making use of selective solidarity (Paré, 2022). This is, at least partly, revealed by attitudes and policies toward both European and non-European migration (Paré, 2022). The Dutch people would be more likely to help the Ukrainians because their cultural background would be more comparable with Dutch culture, and they look more like Dutch people (Fit & Boogaard, 2022; Noor, 2022). Thus, challenges in implementing EU refugee policy appear to stem from several factors, including discrepancies between policy, practice, and conflicting national self-interests. These elements, combined, create complications in the implementation of EU policy and motivations for MPs and the government, despite a shared desire to comply with it. This raises questions about the binding nature of EU refugee policies and whether policymakers have discretion in determining the degree of obligation these policies entail. Moreover, the article by Kiess and Trenz (2019) shows evidence that the principle of European solidarity is more frequently used as a policy frame by the political left in shaping integration policies in advanced Western democracies. Thus, an alignment of political ideology with engagement in solidarity activities can be seen, with the political left showing more solidarity towards refugees (Kiess & Trenz, 2019). These observations lead to the formulation of the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 2a: European solidarity between EU member states regarding Ukrainian refugees diminishes the national self-interest of the Dutch MPs and government.

Hypothesis 2b: The principle of European solidarity is used more frequently as a policy frame by the political left MPs and government in shaping refugee integration policies.

For hypotheses 2a and 2b, if it is true that European solidarity reduces the national self-interests of Dutch MPs and government, and that the political left wing uses the principle of European solidarity more often in shaping integration policy. If these two hypotheses turn

out not to be true, it suggests that European solidarity has not played a significant role in influencing national interests or that its use cannot be associated with a specific political ideology.

Further, the literature states that security is a substantive concern for EU member states. The idea that immigration threatens national security and the welfare state has been the driving force behind the securitization of immigration throughout the EU, particularly in the case of the Netherlands (Groothuis, 2023; Engbersen & Broeders, 2011; Demirkol, 2022). In addition, political elites view policy on immigration as a tool to combat and prevent terrorism, and therefore they have linked immigration policy with security policy (Léonard & Kaunert, 2021). Due to its indispensable character as one of the foundations of peace and democracy within the EU, its importance is expected to lead EU member states, and thus the Dutch MPs and government, to follow their interests to pursue this securitization. Ultimately leading to a more strict refugee integration policy in comparison to the common EU refugee policy. Moreover, right-wing parties use the narrative of security concerns more to influence the politicized topic of refugee integration and their policies (Güler, 2023; Öztığ & Ersan, 2022; Demirkol, 2022). Based on the literature, two hypotheses are stated as follows:

Hypothesis 3a: Security concerns among EU member states have led Dutch MPs and government to pursue their national self-interests regarding refugee integration policies.

Hypothesis 3b: Security concerns about non-Ukrainian refugees are put forward by right-wing MPs and government.

For hypotheses 3a and 3b, if they are true, it shows security concerns among EU member states influence Dutch MPs and government to prioritize national self-interest and adopt less hospitable policies for non-Ukrainian refugees, with right-wing politicians more likely to emphasize security concerns. If proven false, this indicates that security concerns have not had a significant influence on refugee integration policies or that they cannot be strongly associated with a political ideology.

4. Methodology and Research Design

The next chapter will outline the methodology used to address the previously mentioned hypotheses and detail the data utilized for the analysis. In addition, it will provide an explanation of the research design employed for conducting the analysis.

4.1 Data Collection

This thesis will involve a detailed examination of explanatory memoranda and memoranda of response where Dutch MPs and government explain the interpretation and changes of two important laws regarding Ukrainian refugees and non-Ukrainian refugees. Namely, the Aliens Act 2000 (2000), which is mainly based on the Reception Directive 2013/33/EU and the implementation of Directive 2001/55/EU, the TPD (Council of the European Union, 2001; Council of the European Union, 2013). The memoranda will look in detail at the influence of the European Union on Dutch MPs and government over a time period from 1999 to the present. These memoranda were collected from Public Intelligence (n.d.), which serves as a database for public documents such as policies, and are added to the appendix of this thesis. Moreover, memoranda serve as a justification and explanation of policymakers for the parliament and Dutch citizens. Several markers will be set to analyze the policy documents. As a side note, it should be mentioned that studying MPs' motivations just through memos can result in a selective view, a narrow scope, and an incomplete understanding of the elements that influence their decision-making process.

4.1.1 Non-Ukrainian refugees' Data Sources

Understanding the dynamics of refugees in the Netherlands is largely dependent on the Aliens Act 2000 (2000), particularly with regard to how Dutch MPs and government affect the various integration strategies influencing various refugee groups. This law addresses a wide range of immigration issues, but it places particular attention on refugees, which is crucial for addressing variations in integration policies. Functioning within a national framework predominantly shaped by EU directives, this legislation profoundly influences how refugees are treated and categorized within the larger context of immigration policy, thus providing an explanation for policy divergences.

In addition, these memoranda related to the implementation of the Aliens Act 2000 (2000) are useful sources of information as they consider the interpretations and justifications offered by Dutch policymakers with respect to EU directives. Particularly the lack of a legally binding common integration policy in contrast to directives such as the TPD for

'special' refugees. These texts can shed light on how different political perspectives on security and European solidarity shape the creation and acceptance of different integration strategies for refugees from other countries as well as those from Ukraine.

4.1.2 Ukrainian Refugees' Data Sources

This analysis will delve into the implementation of the TPD concerning refugees from Ukraine. To answer the research question and hypotheses, the notes related to the TPD will be used alongside the notes of the Aliens Act 2000. Namely, politicians may use the lack of an EU-wide, legally binding refugee integration policy combined with a directive intended for "special" refugees, such as Ukrainians, as justification for different integration programs. The purpose of this study, like the use of the Aliens Act 2000 (2000) memoranda, is to clarify how TPD implementation memoranda can influence the rationale and development of divergent integration policies.

According to theories that contend that varying political motivations and security considerations among Dutch MPs and government influence differences in refugee integration policies in the Netherlands, these parliamentary papers can provide insight into how policymakers interpret and use the TPD, whether references to European solidarity, or the lack thereof, are clear, and whether different political ideologies, especially with respect to security considerations, influence the framing of integration policies in these papers.

The documents for Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian refugees will be analyzed thoroughly using ATLAS.ti (Scientific Software Development GmbH, n.d.). This software helps with categorizing and systematically analyzing the documents of interest. As such, while doing the analysis, information from within the documents can be easily looked up and compared to one another. It is not literally a data collection method, but it is used to analyze and code the data already collected. Thus, it will hopefully help make many complex matters understandable and clear.

4.2 Data Analysis (Operationalization and Empirical Strategy)

Now the operationalization and empirical strategy will be addressed. To start, the software of ATLAS.ti (Scientific Software Development GmbH, n.d.) will be used. In addition, this thesis uses the method of qualitative content analysis (QCA) to understand the data from the documents described. In short, QCA is the study of recorded human conversations (Babbie, 2013). Written text is by far the most commonly utilized data source for QCA (Krippendorff, 2004). It entails a methodological reading or observation of texts or objects that are given

labels, like codes, to denote the existence of engaging, significant content (Denzin, 2008). QCA can be done quantitatively, but not every content analysis leads to a count (Babbie, 2013). Overall, the fundamental component of all QCA techniques, both quantitative and qualitative, is the systematic classification of textual material in order to make sense of it (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

To address the five hypotheses, markers are used to categorize and visualize the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable derived from the hypotheses. In Hypothesis 1, the independent variable is interested in the existence of a specific, binding common refugee integration policy of the EU. As for Hypothesis 2a, the interest lies in the level of European solidarity between EU member states regarding Ukrainian refugees. In addition, Hypothesis 2b focuses on the political orientation (left-wing) of MPs and government. Hypothesis 3a is interested in the presence of security concerns among EU member states, and Hypothesis 3b adds the expectation that the concerns are primarily expressed by MPs and government on the right wing of the political spectrum.

In general, the memoranda, derived from Public Intelligence (n.d.), should address the EU, from which the influence of MPs and government will be traced. Using only memoranda may cause other factors to be overlooked, resulting in a limited scope of the study. Thus, due to the focus of the study, factors may be overlooked that may play a role in shaping the perspectives and decisions of Dutch MPs and government on refugee integration policy.

For all words, the inflicted form is not forgotten. The use of these words will guide the coding of the findings, after which it is possible to understand the documents in a more detailed way. The following table lists the markers and words that were used to analyze the policy document. The markers and words are only used to obtain information from the documents to help confirm or disprove the hypotheses.

Table 1: Markers and Words for QCA of Hypotheses in Memoranda

Hypothesis	Markers for Categorization	Words Used for Analysis
Hypothesis 1	TPD, Aliens Act 2000, EU Influence on MPs/government	'Richtlijn tijdelijke bescherming', 'RTB', 'richtlijn', 'bindend', 'richtlijn 2001/55/EG', 'gemeenschappelijk', 'harmonisatie', 'Europese Unie', 'vreemdelingenwet

		2000'.
Hypothesis 2b	European Solidarity as Left-Wing Issue	Same words as for 2a, focus on party/person affiliation in documents.
Hypothesis 2a	Influence of European Solidarity	'Samenwerking', 'solidariteit', 'gezamenlijk', 'gemeenschappelijk', 'Europese Unie'.
Hypothesis 3a	Security Concerns Impact on Policies	'Nationale veiligheid', 'veilig', 'risico', 'gevaarlijk', 'gevaar', 'rampen', 'dreiging'.
Hypothesis 3b	Right-Wing Vocalization on Security Concerns	Same words as for 3a, but focussing on political affiliation of MPs/government in documents.

Note: The table displays the precise keywords and markers that were applied during the QCA of the memoranda. The pertinent data that corresponded to each hypothesis was categorized and extracted using these words and markers. The table facilitates comprehension of the data analysis process in relation to the formulated hypotheses.

4.3 Operationalization of the Political Stance of Dutch Parties

The main Dutch political parties' ideological stances can be translated into left-wing and right-wing classifications. The "left-right" dimension is a prevalent tool for organizing the political landscape and is actively utilized in political science research. A study on Dutch voters' perceptions of parties' left-right positions reveals a strong correlation between the contents of party programs and voters' perceptions (Van Der Brug, 1999). This indicates that the left-right classification is derived from the parties' policy positions as determined by their election program contents. Although the strength of this correlation has gradually diminished since the late 1970s, the "left-right" party-ideological distinction remains a crucial element in comprehending the ideological stances of political parties (Van Der Brug, 1999).

To understand the political parties mentioned in the analysis, it is useful to understand the ideological stances of the political parties. The categorization of political parties in the Netherlands into left-wing and right-wing parties can be defined based on their essential stance. The VVD, known as the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy, represents a

right-wing party that advocates for free-market economics and individual liberties (Andeweg et al., 2020). D66, also known as Democrats 66, is a centrist party that focuses on democratic reforms and progressive social policies (Andeweg et al., 2020). The CDA, or Christian Democratic Appeal, is a center-right party with a Christian-democratic ideology (Andeweg et al., 2020). The SP, or Socialist Party, is a left-wing party that promotes social justice and economic equality. GroenLinks is another left-wing party that places importance on environmental sustainability and social progress (Andeweg et al., 2020). The PvdA, or Labour Party, represents a center-left party that emphasizes social democracy and workers' rights (Andeweg et al., 2020). On the other hand, the SGP, or Reformed Political Party, is a right-wing conservative party with a Christian-reformed ideology (Andeweg et al., 2020). Previously, the RPF/GPV, which stands for Reformatory Political Federation/Reformed Political Party, was a Christian-right party that later merged into the ChristenUnie (Andeweg et al., 2020).

5. Analysis

Before testing the hypotheses presented in Chapter 3, I examine the different laws and policies applicable to Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian refugees in the Netherlands. I will begin the analysis by outlining the main variations. These documents applicable to refugees and, earlier, to asylum seekers, will be analyzed using the methodology of Ager and Strang (2008) to contrast different aspects of integration presented on page 27. After looking at the ways in which laws and policies for Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian refugees in the Netherlands differ, I then test hypotheses about how the EU influenced Dutch MPs and government to create these different policy regimes. For this, the findings of our analysis of the Aliens Act 2000 (2000) memoranda highlighting policy differences and motivations of Dutch MPs and government will be presented. Similarly, memoranda regarding the TPD (Council of the European Union, 2001) will be scrutinized. The analysis refers to parliamentary documents using reference numbers from the Public Intelligence (n.d.) website. These reference numbers appear in the appendix and are supplemented by the responsible MPs, ministers and state secretaries and the nature of the memoranda.

5.1 Comparative Analysis of Refugee Groups within the Netherlands

Table 2 below is based on a QCA of documents governing the policies of Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian refugees. The information presented draws from legal frameworks including the Aliens Employment Act (1994), the TPD (Council of the European Union, 2001), Regulation on the Provisions of Asylum Seekers and Other Categories of Aliens (2005), Regulation for the reception of displaced persons from Ukraine (2022), the Health Insurance Act (2005), as well as educational acts such as the Primary Education Act (1981), Secondary Education Act (2020), Law on Education and Vocational Education (1995), and Higher Education and Scientific Research Act (1992). Additionally, the analysis considers the Temporary Education Facilities Act in the Event of a Massive Influx of Displaced Persons (2022). These documents were employed to assess differences in employment, housing, health, and education policies between Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian refugees, based on the markers from the conceptual framework of Ager & Strang (2008). In summary, Table 2 shows observable differences in policy for Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian refugees in four policy areas. While both groups have access to basic services, there are differences in legal frameworks and regulations that address their unique circumstances. It becomes clear that refugee groups are covered by different policies, such as access to employment. Which leads to different possibilities in Dutch society.

Table 2: Refugee Integration Policies for Ukrainian and Non-Ukrainian Refugees

Markers	Ukrainian Refugees	Non-Ukrainian Refugees	Summary of Differences
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Allowed to work during temporary protection. - Existing laws applied for compensation and social security. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TWV or combined permit needed for work. - Exempt from prohibition with residence permit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have work opportunities during temporary protection. - Subject to existing laws for compensation.
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Dutch government oversees Ukrainian refugees' reception. - Reception area meets standards. - Privilege to reside with Dutch nationals in private accommodations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - COA provides asylum seekers' reception. - Entitlements for status holders and denied asylum seekers. - Specific housing processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supervised reception by the government. - Provided unique housing privileges. - Allowed to stay with Dutch nationals privately.
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Covered under legislation following the TPD. - Specific provisions for certain needs during temporary protection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Covered by Health Insurance Act with expense exemptions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Varies in care definitions and cost exemptions.
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of a new law for massive influxes of Ukrainian refugees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subject to various education acts for registration and facility access. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Varies under different laws for Non-Ukrainian refugees.

Note: This table outlines the main differences between integration policies for Ukrainians compared to non-Ukrainian refugees in the Netherlands.

5.2 Memoranda Regarding Hypothesis 1: Policy Frame

As a reminder, H1 stipulated that Dutch MPs and government motivate their adoption of divergent integration policies for Ukrainian refugees by presenting the TPD as more binding than other ‘general’ EU refugee integration policies. It is therefore expected that the documents regarding Ukrainian refugees will emphasize the binding nature of the TPD, while for the Aliens Act 2000 concerning non-Ukrainian refugees, there will be more focus on the

free movement and input of Dutch policymakers in guiding integration policy. Moreover, it is expected that this reasoning will show that policymakers justify this divergence in policy on the basis of this ‘boundedness’ to EU directives in Dutch society and legislation.

The texts analyzed, using QCA, show the EU has created several directives and policies related to asylum and temporary protection. When it comes to directives, member states have the freedom to interpret and implement EU regulations (European Commission, n.d.-b). A directive is binding in its goal; however, it is up to the member to state how this goal will be reached. The more vague the terms of the directive are, the more room it leaves for EU member states to interpret (European Commission, n.d.-b).

According to an explanatory memorandum regarding the establishment of the European Constitution (30 025 No. 3, p 81), under the responsibility of Prime Minister Balkenende (CDA), the EU Constitutional Treaty provides a legal basis for the eventual development or enhancement of the European asylum system. However, despite this potential framework, the TPD demonstrates clear differences from other EU directives regarding refugee status and international protection, emphasizing a temporary situation for displaced persons, as noted by Minister van Gennip (CDA) during an explanation on a legislative amendment for daycare for Ukrainian children (36 241 No. 3, p. 6).

“Dit artikel voorziet in een gemeenschappelijk beleid inzake asiel, subsidiaire bescherming en tijdelijke bescherming. Dit betekent dat er in het Grondwettelijk Verdrag een rechtsbasis is neergelegd voor een Europees asielsysteem.” [This article provides for a common policy on asylum, subsidiary protection and temporary protection. This means that there is a legal basis in the Constitutional Treaty for a European asylum system.] (30 025 No. 3, p 81).

“De Richtlijn tijdelijke bescherming daarentegen is een specifieke regeling voor ontheemden. Die gaat uitdrukkelijk uit van een tijdelijke situatie. De doelstellingen van deze twee richtlijnen verschillen, evenals de context en bewoordingen.” [The Temporary Protection Directive, on the other hand, is a specific regime for displaced persons. It explicitly assumes a temporary situation. The objectives of these two directives differ, as do the context and wording.] (36 241 No. 3, p. 6).

The quotes above show how EU member states adopt and harmonize policies at the EU level (policy diffusion), while also adapting to and learning by comparing EU directives and

understanding their nuances, as shown in the second quote above (policy learning), contributing to the pursuit of a common European policy (Europeanization).

While there are initiatives that seek to synchronize asylum procedures among EU member states, such as the TPD, the differences between directives and regulations highlight the absence of a consistent and mandatory impact on all member states in EU asylum policy. The supposedly binding nature of EU asylum policy is evident in the thrust of several directives and initiatives aimed at harmonizing asylum procedures within EU member states. Thus, as shown in an explanatory memorandum attributed to Minister Verdonk (VVD) discussing the legislative amendment concerning the implementation of this EU directive, the TPD is a first step towards a coordinated and common European asylum system (29 031 C, p. 1). Additionally, the TPD is emphasized as a cornerstone of European asylum policy, which potentially influences their decision-making on refugee integration policies. Furthermore, the EU directives, even if they are not always fully binding in terms of uniformity in national legislation, envision harmonization in addressing asylum issues. For example, the same memorandum imposes minimum standards on member states that serve as a baseline for asylum seekers and displaced persons (29 031 No. 3, p. 1). The following quotes thus demonstrate Europeanization, since they merge national politics and policymaking's organizational logic with the political and economic dynamics of the EU (Ladrech, 1994).

"De richtlijn tijdelijke bescherming vormt een eerste stap in het proces van harmonisatie van het asielrecht in de Europese deelstaten." [The Temporary Protection Directive represents a first step in the process of harmonizing asylum law in European states.] (29 031 C, p. 1).

"De voorgestelde wijziging van de Vreemdelingenwet 2000 dient ter implementatie van richtlijn 2001/55/EG van de Raad van de Europese Unie van 20 juli 2001 betreffende minimumnormen voor het verlenen van tijdelijke bescherming in geval van massale toestroom van ontheemden en maatregelen ter bevordering van een evenwicht tussen de inspanning van de lidstaten voor de opvang en het dragen van de consequentie van de opvang van deze personen (PbEG L 212)." [The proposed amendment to the Aliens Act 2000 serves to implement Council Directive 2001/55/EC of the European Union of July 20, 2001 on minimum standards for giving temporary protection in the event of a mass influx of displaced persons and on

measures promoting a balance of efforts between Member States in receiving such persons and bearing the consequences thereof (OJEU L 212).] (29 031 No. 3, p. 1).

Although the directives discussed in the memoranda are not fully and immediately binding in the sense that different policy procedures can enforce them, they do provide the basis for a common framework for EU asylum policy. As discussed, this framework seeks to ensure uniform treatment of asylum seekers, which will eventually bring member states in line with common EU asylum policy directives.

The extent to which the policy is binding is relevant for understanding the dynamics of refugee integration policy in the Netherlands. As such, the supposed lack of a specific binding common integration policy for non-Ukrainian refugees, contrasted with the existence of a binding directive for Ukrainian refugees covered by the TPD, creates a policy framework in which member states can adopt divergent integration policies for different groups of refugees. For instance, the following quote, which is related to the rearrangement of asylum grounds and is the responsibility of State Secretary Teeven (VVD), demonstrates a dedication to a shared refugee policy, which also suggests policy diffusion, as each country ought to adopt the same policy in this regard (33 293 C, p. 1). At the same time, a later explanatory memorandum, under the responsibility of State Secretary Broekers-Knol (VVD), states that the Netherlands must adhere to the minimum requirements outlined in the EU guidelines on refugee policy (35 691 No. 3, p. 4). This memorandum deals with an adjustment of the period of validity of the residence permit. This indicates that while the policy for non-Ukrainian refugees has been adopted, the Netherlands aims to do as little as possible within the confines of EU policy, which complicates the goal of a unified refugee policy. In addition, the statement is in line with the concept of Europeanization, as it emphasizes that there should be no discrepancies between member states, which would increase the attractiveness of the Netherlands. In other words, no additional measures should be taken, and only the European directives, which are binding, should be followed. Furthermore, this quote already gives some reason to expect that security concerns also play a role in forming divergent policies, but we will discuss that in more detail later. Overall, while the guidelines may be binding, the freedom of policy and interpretation by Dutch MPs and government complicates their implementation. This suggests that differences in integration possibilities due to policy in the Netherlands may be politically motivated, contributing to the divergence in refugee policy within the country.

"Het streven van de Nederlandse regering en de andere Europese lidstaten is erop gericht dat een vergelijkbaar asiolverzoek in alle lidstaten tot dezelfde uitkomst leidt."

[The aim of the Dutch government and the other European member states is to ensure that a similar asylum application leads to the same outcome in all member states.] (33 293 C, p. 1).

"Voorkomen dient bijvoorbeeld te worden dat Nederland in vergelijking met andere lidstaten aantrekkelijker wordt voor asiellozoekers, met mogelijke aanzuigende werking tot gevolg." [It should be prevented, for example, from making the Netherlands more attractive to asylum seekers in comparison with other member states, resulting in a possible pull factor.] (35 691 No. 3, p. 4).

The acceptability of minimum standards in the TPD is emphasized because of the exceptional nature of this form of protection. This is discussed in a memorandum of response attributed to Minister Verdonk (VVD) that talks about the legislative change related to this EU directive's implementation (29 031 C, p. 1). The responsible minister hereby underlines the specific nature of temporary protection, which also serves as justification for implementing the minimum requirements associated with the TPD. References to the differences in legal status and factual situation between displaced persons with temporary protection and asylum seekers further highlight the justification for different modes of treatment (36 301 D, p. 2; 36 241 No. 3, p. 3). The emphasis by the ministers in these memoranda on the differing situations of non-Ukrainian refugees confirms the use of a political frame and the application of different policies. Previous quotes have revealed policy freedom regarding refugee integration policies, regardless of minimum conditions. Therefore, on the basis of these memoranda, a clear pattern emerges. In the case of non-Ukrainian refugees, the pull factor of doing more than the minimum conditions of refugee policies is taken into account. In the case of non-Ukrainian refugees, however, only the minimum is done. These two memoranda concern changes for rent allowance and childcare allowance for Ukrainian displaced persons under the responsibility of Ministers van Gennip (CDA) and de Jonge (CDA). Finally, responsible Minister Verdonk (VVD), defends the choices by claiming that the Netherlands implements the TPD more favorably than the stated requirements in the directive itself, in a memorandum of response about the legislative change related to this EU directive's implementation (29 031 C, p. 5). This shows the latitude of national authorities in implementing EU directives, which may also lead to variations in integration policies.

Overall, these political statements help suggest that political actors portray the TPD as more binding, while the Aliens Act 2000 is also based on minimum requirements by EU rule.

“... de richtlijn is de neerslag van het compromis dat pas na lang onderhandelen tot stand kon komen en dat de lidstaten ook die ruimte laat om invulling te geven aan de wijze waarop zij ontheemden tijdelijk zullen opvangen waaraan zij tijdens de onderhandelingen behoefte voelden.” [... the directive reflects the compromise that could only be reached after lengthy negotiations, which also leaves member states that room to flesh out how they will temporarily receive displaced persons they felt the need for during the negotiations.] (29 031 C, p. 1).

“Ontheemden die tijdelijke bescherming genieten op grond van de Richtlijn tijdelijke bescherming bevinden zich in een feitelijke en juridische situatie die verschilt van die van andere asielzoekers.” [Displaced persons granted temporary protection under the Temporary Protection Directive are in a factual and legal situation different from that of other asylum seekers.] (36 301 D, p. 2).

“Op grond van de Richtlijn Tijdelijke Bescherming moeten Oekraïners onder meer in staat worden gesteld om te werken tijdens de duur van de tijdelijke bescherming en moeten de lidstaten ervoor zorgen dat zij een fatsoenlijk onderkomen krijgen of middelen om huisvesting te vinden.” [Under the Temporary Protection Directive, Ukrainians must, among other things, be allowed to work during the period of temporary protection and member states must ensure that they are provided with decent housing or means of finding housing.] (36 241 no. 3, p. 3)

“... Nederland de richtlijn tijdelijke bescherming gunstiger implementeert dan de eisen die richtlijn stelt.” [... the Netherlands implements the Temporary Protection Directive more favorably than its requirements.] (29 031 C, p. 5).

Furthermore, the same memorandum of response emphasizes that restraint and the pursuit of harmonization within the European asylum policy are important to avoid a national categorical protection policy (29 031 C, p. 2). This highlights the desire to avoid discrepancies between national policies, which may also justify differences in integration policies in the Netherlands. In addition, it is emphasized that providing temporary protection

to Ukrainian refugees is justified as a humanitarian obligation based on international and European provisions (36 081 No. 3, p. 1; 36 106 No. 3, p. 2). These two explanatory memoranda underpin the notion of responsibility under EU law as a justification for certain actions. Moreover, the justification demonstrates the Europeanization of national policies, as they align with the directive regarding refugees. Even though with other refugees this is also a humanitarian obligation, in this case it is emphasized extra, which may indicate a different political motivation. The last two quotes are from memoranda dealing with the continuation of the Population Relocation Act under the leadership of Minister Yeşilgöz-Zegerius (VVD) and amendments to education laws after the influx of displaced persons under the leadership of Minister Wiersma (VVD).

“Verder is de regering van mening dat terughoudendheid past bij het voeren van een nationaal categoriaal beschermingsbeleid.” [Furthermore, the government believes that restraint is appropriate when pursuing a national categorical protection policy.] (29 031 C, p. 2).

“De regering ziet de opvang van ontheemden uit Oekraïne als een humanitaire verplichting.” [The government sees the reception of displaced persons from Ukraine as a humanitarian obligation.] (36 081 No. 3, p. 1).

“... op grond van de Richtlijn 2001/55/EG van de Raad van 20 juli 2001 betreffende minimumnormen voor het verlenen van tijdelijke bescherming in geval van massale toestroom van ontheemden ...” [... under Council Directive 2001/55/EC of July 20, 2001 on minimum standards for giving temporary protection in the event of a mass influx of displaced persons ...] (36 106 No. 3, p. 2).

Memoranda regarding the Aliens Act 2000 also discuss further harmonization. For example, it appears in a memorandum regarding an amendment to the Aliens Act 2000, which concerns the implementation of minimum standards for the granting or withdrawal of refugee status in EU Member States under the responsibility of Minister Hirsch Ballin. This quote shows that the ultimate aim of amending the Aliens Act 2000 is to achieve a common asylum procedure (30 976 no. 3, p. 1). Thus, the discussion of harmonization is a concept that is discussed in both cases, the Aliens Act 2000 and TPD, and requires a general effort from the Dutch government. In contrast, humanitarian grounds when receiving refugees or setting

higher standards than the minimum requirements appear to be different under the Aliens Act 2000. This is evident from the following memorandum, under the responsibility of State Secretary Teeven, which concerns the implementation of EU directives and extends the scope of Directive 2003/109/EC, under which persons enjoy international protection. In the case of the TPD, the humanitarian grounds are presented as a strong motivation with which the Netherlands aims to comply (33 581 C, p. 6). Contrary to this, the humanitarian grounds in the Aliens Act 2000 are presented as an obligation that ought to be fulfilled. The fact that the views differ seems to indicate that another political motivation plays a role in the government's provision of humanitarian aid.

“Deze conclusie stelt dat communautaire regelgeving op termijn zou moeten leiden tot een gemeenschappelijke asielprocedure en een uniforme status voor personen die asiel hebben gekregen welke in de hele Unie geldig is.” [This conclusion states that Community regulation should eventually lead to a common asylum procedure and a uniform status for persons who have been granted asylum, valid throughout the Union.] (30 976 no. 3, p. 1).

“... voor zover het gaat om de reguliere humanitaire grond, als een tijdelijke grond zal gaan gelden en dat dit tot gevolg heeft dat mensen die op deze gronden in Nederland verblijven, niet in aanmerking kunnen komen voor de EU-status.” [... as far as the regular humanitarian ground is concerned, will be considered a temporary ground and this will mean that people who reside in the Netherlands on these grounds cannot qualify for EU status.] (33 581 C, p. 6).

To show that the binding nature of the European Directive on which the TPD is based does not differ from the binding nature of the European law on which the Aliens Act 2000 is based, an example is discussed. For this purpose, employment is examined, which is also a domain within the framework of Ager and Strang (2008). Moreover, the difference in access to employment is the biggest noticeable difference in national policy. The working rights for refugees in the TPD are based on Council Directive 2001/55/EC Article 12. This article states that persons enjoying temporary protection are allowed to engage in employed or self-employed activities. Furthermore, these persons enjoy the same labor rights as Dutch citizens (Council of the European Union, 2001). The Aliens Act 2000 is, in the case of working rights, based on the Reception Directive (2013/33/EU), Article 15. This directive

states refugees have the right to engage in employment within the host country, and when working, they should enjoy the same working rights as national citizens (Council of the European Union, 2013). The only difference between these European laws is that the Reception Directive states that aliens should have the right to work, at least 9 months after their arrival (Council of the European Union, 2013). The Council Directive does not include a term, which means that member states have the freedom to decide a term by themselves (Council of the European Union, 2001). Thus, the European Directives give more or less the same working rights. Member states have the freedom to further implement and elaborate on these rights. However, it appears in a national explanatory memorandum that Ukrainian refugees may immediately enter the labor market, and this is regulated under the TPD. Non-Ukrainian asylum seekers do not have this right and are allowed to work for a maximum number of weeks per year on the basis of the Reception Directive (36 241 no. 3, p. 6). The Dutch High Court decided in November 2023 that this maximum number of weeks is not in line with the Reception Directive (Raad van State, 2023). Non-Ukrainian refugees should also be granted full working hours, just like Ukrainian refugees. This court decision affirms that the European laws on regulation provide more or less the same rights to refugees under the TPD as refugees not covered by the TPD. However, the Dutch MPs and government accord greater rights to Ukrainian refugees under the Council Directive compared to those provided to non-Ukrainians under the Reception Directive.

“Oekraïense ontheemden mogen, zoals gezegd, direct in Nederland aan het werk. Deze onmiddellijke toegang tot de arbeidsmarkt is geregeld in artikel 12 van de Richtlijn tijdelijke bescherming ... Andere asielzoekers in afwachting van een verblijfsvergunning hebben dit recht niet. Zij mogen weliswaar na enige tijd en met een maximum aantal weken per jaar, werken op basis van de Opvangrichtlijn.”
[Ukrainian displaced persons, as mentioned above, are allowed immediate access to work in the Netherlands. This immediate access to the labor market is regulated by Article 12 of the Temporary Protection Directive ... Other asylum seekers awaiting a residence permit do not have this right. They are admittedly allowed to work after some time and with a maximum number of weeks per year, based on the Reception Directive.] (36 241 no. 3, p. 6).

Now the three theories from the theoretical framework will be discussed in more depth. As such, within the domain of policy diffusion, this analysis regarding Hypothesis 1 shows how

the Dutch approach to the integration of Ukrainian refugees reflects a mix of their interpretation of EU directives and how much they feel obliged to do so within their national policy context. Dutch policymakers balance between the binding and non-binding aspects of the TPD, for example, using it as an imposed framework but also suggesting the framework leaves room for interpretation.

Further, Dutch policymakers seem to show a learning process in the context of EU directives, specifically with the TPD. For example, opportunities to adapt policies to their specific context are discussed in a memorandum of response, because in this case, it is said that based on the issue at hand, the standards for the alien are set more favorably than agreed upon (29 031 C, p. 5). This is the same memorandum as the previous one, which Minister Verdonk (VVD) is responsible for. The reason policy learning is at hand is because it involves comparing policy issues across different jurisdictions, in this case European and national jurisdictions, allowing Dutch policymakers to adapt EU policies such as the TPD to their national context by drawing from these other jurisdictions (Zaki & Wayenberg, 2023). Thus, the Dutch policymakers seem to learn from EU directives, but also interpret them to fit the national context of policy.

“In het algemeen is het afhankelijk van het desbetreffende onderwerp of ook daadwerkelijk gebruik wordt gemaakt van die mogelijkheid om de nationale normen op een voor de vreemdeling gunstiger niveau vast te stellen dan de minimumnormen waarover in Europees verband overeenstemming is bereikt.” [In general, it depends on the issue at hand whether that option to set national standards at a level more favorable to the alien than the minimum standards agreed upon in the European context is actually used.] (29 031 C, p. 5).

As for Europeanization, which emphasizes the influence and adaptation of national policies to be in line with EU standards, the Dutch integration policy for Ukrainian refugees appears to be an effort toward harmonization. Thus, Dutch policymakers recognize the broader framework of EU policy but retain autonomy in specific policy implementations. Moreover, what stands out is that the TPD, which governs the reception of Ukrainians, does not appear to be as binding as Dutch MPs and government present it. The analysis shows that Dutch policymakers use this presumably binding nature to justify the divergence in integration policies in the Netherlands. In addition, the Aliens Act 2000, which includes the TPD,

focuses more on non-Ukrainian refugees and Europeanization. The quotes show that all changes may or may not follow EU directives.

All in all, the analysis of the memoranda regarding Hypothesis 1 shows that regardless of the TPD being “binding,” it consists mainly of mutually agreed minimum standards when there is a mass influx of displaced persons. In addition, the Aliens Act 2000 is also subject to European directives, and they therefore do not differ in how binding they are. It also shows that the TPD was a first step toward harmonizing refugee integration policies at the EU level, but the pursuit of harmonization is not only the responsibility of the TPD. It is a larger commitment from the Dutch government in the case of refugee policy. This suggests that the motivation of Dutch politicians for refugee integration policy goes beyond the minimum standards of the TPD and Aliens Act 2000 and is rather a matter of framing by politicians. This is because with the 'regular' refugee policy, just like with the TPD, there is freedom of movement for the design of policy at the national level, but the willingness to implement EU policy for Ukrainian refugees seems to be higher.

5.3 Memoranda Regarding Hypothesis 2a: European Solidarity

Based on the observations from the literature, the expectation is that the memoranda will suggest that European solidarity among EU member states reduces the national interest of Dutch MPs and government regarding Ukrainian refugees. We will begin by looking at how European solidarity occurs in the reception of non-Ukrainian refugees. We will then look at how this is the case with Ukrainian refugees and see whether it has any influence on the national self-interest of the Dutch MPs and government.

The following memoranda were written in the context of the implementation of the TPD in the Aliens Act 2000 under the responsibility of Minister Verdonk (VVD), and the latter in the context of an amendment to the Aliens Act 2000 by Minister Van Aartsen (VVD). It is clear from an explanatory memorandum that the government is committed to cooperation among EU member states on asylum and immigration to create an area of freedom, security, and justice (29 031 No. 3, p. 1). However, a concern for the Netherlands is the inability to reach agreement within the EU on joint declarations and readmission clauses (27 491 No. 3, p. 4). Despite attempts by the Netherlands to bring back readmission clauses into the negotiations, trying to do so indicates some determination to balance the solidarity and self-interest of member states. As such, the Netherlands wishes to see a more cohesive European response to these problems by expressing regret at the lack of agreement among EU members on a joint statement on immigration and asylum policy as well as a readmission

clause. This shows a degree of Europeanization, but at the same time indicates that member states are self-interested since they are not acting as a whole with regard to these readmission clauses. All in all, the statement reflects a desire for further EU integration in asylum matters; however, doubt has been expressed about whether a common agreement can be reached.

“Artikel 2 van het Verdrag betreffende de Europese Unie bepaalt dat de EU zich (onder andere) ten doel stelt de handhaving en ontwikkeling van de Unie als een ruimte van vrijheid, veiligheid en rechtvaardigheid.” [Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union states that the EU's objectives (among others) are to maintain and develop the Union as an area of freedom, security and justice...] (29 031 No. 3, p. 1).

“Nederland betreurt het dat binnen de EU geen consensus kon worden bereikt over de aanvankelijk voorziene gezamenlijke verklaring over asiel- en migratiebeleid, noch over een terugen overnameclausule.” [The Netherlands regrets that consensus could not be reached within the EU on the initially envisioned joint statement on asylum and migration policy, nor on a readmission clause.] (27 491 No. 3, p. 4).

The next explanatory memorandum under the responsibility of Minister Verdonk (VVD) concerns the amendment of the Aliens Act 2000, which discusses the extension of a temporary asylum residence permit. It shows that the pursuit of a common European policy can be found in the effort to prevent undesirable developments that could detract from this solidarity (29 224 No. 3, p. 2). This quote indicates Europeanization by highlighting efforts to prevent undesirable developments that undermine solidarity within the framework of common European policies. Taking these undesirable developments into account is in line with the gradual process of reforming the direction and structure of politics by integrating EU policies into national policymaking (Ladrech, 1994). However, the Netherlands also stresses the importance of keeping autonomy by recognizing the need for flexibility and freedom in policymaking. The Netherlands states that the use of different deadlines and more favorable provisions by other member states is not decisive (29 224 No. 3, p. 4). The theory of policy diffusion, and policy learning, does not hold true in this case, as policy does not spread ‘blindly’ to all member states, as stated in Memorandum 29 224 No. 3. This quote is nevertheless relevant to exploring whether there are intrinsic motivations behind this approach and whether they can be linked to the security hypothesis. Nevertheless, it appears that the Dutch government is striving for harmonization of refugee policy, but it is becoming

increasingly clear that this should not be at the expense of self-interest, which complicates the harmonization process.

“De Nederlandse regering is voorstander van een zo hoog mogelijke graad van harmonisatie om de onderlinge verschillen tussen de lidstaten zo beperkt mogelijk te houden.” [The Dutch government is in favor of the highest possible degree of harmonization in order to minimize differences between member states]. (29 224 No. 3, p. 2).

“... dergelijke afwijkingen door de lidstaten doen afbreuk aan de mate waarin sprake is van harmonisatie van asiel- wetgeving.” [... such derogations by member states detract from the degree of harmonization of asylum law.] (29 224 No. 3, p. 2).

The next memorandum of response discussed under the responsibility of State Secretary Dijkhoff (VVD) deals with the amendment of the Aliens Act 2000 to implement Directive 2013/32/EU and Directive 2013/33/EU of the European Parliament and the Council. The point of interest is the statement that the Netherlands and the EU are alert to signs of possible abuse of refugee flows by terrorists or jihadist organizations (34 088 C, p. 20). This highlights the importance of balancing solidarity among member states. In this way, the government shows a degree of political motivation, which is influenced by the interaction with the EU and self-interest to prevent humanitarian tragedies by taking immediate measures and considering current asylum procedures as adequate for careful assessment of asylum requests, even in times of increased inflows, and shows a degree of policy learning (34 088 C, p. 19). As such, there is cooperation at the European level to address security concerns, but this cannot be seen as European solidarity, because the member states seem to act mainly in their own interests.

“Nederland en de EU nemen deze ontwikkelingen zeer serieus en zijn alert op signalen voor mogelijk misbruik van de vluchtelingenstroom door terroristen of andere jihadistische organisaties naar het Europees grensgebied.” [The Netherlands and the EU take these developments very seriously and are alert to signs of possible abuse of the flow of refugees by terrorists or other jihadist organizations into the European border area.]. (34 088 C, p. 20).

“... voorkomen van humanitaire tragedies door het nemen van onmiddellijke maatregelen.” [... prevent humanitarian tragedies by taking immediate action.] (34 088 C, p. 19).

A memorandum of response under the responsibility of Minister Hirsch Ballin (CDA) concerns a modification of the asylum procedure. In this document, the motivation of the MPs and government to strive for EU-wide harmonization of regulations and procedural safeguards (31 994 C, p. 24) underscores the motivation to promote solidarity and put aside national self-interest. As such, this memorandum shows the MPs and government do seek European solidarity in asylum and migration policy, but not without considering national self-interest.

“De harmonisatie die wordt nagestreefd, hoeft niet te leiden tot exact gelijkvormige procedures, maar wel tot een stelsel waarin dezelfde procedurele waarborgen overal in de Unie geldig zijn.” [The harmonization sought need not result in exactly uniform procedures, but rather a system in which the same procedural guarantees are valid throughout the Union.] (31 994 C, p. 24).

The role that Dutch MPs and government play in the framework of European solidarity regarding asylum and migration policy is that, despite different responsibilities, they represent the interests of the Netherlands in European issues. They play a crucial role in shaping the Dutch position, negotiating at the European but also Dutch level, and implementing policies related to this issue. In addition, Dutch MPs and government have to take into account both national interests and European solidarity, which is pursued as shown in the previous memoranda.

Minister Verdonk's (VVD) next explanatory memorandum focuses on amending the Aliens Act 2000, which extends the temporary asylum residence permit. The other, a memorandum of response, is related to the rescheduling of asylum grounds and is the responsibility of State Secretary Teeven (VVD). The various results derived from these two memoranda can be analyzed using the theories in the theoretical framework. For example, it emerges that the Netherlands has an active involvement in promoting a common European asylum policy, with the aim of preventing developments that would undermine mutual solidarity (29 224 No. 3, p. 2; 33 293 C, p. 1). The attempts made to strive for EU-wide harmonization underscore the spread of common policies and practices among member

states, indicating a joint approach to asylum and migration policy. As such, the process of policy diffusion within the EU can be seen (Gilardi & Wasserfallen, 2019).

“De Nederlandse regering is voorstander van een zo hoog mogelijke graad van harmonisatie om de onderlinge verschillen tussen de lidstaten zo beperkt mogelijk te houden.” [The Dutch government is in favor of the highest possible degree of harmonization in order to minimize differences between member states.] (29 224 No. 3, p. 2).

“Het streven van de Nederlandse regering en de andere Europese lidstaten is erop gericht dat een vergelijkbaar asiolverzoek in alle lidstaten tot dezelfde uitkomst leidt.” [The Dutch government favors the highest possible degree of harmonization in order to minimize differences between member states.] (33 293 C, p. 1).

It is now clear that the Dutch government strives for European solidarity but does not want to succeed due to the self-interest of the Netherlands and the lack of solidarity among member states. Now we will discuss a memorandum regarding Ukrainian refugees. This memorandum shows the Dutch government wants to continue to work for the Ukrainian displaced persons in order to offer them shelter and facilities (36 410 VI No. 2, p. 12). The memorandum concerns the adoption of the budget for the Ministry of Justice and Security under the responsibility of Minister Yeşilgöz-Zegerius (VVD). What is special in this context is that the Dutch government talks about 'we' and 'together', referring to the member states collectively. This fact stands in stark contrast to the reality in the field of European solidarity in the case of non-Ukrainian refugees, where these words are not used at all. Despite the Dutch government's stated commitment, self-interest due to security concerns is one of the reasons for its failure to succeed. The memorandum regarding Ukrainian refugees suggests a departure from the typical consideration of Dutch self-interest in the reception of other refugees. In the case of Ukrainian refugees, this self-interest seems to have been set aside, in the pursuit of European solidarity.

“We blijven ons inzetten om samen deze groep ontheemden te blijven opvangen en voorzieningen te bieden.” [We remain committed to working together to continue to provide shelter and facilities to this group of displaced persons.] (36 410 VI No. 2, p. 12).

Based on several quotes from the analysis of Hypothesis 2a, a summary using the theoretical framework will now be given. The MPs and government recognize the need for flexibility despite disagreements within the EU (29 224 No. 3, p. 4). Recognizing the various approaches of other member states on how they want to deal with asylum shows the openness of the Netherlands to understand and potentially learn from different strategies within the EU. This gives indications that there is a learning process.

An explanatory memorandum shows that the Netherlands is committed to a common European policy with an emphasis on the creation of an area of security and justice (29 031 No. 3, p. 1). The MPs and government's efforts to balance solidarity within the EU framework underscore the influence of European integration in shaping national Dutch policy. Moreover, the role of Dutch MPs and government in shaping the Dutch position at both the European and national levels highlights the impact of Europeanization as they navigate between national interests and the pursuit of European solidarity. It also becomes clear that, although in a modest way, self-interest has diminished for the Netherlands in providing shelter for Ukrainian refugees.

Thus, the analysis of the memoranda supports this hypothesis to some extent. Indeed, it shows the MPs and government commitment to European solidarity regarding asylum policy for Ukrainian refugees, indicating a willingness for joint action within the EU. This is not the case for non-Ukrainian refugees, where even though the Dutch MPs and government show commitment to solidarity, their self-interest is more prominent. It also becomes clear that, although in a modest way, self-interest has diminished for the Netherlands in providing shelter for Ukrainian refugees. For non-Ukrainian refugees, self-interest is still in effect.

5.4 Memoranda Regarding Hypothesis 2b: Left and Right on European Solidarity

The discussion on European solidarity has a range of responses from different political groups, and it is expected of the left-wing parties to use it more often as a framework in shaping refugee policy, according to an article by Kiess and Trenz (2019). The causal mechanism posits that leftist policy frameworks and subsequent actions concerning refugee policy are influenced by perceptions of European solidarity. To identify this, supporting quotes will be provided for each ideological stance on the left-right scale. First, right-wing national parties will be discussed. The right-wing VVD is concerned about the implementation of European directives in other member states and questions why the Netherlands grants more asylum applications than the EU average (32 420 D, p. 10; 33 293 C, p. 1). The VVD's positions here reflect a degree of reluctance toward solidarity measures

within the EU. In addition, this shows policy diffusion, as these positions indicate ideas spreading from other EU member states and its units to those of the Netherlands (Shaw, 2022). In addition, this focus on other EU member states reflects an approach influenced by policies in other EU member states. Further, the VVD also stresses the importance of checking previous applications in other EU member states (34 088 C, p. 16), which provides support for the pursuit of national self-interest. Specifically, if refugees have already applied for asylum in another EU member state, they could be sent back. The VVD is especially focused on international cooperation in terms of free markets (Andeweg et al., 2020). Further, the conservative right-wing SGP and RPF/GPV fractions focus their questions on possible revisions to the UN Refugee Convention and European harmonization of asylum law (26 732 5b, p. 17). This focus on possible revisions to the UN Refugee Convention indicates, to some extent, policy learning, which helps shape their own positions (Goodin et al., 2008). The motivation for raising this possible revision concerns the international context. This is stated in an explanatory memorandum focusing on a comprehensive review of the Aliens Act 2000. In addition, it is stated by the responsible Minister Korthals (VVD) that she supports the position that the UN Refugee Convention should be maintained (26 732 5b, p. 17). Therefore, the motivation of the SGP and RPF/GPV goes against the principle of European solidarity because they call for a review of one of the fundamental principles of solidarity regarding the granting of asylum.

“In de Europese Unie wordt gemiddeld 27% van de asielaanvragen toegekend, zo constateren de leden van de VVD-fractie. Na Portugal kent Nederland in de Europese Unie het hoogste aantal toekenningen, namelijk 45% van de asielaanvragen.” [In the European Union, an average of 27% of asylum applications are granted, the members of the VVD Group note. After Portugal, the Netherlands has the highest number of grants in the European Union, 45% of asylum applications.] (33 293 C, p. 1).

“De leden van de fracties van SGP en de RPF/GPV vragen of er zicht bestaat op een mogelijke herziening van het VN-vluchtelingenverdrag van 1951 (of bijbehorende protocollen). Dezelfde vraag stellen zij wat betreft de Europese harmonisatie van het asielrecht.” [Members of the SGP and RPF/GPV groups ask whether there is any prospect of a possible revision of the 1951 UN Refugee Convention (or associated protocols). They ask the same question regarding the European harmonization of asylum law.] (26 732 5b, p. 17).

Furthermore, the center-right CDA questions the role of national asylum grounds in two memoranda of response and doubts whether further harmonization is necessary (33 293 C, p. 4; 34 088 C, p. 25). This demonstrates the theory of Europeanization to some extent, since the CDA is reluctant to further harmonize refugee policy at the European level. The centrist party called D66, on the other hand, wants to know why the government decided to go beyond prescribed guidelines in their implementation (32 420 D, p. 16). In this regard, D66 shows that they learn from policies and then apply them to their own policy approaches (Zaki & Wayenberg, 2023). D66 is a Dutch party that has positive views on international collaboration (Andeweg et al., 2020). This quote shows that centrist parties in the Dutch political system are also concerned about European solidarity.

“De leden van de CDA-fractie merken op dat volgens de regering de toegevoegde waarde van de nationale asielgronden is afgenomen, aangezien collectieve elementen in het asielrelaas onder invloed van het EVRM en het EU-recht een steeds nadrukkelijker rol zijn gaan spelen.” [The members of the CDA group note that, according to the government, the added value of national asylum grounds has diminished, as collective elements in the asylum narrative have become increasingly prominent under the influence of the ECHR and EU law.] (33 293 C, p. 4).

“De leden van de D66-fractie willen weten waarom de regering heeft besloten om bij de implementatie van de richtlijn verder te gaan dan de richtlijn voorschrijft.” [Members of the D66 Group want to know why the government decided to go further than the directive requires when implementing the directive.]. (32 420 D, p. 16).

Left-wing parties, such as GroenLinks, which has a positive stance towards the EU, are concerned about the government's ambition for further harmonization and ask whether it is appropriate to make new proposals for higher minimum standards in addition to existing topics in the European context (29 031 C, p. 1; 34 088 C, p. 17). Further, the left-wing party SP, which is critical of the EU, wonders what measures the government considers necessary for harmonization to succeed in practice and whether the minimum standards are considered maximum standards (34 088 C, p. 25; 30 925 E, p. 4). The left-wing party PvdA seeks answers regarding the relationship to EC plans, and the possibility of introducing common European standards. They also question whether the right to family reunification in the Netherlands is consistent with that of other European countries (26 732 5b, pp. 16–36). The

PvdA is looking for answers regarding the international context and the possibility of implementing these common European standards in the Dutch context. In doing so, the PvdA focuses on ensuring and complying with European and international standards and obligations, according to the quotes. This aligns with the theory of Europeanization. The PvdA's motivation for European solidarity is present.

“... zo antwoord ik de leden van de GroenLinks-fractie, niet opportuun om naast de bestaande prioritaire onderwerpen in Europees verband nieuwe voorstellen te doen om te komen tot hogere minimumnormen op dit onderwerp.” [... I answer the members of the Green Left Group, it is not appropriate to make new proposals in the European context, in addition to the existing priority subjects, to achieve higher minimum standards on this subject.] (29 031 C, p. 1).

“... PvdA-fractie hoe de invoering van nieuwe wetgeving in 2001 zich verhoudt tot de Europese harmonisatie die in 2004 moet plaatsvinden? Zijn er aanwijzingen dat de Europese regelgeving ook van één status zal uitgaan, of is eerder het tegendeel het geval?” [... Labour Party how the introduction of new legislation in 2001 relates to the European harmonization due in 2004? Is there any indication that the European regulations will also assume a single status, or is rather the opposite the case?] (26 732 5b, p. 16).

The diversity of questions and views of left- and right-wing parties illustrates the division among Dutch political actors, in this case MPs and their party, on European asylum policy. All in all, it becomes evident that left-wing parties within the Netherlands, express themselves more on matters of European solidarity. Therefore, it seems that the party's analysis regarding harmonization and European solidarity among EU member states is a policy framework used more often by left-wing parties than by center- and right-wing parties. However, there are different perspectives and concerns raised by each party, showing that this is a complex and multifaceted debate involving both national and European interests. Moreover, it demonstrates that the use of European solidarity as a policy framework is not strictly exclusive to the left side of the political spectrum in the Netherlands but is more resonant in their discourse. Therefore, the hypothesis is somewhat supported by the memoranda provided but requires a nuanced response. By nuanced, it means that although left-wing parties use the framework of European solidarity more often, this does not mean

that center- and right-wing parties ignore the issue. Additionally, within party families, different perspectives also exist. There are left-wing parties more reluctant to European cooperation, such as the SP, and center-party D66 is more favorable to European solidarity.

5.5 Memoranda Regarding Hypothesis 3a: Security Concerns

This hypothesis highlights the possibility of a connection between security concerns and policy toward Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian refugees. As such, the expectation is that security concerns within EU member states lead Dutch MPs and government to pursue national self-interest. In the context of ongoing discussions on refugee policy within the EU, this hypothesis helps provide a perspective on the role of security concerns.

Several quotes emerge from the memoranda that help paint a detailed picture of how security concerns play a crucial role in decision-making and legislation related to refugee integration policy in the Netherlands. Quotes show an emphasis on ensuring national security and public order, which is directly related to the processing of refugee applications and the protection of Dutch territory from potential risks. One explanatory memorandum, under the responsibility of Minister Van Aartsen (VVD), emphasizes the importance of personal behavior of the refugees as a basis for assuming a danger to public order or national security (27 491 No. 3, p. 18). Another explanatory memorandum, under the responsibility of Minister Verdonk (VVD) describes exceptions for cases in which refugees pose such risks (29 031 No. 3, p. 5). As such, personal behavior appears to affect national security concerns. In this way, there is also a link to Hypothesis 1 because security concerns may play a role in the adoption of the divergent refugee integration policy. What is additionally noteworthy is that the memoranda do not mention security concerns regarding Ukrainian refugees in any sentence. These quotes about security concerns are solely focused on non-Ukrainian refugees.

“Gevaar voor, of inbreuk op de openbare orde, of gevaar voor de nationale veiligheid mag slechts worden aangenomen op grond van persoonlijke gedragingen van de betrokkene.” [Danger to, or violation of public order, or danger to national security may be assumed only on the basis of personal conduct of the person concerned.] (27 491 No. 3, p. 18)

“De uitzonderingen zien op onder meer vreemdelingen die een gevaar voor de openbare orde of nationale veiligheid vormen (artikel 28 van de richtlijn).” [The exceptions include aliens who pose a threat to public order or national security (Article 28 of the directive). (29 031 No. 3, p. 5).

Another quote in a memorandum shows the government's powers to shorten departure deadlines in case there are risks to national security (30 567 No. 3, p. 28). This explanatory memorandum concerns an amendment to the Aliens Act 2000 to implement EU directives and is under the responsibility of Minister Verdonk (VVD). This quote can be linked to Hypothesis 3a because the reason for not renewing residence permits is related to security concerns. These security concerns lead to a less hospitable policy toward non-Ukrainian refugees. Moreover, this quote underscores the government's focus on national security, aligning with self-interest. Further, an explanatory memorandum discusses the situation of minor foreigners under the responsibility of MPs Samsom (PvdA) and Voordewind (CU). They mention the importance of promptly rejecting substantively weak follow-up applications (33 068 No. 6, p. 20). Weak follow-up applications refer to asylum reapplications that are easily rejected due to being based on defective grounds. The quote only refers to non-Ukrainian refugees and endorses less hospitable measures. This is motivated by security concerns, but this is not made as explicit as in the previous quote.

“... verblijfsvergunning niet te verlengen of deze in te trekken en de betrokkene en de leden van zijn gezin verplichten, overeenkomstig de procedures van de nationale wetgeving, verwijdering-procedures daaronder begrepen, het grondgebied te verlaten... In geval sprake is van ernstige redenen van openbare orde of binnenlandse veiligheid kan Nederland als tweede lidstaat besluiten tot verwijdering van de langdurig ingezetenen.” [... not renew or revoke a residence permit and require the person concerned and the members of his family to leave the territory, in accordance with the procedures laid down by national law, including expulsion procedures... In case of serious reasons of public policy or domestic security, the Netherlands as second Member State may decide to expel the long-term resident.] (30 567 No. 3, p. 28).

“Opvolgende asielaanvragen en reguliere vervolgaanvragen kunnen, als die inhoudelijk op gebrekkige gronden zijn gebaseerd, eenvoudig en snel worden afgewezen.” [Subsequent asylum applications and regular follow-up applications, if based on defective grounds in substance, can be easily and quickly rejected.] (33 068 No. 6, p. 20).

The following explanatory memorandum concerns an amendment to the Aliens Act 2000 in response to an improvement in alien identity determination and was written under the responsibility of Minister Leers (CDA). This memorandum discusses Article 8 of the ECHR, the right to respect for private and family life, home, and correspondence. Article 8 highlights the legitimate purposes for restricting this right. The legitimacy of restricting is derived from the pursuit of national security and the prevention of disorder and crime, indicating an emphasis on security aspects within the legislation (33 192 No. 3, p. 36). This suggests that security concerns may be critical in shaping refugee integration policies. Moreover, this demonstrates that when engaging in joint declarations, member states prioritize their national self-interest, with security concerns exerting significant influence.

“Legitieme doelen zijn volgens het tweede lid van artikel 8 EVRM het belang van de nationale veiligheid, de openbare veiligheid.” [Legitimate purposes, according to the second paragraph of Article 8 ECHR, are the interest of national security, public safety.] (33 192 No. 3, p. 36).

Furthermore, a memorandum reveals the Cabinet decision to discontinue the categorical protection policy because of the risk of fraud (33 293 No. 3, p. 8). This explanatory memorandum concerns a rescheduling of grounds for granting asylum and is the responsibility of Minister Leers (CDA). The memorandum suggests that security considerations, such as preventing fraudulent activity, are important in shaping policy. The next memorandum of response, from State Secretary Dijkhoff, deals with the granting and withdrawal of international protection. This quote, mentioned before but in the light of solidarity, raises concerns about possible abuse of the refugee flow by terrorists or jihadist organizations, indicating that security concerns play a role in policymaking (34 088 C, p. 20). By including this threat in the considerations, Dutch MPs and government are responding to national security concerns, including stopping jihadists. The two memoranda suggest that Dutch policymakers are learning and responding to security concerns that affect refugee policy in the Netherlands.

“Het vorige kabinet gaf, gelet op het risico van fraude en aanzuigende werking, reeds aan het voeren van een nationaal categoriaal beschermingsbeleid niet langer verantwoord te achten.” [The previous cabinet, given the risk of fraud and pull

factors, already indicated that it no longer considered the pursuit of a national categorical protection policy justified.] (33 293 No. 3, p. 8).

“Nederland en de EU nemen deze ontwikkelingen zeer serieus en zijn alert op signalen voor mogelijk misbruik van de vluchtelingenstroom door terroristen of andere jihadistische organisaties naar het Europees grensgebied.” [The Netherlands and the EU take these developments very seriously and are alert to signs of possible abuse of the flow of refugees by terrorists or other jihadist organizations into the European border area.]. (34 088 C, p. 20).

Another memorandum of response, regarding a comprehensive review of the Aliens Act 2000 and under the responsibility of Minister Korthals (VVD), discusses the criteria maintained for granting a residence permit, citing national security as one of the criteria (26 732 5b, p. 7). By explicitly citing national security as a criterion for granting a residence permit, the memorandum emphasizes the importance of security considerations. Reference is also made to respecting territorial integrity in relation to national self-interest, including maintaining public order and protecting national security (30 025 No. 3, p. 26). It suggests that these aspects are prioritized in the formulation of policy measures, possibly leading to stricter measures for non-Ukrainian refugees. This explanatory memorandum concerns the approval of the treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe under the responsibility of Prime Minister Balkenende (CDA). Furthermore, in an explanatory memorandum on the budget of the Ministry of Justice and Security under the responsibility of Minister Yeşilgöz-Zegerius (VVD), the importance of protection against insecurity, crime, radicalization, terrorism, and violent extremism is emphasized (36 410 VI No. 2, p. 7). By highlighting this need for protection and security threats, this quote provides context for prioritizing security concerns in shaping refugee integration policies by the government in the Netherlands.

“De huidige wet stelt dat de vergunning tot vestiging slechts kan worden geweigerd, indien de vreemdeling een ernstige inbreuk heeft gemaakt op de openbare orde of een ernstig gevaar vormt voor de nationale veiligheid.” [The current law states that the permit to settle can only be refused if the alien has committed a serious breach of public order or poses a serious danger to national security.] (26 732 5b, p. 7).

“Gerefereerd wordt onder andere aan het verdedigen van de territoriale integriteit van de staat, het handhaven van de openbare orde en de bescherming van de nationale veiligheid.” [References include defending the territorial integrity of the state, maintaining public order and protecting national security.]. (30 025 No. 3, p, 26).

“Zeker zo prominent gaat onze aandacht uit naar de aanpak van georganiseerde, ondermijnende criminaliteit, evenals van radicalisering, terrorisme en gewelddadig extremisme.” [Certainly as prominent is our focus on addressing organized, subversive crime, as well as radicalization, terrorism and violent extremism.] (36 410 VI No. 2, p. 7).

Finally, in a memorandum of response discussing the minimum standards of reception for a mass influx of displaced persons by Minister Verdonk (VVD), the choice in the implementation of European directives is subject to various considerations, including the need for integration and the prevention of secondary migration flows (29 031 C, p. 5). In particular, the latter may reflect security concerns, and therefore it aligns with the theory of Europeanization. Controlling migration flows is often linked to national security objectives.

“... de noodzakelijke harmonisatie van het asielbeleid, de noodzaak van integratie en het voorkomen van secundaire migratiestromen.” [... the necessary harmonization of asylum policy, the need for integration and the prevention of secondary migration flows.] (29 031 C, p. 5).

The quotes just described support the hypothesis that security concerns have led Dutch MPs and government to pursue national interests. Thus, quotes in memoranda illustrate an emphasis on security concerns in the formulation of decision-making processes. It should be noted here that security concerns focus on non-Ukrainian refugees, addressing risks such as radicalization and terrorism. The focus on non-Ukrainian refugees indicates a selective application of security concerns. Furthermore, several policies illustrate the government's commitment to protecting security concerns.

5.6 Memoranda Regarding Hypothesis 3b: Left and Right on Security Concerns

The quotes in this section discuss national security interests, and the expectation is that right-wing parties will address security concerns more. As with Hypothesis 2b, the political parties will be outlined based on their ideological stance. A memorandum of response on an amendment to the Aliens Act 2000 establishing standards for the reception of applicants for international protection under the responsibility of State Secretary Dijkhoff (VVD) contains a number of relevant quotes for this hypothesis. In this memorandum, representatives of the middle and right-wing parties, CDA and VVD, express some concern about aspects they see as possible threats to national security in the Netherlands. In addition, both the VVD and CDA further point to the growing flow of non-Ukrainian refugees, emphasizing the possible consequences for the social and political stability of the Netherlands and Europe (34 088 C, p. 19). Furthermore, the VVD expresses its opinion on the revision of existing procedures to separate “genuine” asylum seekers from asylum seekers who have little to no chance of receiving asylum, within these refugee flows (34 088 C, p. 19). Lastly, a quote by the VVD suggests that migration flows may be used by terrorist groups such as IS to get their members into Europe and infiltrate Europe (34 088 C, p. 20).

“De leden van de VVD-fractie geven aan, gelet op de ongecontroleerde vluchtelingenstromen en de consequenties voor de sociale en politieke stabiliteit in Europa en Nederland, van mening te zijn dat de bestaande procedures om de echte asielzoekers uit deze stromen te filteren moeten worden aangepast.” [The members of the VVD faction indicate that, in view of the uncontrolled refugee flows and the consequences for social and political stability in Europe and the Netherlands, they believe that the existing procedures to filter out genuine asylum seekers from these flows must be adjusted.] (34 088 C, p. 19).

“De leden van de VVD-fractie wijzen erop dat in de media in toenemende mate de suggestie wordt gewekt dat de migratiestromen waar we nu mee worden geconfronteerd, gebruikt worden door IS en andere extremistische groeperingen om hun «handlangers» EU binnen te krijgen met de opdracht om zich als een soort vijfde colonne te vestigen in de Europese landen.” [Members of the VVD Group point out that the media is increasingly suggesting that the migration flows we are now facing are being used by IS and other extremist groups to get their "accomplices" into EU

with the task of establishing themselves as a kind of fifth column in European countries.] (34 088 C, p. 20).

In the context of policy diffusion, increasing awareness of threats to European and national security in other European countries may have fueled concerns among Dutch political parties. In addition, experiences from other countries or European institutions, regarding security concerns related to refugees, may have led to a degree of policy learning among the CDA and VVD. Further, concerns about security may have been fueled by European discussions and directives, which put pressure on the national sovereignty of member states.

Though the quotes do not fit directly into the framework of the theories, interpretations and explanations may be based on general patterns of policymaking and political dynamics observed in similar situations. As such, the quotes show a brief picture of political parties speaking out on national security. Because there are only a limited number of quotes available, it is not possible to directly apply the theoretical framework. Conspicuously absent are perspectives on security concerns from left-wing parties. The absence of these perspectives seems to indicate that these parties prioritize other issues or do not emphasize security concerns to the same extent as the center and right parties in Dutch politics. The absence of left-wing perspectives makes giving confirmation of the hypothesis all the more difficult.

All in all, the hypothesis cannot be confirmed or denied. Of all the parties analyzed, only a minimal amount of quotes appear to relate to the hypothesis assumed, and left-wing parties do not seem to address security concerns. However, there are signs that indicate right-wing parties express more concerns about security. The limited available quotes underscore that right-wing parties, unlike left-wing parties, do address security concerns.

6. Conclusion

As initiated at the introduction of this thesis, a comprehensive approach was used to try to understand the divergent integration policies for Ukrainian refugees in the Netherlands. This was done to reveal the EU's influence on the motivations of Dutch MPs and government in making these divergent policies. Thus, the pressing question posed in the introduction, namely how the EU influenced the motivation behind the different integration strategies of the Dutch MPs and government, was answered through an in-depth analysis. In the analysis, based on the conceptual framework of Ager and Strang (2008), the results from relevant laws and policies were interpreted. Subsequently, five hypotheses from the theoretical framework were tested to collectively answer the research question. These hypotheses were analyzed with the help of the concepts: policy diffusion, policy learning, and Europeanization.

The examination of the memoranda pertaining to the Aliens Act 2000 (2000) and the TPD (Council of the European Union, 2001) helped to provide insights on the influence of the EU on the motivations of Dutch MPs and government in making the divergent refugee integration policy for Ukrainian refugees. The memoranda showed that although the TPD is "binding" in nature, it mainly includes minimum standards in the case of mass displacement. This means that, just as with non-Ukrainian refugees, similar policy freedoms exist at the national level. Dutch politicians do not make their choice for a more accessible and open integration policy based solely on obligations derived from European guidelines. Instead, the so-called binding character is applied by politicians and used as a framework to justify differences in integration policies for refugees. Furthermore, the memoranda revealed that cooperation within the EU framework is sought, but at the same time, national interests and security considerations are of great importance, especially in the case of non-Ukrainian refugees. This results in a balance between solidarity and self-interest. The analysis revealed that, although the framework of European solidarity was not exclusive to leftists, it was more prominent in their discourse. The memoranda additionally suggests Dutch refugee integration policies are shaped by security concerns, and this has led to a less hospitable policy toward non-Ukrainian refugees. In addition, the memoranda can not prove the hypothesis that right-wing parties, and thus MPs, express more concerns about security with respect to non-Ukrainian refugees. Of the parties analyzed, only a small proportion appear to have discussed security concerns at all. All in all, the findings collectively show an interaction between EU influences, national interests, security concerns, and political orientations. In doing so, it shows how the EU influences the motivations of Dutch MPs and government and

reveals how this interaction has helped create the divergent integration policies for Ukrainian refugees in the Netherlands.

6.1 Limitations of the Study

While this thesis offers insights, it is important to acknowledge its limitations. One key constraint lies in the reliance on government documents as the primary source for analysis. While these documents provide essential policy insights, they do not encompass all decision-making processes or disclose every external influence shaping integration policies. For example, it is suggested that cultural identity influenced the more open refugee integration policy in the Netherlands towards Ukrainian refugees since their cultural background matches the Dutch culture more (Paré, 2022; Fit & Boogaard, 2022; Noor, 2022). Further, the thesis primarily focuses on pivotal policy documents like the Aliens Act 2000 (2000) and the TPD (Council of the European Union, 2001). However, there are numerous other associated laws and policies linked to these documents, the memoranda of which have not been extensively addressed in this study and could help explain the influence of the EU in more detail and with more concrete findings. Moreover, this remains an ongoing and evolving issue where policy adjustments are currently underway. These ongoing changes might lead to varied outcomes or findings, and it is crucial to consider the dynamic nature of this contemporary issue.

7.2 Future Research

Interesting follow-up research could include, for example, exploring how the EU influences political motivations and policy variations in refugee integration across different European countries. Additionally, investigate whether this influenced differing refugee integration policies, considering factors such as institutional conditions, political ideologies, and public opinion (Solano & De Coninck, 2022). A comparative approach can shed light on unique policy approaches in different settings. Further, conducting a longitudinal study that tracks the evolution of refugee integration policies influenced by the EU over a longer period may also provide more explanations about the reasons for pursuing different policies. For example, analyzing policy shifts between different periods of government can provide insights into the dynamic nature of integration policies. Furthermore, examining the influence of the EU on the perspectives and experiences of refugees, NGOs, and/or local communities regarding refugee integration policies could provide a more complete understanding. For

example, qualitative studies using interviews can reveal how these policies are perceived, implemented, and experienced in practice and thus be explanatory in another respect.

7.3 Theoretical and Societal Contributions

In the case of theoretical contributions, the thesis contributes to the theoretical landscape by applying and testing different theoretical frameworks in the context of refugee integration policy. It provides a better understanding of how the EU influences policy outcomes. Moreover, it helps by shedding light on the diverse nature of policymaking and contributing to a better understanding of how various factors, such as European solidarity and security concerns, influence policymaking and implementation. Furthermore, the thesis also offers societal contributions. Indeed, refugee integration is a heated debate in society. Highlighting the challenges refugees face in accessing employment, housing, education, and health care and how MPs and government influence these policy areas can help raise awareness about the impact of integration policies on refugees.

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Appendix

File Number & Date	Name and Party Affiliation	Title of File
Aliens Act 2000:		
26 732 and 26 975 No. 5b (2000-2001)	Minister of Justice, A. H. Korthals (VVD)	Memorandum of Response
26 732 and 26 975 No. 5d (2000-2001)	Minister of Justice, A. H. Korthals (VVD)	Memorandum of Response
26 975 No. 3-h1 (1999-2000)	Minister of Justice, A. H. Korthals (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
27 491 No. 3 (2000-2001)	Minister of Foreign Affairs, J. J. van Aartsen (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
27 585 No. 3 (2000-2001)	Minister of Justice, A. H. Korthals (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
28 267 No. 3 (2001-2002)	Minister of Justice, A. H. Korthals (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
28 630 No. 3 (2002-2003)	Minister for Integration and Asylum Affairs, H. P. A. Nawijn (LPF)	Explanatory Memorandum
28 749 No. 3 (2002-2003)	Minister for Integration and Asylum Affairs, H. P. A. Nawijn (LPF)	Explanatory Memorandum
29 016 No. 3 (2002-2003)	Minister for Integration and Asylum Affairs, M. C. F. Verdonk (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
29 031 No. 3 (2002-2003)	Minister for Integration and Asylum Affairs, M. C. F. Verdonk (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
29 224 No. 3 (2003-2004)	Minister for Integration and Asylum Affairs, M. C. F. Verdonk (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
30 567 No. 3 (2005-2006)	Minister for Integration and Asylum Affairs, M. C. F. Verdonk (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum

30 567 C (2006-2007)	Minister for Integration and Asylum Affairs, M. C. F. Verdonk (VVD)	Memorandum of Response
30 830 No. 3 (2006-2007)	Members of Parliament, Lambrechts (D66) & Van der Ham (D66)	Explanatory Memorandum
30 830 No. 9 (2007-2008)	Members of Parliament, Pechtold (D66) & Van der Ham (D66)	Explanatory Memorandum
30 897 No. 3 (2006-2007)	Minister for Integration and Asylum Affairs, M. C. F. Verdonk (VVD)	Memorandum of Response
30 925 No. 3 (2006-2007)	Minister of Justice, E. M. H. Hirsch Ballin (CDA)	Explanatory Memorandum
30 925, E (2007-2008)	State Secretary of Justice, N. Albayrak (PvdA)	Memorandum of Response
30 976 No. 3 (2006-2007)	Minister of Justice, E. M. H. Hirsch Ballin (CDA)	Explanatory Memorandum
30 976, C (2007-2008)	Minister of Justice, E. M. H. Hirsch Ballin (CDA) State Secretary of Justice, N. Albayrak (PvdA)	Memorandum of Response
31 208 No. 3 (2007-2008)	Minister of Justice, E. M. H. Hirsch Ballin (CDA)	Explanatory Memorandum
31 549 No. 3 (2007-2008)	Minister of Justice, E. M. H. Hirsch Ballin (CDA)	Explanatory Memorandum
31 994 No. 3 (2008-2009)	Minister of Justice, E. M. H. Hirsch Ballin (CDA) State Secretary of Justice, N. Albayrak (PvdA)	Explanatory Memorandum
31 994 C (2009-2010)	Minister of Justice, E. M. H. Hirsch Ballin (CDA)	Memorandum of Response
32 052 No. 3	Minister of Justice,	Explanatory Memorandum

(2008-2009)	E. M. H. Hirsch Ballin (CDA) State Secretary of Justice, N. Albayrak (PvdA)	
32 052 D (2009-2010)	Minister of Justice, E. M. H. Hirsch Ballin (CDA)	Memorandum of Response
32 287 No. 3 (2009-2010)	Minister of Social Affairs and Employment, J. P. H. Donner (CDA)	Explanatory Memorandum
32 420 No. 3 (2009-2010)	Minister of Justice, E. M. H. Hirsch Ballin (CDA)	Explanatory Memorandum
32 420 D (2011-2012)	Minister for Immigration and Asylum Affairs, G. B. M. Leers (CDA)	Memorandum of Response
32 455 No. 3 (2009-2010)	Minister of Justice, E. M. H. Hirsch Ballin (CDA)	Explanatory Memorandum
32 528 No. 3 (2010-2011)	Minister of Justice, E. M. H. Hirsch Ballin (CDA)	Explanatory Memorandum
32 528 C (2013-2014)	State Secretary for Security and Justice, F. Teeven (VVD)	Memorandum of Response
33 068 No. 3 (2011-2012)	Members of Parliament, Spekman (PvdA) & VoordeWind (CU)	Explanatory Memorandum
33 068 No. 6 (2011-2012)	Members of Parliament, Samsom (PvdA) & VoordeWind (CU)	Explanatory Memorandum
33 192 No. 3 (2011-2012)	Minister for Immigration and Asylum Affairs, G. B. M. Leers (CDA)	Explanatory Memorandum
33 192 C (2012-2013)	State Secretary for Security and Justice, F. Teeven (VVD)	Memorandum of Response
33 286 No. 3	Minister for Immigration	Explanatory Memorandum

(2011-2012)	and Asylum Affairs, G. B. M. Leers (CDA)	
33 293 No. 3 (2011-2012)	Minister for Immigration and Asylum Affairs, G. B. M. Leers (CDA)	Explanatory Memorandum
33 293 C (2012-2013)	State Secretary for Security and Justice, F. Teeven (VVD)	Memorandum of Response
33 364 No. 3 (2011-2012)	Minister for Immigration and Asylum Affairs, G. B. M. Leers (CDA)	Explanatory Memorandum
33 512 No. 3 (2012-2013)	State Secretary for Security and Justice, F. Teeven (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
33 581 No. 3 (2012-2013)	State Secretary for Security and Justice, F. Teeven (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
33 581 C (2013-2014)	State Secretary for Security and Justice, F. Teeven (VVD)	Memorandum of Response
33 699 No. 3 (2012-2013)	State Secretary for Security and Justice, F. Teeven (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
33 749 No. 3 (2013-2014)	Minister of Social Affairs and Employment, L.F. Asscher (PvdA)	Explanatory Memorandum
33 944 No. 3 (2013-2014)	State Secretary for Security and Justice, F. Teeven (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
34 079 No. 3 (2014-2015)	Member of Parliament, Voortman (GroenLinks)	Explanatory Memorandum
34 079 No. 6 (2015-2016)	Member of Parliament, Voortman (GroenLinks)	Explanatory Memorandum

34 088 No. 3 (2014-2015)	State Secretary for Security and Justice, F. Teeven (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
34 088 C (2014-2015)	State Secretary for Security and Justice, K.H.D.M. Dijkhoff (VVD)	Memorandum of Response
34 128 No. 3 (2014-2015)	State Secretary for Security and Justice, F. Teeven (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
34 541 No. 3 (2015-2016)	Members of Parliament, Voortman (GroenLinks) & Kuiken (PvdA)	Explanatory Memorandum
34 541 No. 10 (2018-2019)	Members of Parliament, Van Ojik (GroenLinks), Kuiken (PvdA), Van Kooten-Arissen (PvdD) & Jasper van Dijk (SP)	Explanatory Memorandum
34 544 No. 3 (2016-2017)	State Secretary for Security and Justice, K.H.D.M. Dijkhoff	Explanatory Memorandum
34 590 No. 3 (2016-2017)	Minister of Social Affairs and Employment, L.F. Asscher (PvdA)	Explanatory Memorandum
35 056 No. 3 (2018-2019)	State Secretary for Security and Justice, M.G.J. Harbers (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
35 271 No. 3 (2018-2019)	State Secretary for Security and Justice, A. Broekers-Knol (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
35 271 B (2019-2020)	State Secretary for Security and Justice, A. Broekers-Knol (VVD)	Memorandum of Response
35 406 No. 3 (2019-2020)	Members of Parliament,	Explanatory Memorandum

	Wilders (PVV) & Emiel van Dijk (PVV)	
35 406 No. 6 (2020-2021)	Members of Parliament, Wilders (PVV) & Emiel van Dijk (PVV)	Explanatory Memorandum
35 604 No. 3 (2020-2021)	State Secretary for Security and Justice, A. Broekers-Knol (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
35 691 No. 3 (2020-2021)	State Secretary for Security and Justice, A. Broekers-Knol (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
35 749 No. 3 (2020-2021)	State Secretary for Security and Justice, A. Broekers-Knol (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
36 196 No. 3 (2021-2022)	State Secretary for Justice and Security, E. van der Burg (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
36 300 No. 3 (2022-2023)	State Secretary for Justice and Security, E. van der Burg (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
36 332 No. 3 (2022-2023)	State Secretary for Justice and Security, E. van der Burg (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
36 349 No. 3 (2022-2023)	State Secretary for Justice and Security, E. van der Burg (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
Rijksoverheid.nl - Justitie - 14-9-2016	State Secretary for Security and Justice, K.H.D.M. Dijkhoff (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
Rijksoverheid.nl - Algemene Zaken - 30-10-2016	Minister of Social Affairs and Employment, L.F. Asscher (PvdA)	Explanatory Memorandum

Rijksoverheid.nl - Justitie - 9-9-2022	Minister of Social Affairs and Employment, L.F. Asscher (PvdA)	Explanatory Memorandum
Rijksoverheid.nl - Justitie - 31-1-2023	State Secretary for Justice and Security, E. van der Burg (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
Rijksoverheid.nl - Justitie - 22-3-2023	State Secretary for Justice and Security, E. van der Burg (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
Rijksoverheid.nl - Justitie - 20-4-2023	State Secretary for Justice and Security, E. van der Burg (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
TPD:		
29 031 No. 3 (2002-2003)	Minister for Integration and Asylum Affairs, M. C. F. Verdonk (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
29 031 C (2003-2004)	Minister for Integration and Asylum Affairs, M.C.F. Verdonk (VVD)	Memorandum of Response
29 224 No. 3 (2003-2004)	Minister for Integration and Asylum Affairs, M. C. F. Verdonk (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
30 025 No. 3 (2004-2005)	Prime Minister, J. P. Balkenende (CDA)	Explanatory Memorandum
33 512 No. 3 (2012-2013)	State Secretary for Security and Justice, F. Teeven (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
36 081 No. 3 (2021-2022)	Minister of Justice and Security, D. Yeşilgöz-Zegerius (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
36 081 B (2022-2023)	Minister of Justice and Security, D. Yeşilgöz-Zegerius (VVD)	Memorandum of Response

36 081 D (2022-2023)	Minister of Justice and Security, D. Yeşilgöz-Zegerius (VVD)	Memorandum of Response
36 106 No. 3 (2021-2022)	Minister for Primary and Secondary Education, A.D. Wiersma (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
36 241 No. 3 (2022-2023)	Minister of Social Affairs and Employment, C.E.G. van Gennip (CDA)	Explanatory Memorandum
36250 VI No. 2 (2022-2023)	Minister of Justice and Security, D. Yeşilgöz-Zegerius (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
36 301 B (2022-2023)	Minister for Housing and Spatial Planning, H.M. de Jonge (CDA)	Memorandum of Response
36 301 D (2022-2023)	Minister for Housing and Spatial Planning, H.M. de Jonge (CDA)	Memorandum of Response
36 394 No. 3 (2022-2023)	State Secretary for Justice and Security, E. van der Burg (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum
36 410 VI No. 2 (2023-2024)	Minister of Justice and Security, D. Yeşilgöz-Zegerius (VVD)	Explanatory Memorandum