

**Abstract:**

This thesis analyzes how Italian politicians employ blame game theories to divert responsibility for the immigration crisis to the European Union. The politicians chosen are Matteo Salvini and Giorgia Meloni as they best represent the use of these tactics. Through the use of a comprehensive content analysis of speeches, public statements, and social media posts the project examines the use of scapegoat, diffusion, and renegade blame games.

The thesis aims to understand the political tactics and motivations behind the use of blame games to shift the fault to the EU. Moreover, the project tries to understand how the strategies used affect Italian citizens. Employing theoretical frameworks from blame-shifting and international relations literature, the analysis explores the significance of the three blame games in political discourse and their impact on other international actors and public opinion. The projects aim to provide insight into the dynamics of blame attribution in a multilevel governance system like the EU as a way to add to wider dialogues on political strategy, accountability, and the politicization of the immigration crisis. Moreover, this thesis looks at the critical gap in the literature by linking blame game theories to specific political behaviors.