

Abstract

The literature on the party politics of immigration has paid increasing attention to the role of centre-right parties. Over the years these parties have often adopted more restrictive positions on immigration policy. However, as traditional parties of government they are faced with various legal and political constraints on the extent to which they can actually change policies when in office. This thesis studies the tensions between the office-seeking and policy-seeking goals of centre-right parties on immigration. It does so by analysing the asylum policies pursued by centre-right ministers in the Netherlands, France and Belgium in 2022-2023, as well as the way their parties' parliamentary groups positioned themselves towards their own ministers. Through a comparative qualitative analysis of policy and policy framing, this thesis argues the role of individual ministers and party ideology are crucial in understanding the impact centre-right parties have on asylum policies as well as in creating tensions between the party in office and in parliament.